

Improv Games in Geoscience Courses

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INTRODUCTION:

-People Learn best in Supportive Social Settings (Mosher & Keane, 2021)

-Diversity is important and lacking in the geosciences (Dutt, 2020)

-Geoscience curriculum should emphasize broad skills over specific content (Mosher & Keane, 2021)

-Improv games were implemented to address the above concerns (Haroldson, 2021)

METHODS

-"Improv theater" games were used daily in classes (Mineralogy and Petrology).

-Student perception survey (20 enrolled, 11 responded).

RESULTS

-Improv games:

1. Foster a Community of Practice in the classroom (Wenger, 1998)

2. Develop transferable Skills:

Confidence in public speaking

Listening

Think on your feet

Ability learn new skills

Communication

Camaraderie

3. Prepare students for class

-Not an active learning strategy *per se*, but may increase engagement in an active learning classroom. (LaDue et al., 2021)



Improv in the classroom

promotes supportive

social learning and

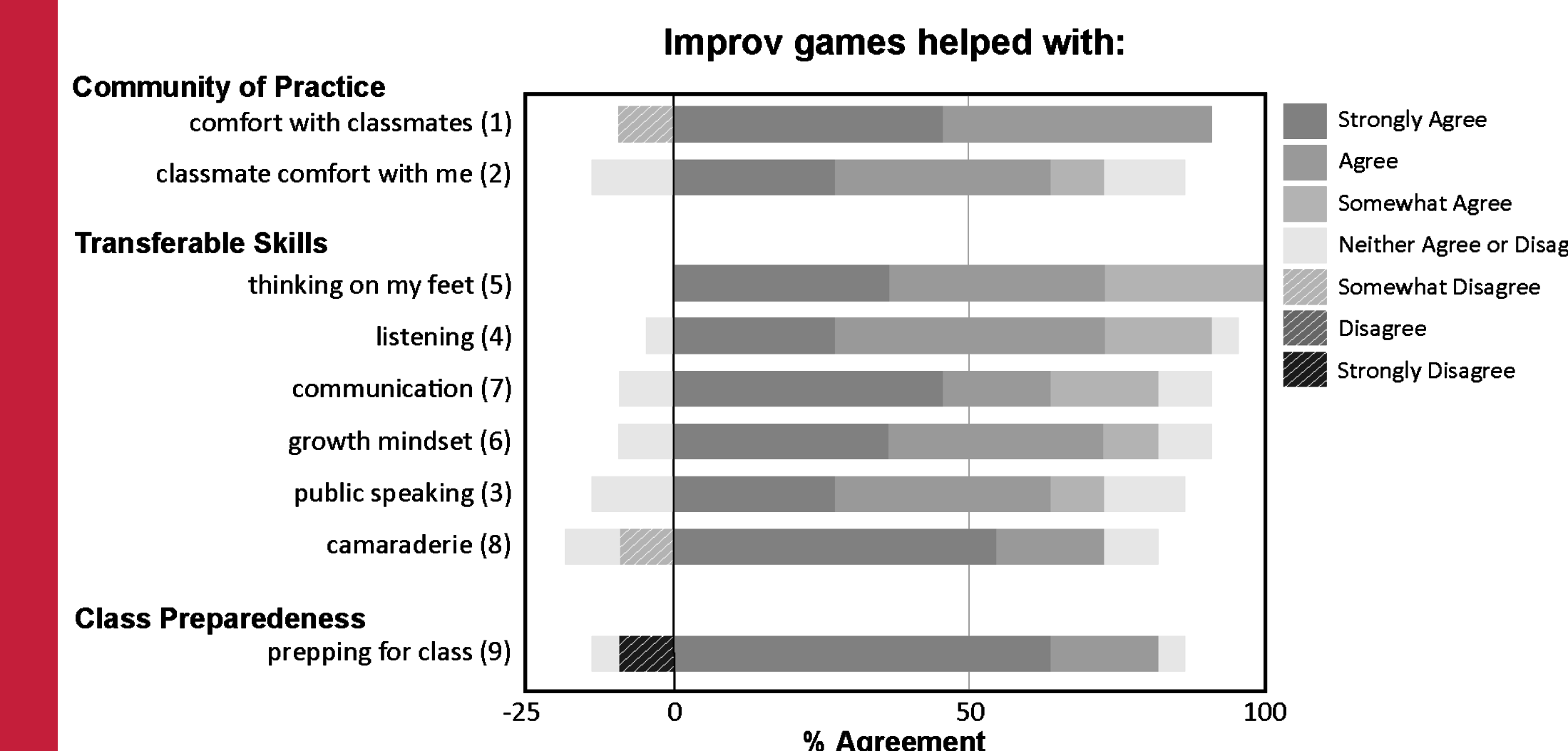
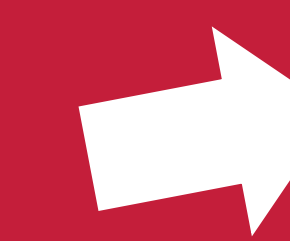
develops students'

transferable skills

student J reported: "... interacting with classmates definitely proved beneficial as a new student in the program."

Student C reported: "[The games helped with] general social camaraderie among classmates."

Journal article here



Students' Mean Agreement with Purposes

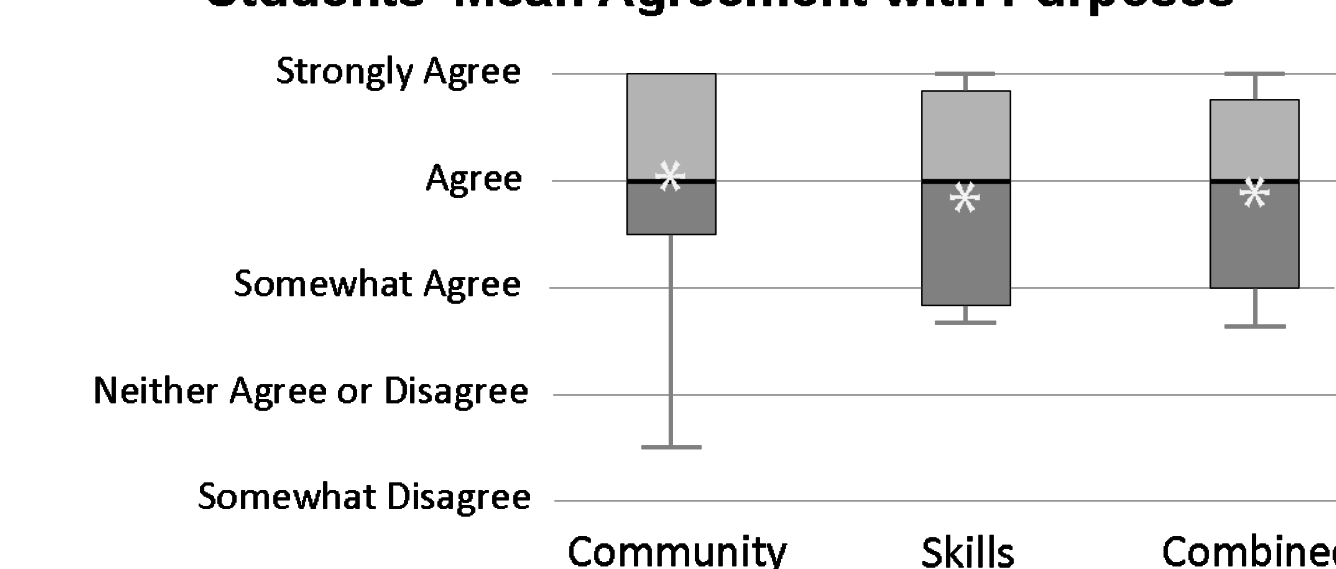


Table 2. Themes to student written answers.

Question	Theme	n	Example quote
1. In retrospect, what were the most valuable one or two things you got from the use of daily improv warmup exercises?	Getting Comfortable with Peers	6	"getting more comfortable with classmates"
	Class Preparedness	6	"It gave me a boost of energy, helps wake you up for an early morning class"
	Time Buffer Before Class	1	"...time buffer at the beginning of the class period."
2. Are there specific courses where these activities would be more appropriate?	Any course	2	"I think any course could benefit from this"
	Discussion focused courses	2	"Course that incorporate a significant discussion element..."
	Introductory Courses	2	"Possibly intro classes or classes where there are a lot of students that don't know one another..."
3. Do you have any other views, opinions or other information you would like to share regarding the use of Improv warmup exercises in upper division Geoscience courses?	Stick to first few weeks	1	"I believe it should have done for the first couple of weeks of the semester"
	Teacher is benefactor	1	"This allows for the teacher to also get to know the students as well"
	Limit to small classes	1	"These exercises may need to be limited to smaller class sizes..."
	Include course content	1	"Possible mixing in non improve related activities, like meditation, power stances, and especially class related warm up 'brain games' essentially improv activities that include the weeks topics or something, as long as its still light and fun"

n = # of responses fitting that particular theme.

Note, a response to question 3 was added to the theme of "Getting Comfortable with Peers" in question 1.

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