

# Outline: Performance-Based Engagement Techniques for a Professional Development Workshop

(from the book [Teach Like a Star](#) by Mark O. Beckwith)

Our workshop or keynote presentation will address many of the following strategies

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## 1. Building Connection With the Audience

- **Authenticity:** Be genuine; audiences (especially older students) sense when a presenter is “acting fake.”
  - **Respectful Firmness:** Kind but confident presence—warmth balanced with authority.
  - **Trust and Honesty:** Avoid empty hype; keep praise honest and meaningful.
  - **Professional Friendliness:** Smile, greet, and engage with students, but remember you’re the teacher, not their peer.
  - **Positive Directions:** Frame instructions as invitations (“Eyes up here”) instead of commands (“Stop talking!”).
  - **Calm Corrections:** Redirect with humor or gentleness—never scold publicly in a way that embarrasses a student.
  - **Personal Stories:** Share short, true anecdotes to humanize yourself and build relatability.
  - **Empathy and Observation:** Watch your student’s reactions carefully—adjust pacing or tone if they look restless or disengaged.
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## 2. Establishing Effective Stage Routines

- **Consistent Expectations:** Create a few clear rules for student participation (e.g., “Hands up to share”).

- **Clear Consequences:** If students push boundaries, calmly redirect without shaming.
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### 3. Performance Communication Skills

- **Keep It Concise:** Simple, clear phrases land better than long explanations.
  - **Audience Participation:**
    - Call-and-response with whole groups.
    - Repetition for younger students.
    - Fill-in-the-blank phrases or guessing games for older groups.
  - **Challenge the Gifted:** Toss in open-ended or “what if” questions for deeper thinkers.
  - **Creative Variety:** Use novelty—props, surprise reveals, or audience volunteers—to keep energy high.
  - **Proximity and Presence:** Move through the audience to build immediacy.
  - **Dynamic Delivery:**
    - Vary facial expressions, gestures, and vocal tone.
    - Use volume, pauses, and pacing for dramatic effect.
    - Add character voices or puppet voices to hold attention.
  - **Nonverbal Cues:** Eye contact and gestures can refocus attention instantly.
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### 4. Body Language for Impact

- **Posture:** Confident stance communicates enthusiasm and credibility.
  - **Gestures:** Use purposeful hand and body movement to underscore ideas.
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## 5. Active Engagement Strategies

- **Movement Breaks:** Quick group actions (“Everyone stand and stretch!”).
  - **Multimodal Approaches:**
    - *Visual:* Use props, drawings, or big visual metaphors.
    - *Auditory:* Add music, rhythms, or sound effects.
    - *Tactile:* Pass around safe objects or props.
    - *Kinesthetic:* Have students mimic movements (heartbeat exercise, clapping patterns, etc.).
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## 6. Rhythm, Flow, and Repetition

- **Performance Rhythm:** Maintain a cadence that’s lively and memorable.
  - **Chants and Catchphrases:** Use slogans, rhymes, or jingles to reinforce key points.
  - **Signature Lines:** Create your own call-and-response moments (e.g., “How are you doing?” / “I’m yearning to learn!”).
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## 7. Humor as a Teaching Tool

- **Safe Humor Styles:**
  - Physical comedy, silly movements, exaggerated reactions.
  - Corny jokes or puns (students groan but remember them).
- **Age-Appropriate Adjustments:**
  - Younger kids: funny voices, absurdities, puppets saying “wrong” things.

- Older students: puns, irony (through a puppet character, not directed at students).
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## 8. Puppetry as Performance Enhancement

- **Engagement Tool:** Puppets are a shortcut to attention—ideal for teaching kindness, emotions, or behavior.
  - **Dialogues Instead of Monologues:** Use a puppet to hold conversations rather than lecturing.
  - **Character Design:** Choose puppets with big mouths and clear personalities. Give them unique voices that contrast with your own.
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## 9. Performer Self-Assessment

- **Record Yourself:** Audio or video your assemblies to improve delivery (if your school district permits).
  - **Review Monthly:** Look for pacing, clarity, and audience reaction.
  - **Journal:** After performances, jot down what worked, what didn't, and new ideas to test.
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## 10. Creativity and Surprise

- **Think Like a Director:** Add novelty, props, and playful twists.
- **Mystery Hooks:** Tease what's coming next to build anticipation.
- **Prop Shelf:** Keep a ready stash of simple objects that can become visual metaphors in performance.