

Love Triangle

Level

Intermediate to Advanced

Time

30–35 minutes

Language Links

Describing relationships

Aim

To create a short relationship drama

- 1 Draw a large triangle on the board and write the names Jack, Sue and Pete at the corners. Elicit the idea of a love triangle. Establish that Jack and Sue are married but that Sue isn't happy; that Jack and Pete are best friends and that Sue and Pete are secret lovers, but Pete wants Sue to tell Jack and leave him. Ask for (and write up around the triangle) details like ages, jobs, how Jack and Pete know each other and what they do together socially, and when and where Pete and Sue meet in secret.

- 2 Ask all the students to stand up in pairs and to decide who is Jack and who is Sue (depending on the make-up and cultural backgrounds of the class you might or might not ask for male/female pairs). Say:

'It's 10 p.m. Jack's getting home late at the end of a busy day. Sue is upset but wants to keep her affair with Pete secret. OK? 3–2–1 Action.'

After two minutes, stop the students and invite quick feedback.

- 3 Ask the students to make new pairs with a different partner; they are now Jack and Pete. Tell them they are together socially (according to earlier input, e.g. playing golf). Jack wants to talk about his marriage problems and Pete has

promised Sue to keep their affair secret.

After they have brought the scene to life for two minutes, stop them and invite feedback.

- 4 Ask the students to find a new partner and to be Sue and Pete. Say:

'Sue and Pete are meeting where they always meet. Sue is arriving late. Pete tries to persuade Sue to tell Jack but Sue refuses. OK? 3–2–1 Action.'

After two minutes stop them and invite feedback.

- 5 Ask the students to make new groups of three. Establish that it is late in the evening. Sue and Jack are in the living room. There is an unexpected knock at the front door. Pete has decided to tell Jack about his affair with Sue and to ask Sue to leave with him. Of course, Sue will try to stop Pete from telling Jack. A couple of minutes into the scene (or longer if all the groups are still going strong), stop the students and give them one more minute to find a conclusion to the drama.

- 6 Ask all the groups to replay the last scene simultaneously in just two minutes, making sure it will be clear for the others to understand, before asking them to show each other their dramatic scenes and their various outcomes.

Variation

In a Business English class, J and P could be the owners of long-term rival clothing manufacturing companies who are on friendly terms and often socialise together. S owns a chain of fashion stores and has always been loyal to J as his or her main supplier, but is now in secret negotiations with P, who is offering a better deal. In the final scene, P arrives unexpectedly at S's office during a regular meeting between S and J. P announces the deal even though S hasn't yet committed to it or signed any contract.

Dicey Sketches

Level

Lower-Intermediate to Advanced

Time

40–45 minutes

Materials

Dice (one for every three or four students)

Language Links

Dealing with problems

Aim

To improvise a sketch about a problem

- 1** Brainstorm and write on the board one list of characters and one of places, each numbered 1–6. For example:

1 Tourist	1 Street corner
2 Police officer	2 In a bank
3 Drunk	3 Riverside
4 Shopper	4 Pub
5 Business person	5 On the bus
6 Beggar	6 Supermarket

- 2** Put the students in groups of three or four and give each group a dice. Each student rolls the dice to find out their identity and the dice is rolled once again to decide on a location (e.g. a shopper and two beggars in a pub). Groups quickly decide if any of the characters know each other and, if so, what their relationship is.

- 3** Tell two members of each group that they have been together in the location for a couple of minutes and to freeze in role, then to bring the scene to life. At an appropriate moment (after a minute or two) the other group member joins them and continues the roleplay.

- 4** After a couple of minutes, stop all the groups. Tell them that a problem is going to arise in the scene. (If a problem has already come up, they will have to deal with a second one!) Write up a numbered list of problems. For example:

- 1 death
- 2 mistake
- 3 fall
- 4 fight
- 5 money
- 6 broken heart

Each group's dice is then rolled and the group must incorporate the allotted problem as they improvise the next part of the roleplay.

- 5** At an appropriate moment, stop the groups and tell them they have one minute to find an unexpected ending to their roleplay.

- 6** Now that they have improvised a whole sketch, the groups have a few minutes to replay and adapt their sketches before performing them for the other groups.