

### Spoken Word & Storytelling: Empowerment at Camp *Specialty Track 1*

<b>AUTHOR(S):</b>	Caroline Rothstein
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	In session one of “Spoken Word and Storytelling” Empowerment at Camp,” using the story of Judith as a catalyst for writing poetry about taking risks, you will begin learning how spoken word poetry can be an empowering, inspiring, and community-building tool at camp. - <i>Submitted by Caroline Rothstein</i>
<b>TOPIC(S):</b>	Writing, Performance, Jewish Text
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVE:</b>	You will learn how to connect historical Jewish stories and texts to your personal experiences, as well as acquire poetry and writing skills around any topic connected to personal experiences and identity, or a combination thereof. In addition, you will gain the ability to teach their campers how do to the same.
<b>AUDIENCE:</b>	Any size group, age, or camp role works, though especially ideal for bunks or small groups (10 to 20 people) of campers and/or staff.
<b>TIMING:</b>	90 minutes
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video Links to Caroline Rothstein's "Fierce This House" &amp; "Holy On My Own"</li> <li>• Judith Story Text</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judith Story Text</li> <li>• Poems / texts to use to spark discussion &amp; writing prompts</li> <li>• Writing utensils for all participants</li> <li>• Paper/notebooks/something on which to write for all participants</li> </ul>
<b>SET-UP DETAILS:</b>	This session should take space in a location, space, or room where participants can both sit in a circle (on the floor or in chairs), and have space to spread out if they want some privacy during the writing workshop portion of the session. The writing workshop portion can also be done around tables (e.g., outside at picnic tables, or inside in the dining hall, etc.).

### SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- Invite participants to find a seat in the circle and each have a writing utensil, paper, and clipboard.
- Begin session.
- Welcome participants and share both specialty track and session one goals and agendas (10 minutes)
  - o Specialty track goal: To learn how spoken word poetry can be an empowering, cathartic, and community-building tool both at camp and beyond; to learn how to write and perform poetry, as well as how to run and moderate bunk-wide and camp-wide spoken word poetry programs at camp.
  - o Specialty track agenda:
    - Session one: live performance, text study, writing workshop
    - Session two: writing workshop, editing workshop
    - Session three: performance workshop, debrief & taking this back to camp
  - o Session goal: to use the story of Judith as both a catalyst for writing poetry about taking risks, and an example of how to use Jewish texts to tell personal stories.
  - o Session agenda:
    - Introduction
    - Performance
    - Discussion/debrief
    - Text study
    - Writing workshop
    - Sharing
    - Closing
  - o Guidelines and group agreements for creating a brave and safe(r) space:
    - Use "I" statements
    - Confidentiality
    - Ask clarifying questions
    - Meet risk with risk
    - It's ok to be raggedy
    - Self-regulate self-care (i.e. it's ok to step outside if needed)
    - Facilitator is available after
- Begin opening activity and ice-breaker (5 minutes):
  - o Ask participants to share their name, their pronouns if they feel comfortable, why they chose this specialty track, and one thing for which they're grateful today.
- Performance (5 minutes)
  - o Caroline performs "Fierce This House."
  - o Caroline performs "Holy On My Own."

- Debrief/Discussion (10 minutes):
  - o Ask participants:
    - What resonated?
    - What stood out?
    - What themes did you notice in either/both of the poems?
  
- Text Study (15 minutes):
  - o Ask participants to share their understanding of the story of Judith.
  - o Read story of Judith in English.
  - o Ask participants:
    - What stood out?
    - What resonated?
    - What themes did you notice?
    - What connections can you see between Caroline's poem and the story of Judith?
  
- Writing activity (30 minutes)
  - o As a literal beheading, the story of Judith can be uncomfortable and/or problematic. As a metaphor – e.g., beheading inner demons, etc. – can this story be empowering?
  - o Make a list of 5 to 10 “inner demons” you have in your life. They could be emotions, actual experiences, people, physical moments, fears, etc. Whatever it is, consider the role the general (and his troops) played in the story of Judith. What is something you wish or want to metaphorically “behead”?
  - o Pick three items from your list. Free write for 2 minutes on each of these items.
  - o Look at your free writes. Underline a line that surprised you. Star your favorite line.
    - Ask for volunteers to share either the line they starred, or the line they underlined.
  - o Now ask participants to pick one of the three items they chose for their freewriting to write about as a full poem. Briefly respond in writing to the following questions:
    - What do you want to say to this “thing”?
    - How are you going to “behead” it?
    - What will it look like after you have “freed yourself” of this “demon”?
    - Using your answers to these questions and the free writing from before, write a poem – in any format or structure, noting that it does not have to rhyme – telling the story of this metaphorical beheading and personal triumph/rise.
  - o The facilitator is available to help you if you feel challenged or stuck.
  
- Ask volunteers to share what they have written. (10 minutes)
  
- Closing (5 minutes)
  - o Ask each person to share one thing that is clear, and one thing that is lingering as they leave today.
  - o Ask participants to please bring what they've written back with them for session two.



## CORNERSTONE 2018 RESOURCE

### ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

- Use your own poetry/writing to be the material that inspires both the discussion and writing!
- If you use a different theme for the writing prompt, it is recommended that you keep the structure of the workshop the same, and change the following sections: the poem or art used at in the sharing opener, the nature of questions in the discussion, and the writing prompt.