Warming up with Shakespeare's Insulting Words

This activity encourages students to focus on a single word and give it importance through **eye contact, body movement,** and **voice inflection**. It works well in large classrooms and with students who have limited language ability.

Part One

- Have students form two lines facing one another.
- Have first person in Line A lock eyes with the last person in Line B.
- Both students must now advance toward one another never losing eye contact.
- When they meet in the middle, they keep eye contact as they move to take the other's place in line.
- Continue this down the line.

It helps to have music in the background and to emphasize that **eye contact** is essential.

Part Two

- Give each student in Line A an index card with a single word on it.
- Let class know that the words are insulting.
- Now, repeat what was done in *Part I* with this addition.
- When partners meet in the middle, Line A person softly speaks the word on the card.
- Line B person then echoes it in a loud and menacing voice.
- They now move to take the other's place in line never losing eye contact.
- Next, give Line B a new set of insult words. And repeat process.

Variation

Have all students in line repeat whispered word loudly. This keeps everyone onboard.

Insulting words: *greasy, fitful, saucy, yeasty, clay-brained, dog-hearted, evil-eyed, lily-livered, onion-eyed, paper-face, rump-faced, shag-eared, white-livered, canker-blossom, snipe, clot pole, pantaloon, dogfish, vacant, paper-faced, mad-bread, egg-shell.*

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