Purposeful Storytelling

Expressing inner values and purpose through stories

BEING | Inner Compass

What you will need:

- Up to 40
- Groups of 4-6
- 30 mins preparation
- 10 hrs execution

Menu:

I. Overview
II. Learning Activity
III. Assessment
IV. Key Advice
V. References

Related Tools:

- Inviting Non-Human Stakeholders
- The Power of Storytelling
- Future Folktales
- Poetic Motivations
- Acting in Alignment

"Teach students to align their actions with their personal values while collaborating in a team to create an audio-guided tour. This activity explores the potential of storytelling to build connections between people, facilitate the inclusion of diverse voices and stories, and contribute to positive change."

—Karolina Doughty

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I. Overview

The inner compass helps individuals stay focused on their values, beliefs and goals. It serves as a guiding force, providing direction and purpose, and helps individuals to make decisions that align with their personal vision for the future. Having a strong inner compass allows individuals to navigate through uncertainties, overcome obstacles and make choices that are consistent with their authentic selves.

This tool helps students to act on their inner values. After identifying what really matters to them, they formulate shared values with like-minded others. Together they create a story that aims to communicate their shared inner values to others. Through this activity, students learn how to be guided by their inner compass in the work they do with and for others, to contribute to building connection and inclusion, and bring about change.

Learning outcome

- The student is able to display and act on their inner values and purpose

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II. Learning Activity

Acting in accordance with your inner compass while working on collaborative storytelling.

1. Locating Inner Values

30 mins

Introduce the concept of inner values and their impact on personal growth and decision-making. Ask students to choose their top 5 inner values from Brené Brown's 'Dare to Lead' list of values.

Encourage students to consider which values resonate most deeply with their own beliefs, aspirations and sense of self. Remind them that there are no right or wrong answers, and they should trust their intuition and personal experiences. Have students reflect on why these values are significant to them and write brief explanations or examples.

Remind the students to keep their lists confidential for now, as sharing and discussion will follow in later steps.

Tip: we recommend dedicating time to establishing a safe and inclusive learning environment to foster collective learning and make students feel respected and understood.

2. Shared Values

20 mins

Instruct students to form groups of 4 to 6 based on shared or similar inner values. Facilitate discussions within each group by posing thought-provoking questions about their values, such as what inspired their choices and how those values guide their actions and decisions in different aspects of life. Ensure that all group members have the opportunity to share their thoughts and perspectives during the conversation.

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Ask the groups to create collaboratively a shared top 5 values list that represents their common values. This list will serve as the foundation for their shared story.

Next, prompt students to decide on a theme for their story that aligns with their shared values and allows them to express those values creatively. Provide ample time for the groups to brainstorm, discuss and finalise their chosen theme for the shared story. Encourage open communication and collaboration.

3. Crafting a Shared Story

4 hrs

Instruct students on the essential elements of storytelling, emphasising key storytelling techniques and principles. Encourage students to develop collaboratively a narrative that effectively reflects their shared values. They should decide on an overarching storyline and discuss the means to construct it. Support students in brainstorming creative ideas, character development and plot progression that aligns with their chosen theme and shared values.

Next, guide students in recording their stories in audio format. Introduce the option to use www.izi.travel to compile their story as a publicly available audio guide.

Tip: download more information on the fundamentals of storytelling.

4. Sharing the Story

1 hr

Instruct students to listen actively to the stories created by other groups. Guide students to provide constructive peer feedback based on the following questions:

- Which specific values did you identify within the story, and how did they contribute to the overall narrative?
- Can you provide examples of how the values were expressed or demonstrated by the characters or events in the story?

Remind students to maintain a supportive and respectful tone while providing feedback.

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Facilitate a discussion after each story, allowing students to share their observations, insights and suggestions for improvement.

Tip: provide students with guidelines for giving and receiving feedback.

5. Refining the Story

2 hrs

Instruct students to discuss and analyse the feedback they received for their story together, identifying specific areas that require adjustments or enhancement. Prompt students to brainstorm collaboratively ideas and strategies for incorporating the feedback into their story.

Support students in making necessary adjustments to their storyline, characters, dialogue or any other aspects of the narrative based on the received feedback. Encourage students to maintain the integrity of their shared values while making revisions to ensure a more compelling and coherent story.

Please note, as part of assessment *as* learning, students reflect using the reflective questions.

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III. Assessment

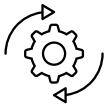
The inner compass can only be assessed by the student themselves. Therefore, the learning activity ends with self-reflection. This gives students the opportunity to assess whether they have been true to their inner compass and to reflect on their learning. In Step 5 of the activity, students reflect on their own experiences using the reflective questions.

Purpose

Assessment *as* learning aims to strengthen the learning process and the development of metacognitive skills. It empowers students to direct their own learning and to become independent, critical self-assessors.

Roles

Self-assessment



Characteristics

Self-regulated learning

Materials

Reflective questions

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Assessment

Reflective questions

1. In what ways has engaging in storytelling helped you establish a deeper connection with your inner compass and values?

2. How do your individual inner values align with the shared values identified within your group?

3. How has actively listening to the stories of others contributed to your understanding of your own values and purpose?

4. Has this storytelling activity impacted your future plans in terms of aligning your actions with your inner values? If so, in what ways?

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IV. Key Advice

Brené Brown's 'Dare to Lead' list of values and **guidelines for establishing a safe and inclusive learning environment** (Step 1) can be downloaded below.

Fundamentals of storytelling (Step 3) and **guidelines for giving and receiving feedback** (Step 4) can be downloaded below.

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List of VALUES

Accountability
Achievement
Adaptability
Adventure
Altruism
Ambition
Authenticity
Balance
Beauty
Being the best
Belonging
Career
Caring
Collaboration
Commitment
Community
Compassion
Competence
Confidence
Connection
Contentment
Contribution
Cooperation
Courage
Creativity
Curiosity
Dignity
Diversity
Environment
Efficiency
Equality
Ethics
Excellence
Fairness
Faith
Family
Financial stability
Forgiveness
Freedom
Friendship
Fun
Future generations
Generosity
Giving back
Grace
Gratitude
Growth
Harmony
Health
Home
Honesty
Hope
Humility
Humor
Inclusion
Independence
Initiative
Integrity
Intuition
Job security
Joy
Justice
Kindness
Knowledge
Leadership
Learning
Legacy
Leisure
Love
Loyalty
Making a difference
Nature
Openness
Optimism
Order
Parenting
Patience
Patriotism
Peace
Perseverance
Personal fulfillment
Power
Pride
Recognition
Reliability
Resourcefulness
Respect
Responsibility
Risk -taking
Safety
Security
Self-discipline
Self-expression
Self-respect
Serenity
Service
Simplicity
Spirituality
Sportsmanship
Stewardship
Success
Teamwork
Thrift
Time
Tradition
Travel
Trust
Truth
Understanding
Uniqueness
Usefulness
Vision
Vulnerability
Wealth
Well-being
Wholeheartedness
Wisdom

Write your own:

_____
_____
_____
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Key Advice

Seven golden guidelines to create a safe learning environment
Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment is an ongoing process. By implementing these guidelines, you can foster open communication, a sense of belonging and collective learning:

1. Set clear expectations
Clearly communicate your expectations and routines from the beginning. Ensure that students understand what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. Encourage them to participate in creating these expectations, promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility.

2. Build trust
Establish a trustworthy and secure environment by emphasising that anything shared within the group should remain confidential. Encourage students to make their own decisions about sharing personal experiences and respect their individual levels of comfort.

3. Foster active listening
Emphasise the importance of truly listening and understanding. Foster an environment where students feel free to express themselves without fear of judgment or criticism and discourage interruptions. Strengthen active listening skills by teaching non-verbal cues and using prompts.

4. Encourage empathy
Encourage students to consider the feelings and experiences of others and to respond with kindness, acceptance and understanding, even when perspectives differ from their own. Foster an inclusive and respectful environment where empathy is valued and embraced as an essential aspect of communication and mutual understanding.

5. Be a role model
Lead by example and embody the behaviour you expect from your students. Treat all students with respect, fairness and kindness, and appreciate their diverse backgrounds, individual strengths and contributions. Ensure the safety and well-being of all students by promptly and decisively addressing any form of harassment or discrimination. Reflect on mistakes and offer apologies when necessary.

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6. Adapt the pace and intensity

Recognise when emotions escalate and become overwhelming, adjusting the pace or intensity of the activity as necessary. For example, implement the "five-minute rule", where each student can express their controversial view in a respectful manner, or offer a short break for students to journal and reflect on their emotions, enabling them to regulate their feelings.

7. Follow up and check-in

Encourage students to reflect on the impact of the experience on themselves as well as the group. Provide individual or group follow-up and inquire about the well-being of students. Offer the opportunity for further discussion or support if needed. If you believe that the emotional intensity or well-being of the students exceeds your expertise, do not hesitate to seek advice from a student advisor, mental health professional or the appropriate support services provided by your institution.

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Key Advice

Fundamentals of Storytelling

Storytelling is the art of conveying a narrative to an audience. It is an essential part of human communication and has been used for centuries to share knowledge, values, beliefs and experiences. The fundamentals of storytelling include:

1. Characters
   Stories typically revolve around characters that the audience can relate to or empathise with. Characters are essential to a story as they bring it to life.

2. Setting
   The setting of a story is where the narrative takes place. It provides context for the story and helps immerse the audience in the narrative.

3. Plot
   The plot of a story is the sequence of events that occur. It involves the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution.

4. Conflict
   Conflict is the driving force of a story. It creates tension and suspense and keeps the audience engaged.

5. Theme
   The theme is the underlying message or lesson that the story conveys. It is often what the audience takes away from the narrative.

6. Point of view
   The point of view is the perspective from which the story is told. It can be first-person, third person or omniscient.

7. Language and style
   The language and style of a story are essential to its impact. They can create mood, tone, and atmosphere, and help immerse the audience in the narrative.

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8. Audience
   The audience is crucial to the success of a story. A storyteller must understand their audience and tailor their narrative to engage and connect with them.

By understanding and using these fundamentals, a storyteller can create a compelling narrative that captivates and resonates with their audience.

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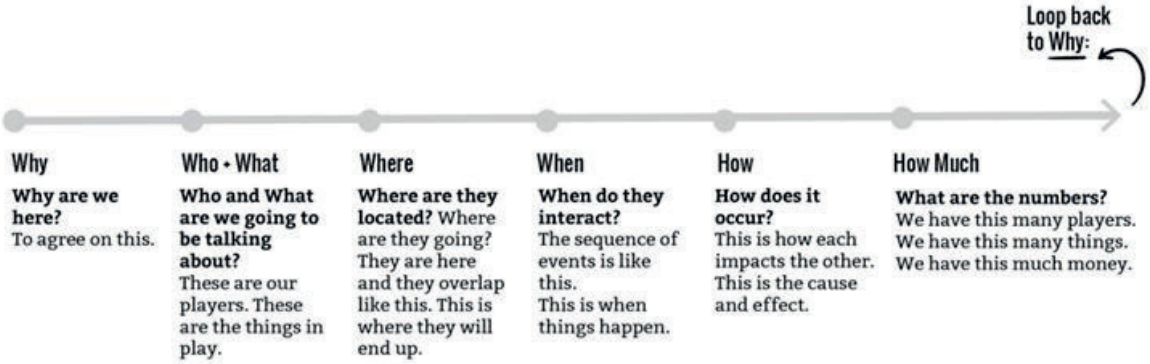
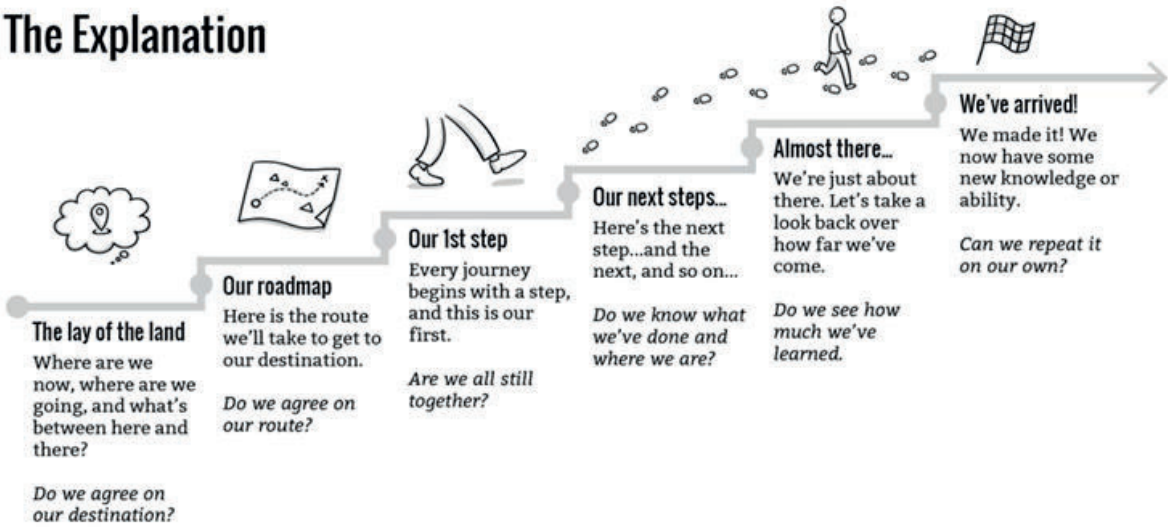
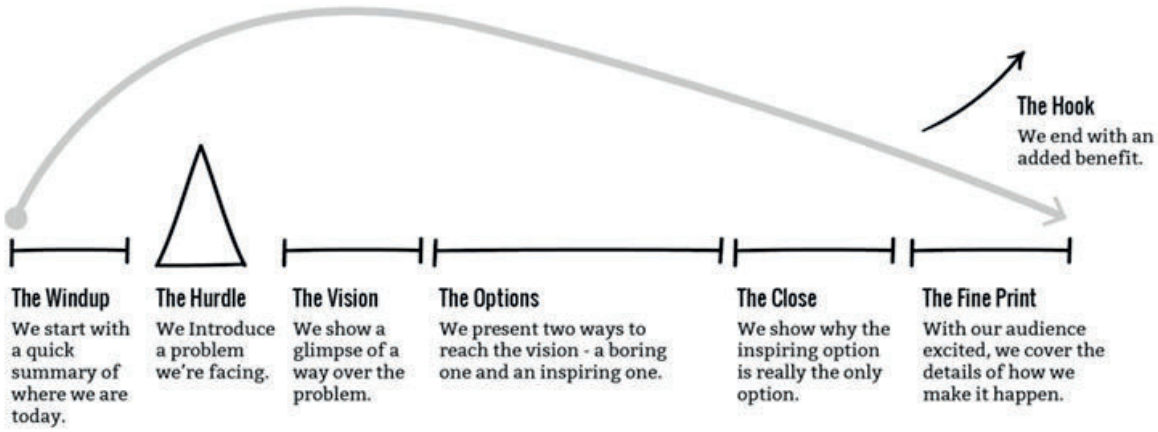
The Report



The Explanation



The Pitch



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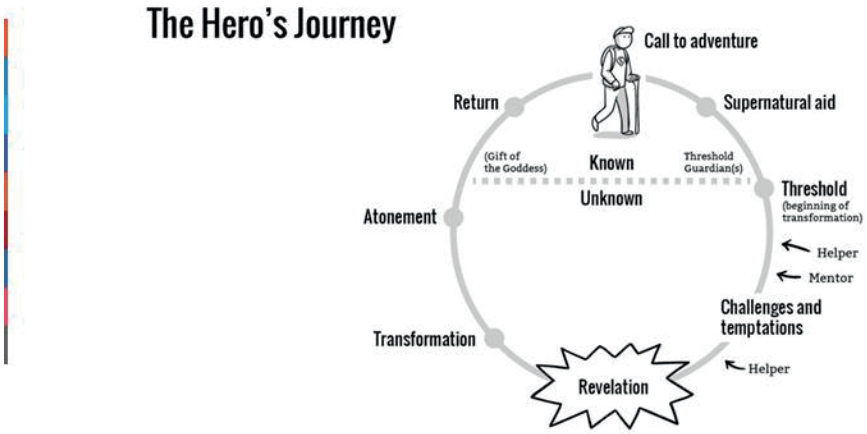
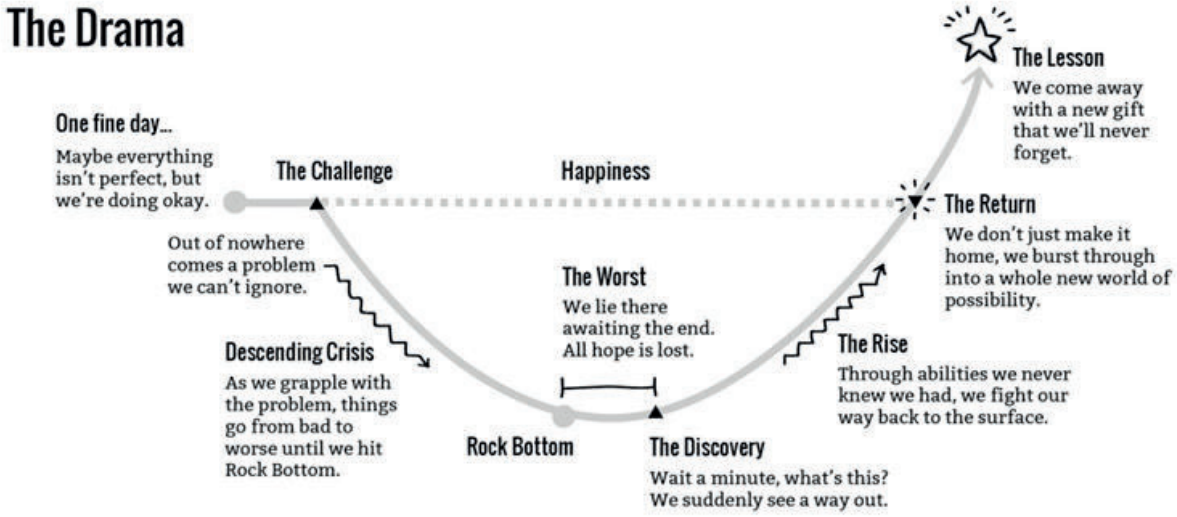
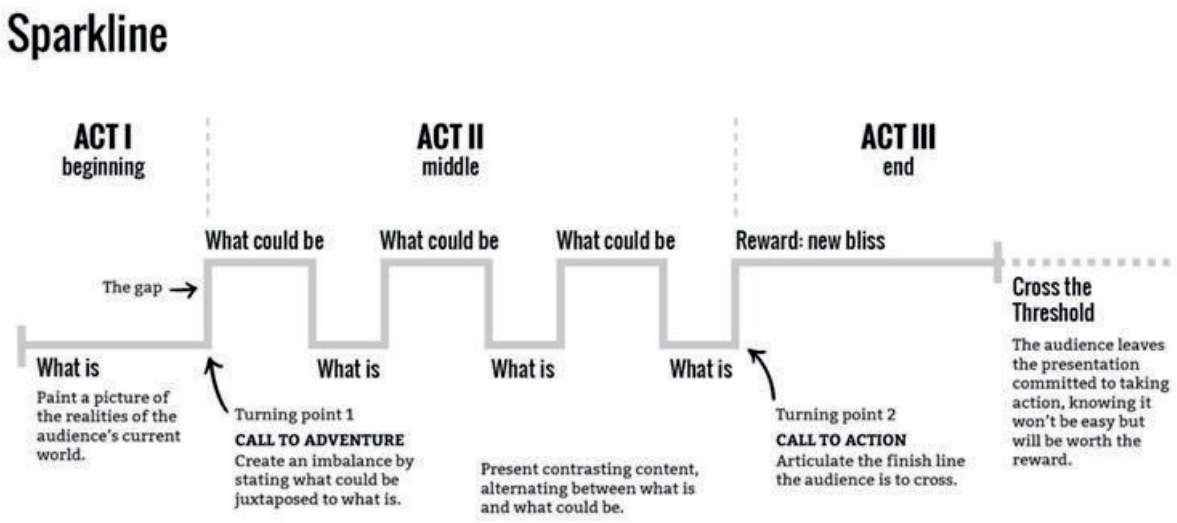
You can be present in the story, but only as that ally or helper. What Campbell prods us to remember is that it's always the audience who play the hero.







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Key Advice

By following these guidelines, feedback exchange can become a productive and positive experience for both the giver and receiver of feedback.

Guidelines for giving feedback

1. **Be specific and objective**
   Focus on the specific aspects of the drawing and the qualities of the character, and provide constructive criticism based on objective observations.

2. **Be respectful and empathetic**
   Use a positive tone and empathise with your peers' efforts, acknowledging their strengths and weaknesses.

3. **Avoid personal attacks or criticism**
   Critique the work, not the person. Avoid using language that could be interpreted as a personal attack.

Guidelines for receiving feedback

1. **Listen actively**
   Listen carefully to the feedback provided and ask clarifying questions to ensure you understand the critique.

2. **Be open-minded**
   Be willing to consider different perspectives and feedback even if it is critical of your work.

3. **Show appreciation**
   Thank your peers for their feedback and acknowledge any insights you gained from the feedback.

4. **Avoid defensiveness**
   Refrain from becoming defensive or taking feedback personally. Instead, view feedback as an opportunity to learn and grow.

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V. References

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