

Storytelling TOOLKIT



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introduction

Through an innovative approach the GUTS-project wants to develop a method that will help to reduce reoffending under young offenders. We want to help them to set targets for their future and hand them tools to become better and more active citizens.

The GUTS-project focuses on storytelling techniques and rap song-writing to support inmates to reflect on their situation and their actions, providing an opportunity to enhance their problem-solving skills and sense of responsibility, in order to imagine a crime-free future.

The storytelling toolkit was designed with the collaboration of all GUTS-project partners to provide a useful tool for all organisations interested in supporting young and adult people from different communities.

The toolkit includes several workshops that every organization can use to realise workshops for adults and young people, to develop new skills, building bridges and help them to have a stronger voice in their communities.



The Transformative Power of Storytelling Workshops for Inmates



In the complex landscape of prisons, innovative approaches to rehabilitation are gaining recognition for their potential to foster positive change.

One such approach is the incorporation of storytelling workshops for inmates.

Evidence suggests that these workshops can have profound therapeutic, communicative, and community-building effects, contributing to the overall well-being of individuals who live in prison and outside.

1. Therapeutic Benefits: unlocking emotions through narrative

Storytelling serves as a powerful medium for individuals to express their emotions, enabling a constructive exploration of personal narratives and help with processing trauma.

2. Improving Communication Skills: crafting narratives for change

Engaging in storytelling practices allows individuals to articulate their thoughts and experiences, fostering improved interpersonal communication.

3. Fostering Empathy and Understanding: shared narratives for connection

Understanding and empathy are vital components of rehabilitation.

M. H. Davis defines empathy as the “*reactions of one individual to the observed experiences of another*”*. In a prison context, sharing personal narratives facilitates mutual understanding among inmates, contributing to a more empathetic and supportive environment.

*Davis, M. H. (1980). A multidimensional approach to individual differences in empathy. JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology, 10, 85.

The Transformative Power of Storytelling Workshops for Inmates

4. Enhancing Rehabilitation and Personal Growth: reframing narratives for positive change

The storytelling process enables inmates to reframe their life stories, envision positive change and set the stage for personal transformation.

5. Community Building: stories that connect

Incarceration often leads to feelings of isolation and alienation.

*"Stories create and give expression to personal and group identity"*** and a sense of community among inmates. Shared stories contribute to a supportive environment, fostering a sense of belonging.

6. Creativity and Imagination: storytelling as a path to self-expression

The incorporation of storytelling in prisons is seen as a means to enhance creativity and imagination. Inmates engaging in creative storytelling exercises have the opportunity for constructive self-expression and personal development.



** Senehi J. (2002) Constructive Storytelling: A Peace Process, University of Manitoba

The Transformative Power of Storytelling for inmates

7. Skills for Reentry: preparing inmates for a new beginning

Enhanced communication, empathy, and creative expression contribute to an individual's readiness to navigate the challenges of reintegration.

“Storyteller and writer Gary Green says sharing stories of people's experiences is not only valuable for promoting understanding — it can help us remember important information that can guide our future actions.”***

8. Personal Testimonies: stories of growth

The Pen Project, an initiative to promote creative expression in prisons, offers a collection of personal testimonies from prisoners. These first-hand accounts offer compelling narratives of the transformative impact of storytelling and creative writing on individuals,



sharing stories of growth and newfound purpose.

In conclusion, while quantitative statistics on the impact of storytelling workshops may be limited, the combination of qualitative research, personal testimony and evidence from existing studies paints a compelling picture. Storytelling workshops in prisons offer individuals a chance for self-discovery, building a sense of community, expressing their emotions and a path to positive change.

***C. Hennebury,(2020) Storytelling is not just entertainment. It's a fundamental part of being human

how to use the toolkit

This storytelling toolkit provides "ready-made scenarios" that you can put into practice with people within your organization or community. Each scenario includes detailed information that supports you in preparing and conducting the workshops effectively.

The workshops collected in this toolkit can be used as a tool to inspire adult and young people to tell their stories by creating, sharing and amplifying their stories or those of others.



What is important to consider when choosing workshops?



Organising a good storytelling workshop in a prison context is never an easy task, because of the specific target group and the difficult environment. You have to take in consideration different factors before starting your workshop.

01 Size of the group

The number of people in your group is important to know so that you can choose a workshop that matches the size of your group. It is suggested that the number is limited to create a safe space where the people can feel comfortable.

02 Workshop duration

Knowing the length of the workshop helps you plan it accordingly, inform participants about the timing, and reserve the training room for the right amount of time.

03 Materials needed

Understanding the necessary materials for the workshop allows you to prepare enough and appropriate materials ahead of time. You can use a checklist to ensure that you have everything needed before starting the workshop, and we recommend completing the preparation the day before the workshop.

04 Space

The space refers to the physical location where the workshop will take place. It's important to consider the size of the space in relation to the number of participants, the layout of the room, and the availability of necessary equipment such as projectors, whiteboards, and internet connectivity but also the space to move around freely.

05 Objectives

The objectives outline what young inmates are expected to achieve after taking part in the workshop. You can use these objectives to promote the workshop, introduce expectations at the beginning of the training, and guide young people towards the desired outcomes.



06 Presentation

These steps provide a detailed plan for conducting the workshop, including how to start, how to guide and give instructions to participants, how to follow-up and reflect on activities, and how much time to allocate for each step.

07 Create a safe space

It is important to create a safe and respectful space where people can feel comfortable sharing their stories while respecting the need for privacy and confidentiality.



08 Challenges

There can be several challenges like:

- Limited access to resources, technology, internet.
- Limited time: Inmates may have limited time to engage in activities due to their daily routines.

- Limited participation: Some young inmates may be hesitant to participate in storytelling activities due to a lack of confidence, previous negative experiences, or other factors.

- Limited engagement: Maintaining engagement can be challenging. It may be necessary to present the activity in a way that is highly interactive, visually engaging, and emotionally compelling.

- Limited privacy: Inmates may have limited privacy within the correctional facility, which can make it difficult to share personal stories and experiences.

Storytelling for starters: simple warm-ups



TALKING TO YOUR BODY

Storytelling is not just about words, but also about how you deliver it. About the non-verbal elements. This exercise helps with this.

Choose a nice rap beat (e.g. from freemusicarchive.org/genre/hip-hop_beats) and individually create a rap in which you tell the team's epic story. A light-hearted song in which you applaud the team's struggle and glory.

Make it a competition: who has the best rap and matching moves? So use not only your voice, but also your hands and your hips

HELP! 'I CAN' T AT ALL...''

A fun format for a retrospective with your group is this: cut equal strips of paper and give each team member one.

Everyone puts a sentence on paper for themselves starting with ''I can't at all...'' or ''I'm not at all...''; and then folds the papers.

You then open 1 note in plenary each time and the group has to guess who wrote it. Of course, it's mainly about the conversation that follows.

AND THEN...

A fun energiser as a brain-warmer in a storytelling workshop is the 'And then...';

You start with a sentence about a random event and the person next to you continues the story with:

'And then...'; and then the person next to you and so

on. 'We went to the beach...and then...there were big kites...and then...a kite fell into the sea...';

This makes for a nonsensical but also fairly straightforward story. It becomes more captivating when you are always allowed to choose between the connecting word 'but...'; and '...and therefore'

'We went to the beach...but.... the sea was empty...and therefore we fetched water from a petrol station...'. .

DIVIDED BY THREE

Describe your message in a minimum of 21 and a maximum of 27 words. Then pick out up to nine individual words that are the core of your story and write them down.

Then discuss this in pairs and delete six words until you are left with three key words. You then use these three as the capstone for your personal legend, team legend or organisational story.

HINTS WITHOUT HANDS...

A nice warm-up for a storytelling session is a kind of hints but without the non-verbal communication. You have to describe a word in words without mentioning the word. And do so within 30 seconds.



WE WOULD..

You do this exercise with several people. The aim is to discover the similarities and differences in your (team) dream.

You invent a special event and start fantasising in the 'then we would' form.

For example: 'If we won the lottery, we would buy a yacht'. The second person follows this up with 'Then we would sail across the ocean', the next with 'Then we would go whale fishing, and again the next' Then we would meet Moby Dick', and so on.

choose your topic:

visual art

Workshops centered around diverse artistic techniques, including collage, drawing, photography and painting

creative
writing

A series of workshops that explore an array of writing techniques, encompassing poetry, free writing, creating stories and more.

music

Different workshops that blend the art of music with diverse writing techniques, fostering a dynamic exploration of creative expression of storytelling

expressive
art

Engaging workshops that harness the synergy between theater and physical expression techniques, providing a dynamic platform for self expression

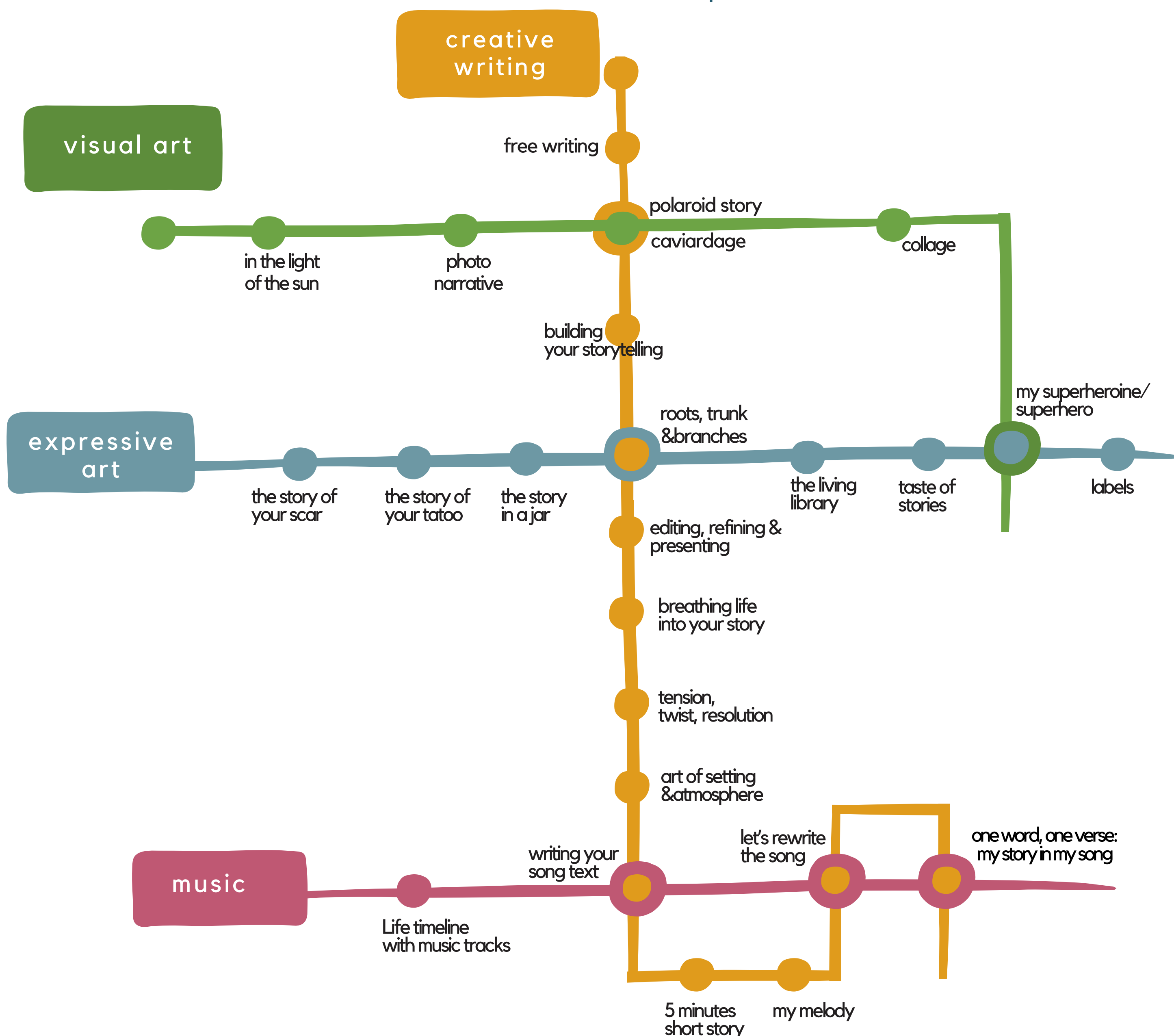
map of storytelling topics:

Storytelling workshops often embrace a fusion of expressive forms, combining writing, art, and other creative elements.

In many activities, themes seamlessly blend, forming a dynamic tapestry of creativity.

To navigate this diverse landscape, we've crafted a workshop map a kind of **underground map**, offering a visual aid to help you explore and choose the most suitable workshop for your group.

Let's embark on a journey into storytelling where writing, art, music and various forms of artistic expression converge to unlock boundless creative possibilities.



Visual art



**IN THE LIGHT
OF THE SUN -
A SILENT
BOOK**



**ROOTS,
TRUNK AND
BRANCHES**



**A POLAROID
STORY**



COLLAGE



**MY
SUPERHEROINE/
SUPERHERO**



**PHOTO
NARRATIVE**





IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUN - A SILENT BOOK

OBJECTIVES:

- To create a message without linguistic obstacles
- To facilitate the production of content through a workshop that does not require specific skills

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Difficulties in keeping the group quiet.

Tip: Avoid listening to music or overlapping other languages

PRESENTATION:

We start with a premise: "to communicate, one does not need to speak or write."

The facilitator explains that it is not possible to speak for the duration of the workshop.

The facilitator explains the 3 phases of work:

1. Finding the pictures and placing them on the sheet
2. Installing the wire and, one at a time, placing the sheets
3. Movement of the sheets until the final position is chosen

The facilitator will only intervene to assign the next tasks without speaking but with 3 display boards representing the 3 work phases.

The group is divided into pairs or three participants, depending on the total number of participants.

The group is given a pile of newspapers and magazines (sports, fashion, music, etc.) and they have to choose an iconic image: for example, it could be an umbrella, a ball, a guitar, a flower.

The group is given white paper and 1 red marker.

Each participant may select a maximum of 3 icons and either glue them in the centre of the single sheet or draw them in a stylised form.

Participants are asked to install the laundry threads and, once this is done, each person will attach their own paper, sharing their choices with the group.

The group is asked to move the sheets in the case of assonance/resonance between their choices without using words.

Finally, the group is asked to share their overall experience: the feeling of remaining silent, the evocative content of the images but also what they thought they were communicating, etc.).

PARTICIPANTS: min. 6

SPACE: outdoors with trees close by to install wires used for hanging laundry

DURATION: 30 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED: sheets of paper, red markers, paper tape for assembling, glue, scissors, clothes pegs.

ROOTS, TRUNK AND BRANCHES

OBJECTIVES:

Self-Reflection and Discovery:

- Encourage participants to reflect on their positive qualities, skills, and interests.
- Promote self-discovery through the exploration of personal goals and dreams.

Building Positive Connections:

- Foster a sense of community by acknowledging and appreciating relationships with loved ones.

Visual Representation of Growth:

- Facilitate a creative expression of personal growth through the metaphor of a tree
- Help participants visually map their strengths, support systems, and aspirations.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Participants may find it challenging to openly share personal reflections and aspects of themselves.

Tip: Creating a safe, respectful and non-judgmental environment is crucial to overcoming this challenge.

PRESENTATION

Take three sheets of paper.

1. On the first sheet, you should write down the things you like about yourself, the positive things (liking, responsibility, companionship, intelligence, generosity, tidiness, etc.) and the things you like to do (reading, writing, running, playing football, walking, cooking, etc.).
2. On the second sheet, you should write about the things you would like to do, which are important to you, goals, big or small (read a book, plant a flower, play a sport, make friends, etc.) or dreams.
3. On the third sheet, you should write the person(s) you love or who love you.

Now draw a tree with all its parts: roots, trunk and branches and colour it as you like.

After drawing the tree, you will do the following:

- In the roots, you will put the skills and things you like to do that you wrote down on the first sheet.
- In the trunk, you will put the supports that you wrote on the third sheet and add yourself.
- To finish in the branches, you will put your goals and dreams.

As you may have noticed, the tree represents you and tells a bit about your story of life, but it is incomplete because it continues to grow and change through the seasons of life.

If you feel like it, share your tree with the group and express with a word what your tree looks like or an emotion it awakens in you.

PARTICIPANTS: max 15

SPACE: Everywhere, it should be a safe space to share stories. The space must offer participants a comfortable place to write and draw on their paper

DURATION: 1 hour

MATERIAL NEEDED: sheets of paper, pencils, crayons



A POLAROID STORY

OBJECTIVES:

- Stimulate creativity and imagination through artistic expression.
- Promote collaboration and storytelling skills among participants.
- Encourage emotional expression and reflection for personal growth.
- overcoming the block that a person may have in front of a blank sheet of paper

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenges:

- Some participants may initially struggle with coming up with creative ideas
- Some participants may find it difficult to connect their pictures to others in a meaningful way.

Tips: As a facilitator, foster a non-judgmental and supportive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their ideas and emotions. Offer guidance in the process of storytelling by suggesting connections between Polaroids. Promote communication and collaboration in small groups.

PRESENTATION

The activity consists of creating a story with polaroids, using recycled material.

A cardboard card with the shape of a polaroid, empty in the centre, is distributed and each participant is invited to create a picture inside it. Magazines, scissors, glue and paints are provided.

A place, a character, a situation, an object, etc. can be represented.

It is very important that participants feel free to represent what they want.

Afterwards, participants are asked to share their Polaroids by distributing them on the table. They are then asked to create a story using the Polaroids.

A string is hung with the clothes pegs and the participants give an order to the Polaroids and are guided in the creation of the story.

At the end of the activity, the story can be told verbally or written down.

Finally, the activity ends in a circle moment where those who wish can share emotions and feelings experienced during the activity.

PARTICIPANTS: 4-8

SPACE: Everywhere, it should be a safe space to share stories

DURATION: 1 hour

MATERIAL NEEDED:
cardboard card, white paper, colours, glue, magazines, strings, pegs



OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the fusion of visual and written storytelling through the art of collage.
- Foster creative expression by breaking traditional storytelling boundaries, allowing participants to engage with storytelling in a non-linear and visually stimulating manner.
- Develop a deeper connection between emotions, images, and words, enhancing the overall storytelling experience.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenges:

- Challenges: Completing a collage and crafting a narrative within the given time can be challenging.
- Participants might feel pressured to create a "perfect" collage, hindering their creative flow.

Tips:

- encourage participants to focus on key elements to ensure a cohesive and meaningful storytelling experience.
- Emphasize that collages are inherently diverse and imperfect, fostering a sense of freedom and acceptance in the creative process.

PRESENTATION

Introduce the workshop and materials and emphasize the freedom to explore creative expressions beyond conventional storytelling methods.

Provide participants with magazines, scissors, glue, colours and other materials (like fabric, cardboard,..).

Support them to create collages that tell a story, combining images and words in a way that resonates with them.

Encourage participants to experiment with symbolism, colour, and texture to convey emotions and narrative elements.

Ask participants to reflect on their collages and identify the story they've created.

Provide guided questions to help participants articulate the narrative behind their collage.

In the end of the activity participants are invited to share their collages and the stories they've crafted with the group.

Encourage open discussion and feedback, highlighting the diverse interpretations and unique elements of each collage.

PARTICIPANTS: 4-8

SPACE: Everywhere, it should be a safe space to share stories

DURATION: 1 hour

MATERIAL NEEDED: cardboard card, white paper, colours, glue, magazines, strings, pegs



MY SUPERHEROINE/SUPERHERO

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage creativity and out-of-the-box thinking for unique superhero/superheroine designs, including distinctive features, powers and appearances.
- Encourage teamwork with an emphasis on diverse skills
- Develop critical thinking by guiding participants to brainstorm and overcome challenges for their characters
- Improve communication skills through group presentations and cultivate storytelling skills by focusing on creating narratives with challenges, adversaries and problem-solving strategies.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Participants might unintentionally fall into clichés. Encourage exploration of unconventional ideas and avoidance of stereotypes.

Tips:

- Celebrate uniqueness by encouraging participants to embrace their unique creativity and express personal values through their superhero/superheroine designs.
- Offer guidance on overcoming challenges and navigating the creative process, ensuring a supportive learning environment.

PRESENTATION

Drawing the superhero/superheroine: Provide participants with templates, comics and drawing materials to sketch the appearance of their superhero/superheroine.

Encourage participants to think of unique features, symbols and colours.

Participants should then choose the unique powers of their superhero/superheroine and draw them on the sheet.

Emphasise the link between the superhero's powers and their mission and ask several questions to generate ideas or discussion:

What would your superhero look like? What superpowers would he/she have? What problems would they face? How would he/she solve these problems?

Once the superheroes have been created with their superpowers, the participants should choose a name.

At the end of the activity, each participant can present his/her character to the group and share what he/she represents to them.

If you want to continue the workshop, to continue the activity, participants split into groups of max. 4 people.

Present different problems or adversities to encourage groups to discuss common approaches to problem solving that superheroes might use, taking into account different skills and backgrounds.

Encourage participants to think creatively about how their superheroes/heroines could overcome challenges.

At the end of the activity, each group presents their superheroes, powers, team, challenges and solutions.

PARTICIPANTS: +/- 10-20 participants

SPACE: room with tables, chairs, and enough space for participants to move around during presentations.

DURATION: 60/120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:

Paper, pencils, markers, or any drawing materials.

Comics

Whiteboard or flip chart for group brainstorming.




PHOTO NARRATIVE

OBJECTIVES:

- Convey emotions and a bit of yourself through photography
- Identify and articulate a theme or subject for visual storytelling.
- Develop skills in planning and executing an effective photo shoot.
- Learn to select photographs that tell a coherent story and develop skills in the creative presentation of visual stories.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenges:

It may be challenging to translate a concept or idea into visual storytelling, and participants might struggle to convey their intended message through images.

Tips: Emphasize the importance of selecting images that best encapsulate the narrative they want to convey. Providing feedback on how well the images communicate the chosen theme can help participants refine their storytelling skills and produce a more impactful visual narrative. Participants can add little notes or text under the pictures.

PRESENTATION

Each participant selects a theme, a subject to tell a story about, or a photo-narrative idea. There are no right or wrong answers, as long as the participant is interested in exploring the subject or telling a story.

Make plans to photograph the subject or object. This can be as simple as grabbing a camera and heading to a location, or as complex as building a set and planning several shoots.

Curate the story. Once the photos have been taken, upload them to the computer and a selection is made. Look at all the images that have been taken and decide which are the strongest and which contribute most to telling the story or exploring the theme or idea. Remember, a story can be a single image, and a single image can make or change the story.

Approximately 1 to a maximum of 5 photos can be chosen.

You can choose to print the photos or opt for digital storytelling.

Present the story. This is the most important part of the process because how a story is presented will be very important.

Participants can choose how to present their story according to their own creativity. They can narrate verbally the story, add a small text below the images or show the pictures and leave the interpretation to the audience.

PARTICIPANTS:
Approximately 2-8

SPACE: Photographs can be taken indoors or outdoors in places with good light. For story preparation and presentation, an indoor location is recommended.

DURATION: 2-3 hours

MATERIAL NEEDED:
cameras, laptops, printer, image print sheets, papers, pens and markers

Creative Writing




FREE WRITING



CAVIARDAGE 




5MINUTES SHORT STORY WITH THE 3 WORDS




BUILDING YOUR STORYTELLING 



EDITING, REFINING, AND PRESENTING




BREATHING LIFE INTO YOUR STORY 

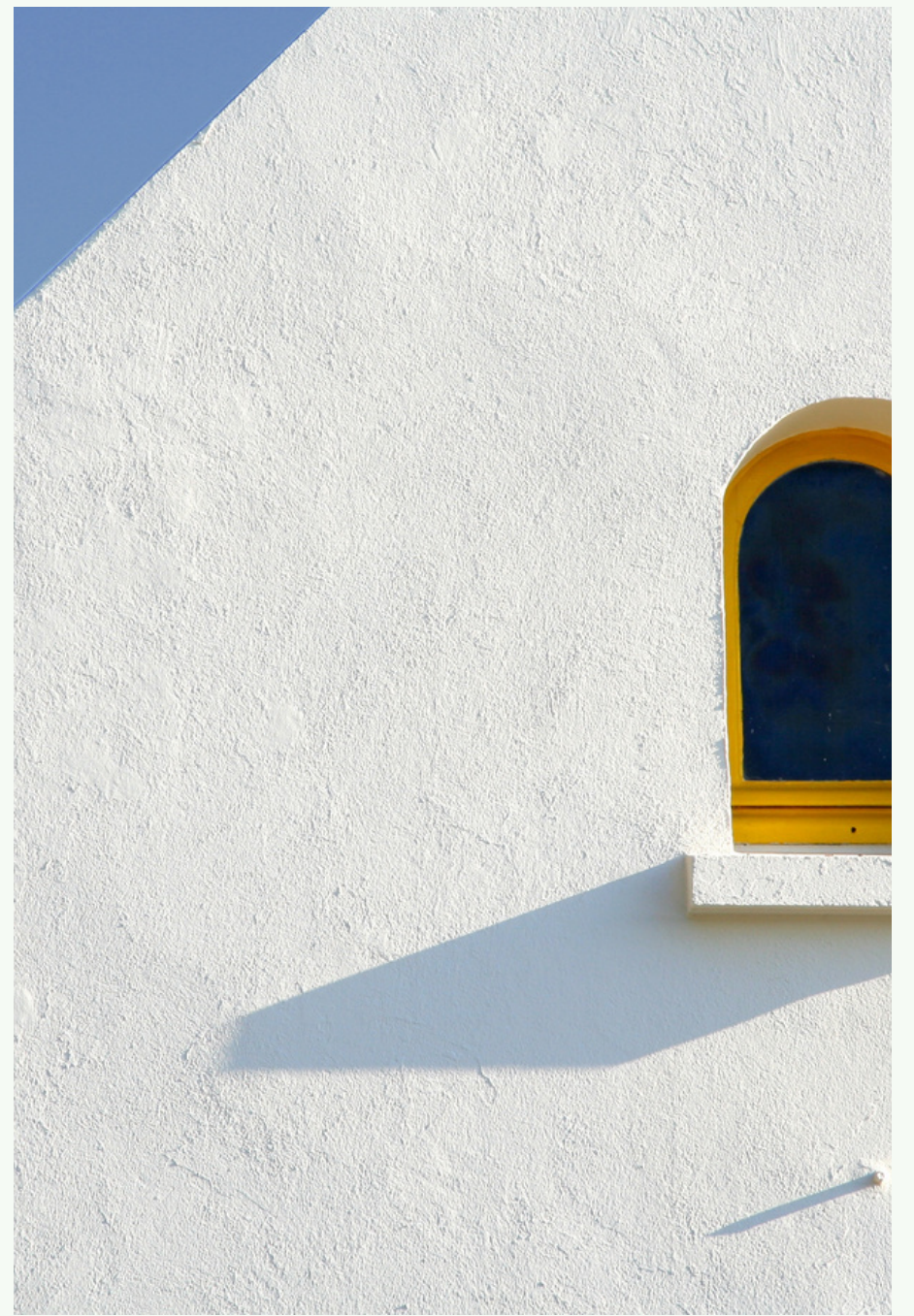





**TENSION,
TWIST,
RESOLUTION**



**THE ART OF
SETTING
AND
ATMOSPHERE**





FREE WRITING

OBJECTIVES:

- The aim is to help the inmate to start the process of writing his own texts about his situation.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenges can be that this is new and foreign to some inmates.

PRESENTATION

This is an example of a text that came out of a poem writing class by inmates at Romerike prison. The text is not written in rap form, but it is the result of a writing course, and we want to present it in the project.

The methodology used was to challenge the participants to free writing.

Free writing means sitting down at the computer or taking out the notebook. To limit the writing session, the student can set the stopwatch on e.g., 10 minutes. The point is to write without stopping, so as not to let the critic get away. When the student attends a writing course, he will meet this metaphor: When we write, there is a bird on each shoulder. One bird grumbles and nags that what you'r doing isn't good enough: That sentence is bad, and what you just wrote is a cliché, the grammar doesn't measure up, etc. etc. It's the critical bird. The other bird tries to calm down, so that intuition and creative ideas can find their way down to paper. It is the creative bird.

In the initial stages of a writing project, it is important to free yourself from that one bird, the critic. The critic is necessary but must wait until you have printed some of the raw material.

To write is to think. Of course, we think without writing, but it can sharpen our thinking, it can help us see new patterns, discover new aspects of ourselves.

PARTICIPANTS: Writing teachers and students

SPACE: Classroom

DURATION: Different periods can be used for the technique. E.g. 4 x 90 min.

MATERIAL NEEDED: A computer and a program for writing (For example. World)



CAVIARDAGE

OBJECTIVES:

- Stimulating creativity through the discovery of hidden poetry.
- Overcoming the block that a person may have in front of a blank sheet of paper
- Initiating an initial approach to poetry without patterns
- Group sharing will help people recount the metacognitive process they followed in choosing words, also expressing the reasons and emotions that guided them to do so.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

- Struggle to select and connect words
- Some participants may find it challenging to manage their time in the different parts of the activity for the lack of confidence in writing poetry.

TIPS: Offer guidance and emphasize that there's no right or wrong way to create poetry in this format.

PRESENTATION

Caviardage, devised by Tina Festa, encompasses various poetic writing techniques that consist of elaborating poems from already written texts such as pages from scrapbooks, e.g. using old short stories.

Participants will have to try their hand at creating a poem from the pages of an old book.

Caviardage, which comes from the French word caviarder, meaning to censor, i.e. to erase a text with the colour black.

Initial phase: Distribute the pages of an old book to the participants.

Central activity: having the pages of an old book, pictures to cut out and colours and felt-tip pens to draw on, the beneficiaries can bring out the poetry hidden on the page and within themselves by simply choosing the words that strike them most (8/10 words), circling them with a pen or felt-tip pen and erasing everything else. They should then connect these words in any order they like, connecting each word to the other with a line. In this way the person is forming a poem by connecting the words. Intersperses, articles or prepositions can be added between words.

Once the words are connected, you can write the text of the poem on the white border around the page of the book. And decorate the page with colours, attach pictures, etc.

The last step is sharing: one can share one's poem in a group, telling why one chose the words and what emotions are attached to them, or simply reading the poem that arose from the activity of listening to oneself.

SPACE: A place with tables and chairs, it should be a safe space to share poetries and emotions

DURATION: 30-40 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED: pages from an old book or newspapers and magazines, markers, pictures to cut out, watercolours scissors, glue

5 MINUTES SHORT STORY WITH THE 3 WORDS



OBJECTIVES:

Spontaneous Creativity: Develop the ability to generate creative ideas on the spot without overthinking.

Adaptability and Flow: Enhance adaptability by writing within specific rules and time constraints, fostering a sense of creative flow.

Observation and Expression: Cultivate quick observation and expression skills, appreciating diverse interpretations within a brief time frame.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

If you want to write, above all, you should NOT think! If you want to write good pieces you have to write fast and that is what you do with the 'writing machine'.

If you think your first story should be top quality, it won't be good. If you think - "I need to write fast"- then it will be quality!

PRESENTATION

You take three random POWER words that need have absolutely nothing to do with each other and start from there.

Power words are words with a meaning, so not 'the' or 'it' because you can't do anything with those. They have to be verbs or nouns. When you read them, you immediately get an image in your head.

- Here are the rules you MUST follow:

- 1) You have to follow ALL the rules
- 2) You have to write as fast as you can
- 3) You have to stop after 5 minutes. If your sentence is not finished put "...";
- 4) You may NOT think
- 5) You may NOT improve
- 6) 1 of the 3 words should be your first word, you start with that
- 7) The other 2 words must appear in the first paragraph (a paragraph consists of about 4 sentences)

You set your stopwatch to five minutes and after five minutes you stop writing, even though you still have something to say and your 'story' or 'text' is not finished.

Five minutes and STOP.

- Stop on the signal and put your text aside
- Stretch your legs for a moment and pick up your text again
- You read your text aloud or in group - each participant - reads his/her text aloud
- Listen and stand amazed at what you can write at 5 min!

PARTICIPANTS: Can be done individually or in groups

SPACE: quiet and comfortable workspace

DURATION: no duration (you can decide)

MATERIAL NEEDED:

- Writing materials (pens, pencils, digital note-taking tools).
- Timerkeeper



BUILDING YOUR STORIES

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the key elements of a captivating story.
- Create relatable characters and establish their motivations.
- Develop immersive settings that enhance narratives.
- Craft well-structured plots with clear arcs.
- Incorporate emotion and conflict to drive engagement.
- Apply the acquired skills to personal or professional storytelling endeavours.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Balancing exposition and action in storytelling.

Tip: Use the "show, don't tell" approach to immerse the audience in the story's world.

Challenge: Keeping the audience engaged throughout the narrative.

Tip: Introduce unexpected twists and maintain a steady pacing

Challenge: Developing unique voices for different characters.

Tip: Focus on distinct speech patterns, vocabulary, and perspectives.

PRESENTATION:

Begin by greeting participants and providing an overview of the workshop. Explain the key components of a story, including characters, setting, plot, conflict, and resolution. Additionally, introduce the hero's journey as a narrative structure. Discuss the significance of relatable characters, and engage in a brainstorming session to create a character with motivations and fears.

Explore the role of settings in storytelling, guiding participants in describing a vivid setting using sensory details.

Introduce the three-act structure and its components, aiding participants in outlining their stories using this framework. Explain different types of conflict and their importance. Delve into how emotions drive engagement and character development.

Summarize key takeaways from each step, and motivate participants to compile their insights into a personal toolkit. Address participant questions and concerns, and create opportunities for volunteers to share their character sketches or story outlines. Conclude by recapping the workshop's objectives and highlights, emphasizing the newfound storytelling skills of the participants.

PARTICIPANTS: 15-20 participants with varying levels of storytelling experience.

SPACE: A quiet, well-lit room with seating arrangements conducive to group discussions&activities. If virtual, ensure access to a video conferencing platform with breakout room functionality.

DURATION: 120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:

Notebooks, pencils&pens
Projector and screen (if available).

Whiteboard&markers
Handouts summarising key points and exercises.

Timer or clock to manage activity timings .



BREATHING LIFE INTO YOUR STORY

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the layers of character development, including backstory and growth.
- Create dynamic and authentic character relationships.
- Utilize dialogue and actions to reveal character traits.
- Explore the role of character arcs in driving the plot.
- Apply advanced techniques to make characters memorable and relatable

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Balancing character-driven and plot-driven narratives.

Tip: Ensure characters' decisions align with their motivations for organic storytelling.

Challenge: Crafting diverse and multidimensional characters.

Tip: Research and approach character differences with respect and authenticity.

Challenge: Developing character arcs that resonate.

Tip: Consider internal conflicts and transformative moments for impactful arcs.

PRESENTATION:

Begin by recapping the importance of characters in storytelling and briefly touch upon the objectives of the workshop. Discuss the complexity of characters, including their backstory, desires, and flaws, and guide participants in brainstorming backstory elements for a character.

Next, explore how character relationships drive conflict and emotion, and lead a discussion on creating meaningful connections between characters.

Explain how dialogue and actions reveal character traits, providing examples of subtext and indirect characterization. Move on to define character arcs and their significance in storytelling, and help participants outline a character's journey of growth or change. Introduce advanced techniques, such as foils and anti-heroes, and share tips for crafting memorable and relatable characters. Discuss ways to incorporate character development into participants' ongoing projects and offer guidance on adapting character techniques to various genres.

Address participant questions and encourage the sharing of character development insights.

Finally, summarize the key takeaways from the workshop and emphasize the role of well-developed characters in driving engaging narratives.

PARTICIPANTS: 15-20 with varying levels of storytelling experience.

SPACE: A comfortable and quiet environment, either physical or virtual, that facilitates interactive discussions and activities.

DURATION: 120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:
Notebooks, pencils&pens
Projector and screen
Whiteboard&markers
Handouts summarising key points and exercises.
Timer or clock to manage activity timings .



EDITING, REFINING, AND PRESENTING

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the impact of settings on the overall narrative.
- Create immersive and vivid worlds through sensory details.
- Develop cultural, historical, or fantastical contexts for your stories.
- Utilize settings to enhance character development and conflict.
- Apply techniques to establish mood and atmosphere in your writing.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Objectively evaluating one's own work during the editing process.

Tip: Take breaks between writing and editing to gain a fresh perspective.

Challenge: Balancing self-editing with receiving external feedback

Tip: Combine self-editing with seeking feedback from trusted sources.

Challenge: Preparing for public readings or presentations.

Tip: Practice reading aloud and adjusting pacing for maximum impact.

PRESENTATION:

Reiterate the importance of settings in storytelling and briefly introduce the objectives of the workshop. Then, discuss how settings influence tone, mood, and character interactions, and share examples of well-known stories with strong setting elements.

After this, explore the use of sensory details to create vivid settings. Next, guide participants in brainstorming sensory descriptions for a setting. Following that, explain the significance of cultural, historical, or fantastical contexts. Discuss the interplay between world-building and character backgrounds. Then, illustrate how settings can drive conflict and character growth. Help participants consider settings as dynamic elements of their stories. Afterward, define atmosphere and its role in storytelling. Lead a discussion on using language to evoke specific feelings. Continue by discussing how participants can incorporate world-building into their projects. Offer tips for integrating setting and atmosphere seamlessly.

Afterward, address participant questions and encourage sharing of world-building insights. Finally, summarize the workshop's key takeaways and highlight the importance of crafting immersive settings in storytelling.

PARTICIPANTS: 15-20

SPACE: A conducive environment, whether physical or virtual, that promotes active participation and group discussions.

DURATION: 120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:

Notebooks, pencils&pens
Projector and screen
Whiteboard&markers
Handouts summarising key points and exercises.
Timer or clock to manage activity timings .

TENSION, TWIST, RESOLUTION

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the importance of tension and conflict in storytelling.
- Create effective plot structures with well-paced developments.
- Craft compelling plot twists that engage and challenge readers.
- Develop satisfying resolutions that tie up loose ends.
- Apply advanced techniques to elevate plot complexity and depth

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Sustaining tension and engagement throughout the narrative.

Tip: Introduce obstacles and challenges that keep characters on their toes.

Challenge: Executing plot twists without betraying the story's internal logic.

Tip: Foreshadow subtly and ensure twists align with character motivations.

Challenge: Crafting resolutions that are both fulfilling and believable.

Tip: Resolve major conflicts while leaving room for character growth.

PRESENTATION:

Emphasize the significance of tension, twists, and resolutions in storytelling and provide an overview of the workshop's objectives. Then, define tension and its role in driving the narrative. Discuss different types of conflict and how they contribute to tension. Following that, explain the concept of the story arc and its components. Help participants outline a basic plot structure for a story. Next, discuss the purpose of plot twists and reader expectations. Lead a brainstorming session for potential plot twists. Explore the elements of a satisfying resolution and guide participants in outlining a resolution that addresses major conflicts. Introduce advanced techniques like subplots and multiple viewpoints. Share tips on seamlessly integrating complexity into the narrative. Afterward, discuss how participants can apply plot techniques to their projects. Offer advice on selecting the right balance of tension, twists, and resolutions. Address participant questions and encourage sharing of plot development insights. Finally, summarize the key takeaways from the workshop and highlight the impact of well-crafted plot dynamics on storytelling.

PARTICIPANTS: 15/20 with varying levels of storytelling experience.

SPACE: A comfortable and quiet environment, either physical or virtual, that facilitates interactive discussions and activities.

DURATION: 120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:
Notebooks, pencils&pens
Projector and screen
Whiteboard&markers

Handouts summarising key points and exercises.
Timer or clock to manage activity timings .

THE ART OF SETTING AND ATMOSPHERE



OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the impact of settings on the overall narrative.
- Create immersive and vivid worlds through sensory details.
- Develop cultural, historical, or fantastical contexts for your stories.
- Utilize settings to enhance character development and conflict.
- Apply techniques to establish mood and atmosphere in your writing.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Balancing world-building and plot progression.

Tip: Integrate world-building seamlessly into character interactions and plot events.

Challenge: Creating unique and believable fictional settings.

Tip: Mix real-world inspirations with imaginative elements to craft original worlds.

Challenge: Conveying atmosphere effectively.

Tip: Experiment with descriptive language to evoke specific emotions.

PRESENTATION

Emphasize the significance of editing, refining, and presentation in the context of your story. Outline the workshop's goals and structure. Then, discuss the role of editing in improving story quality and provide insights into the editing mindset and approach.

Following that, highlight typical errors in grammar, punctuation, and structure, and share strategies for identifying and correcting mistakes.

Discuss the importance of clarity, coherence, and consistency and lead participants in refining a paragraph for improved readability.

Explore strategies for effective public readings or presentations and discuss techniques to engage different types of audiences. Share the value of external feedback in enhancing stories and provide tips for receiving and applying feedback constructively.

Discuss the last steps before presenting or publishing and emphasize the importance of proofreading and final checks. Encourage participants to share a brief excerpt of their work and facilitate constructive feedback from peers. Finally, summarize the key takeaways from the workshop and emphasize the importance of continuous improvement and growth.

PARTICIPANTS: 15/20 with varying levels of storytelling experience.

SPACE: A conducive environment, whether physical or virtual, that promotes active participation and group discussions.

DURATION: 120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:

Notebooks, pencils&pens

Projector and screen

Whiteboard&markers

Handouts summarising key points and exercises. Timer or clock to manage activity timings .

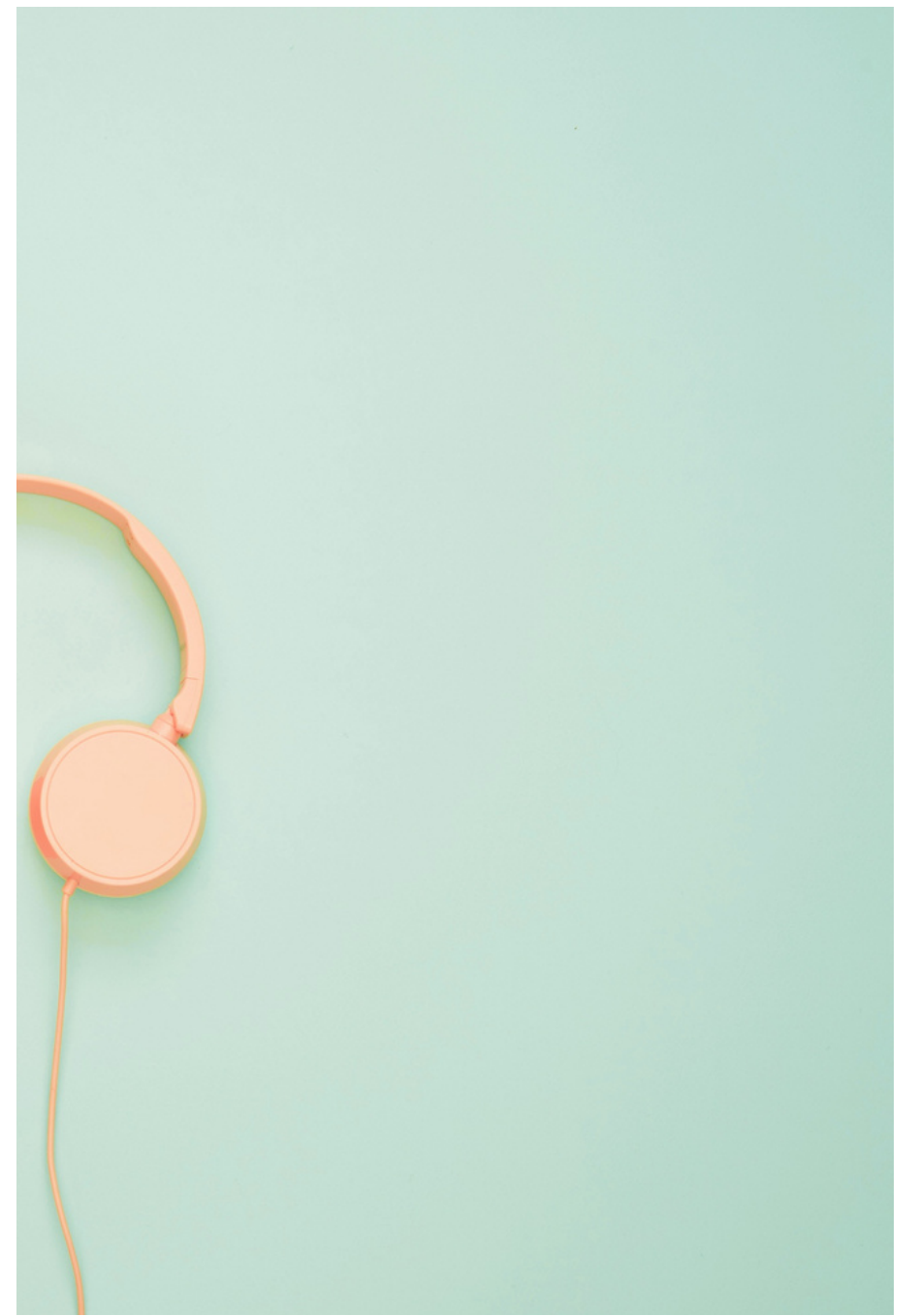
Music



**WRITING
SONG
TEXT**

←

**LET'S REWRITE
THE SONG** ↗



MY MELODIES

←

**INNOVATIVE
RHYTHMS** ↗



**LIFE TIMELINE
IN A MUSIC
TRACK**

←

**ONE WORD,
ONE VERSE:
MY STORY
IN MY SONG** ↗





WRITING SONG TEXT

OBJECTIVES:

- The aim is to help the inmate to start the process of writing his own texts about his situation.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenges can be that this is new and strange to some inmates.

PRESENTATION

Lyrics can be written in different ways. Some people first write a text, and then make music for it, or get someone else to do it. Then we have those who first create the music, and then write the lyrics. Many will probably also choose to do both at the same time - you have something on your mind that you want to make music from, and you hum and create words at the same time.

Theme-based: Decide on a theme. It should be something that engages you, or something you find comical, sad, strange, exciting - then the text will also be more interesting.

Suggestions for topics from a rehabilitation perspective: - a good story about a person you have met - thoughts about your own processes - friendship - consequences of choices - things that annoy - big questions about life - anything, really!

Work through the material. Try to collect some of the ideas so that they can fit together in one verse - or make a sort of order for them. Feel free to use colours, and use the same colour to circle ideas that belong to the same verse. Also find out what will be the chorus - what is the most important thing you want to say? Think lines in the verses and think main message in the chorus.

Then determine the lines against the chord progression or the beat.

Determine the ending: How should the text end? Do you want the chorus to be repeated several times, or do you want to replace some words to emphasize a point? Or will there be a kind of closing verse, with a slightly different melody?

PARTICIPANTS: Writing teachers and students

SPACE: Classroom or music room.

DURATION: Different periods can be used for the technique. E.g. 4 x 90 min.

MATERIAL NEEDED: A computer and a program for writing (For example. World). You also need something that indicates the key and chord progression of the text. E.g. a guitar, a beat, a piano or similar.

LET'S REWRITE THE SONG



OBJECTIVES:

- Critical Analysis: Encourage participants to listen to and analyze song lyrics with a critical and conscious eye
- Promote teamwork and creative thinking within sub-groups during the brainstorming session, fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment.
- Telling and telling yourself through the words of a song

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: the challenge of this workshop lies in merging individual creativity with group collaboration.

Tips: Emphasize the importance of constructive feedback within sub-groups to refine and improve the collaborative song writing process.

Lastly, celebrate the diversity of ideas and perspectives within the group, fostering an inclusive and supportive atmosphere throughout the workshop.

PRESENTATION

In a room, the lyrics of a song chosen by the participants or suggested by the facilitator are listened to and projected. The text is read and analysed together, giving the participants the opportunity to look at the song with a more critical and conscious eye. The different types of rhyme and the concepts of verse and chorus are reviewed and summarised, and cards are prepared with simple definitions and examples produced by the participants.

At this point the more creative activity begins. A number of song themes are suggested and the theme can be chosen together with the participants. Once the song theme has been chosen, the group divides into different verses and a chorus (if there is one).

Within the groups, brainstorm to get as many rhyme ideas as possible. It is useful to have the base of the song in the background so that you can test the verses as you work.

When the work in the sub-groups is finished, the group comes together to rehearse the song as a whole and give it unity with the final corrections.

Closing: Gathering reflections on the work done and singing or reading the song.

PARTICIPANTS: +/- 15

SPACE: Classroom or music room.

DURATION: Around 2 hours

MATERIAL NEEDED: Computer with Internet connection to select a track.

Printer to print out lyrics to work on

Projector to display and discuss lyrics

Paper and pens



MY MELODIES

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage participants to unleash their creativity and imagination by connecting with the emotions and images inspired by different music tracks.
- Foster the ability to weave a compelling story, incorporating elements such as characters, setting, and plot, all influenced by the chosen music.
- Explore the role of music in evoking and expressing emotions within a storytelling context.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Some participants may find it challenging to start their stories or develop a plot.

Tips: Prompt participants to incorporate symbolic elements from the music into their stories, deepening the connection between the auditory and written experiences.

Be flexible with the structure and format of the stories.

PRESENTATION

Play several short pieces of instrumental music and ask participants to close their eyes and let the music guide their imagination. Encourage them to write down any feelings, images or stories that come to mind as they listen to each track.

After the exploration, ask participants to choose one track that inspired them the most. This will be the "melody" in their story.

Participants will now develop a short story based on their chosen Melody. They should incorporate the emotions and images inspired by the music into their stories. Remind them to focus on descriptive language and setting the mood.

At the end of the activity, if time allows, participants can either read their stories or create a short dramatic performance accompanied by their melody. This adds a multi-sensory dimension to the storytelling experience. Discuss how different pieces of music influenced their stories and explore the variety of narratives that can emerge from the same piece of music.

PARTICIPANTS: There is no number limit

SPACE: Classroom or music room.

DURATION: suggested timeframe could be approximately 2 to 2.5 hours.

MATERIAL NEEDED: A variety of instrumental music tracks or pieces with different moods (happy, sad, adventurous, mysterious, etc.)
Speaker or music player
Paper and writing tools for participants.



INNOVATIVE RHYTHMS

OBJECTIVES:

- To develop musical creativity using unconventional instruments.
- To stimulate collaboration between inmates through the collective creation of rhythms.
- To promote a therapeutic approach through musical expression.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Create an engaging rhythm using only objects available in the prison environment. Record and document the rhythm created.

Tip: Experiment with different textures and sounds of the objects to create a unique percussion.

Tip: Use mobile devices or other available means to record the musical production.

PRESENTATION

The trainer begins the activity by presenting the objective of creating unique rhythms using only materials available in the prison environment.

The inmates are organised into groups and instructed to explore the materials at hand, such as plastic containers, kitchen utensils, empty cans, or any object that can produce sound.

The challenge is for each group to create a rhythm lasting at least one minute.

The trainer encourages experimentation and communication between the participants, encouraging the use of different textures and sounds to build a unique percussion.

After creating the rhythms, the groups are instructed to record their compositions.

Reaching the final stage, each group presents its creation to the rest of the group. The trainer leads a discussion about the sound choices made, the experience of creation and the possible therapeutic benefits of the activity.

PARTICIPANTS: There is no number limit

SPACE: Classroom or music room.

DURATION: suggested timeframe could be approximately 1 to 1.5 hours.

MATERIAL NEEDED: Any object in the room that can make a sound. For example pens, plastic containers, kitchen utensils, empty cans, bottles,...



ONE WORD, ONE VERSE: MY STORY IN MY SONG

OBJECTIVES:

- Foster a sense of personal connection and reflection.
- To create an emotional and meaningful experience for each participant.
- Encourage creative expression and the integration of personal narratives into a collective creative process.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Some participants may choose songs with a deeply personal or emotional meaning, can be challenging to manage any emotional responses that may arise during the activity.

Challenge: Allow enough time for each participant to share their song and contribute a verse or chorus.

Tip: it is important to ensure a safe and supportive atmosphere where participants feel comfortable expressing their feelings and sharing personal stories.

Tip: Include moments of reflection during and after the activity to share feelings and thoughts, thus fostering a deeper understanding of the impact of the activity on their personal narratives.

PRESENTATION

Each participant is invited to choose a song that has marked his or her life.

If there are fewer than 10 people in the group, the songs can be played one after the other, or if the group is large, only part of the song can be played for those who want to share it. Participants can introduce their own song and sit or move around the room while listening to the music.

Once they have listened to all the songs, they can look up the lyrics on the internet or print them out if a printer is available. Next, everyone looks for a word in their song that has a particular meaning in their life story.

Papers and pens are then distributed and participants are invited to add a verse to the song or write a new refrain based on or starting from the word they have chosen.

Something that relates to the present, to their own story now.

They are given about 30 minutes to write the lyrics and when the group is finished we gather in a circle and everyone shares with the group by singing or reading their verse or refrain.

It is always important to leave a space to share how they felt before, during and after the activity and to facilitate a moment of sharing the experience.

PARTICIPANTS: +/- 10

SPACE: Any space or music room.

DURATION: suggested timeframe could be approximately 1 to 1.5 hours.

MATERIAL NEEDED: Speaker, printer (optional), papers, pens, internet connection, phone or laptop



LIFE TIMELINE WITH MUSIC TRACKS

OBJECTIVES:

- Engage in thoughtful self-reflection by creating a timeline of their lives
- Foster emotional connection and introspection as participants explore the impact of specific songs on their life journey, creating a deeper understanding of the role of music in their personal narrative.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Participants may face emotional challenges as they relive significant life events through the songs.

Challenge: Technical hurdles (if laptops are used). Some participants may find it difficult to use the digital platform, so facilitators will need to provide support and guidance.

Tip: Create an open and non-judgmental atmosphere for participants to freely express personal experiences and emotions. Be prepared to offer support and resources to participants facing difficult memories.

Tip: If laptops are used, give a short tutorial to ensure that participants can combine song elements effectively.

PRESENTATION

Participants draw a timeline of their life on paper, marking important milestones. At each time point, participants write down the title and artist of a song that resonates with that period of their life.

Share their timelines in small groups or pairs and discuss the meaning of each song chosen. Facilitate a brief reflection on the emotions and memories associated with each timeline.

Second part: Computer-based song creation if computers are available.

For participants with access to computers, guide them to digitally assemble snippets or lyrics from the songs identified on their timeline.

Encourage creativity in combining elements to create a unique, personalised song that represents their life journey.

At the end of the workshop, participants gather to share their unique songs with the group.

Encourage participants to discuss the creative process and the emotions evoked by the final composition.

PARTICIPANTS: There is no number limit, depends on the availability of laptops

SPACE: Classroom or music room.

DURATION: suggested timeframe could be approximately 2 hours.

MATERIAL NEEDED:
Speaker or music player.
Paper and writing tools for participants.
Laptops with a digital programme to cut pieces of the songs and put them together into a single track

Expressive art



LIVING LIBRARY

TASTE OF STORIES



THE STORY OF YOUR SCAR

THE STORY OF YOUR TATOO



A STORY IN A JAR

LABELS





THE STORY OF YOUR TATTOO

OBJECTIVES:

- Explore how tattoos serve as a form of personal storytelling.
- Encourage participants to share the stories behind their tattoos, fostering self-expression and understanding.
- Facilitate a dialogue on the diverse reasons for getting tattoos, such as honouring someone, expressing ideals, or shaping identity.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

- Navigate sensitive tattoo stories by creating a safe and respectful space.
- Promote inclusivity by broadening the conversation to include perspectives on body art.

PRESENTATION

How do tattoos tell a story?

Tattoos have for centuries been a form of storytelling – from each line, shape, colour and form tracing a particular narrative.

Although not a typical canvas, tattoo artists give a home to meaningful art onto the human body, portraying the person's most cherished stories. A big difference with scars is that they are placed intentionally and are not the result of a traumatic event.

What does a tattoo tell about a person?

According to a study 22% (of 540 individuals) possessed at least one tattoo.

Further analyses showed that, compared with non-tattooed individuals, tattooed participants had significantly higher scores on extraversion, experience seeking, need for uniqueness, and held more positive attitudes toward tattoos.

Tell the story of your tattoo:

Is it to honour someone?

Is it about your ideals?

Is it because it expresses a certain identity?

Why did you decide to place the tattoo?

...

PARTICIPANTS: +/- 10

SPACE: Everywhere, it should be a safe space to share stories

DURATION: around 10 minutes each one.

Depending on the number of participants.

MATERIAL NEEDED: No material needed.

There is the possibility of writing the story down instead of telling it aloud. In this case you will need some paper and pens.

THE STORY OF YOUR SCAR

OBJECTIVES:

Therapeutic Expression:

- Allow participants to express personal scar stories for emotional release and growth.
- Foster empathy and connection through shared stories of resilience.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Some participants may feel shame or reluctance in sharing the stories behind certain scars.

Tip: Establish a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere, emphasizing the importance of personal choice in sharing, ensuring participants feel safe. Provide resources for navigating more traumatic stories with sensitivity and compassion.

PRESENTATION

Each scar has its story, its place in time, its locations and its cast of characters. The stories of scars are chapters of your autobiography. Each scar is a physical souvenir with an emotional echo. There physical scars but also emotional scars and psychological scars.

Most people have scars, innocently obtained in childhood, these pink, purple linen are reminders of the past.

Each scar has its story, its place in time, its locations and its cast of characters. The stories of scars are chapters of your autobiography. Each scar is a physical souvenir with an emotional echo. There physical scars but also emotional scars and psychological scars.

Most people have scars, innocently obtained in childhood, these pink, purple linen are reminders of the past. Maybe you fell of your bike or from a treehouse.

Other scars are larger, more traumatic with associated memories that have been deliberately consigned to the darkest corners of the mind.

Scars tell a story and we shouldn't be ashamed to tell it. Some people try to conceal their scars. For smaller ones it's easy the larger ones are more difficult to hide.

Tell the story of your scar describe what happened, describe how all your senses experienced the event/incident.

What did you feel, what did you see around you, what did you hear, how did the place smell, did you taste something, ... Where was it, how old were you.

PARTICIPANTS: +/- 10

SPACE: Everywhere, it should be a safe space to share stories

DURATION: around 10 minutes each one. Depending on the number of participants.

MATERIAL NEEDED: No material needed. There is the possibility of writing the story down instead of telling it aloud. In this case you will need some paper and pens.



A STORY IN A JAR

OBJECTIVES:

Creative Collaboration:

- Foster teamwork and creative collaboration among participants as they work together to weave a coherent and engaging story using the randomly chosen elements.
- Encourage the exploration of diverse perspectives and ideas within each group.

Spontaneous Storytelling Skills:

- Enhance participants' ability to think on their feet and create compelling narratives spontaneously by combining disparate elements.
- Develop confidence in improvisational storytelling and inspire participants to embrace the unexpected in their creative process.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenges: Integrate disparate elements for a coherent narrative and balance planning time with effective performance execution.

Tips: Encourage creative thinking and open communication and allocate time wisely and emphasize quick decision-making.

PRESENTATION

We prepare four glass jars with different coloured lids. Each jar will contain a different theme:

- A place
- A character (person, animal, fantasy character)
- An object
- A verb

The participants are given small sheets of paper which they divide into four. They must then write a place on one piece of paper, a character on the other, and so on.

Each jar must contain at least 10 cards before the activity starts.

The participants are divided into two or more groups, depending on the number of participants (max. 5 persons per group).

Each group takes a card from each jar and ends up with 4 words. The group with these 4 words has to create a story and present it through a small performance or alternatively a video.

The participants are free to interpret the story in the way they feel most comfortable.

PARTICIPANTS: max 20

SPACE: Everywhere, it should always be a safe space to share stories and perform.

DURATION: 60-120 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED: glass jars, papers, markers, scissors. And a camera if they want to make a video.

LIVING LIBRARY



OBJECTIVES:

- Promote empathy and understanding through meaningful conversations between people from different backgrounds.
- Create a platform for open and respectful dialogue that challenges stereotypes.
- Promote a safe space that values lived experiences and emphasises active listening and respectful communication.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Challenge: Sensitive topics such as lifestyle, health or ideology may come up during the workshop. Some questions may be uncomfortable for the person.

Tip: Stress the significance of empathy, openness, and mutual respect in approaching sensitive subjects. Ensure Privacy and Respect. Encourage participants to be mindful of boundaries and prioritize creating a comfortable and secure space for sharing.

PRESENTATION

Every live is a story, every live is a book. The Living Library sometimes called human library, is in the true sense of the word, a library of people with a story to share.

During a living library event several people are present, some of them are invited because they have an interesting story to share. The “readers” can “borrow” the people who serve as open books sit down together and have conversations with them.

Often the human books, represent a group in our society that is subjected to prejudice, stigmatization or discrimination because of their lifestyle, diagnosis, belief, disability, social status, ethnic origin etc.

The Human Library aims to establish a positive framework and safe space for dialogue between readers and a human book. The concept is based on personal conversation rather than a presentation or lecture. It is not just a story, it’s an engagement and interaction, a Q&A from a lived perspective.

The “rules for readers” are simple:

- respect the book
- be curious
- bring the book back on time and in the same condition it was given to you.

Both parties have the right to end the loan at any time.

Other topics in the human library include addiction, family relations, gender/sexuality, health, ideology, lifestyle, occupation, and religion.

The library golden rules are being respectful of others, setting your phones on vibrate. To ensure a good library experience for all protect everybody’s personal privacy.

PARTICIPANTS: No number limit

SPACE: Everywhere, it should be a safe space to share stories

DURATION: 30-60 min

MATERIAL NEEDED:
Few chairs, depending on the number of participants

THE TASTE OF STORIES



OBJECTIVES:

Telling stories and cooking together

- To connect people inside and outside the prison walls.
- Exchange of impressions/memories/ emotions/tastes in a very attractive way.
- Respect and curiosity/interest in each other
- Sharing is caring. Food sharing even more
- All the recipes and stories are compiled into a booklet.
- Creating exciting and lively worlds with sensory details

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

Participants often meet for the first time; often difficult to tell your personal story. Taste of stories concept is low-threshold and accessible to all.

- This workshop will result in wonderful stories about food.

Some stories/memories can be emotionally charged, please bear that in mind

- Have each person structure/present his/her story in a similar way: who am I, age, country of origin, memory, recipe, what does this do to you,...that way you bring structure and avoid talking in a jumbled fashion.

PRESENTATION

Prisoners from prison and people from outside prison come together different times. Together they will discover the stories behind everyone's favourite recipe. They will learn how to share their story with the group in a fun way.

Then we go into the kitchen and cook each recipe. This way you literally taste the stories we shared with each other.

Practical method in steps

1. Each participant closes their eyes: (facilitator asks the following questions)

- o Dive into thought to the memory where you intensely enjoyed food, the smell of delicious food.
- o Who was your company at the time (parents/family/friends,..); Who was cooking? Where were you then?

Imagine if you could taste these delicacies at that moment:

- o What smells come to mind? Can you recall any flavours?
- o Are there any specific ingredients you liked?
- o What goes through your mind? What feeling does this give you?
- o What was your favourite recipe/dish?
- o When was it prepared/eaten (party, special occasion,..)
- o Could you also make those dishes yourself?

Imagine being back in that place. Hold on to the feeling and impressions. If necessary just write down words or memories

2. Tell the group about this personal culinary journey: Share your memories and listen to the other stories

- o Are there any similar stories? (perhaps from different regions/use of similar ingredients/preparation methods,..)
 - o Which ingredients are important in your recipe? Why?
- Group is divided into groups of 2/3 (inmate + external)
- o Decide among yourselves which recipes will be prepared (order).

3. Make your way to the kitchen and get to work.

- o Cook your favourite recipe, tell how you prepare it and why it is special to you
- o Sit at the table together and enjoy/taste all the goodies. Share your dishes and above all, share the joy of food sharing. This way they literally taste the stories they shared with each other. Afterwards, take time to share your recipes and experiences from this workshop.

PARTICIPANTS: +/- 6 people from both groups

SPACE: inside prison: meeting room + kitchen

DURATION: different formulas possible: f.i. once a week/one afternoon during different weeks

MATERIAL NEEDED:

- Sheets of papers
- Writing materials (pens, pencils, other tools)
- Kitchen and cooking materials,
- Ingredients
- someone who notes

LABELS



OBJECTIVES:

- Recognize and challenge stereotypes associated with labels, fostering a deeper understanding of how preconceived notions can shape interactions.
- Promotion of Creative Collaboration: Facilitate an environment that promotes creative thinking and collaboration, highlighting the potential for diverse perspectives in storytelling.

CHALLENGES&TIPS:

We often feel assigned many labels in everyday life and this can have an impact on our mental health and our relationships with ourselves and others. This activity can move a person's sensitive emotions and appeals.

Tip: create a safe and trusting space where people can feel free to express their emotions and emphasize the importance of active listening

PRESENTATION

Create labels with character descriptions. Include a mix of real and fictional characters (e.g., doctor, inmate, teenager, singer, police, superheroine).

Attach a label to each participant's back without revealing it to them and ensure that characters are diverse and intriguing to spark imaginative stories.

Ask participants to freely mingle in the room, walking and looking at each other in silence.

Encourage participants to observe each other and they can begin to communicate with each other without revealing to the person they are addressing the character they represent and have attached to their back.

After a set time, introduce a narrative twist (e.g., an alien has arrived in town, a purse has been stolen).

Instruct participants to interact with others to weave a narrative together, creating a short, imaginative story.

Following this, gather participants and provide each person with an opportunity to share the story, their experience and emotions.

After everyone has shared their experiences without knowing their character, ask participants to guess their characters based on the stories shared.

Reveal Labels: Have participants look at the label on their back to discover their assigned character.

Discussion: Facilitate a group discussion about how labels influenced their interactions and storytelling.

Explore feelings associated with the assigned labels, assumptions made, the impact on building connections and how this has affected the narrative.

Reflection: Ask participants to reflect on how labels can influence perceptions and interactions with others in real-life situations.

Encourage discussion about breaking stereotypes and fostering open-mindedness.

- How did the labels influence your interactions and storytelling?
- How did you feel you were seen and treated by others?
- How do assumptions based on labels affect our perceptions of others?

This activity aims to create an engaging and thought-provoking experience, fostering discussion around the impact of labels on interpersonal dynamics and storytelling.

PARTICIPANTS: 10-20

SPACE: indoor space, Ensure that there's enough room for participants to move around

DURATION: can be adjusted based on the size of the group, 60-90 minutes

MATERIAL NEEDED:

- Labels with character descriptions (real and fictional).
- Pens/markers.
- Timer.

conclusion

By incorporating storytelling into your educational approach, you have the opportunity to inspire positive change and personal growth among individuals. Remember, that every story holds the potential to break down barriers, cultivate empathy and creativity, and contribute to a profound shift in perspective.

Storytelling is seen as a universal language that connects people from different backgrounds, and fosters a sense of shared humanity.

The workshops in this toolkit are invitations to explore, connect, and inspire. Together, let us continue to harness the profound impact of storytelling, and contribute to a world where sharing stories becomes a force for positive change, both within prisons setting and in the wider community.

This storytelling toolkit is a result of a collaborative work, a product of the dedication and passion of the GUTS-project partners.

Thank you for embarking with us on the journey of using this toolkit, and may your own narratives continue to shape a future filled with personal growth, understanding, and creativity.



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REFERENCE

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If you would like to share your thoughts on this toolkit, any workshop experiences you have had, or any other ideas you would like to add to this handbook, please write to us:

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