

MATERIALS

1. Notebooks
2. Pens

ENERGIZER AND TEAM BUILDER

Human Knot

5 Minutes

The group forms circle. Each person extends their hands to the center and grabs another hand (each hand needs to belong to a different person). The group works together to unravel the human knot. Letting go of hands is not allowed, but participants can change their grips if they need to. If the group is really stuck, the facilitator can use his/her discretion and allow one break.

DISCUSSION

Writer's Notebook

10 Minutes

Pass out Writer's Notebooks. Discuss importance and meaning of Writer's Notebook as needed for the group.

Discuss how a Writer/Poet sees the world. Too often many people go through each day as if they were on a highway or a speeding car with no windows. Destinations are arrived at, but all that happens between journeys goes by unnoticed.

A Writer never takes highway or rides in a speeding car with no windows. A writer is on a slow bus that goes through many galls and lanes that halts stops at intersections and allows the passenger to notices all that is around. For a writer the journey is also a part of the writer's destination. When a writer is observant to small noticings, there needs to be a place where the writer can record such observations. Hence, the Writer's Notebook.

The Writer's Notebook is in many ways like a bank that has all the goods and riches we experience in a day (both good and bad.) We use the notebook as a resource of ideas, images and stories.

The Writer's Notebook Includes

- Questions or Memories
- Eavesdropping
- Overheard Conversations
- Playing with Language
- Images that stick in your mind

- Lists,
- Family Stories
- Close

Observations/Descriptions

- Newspapers/Magazines

Clippings

CRAFT ACTIVITIES

- Talking to yourself on paper
- Opinions on issues/situations
- Free Writing
- Quotations
- Kernels of Stories

1. Writing with Senses

30 Minutes

Discussion: List four senses on the board. Ask the group to orally describe the room they are presently sitting in using of the following senses: (Sight: Mint green walls, Sound: The Hiss of the pressure cooker upstairs, Smell: Cigarettes from the room next door, Touch: The cool cement floor). For each sense ask them to think in details and in specifics. Enjoy an oral discussion.

Writing Activity: Ask the writers to close their eyes and visualize the gali or lane outside of their home. Think in terms of the four senses we just talked about.

- Ask them to think of a sound they hear when they think of the gali.....[Ask them to write the sound]
- Ask them to think of a sight they see when they think of the gali.....[Ask them to write the sight]
- Ask them to think of smell when they imagine the gali....[Ask them to write the smell]
- Ask them to think of a touch when they imagine the gali....[Ask them to write the touch]
- At the heading of these lines, ask them to put the following title: The Lane across my Home.

Share the short poems. Spend time on each poem, suggesting greater detail and trimming sentences with unnecessary words.

3. Ordinary to Poetic: Thinking with Similes and Metaphors

15 minutes

One of the things that poetry does is that it helps us look at the world in a new way and describe it like no one has before.

1. Pick an object in the room around you. (Fan, Bag, Mat, Rug, Sky, Grass etc)

2. Ask the group to describe the object as one normally does.
Example: Grass – Green, Thin, Long, Smooth.
3. Now, ask them to think describe the object as a poet would:
 - Color: Blades of grass are green like....(My mother’s Sari/Dreams/Empty bottles of citrus)
 - Thin: Blades of grass are thin like (my sister’s eyebrows/nani jaan’s gently fingers/ school pencils)
 - Smooth: Blades of grass are smooth like (an old pair of jeans)
4. Practice this orally with the group with different objects and unobvious similes.
5. Explain to the group that the poet always Re-Sees’ the ordinary through the imagination

Prompters to RESEEing and REWRITINGing:

- Color. Get specific about color. Compare the color to another object.
- Size. Get specific about size. Compare the size to another object.
- Shape – think of similes.
- Texture
- Think of the whole object and outrageous similes.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Poem: Five Ways to look at a Dead Crow

15 Minutes

1. Have each participant pick an object they will write about (light bulb, dead crow, red fountain pen, etc)
2. The poem should be titled, “Five Ways to Look at a (the chosen object)”
3. The body of the poem should consist of five metaphors representing the object. See example

“Five Ways of Looking at Dead Crow”

*Dada ji’s old sandals
Palm full of raisins
Thumb prints
Flat tire
A black seashell*

“Five our Ways of Looking at a Glass of Water”

*White underwear
Broken finger nail
Flat afternoon sky
Convent girl’s handwritten letter.
Your lover’s dishonest eyes*

4. Encourage the writer do make descriptive comparisons and even thematic comparisons (See the later lines of the poem, Four Ways of Glass of Water)
5. This is a take-home activity.

Concluding Activity

Check-Out

Go around the room and ask the group to “sign” how they felt about this session. Thumb up, Great Session. Thumbs Down, Bad Session. Thumbs Sideways, So-so session.

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