

What is the story: activities to support a storytelling workshop.

presented by EarlyWorks, llc.

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EarlyWorks is a Detroit-based strategy and insights consulting group. We work with clients who seek to create more equitable and thriving communities in all spheres of public life.

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“*Stories make life less painful and a little more livable.*” - Robert McKee

Storytelling Elements

There are many ways to tell a story. The eight questions below are cues you can use to make your stories memorable, meaningful and actionable.

Ask yourself:

How am I using all the senses to tell this story?

Does this story put people at the center, starting at the heart?

What is the journey that is taken?
What is the transformation?

How authentic and personal is this story?

Does this story create a connection—an intimacy—between its teller and its recipient?

How does this story create generosity?
Or exceptional hospitality?

Should this story be told?

Does this story create a sense of possibility or magic?



Paired Exercise: Sharing our Stories

Find a partner. Choose who tells the story and who listens first.

Tell each other your favorite [fill in your context here] story — it doesn't have to be your own; it could be one that affected you deeply and/or that you find yourself telling others.

Switch.

There will be an opportunity to share with the larger group. Think about whether the story you've told and the story you've just heard should be told more broadly, to lift up examples of [fill in your context here].

MY STORY		
Beginning	Middle	End

NOTES

“*The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.*” - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Table Exercise: Imagining our stories

We want to imagine how the stories will be told. At your table, choose a scribe and a spokesperson. The scribe will write your table’s ideas on the paper provided. The spokesperson will report out to the bigger group at the end of the exercise. Everyone will have the chance to contribute!

Develop two story ideas as a group and then write them out as headlines.

For each idea, imagine the journey that is taken, the hero of the story, the major obstacles or conflicts encountered to reach the destination ...

- What happens?
- What happens next?
- How is it resolved?
- How does it end?

Pick one story idea to share with the broader group and be prepared to describe:

- Headline for the story, e.g., mermaid falls in love with human
- Hero of the story
- Story arc (what happens, generally) - see graphic on the right
- Medium for the story (Is it shown through imagery? Is it written? Is it spoken?)

STORY 1

HEADLINE			NOTES:
HERO			
Beginning	Middle	End	

STORY 2

HEADLINE			NOTES:
HERO			
Beginning	Middle	End	