

The Great Learning, paragraph 5

The Introductory Dumb Show

Sentence 1

Curve the two forefingers, place them on the sides of the head as horns and waggle them; then take one hand, fingers outstretched, down and out to full length behind body.

Other hand points obliquely towards the ground in front, forefinger extended, then with extending motion of whole arm raise it high quickly and repeat the process with the other hand. Now play with this position: shake the hands like foliage, sway the arms as in wind, make little firework explosions with the fingers, etc. all the while watching the hands attentively. During this play take a slow step or two and produce an unvoiced sound from the region of the mouth.

Centre-piece: Combing motion of the fingers of both hands down the face, accompanied by facial expression. Then EITHER strike mouth with palm while exhaling breath, and immediately chop downwards with the other hand holding palm towards body front. OR: Fingers and thumb partially unclosed are placed in front of the mouth, shot upward and slightly shaken, accompanied by whistling.

EITHER: One hand up, flat, pointing forward, palm down, beside and behind head; shoot it straight forward, decelerating fast, finally reaching maximum extension out front, while eyes narrow as though following the trajectory into the distance, accompanied at some point by an unvoiced sound from the region of the mouth. OR: Left hand closed with the thumb covering the nails of the other fingers. Now allow fore-

finger out and holding it upright in front of the chest rub it up and down with thumb and forefinger of right hand, the other fingers being loosely closed. At some point in this rubbing produce an unvoiced sound from the region of the mouth. Then return the left forefinger under its thumb. Suddenly extend all fingers of left hand while snapping thumb and middle finger of right hand behind back.

Flex arms, fists closed, then release forearms up and out, turning the hands to face outwards and continuing the movement down and curving back with the whole arm, continue the curve to bring the arms up at the back, forcing the body forwards, down on knees, touch forehead to ground with hands as high as possible behind, optionally beating like wings.

Rest.

Sentence 2

EITHER: Right hand thumb and forefinger fully extended, other fingers closed, palm towards body, moves from just below chin, downwards, outwards, and slightly to the right. Elbow gives movement. OR: Right arm raised, fingers together, palm forward, placed in front of forehead, moves forward and downward in a quarter circle. OR: Right forefinger placed side on to nose, moves forward and slightly to the right, turning pad outwards.

Eyes cast vaguely about, then left hand, palm down in front of the body, is brought down to touch ground with pad of middle finger. Then both hands - palms up in front of chin and as close to it as possible, pointing forward, thumbs out at right angles - move forward and outward and round to end in fully outstretched cross shape, with palms still up.

Repeat centre-piece.

Left thumb and forefinger make a circle low at left side, palm away from leg. Then with arm at full extension move this circle in a circle overhead and down to right side, leaning back to allow passage of arm in front of face. At some point early during this, strike heart audibly with right fist.

Left hand waits loosely open at left shoulder while: Flick right forefinger off thumb away from mouth, hand following and opening, several times. Palm can face either up (start with thumb touching lower lip) or down (forefinger knuckle touching lower lip). Then clasp right hand to left hand waiting at left shoulder, with a loud clap. Clasped hands then chop sharply down diagonally to a sudden stop in front of the body, like a left-handed axe stroke.

Rest.

Sentence 3

Make circle with right thumb and forefinger and starting low by left leg let it describe a circle overhead

as left hand did before. Signal to start the motion is given by the limp left hand striking the heart and rebounding lightly upward.

EITHER: Left hand strikes mouth several times (mouth position as for silent yell) followed by right hand flicked violently forward at shoulder level, as if throwing heavy dart or shaking off sticky dough. **OR:** Left fore-finger (other fingers are held by the thumb) nail against lips; Flip the finger (remainder of hand keeping still) several times against the lips, then slide it over to left cheek, turning hand so that nail now faces outwards. Suddenly throw it forwards with whole hand, opening the hand en route.

Repeat centrepiece.

Right hand on heart, palm to body and fingers horizontal, and keep it there till end of sentence.

Left fist facing front beside right hand; erect the fore-finger, then the three other fingers all at once to make a flat palm facing front, fingers pointing up.
Rest.

Sentence 4

The right hand, fingers collected, thumb on pads of other fingers, is slowly raised to the heart. Hold it there through the following action.

Left hand, back up, fingers together pointing upward at an angle, held as low as possible by left hip, slowly advances in the plane of the hand, rising forward in as straight a line as possible, to end at maximum extension.

Repeat centrepiece.

Both hands palms up, tips touching, held horizontal below abdomen. Together they move out (or slightly down and out) and rise up in a curve as over a pregnant belly, ending with a neat little curve to bring hands flat on chest, backs out, tips of fingers touching.

Jump, both feet together. stretch out the left hand to full length in some direction, then surprisingly turn it in and point definitely to centre of own breastbone. Then move both hands, loosely closed, to chest - rather like a clubman holding his lapels. Hold them there. Then the right hand - palm up, fingers together; pointing more or less forward and slightly up, slightly out from the chest - curves in a semicircle inwards, downwards and finally outwards between thighs, ending palm down, fingers pointing forward and slightly up. In lower part of semicircle drop shoulder to gain depth. Jump with both feet to end this gesture.

Rest.

Sentence 5

Hands carelessly hanging at sides, fore-fingers extended in to touch thighs, then dragged up the sides of the body to end either on shoulders or pointing into

armpits, in either case with elbows straight out sideways.

Left elbow in against side with cupped left hand held about a foot away from the face. Turn head slightly to the left and down as if looking into a mirror held in the left hand. Hold this through the following: Hold right fore-finger extended straight up in front of the chest. Walk it away a few steps, gently stamping one foot in tempo. Then - in tempo - place the flat right hand edgewise transversely in the crook of the left elbow, this coinciding with the last gentle stamp.

Repeat centrepiece.

Right arm thrown over the head, elbow pointing up, protecting the head, while left fist hanging down pretends to lift something - say a pail of water - off the ground and then replace it. Repeat this left arm part a few times gradually making it a smooth grinding gesture, forgetting the idea of lifting.

The flat hands, palms down, approach one another in front of the body until the tips of the middle fingers touch. Then these tips slide round each other and all the fingers mesh, tips going below palms. Then turn the whole in and over to show meshed fingers standing up. Then move the whole forward away from the body until the hands are forced to separate. All this is as continuous as possible, except for a slight hitch where the tips of the middle fingers touch.

Rest.

Sentence 6

EITHER: Hands hold scalp and slide down to cover the ears; then vibrate the fingers to and from the head, the thick part of the hand being held still. **OR:** The two fore-fingers touch in front of the face to make a tent shape; then the right hand scoops forward and down several times from the mouth.

Hands up about one foot away from the face, one behind the other, not touching, fingers outspread, palms facing out or in, jiggled rapidly from side to side in contrary motion, to produce stroboscopic effect. Focus eyes on an object beyond the hands.

Repeat centrepiece.

Both hands, fingers outspread, pointing up in front of the chest, palms towards the body, joggled rapidly up and down several times.

Left hand is cupped in front of mouth as though drinking from it; breathe in making the sound THHHSSSS.... Meanwhile the right hand, fingers outspread, pointing downwards, palm towards the body, descends forward and down, shaking rapidly.
Rest.

Sentence 7

Right hand fore-finger shoots forward from mouth with vocal sound, and ends right out front pointing

upward, palm forward. Then the other fingers jump up too and the left hand joins it in similar position. Then the hands move round in a big horizontal circle (away from each other) to end as far behind body as possible.

Left hand fluttering horizontal to left of head, while right hand, forefinger pointing left, moves from in front of left hand to a position fully outstretched in front. Throughout this action make a gradual transition from T H H H --- to S S S ... (breathing out).

Repeat centrepiece.

Right hand, with forefinger extended pointing up to right of head, moves up in an arch till overhead, then turns forward and arches forward and down and proceeds slowly to the ground. While right hand is overhead, left hand is up high above it, and forefinger and thumb strike each other a couple of times in different positions (these are stars).

OPTIONAL: With the right forefinger touching the ground, get the back of the hand horizontal; cover it with the left hand, then sink the right hand flat to the ground, leaving the left hand where it is.

Stand with outstretched arms, palms up and head dropped, making a T-shape. Hold arms and head as still as possible while bending the body out to right or left side and also forward as far as possible; then return to T-shape. Then lift up the head and move the hands up and over and in to end with their backs over the ears and the fingers pointing down the neck. Holding the hands thus, walk about on heels for as long as you feel inclined.

METHOD OF PERFORMING THE DUMBSHOW. The players divide into groups of seven or eight and each sits as if in a classroom. One who thinks he will be relatively slow in performing the dumbshow gets up in front like a teacher. Another who thinks he will also be slow gets up and faces him. The 'teacher' now performs sentence 1 while the other watches. The watching one then becomes teacher in his turn, and another gets up and watches him perform sentence 1. And so on. The first 'teacher', after completing the first sentence wanders off and completes the dumbshow in his own time. Similarly do all the other teachers in their turn. The fastest performers should start last so that all end move or less together.

The Text

When things had been classified in organic categories knowledge moved towards fulfillment. Given the extreme knowable points, the inarticulate thoughts were defined with precision, the sun's lance coming to rest on the precise spot verbally. Having attained this precise verbal definition, this sincerity, they then stabilized their hearts. They disciplined themselves. Having attained this self-discipline, they set their own houses in order. Having order in their own homes, they brought good government to their own states. And when their states were well-governed, the empire was brought into equilibrium.

The whole of this text is spoken before the commencement of each of the seven compositions that follow (it is thus spoken seven times). It is spoken in a normal voice by a majority of the players, all speaking together. The following compositions may be played in any order.

The Compositions

CRASH BANG CLANK MUSIC Mostly percussion. Generally hard on hard. Soft on hard and other instruments used sparingly. Sound of machinery may be used or imitated. Refinements: Predominantly wood and metal, predominantly not made up into instruments. Hard on soft may be used sparingly. Heavy on soft. Loud to start, and start by making a variety of sounds, irregularly; then it becomes rhythmic, still loud. The rhythm disintegrates, and soon after the piece comes to a natural end. It may have opened with fireworks. Thought: Don't waste sounds.

LOUD AND SOFT LAUGHTER MUSIC Mostly vocal. Besides laughter of all kinds a few jokes may be sprinkled. Self-satirising screams, yells, grotesqueries of all kinds are not excluded. Sung sounds used sparingly. Refinements: Other laughter-producing devices and activities. Uproarious at the start, then seek either a) refinement, b) contrast, or c) melody. At one point stop work and watch and listen serenely. Smile or laugh if that's the way it takes you, but without effort to make it noticeable; after a certain amount of time rejoin the piece. Later on stop work again and watch and listen and this time try not to laugh. If you fail and laugh, stay with the piece until its natural end. If after a while you seem likely to succeed indefinitely sing a long mournful note and drop out. Preparation: build up a repertoire of laughs, also funny laughs.

MOUNTAIN TOP MUSIC Mostly winds. Taking off. Flying high. 'Blow your problems and solutions to the four winds?' In the middle get quiet but no less blowy for that. Think of mountain contours all around 'cutting the horizon fold over fold'.

SILENT MUSIC No sound. Silent and still. Occasionally a movement watched by all, never more than one at a time. Refinements: Sit in a semicircle like sculptured Pharaohs, composed. Comprehend the movements as deeply as possible — physically, referentially, plastically, symbolically — as they occur. Very heavy music.

BEAUTIFUL SOUND MUSIC Players make sounds they think are beautiful, making them beautifully, spacing them and arranging them in a manner they think beautiful in the general context. Three times try and make neighbouring sounds sound stupid or ugly in the general context. Three times make sounds that you think are

stupid or ugly. Refinements: For the second sentence either the method of shining example or the method of satire or some other method may be used. If the method of satire is used the occasions of the second and third sentences are likely to coincide. Try to go forward to ever more beautiful sounds. If no more beautiful sound occurs to you repeat the last one over and over ever more beautifully. If it gets less beautiful, stop. At the first sign of complacency, stop. As people drop out, at the point where their dropping out seems to deplete the harmonious of the general context, stop. If you find yourself all alone, end. Preparation: collect the beautiful sounds of different contexts.

BOWED SOUND When this composition is announced ~ by one person playing a bowed sound ~ the remainder assemble and all enter simultaneously with a bowed sound and hold it throughout. Each player has his own bowed sound, different (probably) from everyone else's. No prior consultation as to what sounds are to be included. In conventional manner minimise changes of bow. Bow the one sound, not striving for variety, not striving to obtain harmonics, striving not to tune to others. End individually, but wait till all have ended before moving off.

PLINK This music is generally pointillistic. Mostly short sounds. Mostly plucked sounds. Musical boxes, toy pianos, jews harps, drips, etc. not excluded. Think of producing sounds that are isolated in one respect or another. Preparation: Spend time with the Masters of Plink in their hierarchy: Hugh Shrapnel, Christian Wolff, Webern, God. And on their work. Plink may be accompanied by

TUBE TRAIN STOPPED BETWEEN STATIONS
No participation in this piece without the following qualifications: In the month prior to the performance a participant must have been in a tube train stopped between stations at least three times, each time listening attentively to the music, without taking notes or making any kind of recording. In the performance he should emulate that music as closely as possible, under no circumstances using any sound that he has not actually heard in a tube train stopped between stations.

The Improvisation Rite

A dense forest that presents no obstacle to the mind or eye (or other sense).

The improvisation begins when the last composition has ended. In length it should account for roughly half the piece. The material given so far is the primary music of this paragraph. What follows is secondary, optional material.

Chanting

Sentence 1 WHEN. THINGS HAD BEEN CLASSIFIED IN ORGANIC CATEGORIES KNOWLEDGE MOVED TOWARDS FULFILLMENT.

Sentence 2 GIVEN. THE EXTREME KNOWABLE POINTS THE INARTICULATE THOUGHTS WERE DEFINED WITH PRECISION, THE SUN'S LANCE COMING TO REST ON THE PRECISE SPOT VERBALLY.

Sentence 3 HAVING. ATTAINED THIS PRECISE VERBAL DEFINITION, THIS SINCERITY, THEY THEN STABILIZED THEIR HEARTS.

Sentence 4 THEY. DISCIPLINED THEMSELVES.

Sentence 5 HAVING. ATTAINED THIS SELF-DISCIPLINE THEY SET THEIR OWN HOUSES IN ORDER.

Sentence 6 HAVING. ORDER IN THEIR OWN HOMES THEY BROUGHT GOOD GOVERNMENT TO THEIR OWN STATES.

Sentence 7 AND. WHEN THEIR STATES WERE WELL-GOVERNED THE EMPIRE WAS BROUGHT INTO EQUILIBRIUM.

Sentence 1 is chanted after the first recitation of the text, Sentence 2 after the second recitation, etc. SUGGESTED METHOD OF CHANTING: The first word of the sentence uses one breath. In this breath explore the entire range of the voice in search of a comfortable and suitable note for chanting. The remainder of the sentence uses another breath, and is chanted on the note that has been found in the course of the first breath.

Action Score (Interpretation)

SUGGESTED METHOD OF PERFORMANCE: Start with a word in capital letters in the left hand column; keep that action going. Then add to it the action referred to by a word directly above or below the first word. Keep the two actions going simultaneously. Then add the action referred to by another adjacent word and keep all three going simultaneously. And so on. If you reach another word in capital letters, the action referred to by the initial word may be discontinued, to make room for the new action. Move to the next column EITHER when all the words in a column have been used, OR when one or more of the actions breaks down, due to the performer becoming overloaded.

IN THE SCORE: / = 'or', — = 'alternating with', () = 'ending with'.
 ballgame = any game using ball(s). New games may be invented. See example below.
 cardgame = any game using cards. See example below.
 coingame = any game using coin(s). See example below.
 drum = any action involving a drum. Or use an object as a drum.
 dumbshow = silent gestures of communication.
 face = activity of the nose, ears, eyebrows, eyelashes, eyes, etc. or some action involving them.
 fall = fall to the floor (one feature or several).
 floor = any action on the floor, or referring explicitly to it. Or use the floor. Or play an instrument on the floor.
 handgame = any game using hands. See example below.
 heavy = action with a heavy object, (eg. carrying an amplifier).
 image = a visual object. Something displayed.
 legwork = jump, stamp, kick or other extreme leg action.
 light = action with a light object, eg. a feather.
 locomotion = hop, float, swim, fly, ride, dance, etc. (not walk or run). 'Float' in this context refers to a special kind of walk in which the centre of gravity of the body is carried along at an unvarying speed at a constant distance from the ground.
 machine = a machine in action.
 mouth = unvoiced sound from the region of the mouth.
 overhead = play an instrument overhead.
 rattle = use rattle or rattle something.
 shake = shake yourself or part of yourself.
 sheet = action with a sheet of cloth, paper, foil, cardboard, etc.
 skip = skip with a skipping rope or substitute, or sing the Skipping Ode (see below).
 soft = sound or action with a soft object.
 song = sing a song with words.
 spin = spin on your axis, or spin an object.
 stone = sound or action with stone(s).
 streamer = action with a flag or streamer.
 swish = passage of an object through air.
 swoosh = passage of an object through water.
 tool = use a tool.
 voice = vocal sound.
 walk = normal walk or run.
 wand = use a wand for striking or stroking.
 whistle = blow a whistle.

Examples: **CARD GAME**: All flick a card at a wall (if no wall is available draw a line). The player whose card falls nearest the wall takes all the cards.
COINGAME: 'Penny against the wall'. If two players, one is heads, the other tails. Both throw a coin at the wall. If both are heads, heads picks them up. If both are tails, tails does. If they are different, have another throw. **HANDGAME**: Set up a regular pat-a-cake routine with another player. Then without warning try and grab your opponent's ear. **BALLGAME** (in simultaneous combination with MOUTH, as might occur in sentence 2, second column): Take a ping-pong ball in your mouth. Blow it out forcibly. You score according to the distance from a given spot that the ball makes its first bounce.

The first two game examples and the words of the Skipping Ode that follows were collected by Richard Reason in a school in South London.

histle
ACE/streamer
UERO
woosh
ardgame
verhead

(continuing from previous page)
SKIPPING ODE: If a performer takes up the option of singing this ode he is exempted from other responsibility (e.g. simultaneous actions, text recitations, etc) until such time as he has completed it.

ON THE MOUNTAIN STANDS A LA-DY WHO SHE IS I DO NOT KNOW
ALL SHE WANTS IS GOLD AND SIL-VER ALL SHE WANTS IS A NICE YOUNG MAN
ALL RIGHT (a girl's name) I'LL TELL YOUR MOTHER I SAW YOU KISSING
.... (a boy's name) ROUND THE CORNER. DO YOU LOVE HIM?(shouted)
YES NO YES NO Continue upward until no higher note can be sung. The last word is the answer. HOW MANY KISSES DID YOU GIVE HIM?
FIVE TEN FIFTEEN TWENTY.... WILL YOU MARRY HIM?
YES NO YES NO

W (face)

Number Score (Interpretation)

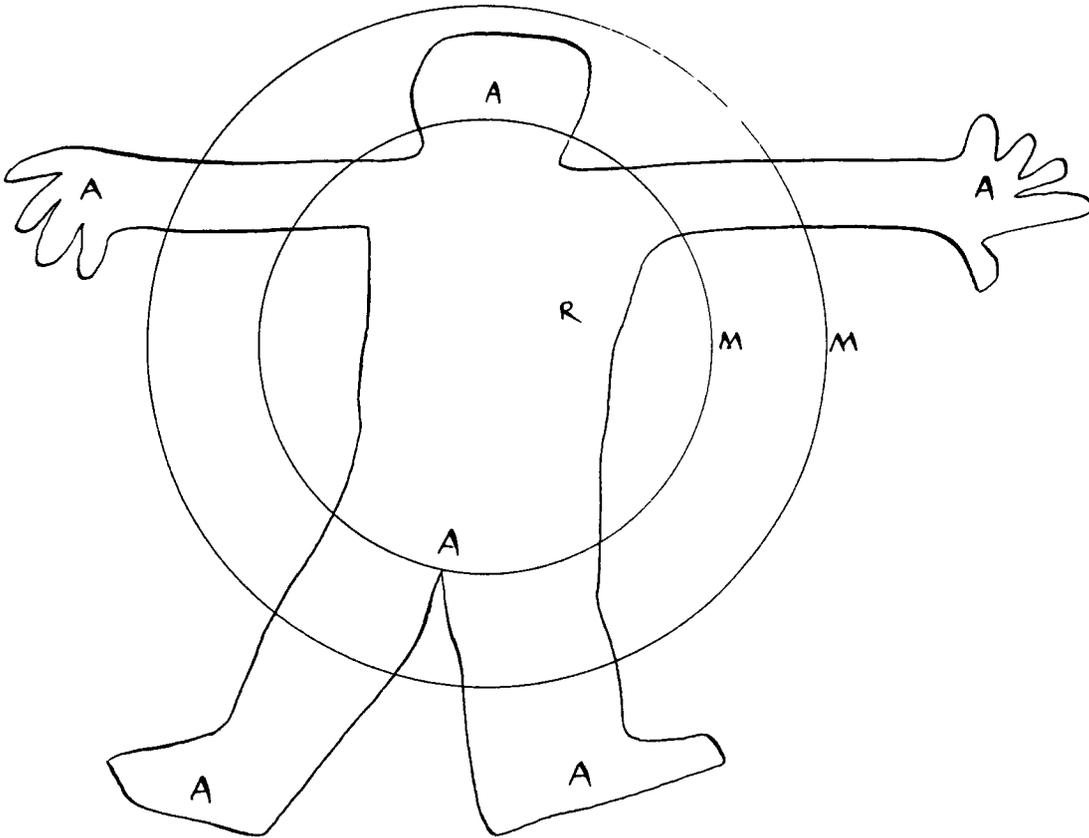
	MATRIX OF CATEGORIES										
	I - social	II - scale	III - actions	IV - parts of the body	V - states	VI - ideas ("Think about...")	VII - positions	VIII - objects	IX - materials	X - composition	
1	solo	huge	jump	foot	sleeping	Unity	to left	ball	wood	spun	1
2	duet	tiny	stamp	leg	waking	Multiplicity	to right	coin	metal	drawn	2
3	trio	big	swim/hop	fingers	anxiety	Birth	in front	card	stone	cast	3
4	quartet	small	shake	hand	expectancy	Rebirth/Reproduction	behind	rope/chain	earth/sand/clay/grit	constructed/knitted	4
5	quintet	generous	walk	arm	loving	Death	above	wand	glass	natural(raw)	5
6	large group	economical	float	shoulder	dreaming	Humanity	below	streamer	leather/skin	blown(hollow)	6
7	dissenting	mean	kick	hip	wonder	Nature	inside	tool	dust/gas	woven	7
8	leading	microscopic	spin	head	active	Good	outside	heavy object	plastic	carved	8
9	assisting	cosmic	crawl	mouth	still	Evil	horizontal	toy	water/oil/milk	juxtaposed	9
10	gregarious	swelling	run	teeth	wandering	Revolution	vertical	handkerchief	flesh	fused	10
11	passenger	shrinking	roll	tongue	randy	Permanence	off at an angle	light object	blood	fixed	11
12	misanthropic	middling	cartwheel/skip	hair	communicative	Transience	out of sight	musical instrument	rubber	loose	12

SUGGESTED METHOD OF INTERPRETATION: Take a 4-digit number (it could be derived from your birthdate), convert the digits into roman numerals (0 becomes X) and read off from the matrix of categories (above) four categories to be represented by the letters A B C D in the score. The numbers in the score are then read as the corresponding items in these categories. For EXAMPLE: 1820 (from the birthdate 1 August 1940) gives A = I, B = VIII, C = IV, D = X, and the beginning of sentence 1 of the Number Score thus produces the verbal matrix: leg, card, dust, wand. The interpretation and performance of this is entirely free. This is the freedom of the fortune teller. No-one can expect you to justify your interpretation. Your interpretation is self-justifying. The example might produce the following performance: Strike a playing card with a wand; slip the playing card into someone else's sock and the wand into your own.
A particular 4-digit number may be used in only one sentence of the score. If a player is involved in other sentences he must use new numbers. Anything in the matrix of categories may be changed - categories, items, order of items.

woosh (locomotion)

Topography

- 6 Action centres (A)
- 2 Mobility rings (M)
- 1 Relay point or point of rest (R)



The action centres could be persons, or buildings, or 'attractions' (as in a fairground) or, if the performance, as a whole is in one building, rooms, or they could simply be spaces marked off (i.e. the figure drawn on the floor). The public could circulate between the two rings. A concourse with refreshments, shops, etc. could be made available. Or a thoroughfare/circuit, not necessarily circular.

R could be a centre of information, where someone in touch with the action can inform the curious as to what goes on. It could be a large drum calling for silence — an instrument which at anybody's wish may be struck and bring all activity to a stop. After which it should start up again only very gradually, from nothing. Such a drum could announce (or confirm the arrival of) the 'temporal point of rest' mentioned below.

Miscellany

The first to finish the introductory dumbshow sets up a vocal signal (say a wulf-howl) and repeats it every so often, and as others finish they gather to him, and when there are 7 or 8 gathered they proceed under leadership of the howler to recite the text, all together. Then, the howler who initiated the recitation chants the first sentence of the text, as prescribed. Under cover of this chanting a composition is proposed (a set of 7 visual signals may be devised for use in this connection) and initiated. When someone participating in the chosen composition considers it has come to an end or that it soon should, he initiates the second recitation of the text in the same way as the first, by vocal (wulf howl) or other pre-arranged (acoustic) signal. When 7 or 8 have gathered the recitation can proceed. Thereafter, the howler who initiated the recitation chants the second sentence, and so it goes on.

Everyone should sit out one sentence. The person who howls (after the dumbshow or a composition) goes on to lead the recitation, and thereafter to chant the appropriate sentence. After chanting, he is inactive until the next recitation (or, if his was the last recitation, until the beginning of the improvisation). This constitutes 'sitting out a sentence', but is an opportunity that comes to only 7 people. The remainder must choose for themselves (each one individually) a sentence to be absent from, a period of belonging to an audience.

After each recitation there are the further options of reading the appropriate sentence of the Action or Number Scores. Any player reading the Action Score can, on completing any column, transfer to the corresponding place (marked by a barline) in the Number Score, and vice versa, from the Number Score to the Action Score. Interpretations of these scores may also trail slightly, into the next recitation or even a short way into the next sentence. And there is no obligation to complete a sentence of these scores.

Having opted for one of the alternatives, stick to it (the three options available after each recitation of the text are 1) composition, 2) sitting it out, 3) the

Action