

ONE WORD STORY

IDEA

The one word story is a simple way to illustrate THE FUN AND POWER OF COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY.

It also helps us to understand the essential attitudes and behaviours that each participant needs to adopt in order for the wider team to successfully co-create.

So the idea is to tell a story as a team each person adding one word at a time.

PLAY

Find three or more people to take part. Form a standing circle. Identify someone to begin telling the story. This person starts by

A SINGLE WORD OUT LOUD.

Each person in turn then adds ONE ADDITIONAL WORD to create full sentences that eventually make up an entire story.

Play the game a few times.

TIPS

If you're team is finding it difficult start with "Once - upon - a - time..." to get you going.

Don't try too hard.

Don't try to guess what is coming or force the story in a particular direction.

The idea is to relax and allow thoughts and words to flow freely. Building on what has come before.

QUESTIONS

When and how does the story work best?

What is it that makes a good story?

What hinders the narrative progression?

What helps?

Where are there moments of surprise?

Where are there moments of disruption?

How did it feel taking part?

How did you personally have to behave to make the group story work?

OBSERVATIONS

It is rare that the story makes a great deal of sense, although it is always amusing. And of course the important thing is that by playing the game as a team and questioning the process you will have identified some important learnings and strategies for successful co-creation.

LEARNINGS

Collective creativity, works best when individuals listen connect and build upon each others ideas rather than each trying to own the creative process.

While absolute democracy has the power to unleash unexpected creativity it also creates difficulties in the construction and communication of a story or an idea.

In the case of the one word story we each have the ability to choose words that connect or disrupt the narrative, that add surprise or resolve to the story. It is up to us when and how we chose to use this power.

With no single author if we are to collectively build a narrative that at least has a beginning, middle and end and at best tells a compelling tale we each need to leave our own individual ambitions behind in order to build the narrative as a group.