

Half Baked

DEBATING & PUBLIC
SPEAKING RESOURCES



Masters Academy

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Activity - Half Baked (Quick Version)

Overview

Half-Baked is an activity which combines critical and creative faculties in preparation and has a strong focus on presentation and delivery, which makes it ideal for innovation, debating and public speaking. Students are to be given the scenario of being in an elevator with a very rich person (Donald Trump, Gina Rineheart, Bill Gates etc.) and having only 1 minute to convince that person to invest in a new product. The quick version of this activity requires students to simply provide benefits that their product provides.

During the game, students will work in groups to create a pitch for a ridiculous product e.g. cobwebs. They will then 'pitch' their product to the class, with the aim to be more persuasive than the other groups in the class. Students should be told that this game is aiming to get them to create a type of advertisement for their new product, and thus it needs to start by engaging the audience with a 'real' problem and an effective solution.

How to play Half-Baked:

Step 1: Organise the class into small groups (around 2-3 students in each group is suggested)

Step 2: Explain the context of the game to the students (one minute to convince a very rich person to give you some investment).

Step 3: Ask the students to suggest a product that no one wants to buy and model the process for the students verbally (this means that you should demonstrate the game to the students).

Step 4: Briefly explain to the students that they will need to provide 4 reasons why people would benefit from purchasing their product.

Step 5: Assign a ridiculous 'unsellable' product to each group and tell students that they have 3 minutes to prepare their pitch

Step 6: Go through each groups' pitch (only one student is allowed to present the groups' idea) and then choose the pitch that was most persuasive as the winner. A clap-o-meter can be used to decide the top 3 groups

An example pitch

Ladies and gentlemen, for decades people have overlooked the greatness of cobwebs! Cobwebs are unwisely looked down upon when in fact they are a wonderful and versatile addition to many situations. Firstly, cobwebs are an amazing natural way to protect yourself from bugs. If you surround your balcony with cobwebs, you can say goodbye to unwanted flies and mosquitos - the cobwebs that you have placed will catch them! Secondly, cobwebs are a wonderful decoration for any house, especially around Halloween time. Thirdly, cobwebs are an excellent way of scaring your siblings - just jump out at them with a stick full of cobwebs and they're sure to get a fright! Finally, cobwebs are a really excellent way for society to grow an appreciation of nature. We don't realise the intricacy of the ecosystems around us and cobwebs are truly amazing once you look closely at them.

Classroom Tips

- If students are struggling with their introduction, provide them with examples of leading sentences that will frame their problem such as: *"Have you ever seen..."*, *"Don't you hate it when..."*, *"Everyone knows that..."* etc.
- Another way to lead students through this process is to remind them of 'As seen on TV' ads (Danox Direct and the like). Tell them that a pitch in Half-Baked is similar to an infomercial.
- Don't forget that each pitch should finish with a sentence that reinforces the product and acts as a 'call to action'. For example: *'So invest now in dishwasherflower.com.au and become part of the future of dish cleaning'*
- Please note that it is important for the students (and facilitator) to elaborate on these frameworks. No writing is allowed, this is purely a one minute speaking task.
- The game is designed to be fun! Make sure that you laugh along with the ideas that the students come up with and the problems that they present. Often the best ideas are some of the most creative ones!

Activity - Half Baked (Full Version)

Overview

Half-Baked is an activity which combines critical and creative faculties in preparation and has a strong focus on presentation and delivery, which makes it ideal for innovation, debating and public speaking. Students are to be given the scenario of being in an elevator with a very rich person (Donald Trump, Gina Rineheart, Bill Gates etc.) and having only 1 minute to convince that person to invest in a new product. This activity focuses on a Need, How, Why framework; which is intrinsically linked to the Imperative/Practical/Principle elements of persuasive speaking and writing.

During the game, students will work in groups to create their product using randomly assigned nouns. They will then 'pitch' their product using the Need/How/Why framework, with the aim to be more persuasive than the other groups in the class. Students should be told that this game is aiming to get them to create a type of advertisement for their new product, and thus it needs to start by engaging the audience with a 'real' problem and an effective solution.

The Need/How/Why Framework

Need	What is the need or problem that you are solving with the new product? What is the 'pain' that is currently being experienced by the consumer?
How	How does the product work specifically? What does it aim to do, and what specific processes does the product use to achieve this aim?
Why	Why is this particular solution good? What extra benefits does it bring to the consumer? How does it solve the problem in a novel or innovative way?

How to play Half-Baked:

Step 1: Organise the class into small groups (around 5/6 students in each group is suggested)

Step 2: Give the students 1 minute to come up with 2 different nouns (explain that nouns are objects or things if need be!)

Step 3: Write down all of the nouns in a list on the board, then explain the context of the game to the students (one minute to convince a very rich person to give you some investment).

Please note: If you let the students know the scenario of the elevator pitch too early, they'll use more complex nouns - making the game harder to facilitate!

Step 4: Ask the students to give you 2 additional nouns, and then quickly put those nouns together to create a product of your own and model the process for the students verbally (this means that you should demonstrate the game to the students).

Step 5: Write the description of the Need/How/Why framework on the board and briefly explain it to the students.

Step 6: Assign 2 random nouns to each group and tell them that they have 5 minutes to get a 'pitch' ready that covers the main points of Need/How/Why.

Step 7: Go through each groups' pitch (only one student is allowed to present the groups' idea) and then choose the pitch that was most persuasive as the winner.

Activity - Half Baked (Full Version)

An example pitch

Flower / Dishwasher		
DishwasherFlower.com (The nouns can be arranged in any order as long as they are used in a .com address)		
Need	How	Why
Getting rid of horrible stench and grime from your household dishwasher	The <i>DishwasherFlower</i> would attach to the inside of your home dishwasher, and routinely release fresh sprays of antibacterial and pleasant smelling odour remover. It also contains a sensor that beeps when an excess of food is caught in the dishwasher to let the owner know that a manual clean is required.	To make your dishwasher even more hassle-free for the owner, to ensure that there are no 'nasty surprises' waiting for you next time that you want to do some washing and to increase the longevity of your dishwasher by conducting regular 'check-ups'.

Please note that it is important for the students (and facilitator) to elaborate on these frameworks. No writing is allowed, this is purely a one minute speaking task.

Classroom Tips

- If students are struggling with their introduction, provide them with examples of leading sentences that will frame their problem such as: *"Have you ever seen..."*, *"Don't you hate it when..."*, *"Everyone knows that..."* etc.
- Another way to lead students through this process is to remind them of 'As seen on TV' ads (Danox Direct and the like). Tell them that a pitch in Half-Baked is similar to an infomercial.
- Don't be afraid to change and shorten the nouns that you collect from the groups. Often shorter words mean that the product will be easier to create. For example; Chainsaw = *Saw*, Samurai Sword = *Sword* etc.
- Don't forget that each pitch should finish with a sentence that reinforces the product and acts as a 'call to action'. For example: *'So invest now in dishwasherflower.com.au and become part of the future of dish cleaning'*

Half Baked has amazing replay value! There are a multitude of combinations that can be used to create interesting products. However, if you want to make the exercise more challenging, try adding a general 'product area' into the game.

You can dictate that, regardless of the nouns that groups are assigned, their product must have something to do with a particular paradigm. This focuses the creative energies of the student and can lead to a more productive and logical preparation session.

Examples include:

Education

Safety

Environment

Travel

The game is designed to be fun! Make sure that you laugh along with the ideas that the students come up with and the problems that they present. Often the best ideas are some of the most creative ones!