Improvisation and Characterization Notes – Theatre 1 – Fixel

Improvisation

* Portrayal of a character or scene without rehearsal or preparation
* Make up the character/lines as you go; without a script
* “The actor is…rather than is pretending to be” 🡪 BE THE CHARACTER, DON’T PLAY IT.

Why Improv?

* Practicing theatre through improv helps you work on reactions/responses to other actors

Approaches to telling a story

* Character-centered: focuses on character/group of characters who experience different situations one after another; emphasizes each character’s response to those situations as they happen
* Situation-centered: usually takes a single situation and places a number of character in the situation to demonstrate how different personalities will respond to the same event
  + Situation comedies – sitcoms

Establishing a character

* Visualize your character in detail – try to feel his/her emotions
* Before entering the scene – take on the physical attitude of your character
* Stay in character - listen and speak as your character would – exhibit actions and reactions that are appropriate to your character
* Questions to ask about your charter:
  + Who am I?
  + What kind of person am I?
  + How am I different from other characters?
  + What are the fewest things I can do to convey the most information about my character?
  + What does my character want?
* In writing, characters may be presented by means of description, through their actions, speech, or thoughts….it is the same way with theatre and plays