



Reader's Experience: a Letter from a Hero


Organization	Dafni Kek
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Methodology
Creative writing

Type of activity		Modality	
Exercise		In presence	X
Activity	X	Remote Activity	
Workshop	X	Blended learning	

<p>SUMMARY</p> 	<p>“Reader’s Experience: a Letter from a Hero” is a creative writing workshop that allows participants to use writing techniques to express themselves, their feelings and reflect on their life experiences related to their migration stories.</p>
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<p>THEME</p> 	<p>“Reader’s experience: a letter from a hero” uses the methodology of creative writing, a form of artistic expression, inspiring participants to use their imagination to bring personal experiences and views to their work. Also, the technique of writing a letter to oneself is a therapeutic technique that is helpful in processing emotions and easing pent-up anger, pain, or frustration.</p>
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<p>PARTICIPANTS</p> 	<p>The workshop was initially developed for Ukrainian female refugees living in Athens. Still, it is suitable for diverse groups of learners.</p>
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<p>OBJECTIVE</p> 	<p>The objectives of the workshops are for the participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to self-reflect on life, experiences and life milestones; • to reflect on their migration stories and experiences; • to get acquainted with creative writing techniques as a way to express themselves; • to get in touch with women writers and their works dealing with the theme of migration from an autobiographical point of view.
<p>MATERIALS</p> 	<p>The materials needed for this workshop are a pencil or pen and a piece of paper available for all the participants. Participants can also be informed beforehand to bring the latest book they read in order to be able to present it to the other members of the team more easily. A flipchart can be useful, too, for the participant to be able to describe the appropriate structure of a letter to the participants.</p>
<p>PREPARATION</p> 	<p>The facilitator should select a location for the workshop that is a space considered safe by all participants. A place that provides a physically and emotionally safe environment for all participants, especially a place where people can freely express themselves without fear of prejudice or any negative judgment. The process of sharing personal information may be stressful for some of the participants, so the facilitator should be alert to understand any inconvenience, take the lead and handle the situation.</p> <p>In addition, the facilitator should have contacted and invited the author they consider that should participate in the workshop and should also arrange all the practical issues beforehand.</p> <p>Lastly, the facilitator should have a familiarity in using creative writing techniques in order to be able to explain the necessary steps, the techniques and the creative process of writing a letter to themselves.</p>
<p>STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants introduce themselves through the last book they read, and they compare and connect their reading experiences; 2. The facilitator introduces the invited female writer to the participants, her story of arrival to the host country, her adjustment to the new life, her



feelings of depression, creating a family, and finally having the courage to publish her diary*1;

3. Participants are encouraged to discuss their feelings of homesickness, living an entire life while having the guilt of leaving loved ones behind (relatives and friends in Ukraine)*2;

4. Participants are asked to write a letter to themselves, an invitation to a coffee date from their favourite writer or their favourite book character;

5. Sharing the choices of writers/characters, key points of the letter, optionally reading;

6. As homework for self-reflection, participants are asked to answer the following question about happiness: What is happiness to me? How can I reach it? How can I feel happier now?

Clarifications

*1Step no. 2 can be adjusted according to the needs of each group of participants and the invited writer. We propose the invitation of a female writer who has published her own story of migration to a new country, as it suits well with the methodology of autobiographical storytelling and creative writing.

*2 The methodology for this workshop was developed for women migrants and refugees from Ukraine, so step no. 3 is articulated according to their experiences and needs. This step can be adjusted depending on the target group of the workshop.






EVALUATION



The final step of the workshop includes an activity that can take place as homework for the participants.

The participants are asked to self-reflect and answer the following question about happiness:

“What is happiness to me?”, “How can I reach it?”, “How can I feel happier now?”. The final self-reflection activity was chosen to be a homework assignment, as the topic approached by the participants in the workshop, of their experience of migrating to their host country and how they deal with the negative feelings they have about this decision, can be very stressful for most of them and cause inconvenience.

<p>TIPS - SAFETY</p> 	<p>The workshop can be adapted to suit coherent and diverse groups of learners. Participants may share personal information, and this process may be stressful for some of them, so the facilitator should be alert to understand any inconvenience, take the lead and handle the situation. In addition, the invitation of a female writer who has published a book about her own migration story and has a similar experience with the participants may cause participants to reminisce about traumatic experiences and trigger negative emotions.</p>
<p>GROUP SIZE</p> 	<p>The group size for this workshop does not matter, but it is more challenging to manage the workshop with the participation of many individuals. Working with a big group of people makes it harder to make people feel safe to share about themselves. 8 to 10 participants would be the ideal group size.</p>
<p>COMPLEXITY</p> 	<p>The complexity of the workshop can be rated at 2. The facilitator needs to take some time to prepare the different phases of the workshop, review the methodology and prepare the workshop's reflection phase.</p>
<p>TIME</p> 	<p>1 hour and 30 minutes to 2 hours would be ideal for the Reader's Experience: a Letter from a Hero workshop.</p>
<p>AUTHOR(S)</p> 	<p>The author of this workshop is Nataliya Dovhopol.</p>