

WORKSHOP 2

Writing Together: Creation in Collaboration

"Writing is a legitimate way, an important way, to participate in the empowerment of the community that names me." Toni Cade Bambara (1984).

Objectives:

1. Explore the relationship of the short story *The Most Handsome Drowned Man in the World* by Gabriel García Márquez with the title of the workshop.
2. Develop a short story in groups that revisits García Márquez short story's core: creating stories in collaboration.
3. Explore reactions and feedback to each other's work and workshop dynamic.

Materials:

1. 4 audio recorders.
2. 1 video camera
3. Researcher's diary
4. Workshop guide
5. Flip chart paper
6. Notebook/Block per student
7. Pens and pencils per student
8. Markers for flipchart
9. **12 images for students to choose from¹**
10. Post-its and exit ticket papers.
11. Feelings chart
12. Copies of short story (*The Most Beautiful Drowned Man in the World*, by Gabriel García Márquez²).

Notes:

- Given the school's schedule distribution, this workshop had to be parted in two one-hour sessions, rather than one two-hour session. The workshop guide reflects this.
- I am working with 15 students out of the 16 that initially signed up.
- The last session started 20 minutes late, as the person in charge of the keys of the room we are working in, could not arrive on time. This meant I had to shorten warm up writing activities which I might use later on (like *Fantastic Pairing*).

Workshop guide:

Day 1.

1. Before the workshop:

- a. Have four tables with chairs around them.
- b. Each group has an audio recorder and have the camera set up and ready to record.
- c. Have 4 notebooks per table, pencils/pens, post-its, and copies of the first story.
- d. Have the short story books in each group.

¹ Images used have no copyright restrictions. Only one which I have the consent of the artist to use it (on p.

² Story can be found in English in the following link:

https://www.colorado.edu/studentgroups/shortfiction/The_Most_Handsome_Drowned_Man.pdf

WORKSHOP 2

Writing Together: Creation in Collaboration

- e. Have questions and ground rules done in the previous encounter on the walls where everyone can see it.
- 2. Introduction to the workshop: (5 min)**
 - a. Welcome the students and ask them about how the rest of their week was.
 - b. Explain the objectives of the workshop, and divide the group in 4.
 - c. Explain today will be focused on the story, and the second day will be focused on the writing. Our reading will be used as a guide or model for our writing.
- 3. Reading the story (35 minutes):**
 - a. **Title:** After reading the title, ask the students to write and predict what the story will tell about the most handsome drowned man **(1-2 minutes)**. Have 4 students share their ideas.
 - b. **Jigsaw reading (25 minutes):** Each group will be assigned a portion of the story. After each group reads their part, they must prepare a way to communicate what happened to the rest of the students, so that everyone in their group speaks at least once **(Reading: 5 minutes; Preparing: 8 minutes; presenting: 3 minutes per group)**.
 - c. **Questions (10 minutes):** Ask them to individually write a short answer to the following questions (have them on the flipchart). Give the students **5 minutes to answer and 5 to share**.
 - i. How close were your predictions to what actually happened?
 - ii. What do you think about the story?
 - iii. What is one element/moment of the story that stuck with you? Why?
- 4. Analysis (20 minutes):**
 - a. The women in this small town, through their present actions, build a past, present and future of an unknown drowned man, with very little information.
 - b. The story created around Esteban is so powerful, that the community transforms itself from a dull, small town, to a town that sustains and recreates the story of a dead man as a man they make their dead to mourn.
 - c. García Márquez builds a complex character through the eyes of others who see and interact with him. What elements of the character are used to describe him? Down here are some elements I can point them to if they don't mention them (physical, emotional and action dimensions).
 - i. How he looks
 - ii. How he must have felt then and how he must feel now.
 - iii. How he related to others
 - iv. How others related to him, before and after his death
 - v. How he transformed places...
 - d. *How could you relate the title of the workshop 'Creation in Collaboration' with:* (ask them to individually write their thought on their block)
 - i. The story
 - ii. Your own creative writing
 - iii. You
 - iv. Your relationship to others
- 5. Closing:** Thank the students for their work and tell them tomorrow they will be writing collaboratively around some images they will choose, acting as the men and women of this small

WORKSHOP 2

Writing Together: Creation in Collaboration

town we read about today. Before leaving, ask them to write a reaction/emotion they leave the workshop with, and a recommendation for future workshops, if they have any.

Day 2.

1. Before the workshop:

- a. Have four tables with chairs around them.
- b. Each group has an audio recorder and have the camera set up and ready to record.
- c. Have 4 notebooks per table, pencils/pens, post-its, and copies of the first story.
- d. Have a post it in each desk.
- e. Have the images scattered in the main table for the groups to be able to choose one to work with.
- f. Have questions and ground rules done in the previous encounter on the walls where everyone can see it.

2. Introduction to the workshop (4 minutes):

- a. Welcome the students. Ask them to please write a thought they woke up with in the post it in their table (I'll pick them out later).
- b. Today it will be all about the writing. We will be using images to construct a story in groups, the same way Esteban's story was constructed by the women in town. In order to do this, you will pick an image or group of images as a group. Once you have picked the images, we will begin to create.

3. Writing Activity: *Before, during and after* (Taken from Carter, 2002)

- a. **Group discussion: (2 minutes)** Once you have selected your image or images as a group, please discuss what about the images caught your attention for you to have selected it.
- b. **Individual brainstorming: (8 minutes)** Individually, brainstorm about the image. Do not worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar, or how the words form or not a story. Let your mind freely explore everything it has (Have the following list on the flipchart for everyone to see):
 - i. Ideas and thoughts.
 - ii. Moments, events, situations you see/it makes you think of.
 - iii. Descriptions: what you see, describing a place or person.
 - iv. Sentences, dialogue.
 - v. Images.
 - vi. Memories it triggers.
 - vii. People.
 - viii. **Senses:** smells, textures, flavours/taste, sounds, colours.
 - ix. **Feelings**, how the image makes you feel, what it would feel to be in it, how someone in the picture might be feeling...
 - x. Anything else that comes to mind.
- c. **Sharing thoughts: (8 minutes)** Spend time reading each other's notes. Pay close attention to others' ideas. You will not be using everything the others and yourself have explored. However, do think about how others' ideas bring new perspectives to your own. Highlight ideas in everyone's work that captures the group's attention and that generally cover the elements on the flipchart.

WORKSHOP 2

Writing Together: Creation in Collaboration

- d. **Think and share: (8 minutes)** Have these questions written on the flipchart and ask students to brainstorm within the group with what they have shared. Ask them to write down ideas in at least one notebook (write the group's names in the paper):
 - i. *What was happening before? What events led up to this picture/these pictures?*
 - ii. *What is going on right now? Is there a main event? Are there any secondary events happening at the same time worth considering?*
 - iii. *What will happen next? How will events develop?*
 - e. **Story: (15 minutes)** As a group, using the ideas you have selected from everyone (refer to the list in the flipchart), and your answers to these previous questions, write a short story that tells these events.
- 4. Sharing and closing: (15 minutes)**
- a. Each group reads their story.
 - b. Discuss their creative process:
 - i. Why they chose those pictures.
 - ii. How they chose the ideas to work with.
 - iii. How the experience of creating together was.
 - c. **Exit ticket:** Hand in a paper to each student with the following questions: *Is it different to write individually than working with others to create a joint piece? If so, how? What do you get from it that you can't from individual creation?* Ask them to hand it in before they leave.

References:

Bambara, T. C. (1984) 'Salvation is the issue', in Evans, M. (ed.) *Black Women Writers (1950-1980)*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, pp. 13-38.

Carter, J. (2002) *Just Imagine: Creative Ideas for Writing*. London: David Fulton Publishers Ltd.

García Márquez, G. (1968). El ahogado más hermoso del mundo. En *La increíble historia de la cándida Eréndira y de su abuela desalmada*. Disponible en línea en:

http://www.ingenieria.unam.mx/dcsyhfi/material_didactico/Literatura_Hispanoamericana_Contemporanea/Autores_G/GARCIA/ahogado.pdf. Consultado el 20 de febrero de 2018.