

Long Term Solution Tips

- Remember, long term tells a story. Have a beginning, middle and end. Setup, conflict, resolution. The plot should be able of being explained in a few sentences. You only have 8 minutes.
- Speak clearly and loudly. Your team will tell you they feel like they are yelling.
- Always speak facing the audience. Never speak into a backdrop or with your face pointed away from the audience.
- Teach your kids to act a little. It's a character! Make the character come to life. Over exaggerate facial expressions and body movements. For instance, if you are a little girl, use the voice and speech of a little girl.
- Make each character unique. They need an identity. A window washer or a window washer with a New York accent, an extreme fear of heights and an affinity for wearing neon clothing.
- Fluctuate your voice – don't speak monotone. Sing, talk in rhyme, or something else to catch audience's attention. Explore various ways to say a line: accent, tone, actions, facial expressions
- Don't work inside a box. Use the full dimensions of the stage. Use stage movement throughout the performance.
- Smoothly transition between scenes. Divert audience attention away from the scene that is being changed. Give them something to see while the change is occurring.
- Interact with the backdrop/props if possible. This will draw attention to it and incorporate it into your performance.
- Don't waste setup time. Begin your dialogue early. The set doesn't have to be fully complete to start. Do something while setup is occurring.
- Practice staging to setup from many directions. Left side staging, right side staging, from behind the performance area.
- Have a good "team, are you ready" chant. Let the judges know early that they are going to see something worth watching.
- During normal practice, hide props from your team as they practice. Put them in awkward situations and force them to either catch you or improv their way through.
- Interview the kids as judges. The team can position themselves near props they want to talk about. Get them excited to talk to the judges. This is their chance to demonstrate the hard work they've done as well as to explain the creative process.
- Video the team and play it back for them. Get them to critique themselves. See section called Videoing at team practice.
- Avoid common themes and settings! Ask "would another team come up with this idea?" If so, kick out the idea. For example, our team has done the inside of a dog, the parts of an old trumpet, the inside of a potato powered cuckoo clock, ANYTHING can become a setting.