



“Re-Presentation”

Narrative Medicine Workshop Rundown

Description:

This guide is timed for a **1-hour, 30-minute** virtual workshop with **8-10 participants** and includes a short break. It assumes you have already held an introductory “Attention” group and set group guidelines. Adjust your time estimates for groups that are larger, smaller, or of different lengths. Same for in-person groups: adjust timing and exercises as necessary.

Look for facilitator tips, production notes, and sample language throughout to help make your workshop successful. Feel free to copy and paste third objects, prompts, and other exercises from the [Accessible Digital Library](#) into your rundown.

Workshop sections:

WELCOME	<i>3-5 minutes</i>
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Guidelines reminder. Introductory note about **representation/re-presentation**, how we tell and retell our own stories and others, the limits of language, the skill and difficulty of translating what we absorb. Remind everyone there will be a short break midway through the workshop.

WARM-UP WRITE & SHARE	<i>15-20 minutes total</i>
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Write #1 (5 minutes)

With yourself in mind, or some detail about the space you’re in right now, write on one of the following prompts. Engage with all the senses available to you and be sure to keep your pen/pencil/typing moving:

- You can’t always tell, but...
- Do you know what this is?...

Facilitator tip on accessibility:

These are modifications of common prompts such as “You can’t tell by looking...” or “You’ve got to see this...” These versions de-emphasize the primacy of sight over other senses.

Share (10-15 minutes)

Give everyone an opportunity to share all or part of their writing aloud. Reminder of confidentiality, to read without apology or preamble. For everyone else, bring attention to the writing, practice active engagement with what is being shared. If there is a particular word or phrase that stands out to you, write it down for yourself or type it in the chat.



THIRD OBJECT – ENGAGE, DISCUSS, AND WRITE
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<i>16-20 minutes total</i>

For third objects and prompts or exercises that pair best with this workshop, [visit the Accessible Digital Library here](#).

Preface (1 minute)

Before sharing your screen with the third object, encourage everyone to continue the level of active engagement when you shared each other’s words. Encourage them to keep a list of what they notice about the piece, first impressions, words or phrases, their own experience in their body and any emotional reaction.

Engage with third object (5-7 minutes)

Share your screen. If a written work, mimic other workshops and have a participant read aloud and a second volunteer read it again. Whatever the third object, have everyone jot a list for themselves what they notice about the piece, the questions they have.

Discuss (10-12 minutes)

Facilitate discussion about what people notice or respond to, what stands out. Use skills honed in previous workshops. Does everybody gravitate to the same things or different? Was there something you brought to your observation, any aesthetic preference or bias? Was there something familiar that helped you identify with the material, or was there no point of reference? Was anything about the piece difficult or challenging for you? Name it.

BREAK

<i>5 minutes</i>

While it is nice to stay inside the dream of a workshop, it’s also important to normalize taking breaks. “Powering through” may leave some people behind who have access needs you are not aware of. Encourage people to keep phones and other devices tucked away, but also to stretch their body, use the restroom, grab a snack, and/or do what they need to rest and recharge.



WRITE #2, SHARE IN PAIRS

25-28 minutes total

Write #2 (10 minutes)

With the discussion of the third object in mind, do a second write. Think of a vivid memory you don't share often, something unrehearsed. It's okay to fictionalize (attention will be on the writing, not the writer). Some prompts to get you started:

- I'll never forget...
- I had no idea at the time...

Facilitator tip:

For continuity, use prompts that reference the third object you just discussed.

Share in pairs (15-18 minutes)

Before you split everyone into breakout rooms, spend 1-2 minutes explaining slowly and intentionally how each pair will share their work aloud with each other:

- You will each take turns sharing your own writing aloud ***twice in a row*** to your partner.
- The listener should practice absorbing with their whole body the first time, no need to take notes. Then, during the second reading, feel free to jot any words, phrases, or other notes down, anything to help the piece sink in.
- Be sure you thank the other person after each time they share.
- Leave a little time for the one absorbing to jot more notes, if needed
- Be sure to switch readers at the half-way mark!
- After both have shared, spend any remaining time writing down notes about the experience, or have a conversation about what you noticed and what it was like to share aloud.

At the end, everyone returns to larger group.

Production notes:

This sharing portion is padded with extra time because it may take a bit to assign breakout rooms manually so that each participant is in a pair with each other. If you have an even number of participants, it's best to sit this exercise out to make it easier for you to post reminders on timing (half-way mark to switch readers, 1 minute warning, etc.). If you have an odd number, pair up with a participant so they get the same experience of reading/absorbing, but also give yourself time to do those reminders.



WRITE #3, SHARE, DISCUSSION	<i>16-18 minutes total</i>
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Write #3 (3-4 minutes)

As you come back as a group, and while it's still fresh, a quick writing exercise. Take the notes about your breakout pair and distill your partner's words into a six-word version. Revise as many times as you want.

Share in group (3-4 minutes)

Without identifying who your partner was, share your six-word version of their story.

Group discussion (10 minutes)

Ask the group what was easier or harder, sharing your piece or recapping someone else's? What does it mean to carry someone else's story? What did you notice happening in your body during each stage of reading or absorbing? Any quality or emotion that came up? Any distracting thoughts or emotions as you read or listened? Anything that came up for you hearing someone else's 6-word version of the story you shared?

Production note:

Do a time-check here. If you have more than 15 minutes left, share a second third object and do Write #4 with a share. If there is less than 15 minutes left, skip the third object, and go straight to Write #4 and the share, making sure you can end on people's words.

**THIRD OBJECT #2, WRITE #4, and SHARE***5-20 minutes total*

For third objects and prompts or exercises that pair best with this workshop, [visit the Accessible Digital Library here](#).

Engage with third object #2 (6-8 minutes) (time-permitting)

Share your screen. If a written work, have a participant read aloud once, but not necessary for a second reader. Whatever the third object, have everyone jot a list for themselves what they notice about the piece, the questions they have. Encourage them to hold onto that sense of wonder as we go straight into a write...

Write #4 (3-8 minutes)

Reflecting on the piece just shared or anything else this evening, do a short write on one of these prompts (or use a prompt from or inspired by the second third object):

- I remember this one detail...
- If I was in their shoes...

Share (2 minutes)

Pick a single word or phrase from your piece or anything else that was shared today. Type that word or phrase in the chat so we end with a stream of our words. Facilitator may choose to read these aloud as they come in, honoring the experience of ending with everyone's words.