

Using Improv to Help Undergrads Communicate Science to Children

Julie Collins

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Integrative Biology Department, 250 North Mills St,
Madison Wisconsin 53706 USA

(jcollins4@wisc.edu)

The honors project for our Introductory Biology course requires students to design and lead exploration stations at a local science festival open to the public and geared toward young children. To be successful, our undergraduates must not only master complex scientific content, but also be able to explain it in simple terms. Most of our students have only practiced scientific communication in the context of class presentations or similar formal settings; shifting into dynamic dialogue with a 6 year-old can be a challenge. Last year, we began integrating games and practices from improvisation troupes into our honors curriculum. This has helped our students become more comfortable talking about science with a wide range of audiences - and we've had a lot of fun in the process. During this mini, participants will hear a brief overview of our approach to Intro Bio Honors then practice several exercises we've put into practice. There will be time for discussion about when and how to implement such exercises in other curricula.

Keywords: Biology Honors project, science improvisation

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