

modify for HLT
jokes

General joke sketchlet

Group homework joke sketchlets

Methodological note

So far sketch has required students to go off and do individual re-telling or transformational homework. This then gets ritually red-inked and relegated. Not too intelligent.

Sketch is an ideal area for GROUP HOMEWORK. This is the first of a series of joke sketchlets which the students prepare themselves in group homework. The out come is that they either

(a) act the sketch for the class

(b) record the sketch on a tape-recorder and then the class criticises. No red-ink, no relegation. The homework is no longer a dead end in itself.

The idea of Joke sketchlets is that once they have done half a dozen the students can turn jokes they know in their own language into English sketchlets.

General Joke Sketchlet

INTERMEDIATE OR ADVANCED

Joke Sketchlet 1 (This text to be given to the group of students doing the homework.)

Number of students needed: 4 : General (in dictatorship)
Aide de camp A.D.C.
School child
Prisoner.

General and aide de camp arrive at school. General gives the primary school kids a pep talk about serving the Fatherland etc. A kid pips up and asks if they couldn't have benches to sit on instead of rocks. General barks that no, they've got to get tough and be used to making sacrifices. Kids asks if they could have biros to write with. General says they must use hen feathers.

The General and ADC now move on to a prison. General gives pep talk about how these men who have gone astray must serve the fatherland when they are released.

A prisoner asks how they are meant to get any exercise. There are no tennis courts in the prison.

The General is shocked. He asks the ADC if this is possible, a prison without tennis courts. He orders to have some built at once. The ADC looks stunned but says: Yes Sir.

The prisoner explains that it's very hot here in summer. Could they have a swimming pool?

The general is amazed- no swimming pool? He orders one to be built at once. The ADC can contain himself no longer. He asks why the general refused the primary kids benches and biros but is willing to give the convicts tennis courts and swimming pools

The general turns to him, looks at him, pauses and then asks:
" Do you think I'm ever going back to primary school?"

Once the acting team has performed the teacher could ask these questions:

1. What astonishes the ADC?
2. Would you say the general is an idealist/ realist or a hypocrite? Why?
3. Are there any countries you know of where a general might think as this one does?
4. Why do people under dictatorial regimes come up with jokes of this sort?

The time the performance and the question + discussion should take would be ten minutes. Could well be planned as a 'lightener' between two periods.

Singing Kettle joke sketchlet

GROUP HOMEWORK JOKE SKETCHLETS

3. (For methodology see Sketchlet 1)

THE SINGING KETTLE (INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED

2 students: salesman
housewife in a sheet.

The salesman comes to door with a first offer singing kettle.

The housewife is wrapped in a sheet.

As the kettle heats it plays Mozart louder and louder.

When the water is boiling a technicolour 'photo' of Mozart ~~pop~~ pops up.

Housewife says she doesn't like classical music.

The salesman won't be put off- he has a Beatles singing kettle also with a a technicolour photo that pops up.

The housewife says she'll really have to consult her husband.

The salesman stresses that this is a first offer- now the kettle are just thirty pounds each- in a months's time they'll be up to £50. He asks when the husband will be back? At 5.30?

The Housewife says he'll be back in ten years time.

The salesman suggests she should write to him.

The housewife says letters don't get thru to him.

The salesman asks why?

"Well you see, he's on Alcatraz".

The salesman says that's very interesting, what did he do to get sent there?

" He murdered me"!

1. Would you describe a Mozart playing kettle as a cultural amenity, a vulgar gimmick or a utensil with a warning device?
2. What's the point of having a first offer that is cheaper than the subsequent price?
3. How would you describe this salesman's selling technique? (why?)
4. Have you ever be confronted with door to door salesman trying to sell you gimmicky things? What? Did you buyit?

The Dublin Job Joke sketchlet

GROUP HOMEWORK SKETCHLETS (JOKES)

2. (for methodology see sketchlet 1)

THE DUBLIN JOB (intermediate and advanced)

2 students: Spanish woman
Irish man/woman.

The scene is on a plane from London to Dublin. A Spanish woman is insistently questioning the Irish person with questions. The latter hesitates and stammers when answering. The Spanish woman wants to know where the other is going. Dublin.
"What is going for, a holiday? No.

What for? For an interview.
What sort of interview? Here the Irish person stammers dreadfully; finally it comes out: she is being interviewed for a job as a TV announcer.

The Spanish woman looks uncomprehending. Finally she asks if the other person thinks they will get the job. No. They don't think so:

" Y y y ou , s s see, I'm a Pppprooostestant!"

(Before the performance the teacher should outline the Catholic-Protestant problem in Ireland)

1. How would you describe the way the Spanish woman questions?
2. Does the Irish person reply fluently. (How then?)
3. At which point or points did you laugh? Why there?
4. Are there other countries than Ireland about which you know denominational jokes?

SCHOOL TEACHER SKETCH

Use of sketch as a CLOSER and RE-FOCUSSEER for a discussion class at advanced level, and as an OPENER for an advanced level composition.

METHODOLOGY.

You start your class with a series of aural stimuli on tape that provoke people to think about the theme. (3-4 minutes)

You then give them two short reading passages that deal with the theme analytically. (5 minutes)

The class then goes into three or four committees that discuss the theme. (15 minutes)

These then report back to the whole class. (10 minutes)

Then, at the end of the report back two or three students who have prepared the sketch for homework, put on the sketch. (10 mins)

You then finally give them a selection of composition titles on and round the theme for them to do as homework (5 mins)

Total 50 mins.

Here is an example, though neither the aural stimuli nor the two texts will be available till October.

~~Annex~~

Theme: Authoritarianism in general and in particular in education.

Aural stimuli: On tape: Parade ground screeches
Mother screaming at her children
Magistrate sentencing
Bit of Ten Commandments read in ~~parson~~ parson voice. (hollow, false)

Short reading texts: from Carl Rogers
Pablo Freire
Education black book.

Sketch:

School teacher sketch

(This outline to be given to four students the day before)

Teacher

Inspector

Toto school kids.

Lulu

Teacher is writing interminably on the blackboard. Toto and Lulu looking around, bored, Toto gets up and shambles to door. Teacher stops him and asks why he's going. He says he's going to the toilet. Teacher plays shocked and says that's very vulgar word. He must not just get up and go like that. If it's for a ~~brief~~ brief visit he must raise one finger. If he wants to go for two minutes or more he must raise two fingers. Toto then raised two fingers in an ironic V sign and goes.

He comes back. The teacher questions him and Lulu. What is 2 + 2? Long silence. Lulu: 4½! Authoritarian despair. Two more sums and subtraction painfully done. Teacher angry, aggressive and finger peking under nose.

Knock at the door. Enter inspector. Teacher now soft and gooey. Tells inspector how clever the students are. Introduces them. They forget to stand up, have to be gestured to do so. Inspector says he's going to test them. Tries sums and subtractions. The third one is: "What's five minus three. They can't get it. Behind inspector's back teacher gestures "two" by raising two fingers in V sign. Toto pipes up: "Please Sir, Teacher want to go to the toilet."

(Clearly this sketch can also be used at other than advanced levels if you add the usual questions and follow-up material)

We propose it for advanced level simply because of it's stark

INTELLIGENT IN CHARGE OF A BOOK SKETCH.

Closer, refocusser sketch for Adv discussion class and opener for adv composition

(For methodology see Teacher sketch)

Theme: Authoritarian, fear of written texts.

Aural stimulus: Dialogue in which customs are minutely searching a car for (a) arms (b) 'subversive' literature.

Texts: Account from C.P. Fitzgerald of Haung Ti's burning of Confucian texts at beginning of Former Han dynasty.

Journalist account of Leigh and Merino's burning of the books in Fascist Chile, 1973.

(the above material will be made available in October)

Sketch

Props: telephone directory, policeman's hat, dunce's cap, patch cord (from lab) clothes peg.

Parts: Man in the Park
Policeman.

Man sitting on a park bench, nervous, glancing ground. He is reading the telephone directory.

Policeman comes up, looking very severe. Man cringes.

P. asks him his name and address.

Did he go to primary school? Yes. How many years? Six.

Did he go to secondary school? Yes. How many years? 8.

Did he go to University? Yes. How many years? 4.

At each answer or ~~xx~~ rather admission, the man looks and acts more guilty and frightened.

The Policeman tries to write all this down in his notebook but can't. Finally ponderously orders man to.

Then he says: " I see you are reading a book." He says he's going to have to administer the intelligence test.

He puts a dunce's cap on the man's head and patch cords it to a clothes peg on his own nose. He then orders the man to think. If there is any sign of intelligence in the man's thoughts ~~he~~ fuzzz will sneeze three times.

The man looks dreamily into the distance. The policeman sneezes heavily three times.

The policeman deliberately ~~xxxxxxxx~~ dismantles the apparatus.

" I charge ~~wikix~~ you with being intelligent in charge of a book. Come with me please". He leads him off, the man quivering all over.

(if the students come from countries where the breathalyser test is not common this should be explained before the sketch as the sketch is a take off of this.)

(The sketch can obviously also be used at other levels than advanced- you just need to get some questions together and do whatever followup work seems appropriate.)

A Job in the Ministry

(Advanced discussion closer and refocusser + composition opener)

(for methodology see Teacher sketch)

Theme: Bureaucracy, corruption and family connections

Aural stimuli: None

Texts: Extract from sociological article on class in Britain
Extract from Milovan Djilas's NEW MEN

Sketch: A job in the Ministry

~~xxxxxx~~ Parts: Minister Props: dark glasses
 Roman Layabout
 Director of personnel in the Dept of Planning of
 Coordination of Planning.

Scene 1: Takes place in Minister's room. He is lounging behind large desk. Enter Roman 27 year old ~~do~~ de vita layabout. He is wearing dark glasses. He nonchalantly greets the minister. They are both arrogant and speak slowly and lazily.

The minister ask him how his dear mother is and his father , the minister's ~~xxxxxx~~ third cousin twice removed. The boy says well, but his aunt Emilia is in a bad way. Short of money - now only has a Lancia and Lamborghini- the Rolls is too expensive to run. What will she do?

Minster asks why he has come? Boy says both his psychiatrist and his mother say he must get a job. He thinks it's dreadful, but there you are. And he's only 27. Minister commiserates and says he'll see what he can do. He picks up the phone and tells his secretary to fix the boy abd interview with the personnel ~~xxxxxx~~ director in the Dept of Planning of Coordinatioj of Planning. Boy leaves.

Scene2

The boy goes to interview. He starts of by complaining that he has had to come to the interview; why couldn't the director have come to his house?

The director offers him a job taking documents from Room 1103 to Room 1105. The Boy objects that there must be a room in between them and he will get worn out. He says he wants a very easy job but also , of course, an intellectual job.

The Director think a moment. Yes, there is one office , 10,005, in which there is an easy and a very intellectual job, There is a Governement Gazette on a high shelf and it has to be moved from the shelf ~~xxxx~~ onto the desk and back again five times a day. No reading involved, just thinking about what it may contain, speculating.

The boy says his doctor has forbidden him to move his arm above shoulder level. Surely there must be an easier job in the ~~Ministry~~ Ministry. He wants a job where he will have absolutely nothing to do.

The director ponders a bit, then leans forward and says in confidence : "Yes there is, but I really can't give you that job."

The boy asks why not?

Director: " Because it's my job".

(Clearly this sketch can also be used , with appropriate questions etc at intermediate and elementary level)

Lower Intermediate Short Sketch

In first period: Presentation
questions
Role playing..

Transformational group homework

In second period they perform transformations
they do follow-up work.

1st hour and homework.

Careers master Sketch (Labour Exchange sketch)

Scene 1.

Old man walks into career's master's office. How old is he? 95.
When did he retire? 20 years ago. What does he want? A job
sitting down.

C.M. suggests he could be a cashier in a supermarket.

Old man says he likes taking money, but he's forgotten how to
count.

C.M. thinks a moment and then tells ~~he~~ him he can be a parking meter
he'll just have to stand still by the road side with his mouth open.
(C.M. stands up and mimes the last part).

Scene 2

A giraffe walks into the career's master's office. How old is he?
3 years old. How long has he been in England? Three months.

What does he want? A job where he can use his height.

The C.M. proposes that he join the navy.

The giraffe asks why?

Well he could work in a submarine as a spare periscope.

(C.M. mimes this last part)

Scene 1 Questions:

1. Was was the Career's master's first question to the old man?
2. Did he ask when he started work?
3. When did the old man retire?
4. Did he want a job walking about?
5. What job did the C.M. suggest?
6. What had the old man forgotten?
7. What ~~xxxxxxx~~ did the C.M. suggest he took a job as?
8. Do you like this idea (why/ why not?)

Scene 2 Questions:

1. Who or what came in? Where do giraffe's normally live?
2. What was the C.M.'s first question?
3. How long had the giraffe been in England?
4. What special kind of job did the giraffe want?
5. What did the CM suggest he join?
6. What could he work as in a submarine?
7. What other jobs can you think of for the giraffe (policeman
window cleaner
Private detect
ive)

NOW get the students to role play the two scene.

Homework: Suggest to the students that all sorts of different
types might come to the careers master asking for help in finding
jobs. Each type has his own special characteristics, in the above
two cases age and height. The CM gives them improbable solutions.
Each pair of students comes ready to role-play one scene.
THIS IS GROUP HOMEWORK. They could tape scene if they wanted to.

Second hour

1. The students role-play their sketchlets to the others.
2. The teacher selects one of the sketches and asks the students to write five questions about it. They fire them at each other.
3. Then get them to play a card game in which they put these sentences back together again, in pairs:
(work in groups of 3 or four)

HOW OLD / ARE YOU?
 WHEN DID/ YOU RETIRE?
 WHAT EXACTLY/ DO YOU WANT?
 I'VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO COUNT.
 YOU COULD BE/A CASHIER
 YOU COULD BE/ A PARKING METER!
 YOU'D STAND IN THE STREET/WITH YOUR MOUTH OPEN.

Get them to put the pairs of cards in order so as to re-tell Scene 1 of the sketch.

4. Structure drill ('you could be' as a suggestion)

You give the students this information about yourself and they suggest profession for you using one of these patterns:

Well, you could be.....
 Well, why don't you become.....
 Well, why don't you try for a job as a.....
 Well, you could get a job + ing.

1. 18, no qualifications, driving licence
2. 49, ex-policeman, likes responsibility.
3. 27, Phd English literature, doesn't want to teach.
4. 19, 5 O levels, unmarried, one child, secretarial course.
5. 32, art college teacher, just been sacked for political views
6. 55, just out of prison, no qualifications.
7. 62, Tory cabinet minister for 20 years.

~~xxx~~

Now get the students to each write five profile like the above. they then carry on the drill in pairs.

5. Discussion on getting jobs

Start ball rolling by asking different works how these people set about getting a job in their countries: building worker
teacher
pilot

Ask them if they have labour exchanges? How do they work?
 Are there some jobs girls can't get etc?
 Do they have careers masters in their schools? Are they doing a good job. etc.....

6. PROJECT WORK. They could evolve a detailed questionnaire to use in interviews (a) with Labour exchange employees
 (b) people going to the labour exchange
 (c) careers masters
 (d) last year at school students.
 (e) last year At University students.

They might use tape recorders in doing these interviews.