Jerry Corley's

Comedy Clinic

The World's best Online Training for Comedy Writing & Stand-up

COMEDY 101

JOKE WRITING FUNDAMENTALS

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

DEEP DIVE INTO COMEDY MASTERY

- **THE SCIENCE OF COMEDY**
- WHY PEOPLE LAUGH
- WHAT MAKES COMEDY WORK
- **THE STRUCTURE**
- HOW TO WRITE IT
- HOW TO PERFORM IT

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

TO HELP YOU TRULY UNDERSTAND

What is Funny?

Why People Laugh?

How to use Structure to Trigger Laughter

How to Write an original Joke

How to make it a permanent skill set

BY THE END OF THIS COURSE...

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

- Write original jokes using at least 3 structures.
- Have a fundamental understanding of comedy
- Begin to recognize the potential for humor in almost any situation

WHO'S THIS COURSE FOR?

THIS COURSE IS EXCELLENT FOR:

- Stand-up Comedians
- Comedy Writers
- Screenwriters
- Comic strip writers and illustrators
- Sketch Writers
- Improv actors
- Speakers
- Presenters
- Authors
- Playwrights
- Ministers
- Toastmasters
- Anyone who wants to be funny

SHATTERING THE
MYTH

CAN YOU TEACH COMEDY?

THESE GUYS SAY "NO."

- "YOU CAN'T TEACH COMEDY"
- "YOU GOT IT OR YOU DON'T"
- "YOU'RE BORN WITH IT"

THEY'RE WRONG!

- "YOU GOT IT OR YOU DON'T"
- "YOU CAN'T TEACH COMEDY"
- "YOU'RE BORN WITH IT"

You're born with it?

REALLY?

Like babies are popping out of the womb saying...

"Is this thing on?"

Laughter isn't Random

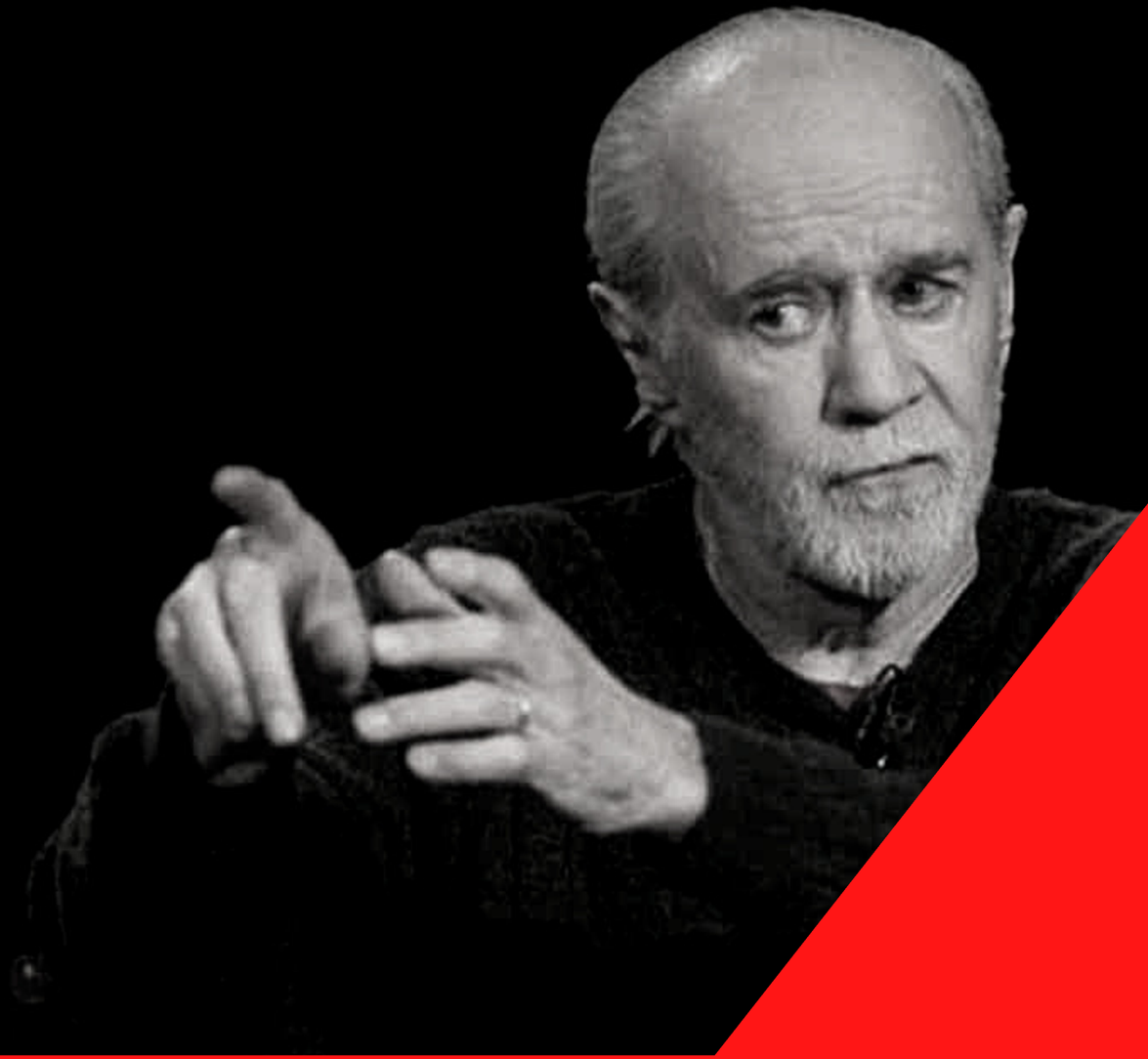
It happens for a reason!

Because

Certain
STIMULI
are present

"I know with 98 percent accuracy that a joke is funny BEFORE I step on stage."

GEORGE CARLIN



SCIENCE OF COMEDY

UNDERSTANDING **WHY** PEOPLE LAUGH

The 9 stimuli that triggers human laughter

TYPES OF COMEDY

Verbal, Physical, Reactionary

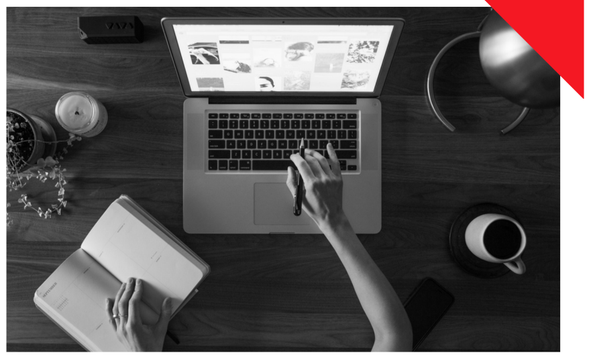
UNDERSTANDING TIMING

Timing is listening, processing, responding.

3 TYPES OF COMEDIANS

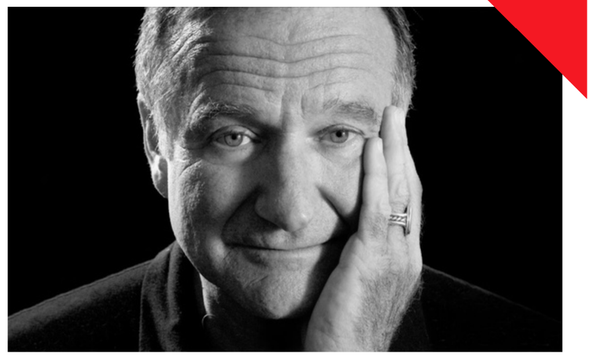
COINCIDENTAL

React to something that occurs around them mostly verbal or situational



ARCHITECT

Generates material from scratch on demand on any topic



HUMORIST

Blends both the coincidental & mechanical

GET IT ON THE PAGE!

Observation

Write Jokes

Write a Story

3 COMMON WAYS TO WRITE COMEDY

Your Inner Comic

State of Being

Put on your humorist's glasses

Have a recording device available

Comedy buddy

3 QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Is there a double-entendre play?

QUESTION 2

Is there an assumption, expectation? What do I see?

QUESTION 3

Are there 2 or more dissimilar ideas converging?

9 MAJOR LAUGH TRIGGERS

- SURPRISE
- SUPERIORITY
- EMBARRASSMENT
- RELEASE
- INCONGRUITY
- RECOGNITION
- AMBIVALENCE
- COINCIDENCE
- CONFIGURATIONAL

SURPRISE

If you can surprise us by what you're going to say or do by misdirecting us with an expectation or assumption, then shatter that expectation... odds are you can create a laugh

EMBARRASSMENT

Embarrassment is a defense mechanism. We laugh when we're embarrassed. Normal people hide embarrassment. Funny people shine a spotlight on it and basque in the limelight of the laughter.

Regular people see it as a weakness, funny people see it as a laugh.

Embarrassing situations also build tension.

SUPERIORITY

Comedy is about obstacles. Trying to get from point A to point B and encountering obstacles. Superiority is making the audience feel superior by revealing flaws and weaknesses.

The BIGGER your FLAWS the BETTER your COMIC CHARACTER

INCONGRUITY

When two dissimilar ideas converge and we juxtapose them or show the coincidental similarity

RELEASE

Overlooked and underestimated, release is extremely powerful as a laughter trigger. When there's so much tension from a few jokes not working a simple acknowledgement from a performer can release that tension and get big laughs

SOME METHODS TO TRIGGER RELEASE

CANDOR

Being candid, Using asides, subtle admissions,

PHYSICAL

Trying to hold a straight face, then cracking up

BLUNT VULNERABILITY

Acting tough, then admitting you're not.

CONFESSING

It's true, I'm flawed!

USING HOOKS

Storytelling techniques to create suspense

RECOGNITION

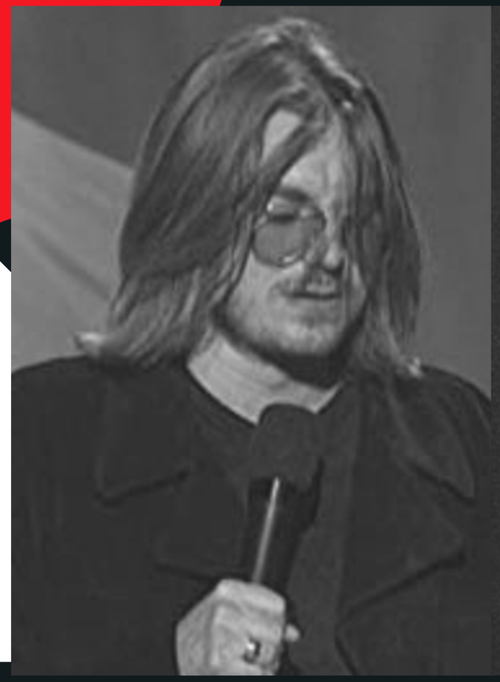
"Cats and dogs blink differently. Dogs blink to blink. A cat blinks with purpose. A cat will look right at you and do that slow blink... and you're like that cat knows some shit." - George Carlin

AMBIVALENCE

Ambivalence is being uncompassionate about things you should be compassionate about.

"*I remember the good ole' days when kids worked in factories*" - Emo Phillips

CONFIGURATIONAL



MITCH HEDBERG

STEVEN WRIGHT

" I don't have a girlfriend. But I do know a girl who'd be mad at me for saying that."
-- Mitch Hedberg

"Dancing is a perpendicular expression of a horizontal desire."
-- Steven Wright

COINCIDENCE

The power laughter trigger. It's when the brain connects ideas and says, "Oh! That's so true! I never thought about it that way. What a coincidence."

THE AUDIENCE IS ALWAYS THE FINAL JUDGE

Even if you know with high odds the audience is going to laugh at a joke, the audience is always the final judge.

KEY CONCEPT

I'M JUST A PERSON TRYING TO GET FROM POINT "A" TO POINT "B" AND ENCOUNTERING OBSTACLES.

- Mired by my flaws
- In over my head
- Fish out of water
- Impeded by my perspective and quirks

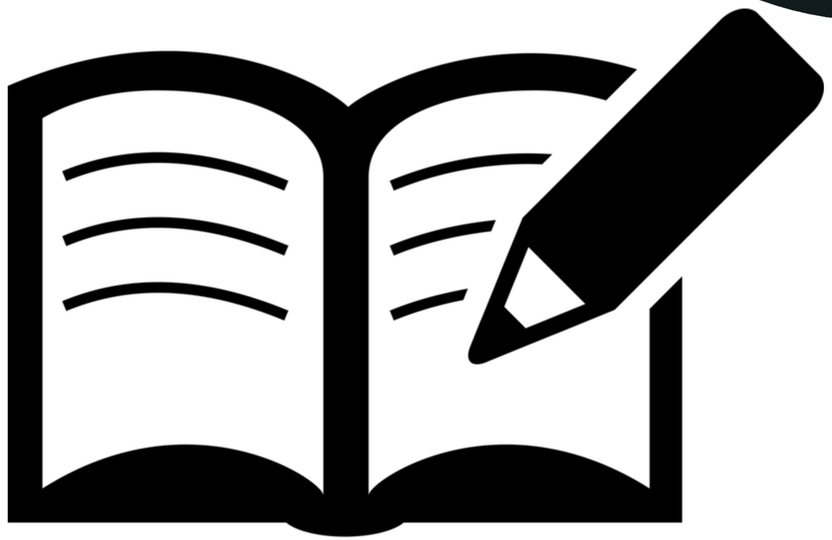
9

PSYCHOLOGICAL LAUGHTER TRIGGERS

- **Watch** a video of your favorite comedian.
- **Pause** it every time there is a laugh.
- **Identify** the laughter trigger or triggers, (Many times there's more than one).

IMPORTANT

The audience is in whatever state the performer is in... if you're playful, they are playful.



Double Entendre

One of the quickest ways to develop a "sense" of humor

THE MAGIC EGG

SIMPLICITY OF COMEDY

13 MAJOR COMEDY STRUCTURES

DOUBLE ENTENDRE

Words with 2 or more meanings.

Taking the implied meaning and turn it into the comedic meaning.

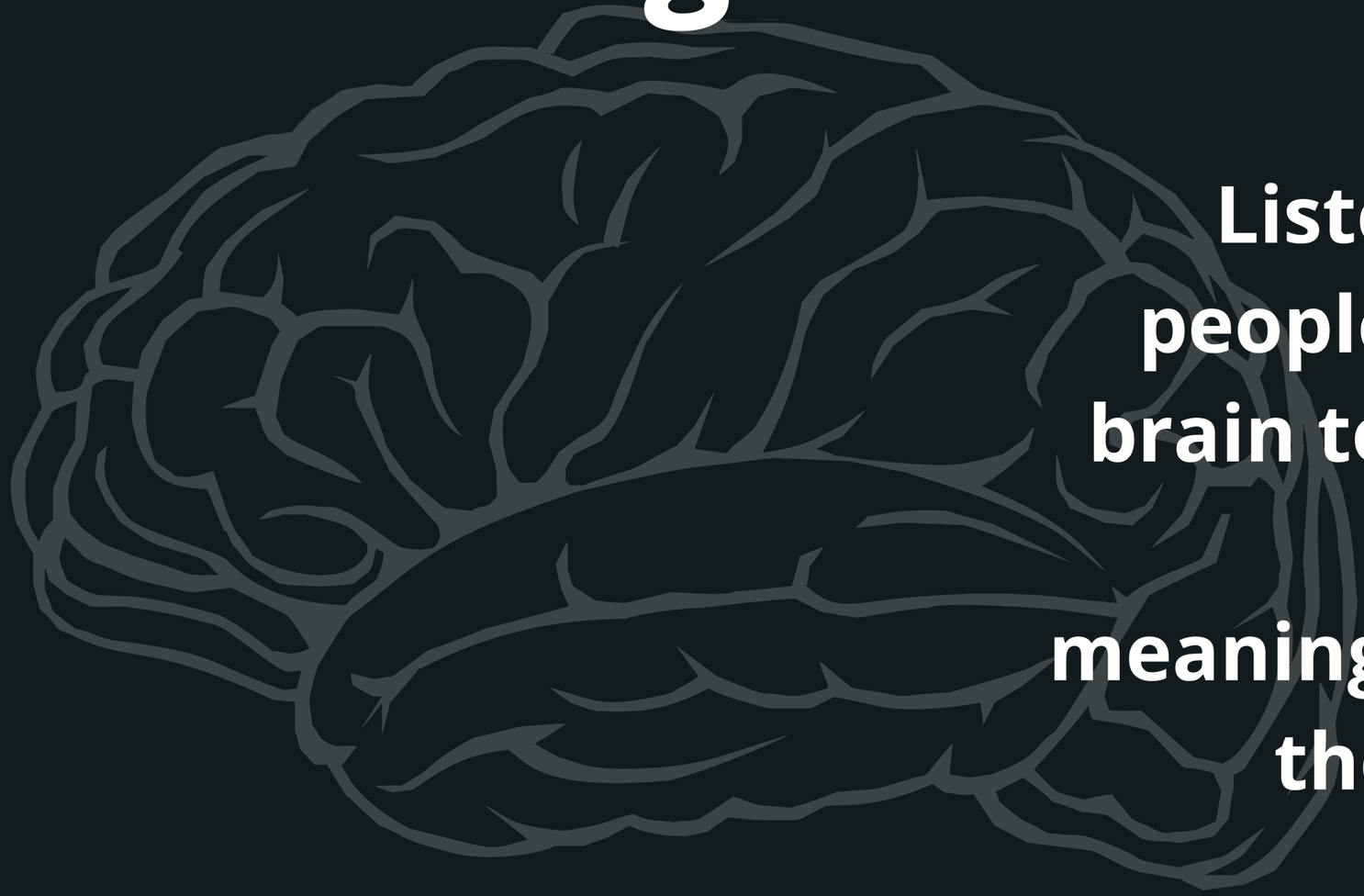
TIP

Listen acutely to what people are saying and look for words that could be turned into a different meaning.

BEST WAYS TO USE DOUBLE ENTENDRE

- Stand-alone jokes
- As a come-back to a statement or question
- As an aside
- "That's what she said..."
- To create jokes on the way to the bigger joke.

Training Your Brain



Listen Acutely to things people say and train your brain to identify the words that have alternate meanings and respond with the comedic meaning.

"I TOOK 2 YEARS OF ANATOMY AND I DON'T KNOW SHIT ABOUT THE STARS..."

"I TOOK 2 YEARS OF ANATOMY AND I DON'T KNOW SHIT ABOUT THE STARS..."

FLY

FLY

RANDOM WORDS

Purpose: Sharpen your awareness of available meanings of words

Results: Brain exercise. Improves "sense" of humor and awareness. Makes you faster on your feet, increases your quickness, wittiness

SCHEDULE TIME

Put in your date book, scheduler "Random Word Exercise

GENERATE WORDS

Generate 10-15 random words

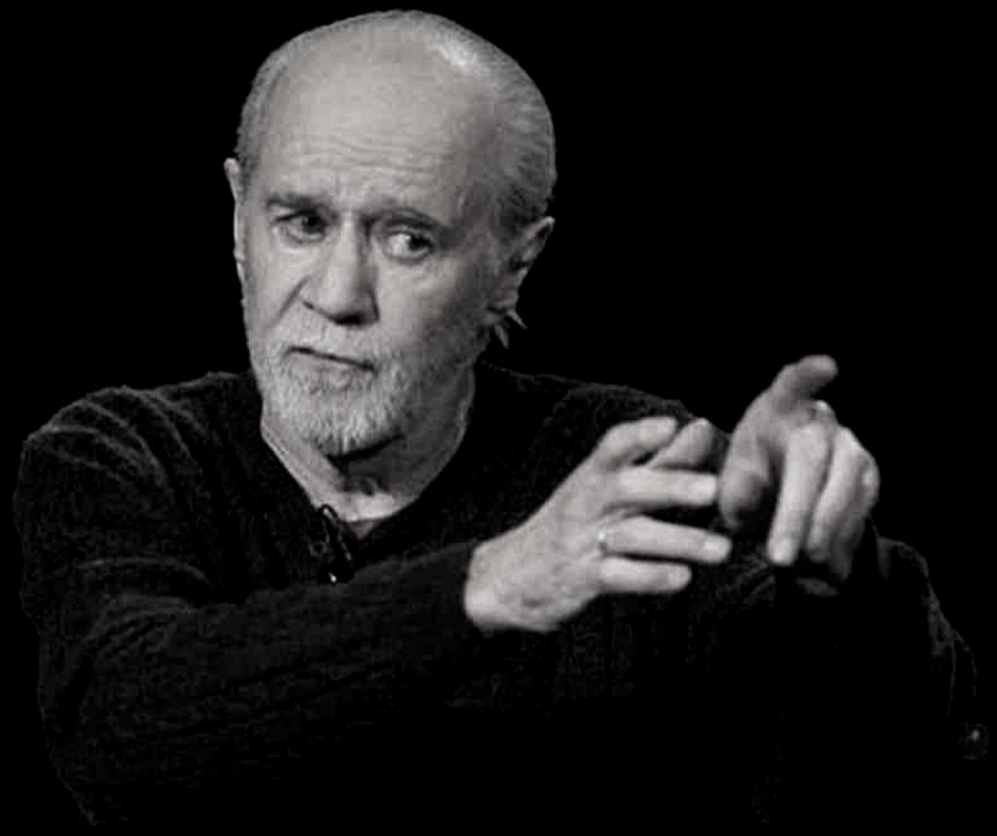
RANDOM WORD GENERATOR

Google the term Random Word Generator. Go to the page.

DEFINITIONS

Find 3-5 definitions for each word. Ask yourself how they could be used to respond humorously to a question, quote or statement.

HERE'S SOME QUICK EXAMPLES OF TIME TESTED DOUBLE ENTENDRE JOKES



"Did you ever realize that on TV you can say you pricked your finger, but you can't say you fingered your prick"

-- George Carlin

"I'm on the Ex-boyfriend diet. 4 out of 5 doctors say it's the quickest way to get rid of a big ass..."
- Lina Alva

"President Trump said April is hot. So Covid-19 will die and go away... When Trump said April was hot... I think he meant 'Miss April'"

- Jerry Corley

"My doctor asked me how much I weighed. I said, "Oh about two... much. Then I got on the scale. Turns out it was three... much"

- Sebastian Corley

Structure is Essential without it, you can't build.

When you know your scales...

The best improvisers in the world know that in order to be good, one must know their scales. If you don't you'll hit a lot of sour notes.

PUNCHING UP A BIT OR STORY USING DOUBLE ENTENDRE

Stories have been used by humans to communicate since the time humans *could* communicate. Making them funny has been used by humans to communicate better.

EXERCISE

WRITE A QUICK STORY

Results: Applying this skill is one way to make it part of your arsenal.

Purpose: Apply your new understanding of Double Entendre to punch up a bit or story

1 WRITE THE STORY

Just focus on telling the story without worrying about being funny. Your goal is to get the story on the page.

2 FIND DOUBLE ENTENDRES

Go back through and find the words that have multiple meanings

3 REWRITE

Edit your bit so the double entendres fit and make sense in the story

4 READ ALOUD

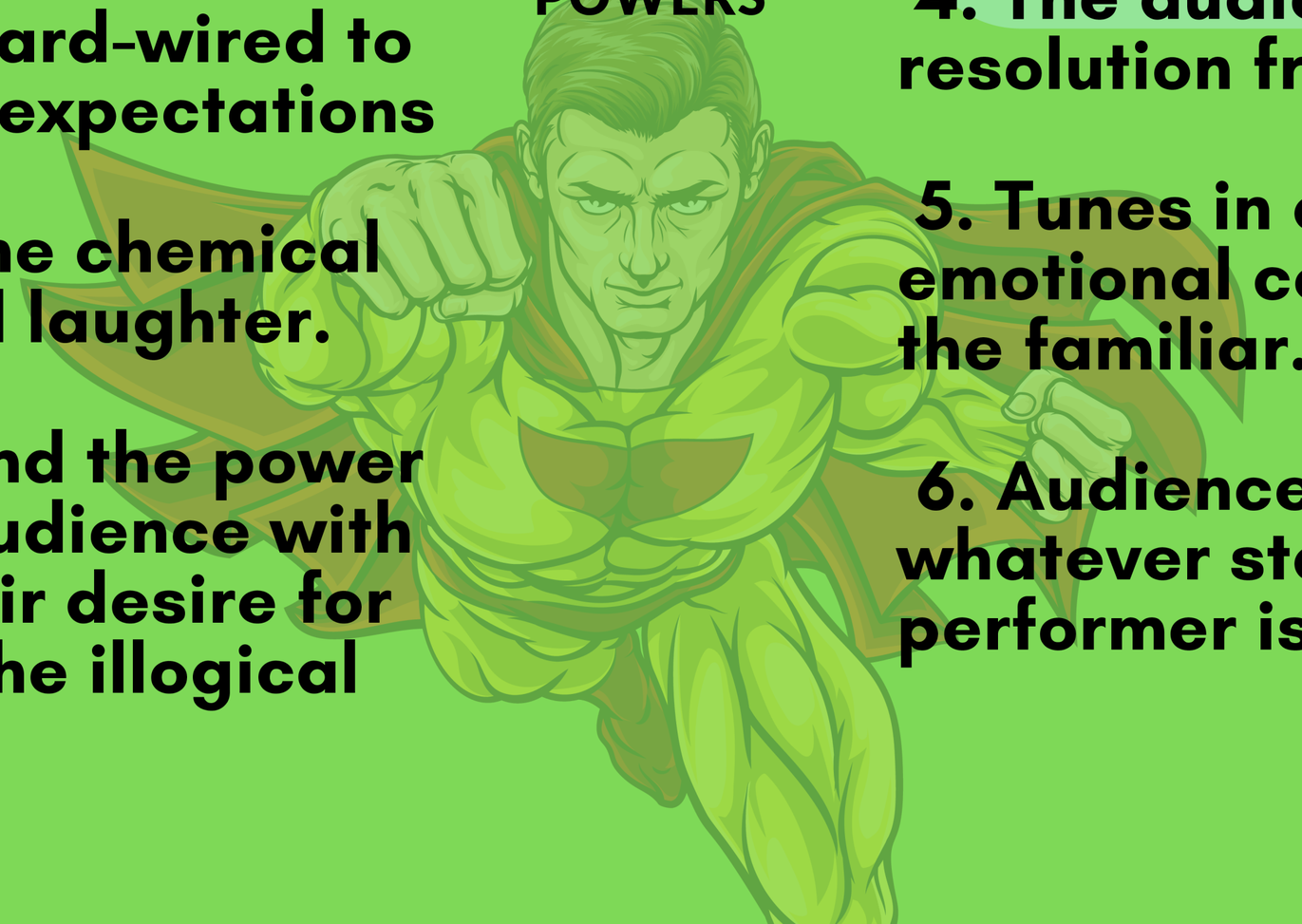
Read the material aloud add your inflection to see if it makes sense and works for your voice.

REVERSE

COMEDIANS'

6

SUPER POWERS



1. Knowing that the audience is hard-wired to create acute expectations

2. Knowing the chemical power behind laughter.

3. Analogy and the power to hook the audience with tension in their desire for you to solve the illogical equation.

4. The audience Craves resolution from tension

5. Tunes in and has an emotional connection to the familiar.

6. Audience is in whatever state the performer is in

REVERSE

My Favorite Type of Reverse

I remember the first massage I ever got from a male massage therapist.

About 10 minutes into it I said, "Hey man, is it normal during one of these things to get an erection?

He said, Oh, it's perfectly normal.

I was like, "Great, but could you get it out of my face?"

Steps for Writing a Reverse

COLLECT PERSONAL FACTS, FACTOIDS, QUOTES, STATEMENTS,

Presentations are tools that can be used as lectures.

ASK THE QUESTION

Is there an assumption, expectation or image I can shatter?

IDENTIFY

Guess the most obvious assumption, expectation or image

REWRITE

Rewrite the line to hide the reveal till as far till the end as possible

REWRITE TO TIGHTEN

Rewrite to remove any words or phrases that are not necessary to tell the joke

TEST THE JOKE

Say the joke out loud, then test it with friends and family*

Getting it on the Page

The biggest mistake comedians make is NOT getting that story on the page. Once you get it on the page, you are set free to create!

BENEFITS OF GETTING IT ON THE PAGE FIRST

YOUR FOCUS IS JUST THE STORY

The writer can focus on the pertinent information of the story.

Many comedians leave out crucial elements leaving the listener confused.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

When you're not worried about the funny, you can create detailed imagery

5 ELEMENTS OF STORY

Character, Theme, Setting, Plot, Conflict

WE LEARN COMEDY THOUGH EXPOSURE & EXPERIENCE

Study any comedian's background, you'll find a comedic experience