

Words Create Worlds: Using Your Voice (Part 1) *Specialty Track*

AUTHOR(S):	Caroline Rothstein
SUMMARY:	In this specialty track, participants will use spoken word poetry and other storytelling and writing techniques to find their voices and overcome any perceived barriers on how to articulate their values and truths. - <i>Submitted by Caroline Rothstein</i>
TOPIC(S):	Storytelling, Writing
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will explore what it means to be a people of stories, prophets, speaking truth to power, and using one's voice by learning how to intentionally use their voice to feel heard and have an effective impact both in their communities and the world.
AUDIENCE:	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.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who Told You Text • Who Told You - FULL RESOURCE NOTES (for facilitator; not to hand out)
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text and resource sheets • Poems/texts to use to spark discussion & writing prompts • Writing utensils for all participants • Paper/notebooks/something on which to write for all participants • Clipboards (if needed)
SET-UP DETAILS:	This session should take place in a location, space, or room where participants can both sit in a circle (on the floor or in chairs), and also 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 (i.e. outside at picnic tables, the dining hall, bunk area, 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)

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- Specialty track goal: To learn how to intentionally use our voices to feel heard and have an effective impact both in our communities and the world at large using spoken word poetry and other storytelling and writing techniques to find our voices and overcome any perceived barriers on how to articulate our values and truths.
- Specialty track agenda:
 - Session one: discussion/text study, live performance, writing workshop
 - Session two: writing workshop, editing workshop
 - Session three: storytelling workshop, debrief & taking this back to camp
 - Offer this overall note: there will be an opportunity in the final session where everyone will be invited to share one of the pieces of writing they'll have created during this session. There will be smaller opportunities for volunteers to share throughout, and opportunities to share in hevruta/pairs, as well.
- Session goal: To explore what it means to own and share our own stories and publicly share/name the things we value and for which we feel passion and purpose in life.
- Session agenda:
 - Introduction
 - Opening activity
 - Performance
 - Discussion/debrief
 - Writing workshop
 - Sharing
 - Closing
- 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):
 - 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.
- Text study (15 minutes):
 - Read "Who Told You?" source sheet
 - Discuss/debrief as a group
- Performance (10 minutes):
 - Caroline shares her two poems, framing them from the text study as participants/we think about what it means to have a story to tell, and what it means to narrate one's own life and experiences, values, and purpose on earth:
 - ["My G-d Is a Queer G-d"](#)
 - ["Holy On My Own"](#)
- Debrief/discussion (10 minutes):
 - What resonated?
 - What stood out?
 - What did you notice?

- Writing Workshop (25 minutes):
 - o Ask participants to make a list of 10 values they hold—either words and phrases, and or miniature personal examples of when they’ve shown/lived those values. (3 minutes)
 - o Ask participants to make a list of 10 things they feel they are here to do in the world—again, either words, phrases, and/or brief examples/sentences/scenes. (3 minutes)
 - o Ask everyone to pair off and share and talk about items from their lists with their partners. (4 minutes)
 - o Bring everyone back together.
 - o Present the term “hineini,” and ask participants to share their understanding of it.
 - NOTE: Throughout the Torah, several times G-d calls upon someone— Abraham, Moses— who answers with *hineni*, “Here I am.” It emboldens the speaker of the phrase to declare that they are present, prepared to take on their responsibility and call. Some translations are “I am present.”
 - o Ask participants to write a poem using each of the items in their lists – in any order – where each line begins: “Here I am…” and/or *hineni* (participants can choose if they want the line to start in English, Hebrew, both, or a combination throughout) (15 minutes)
- Ask volunteers to share what they’ve 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.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

Some recommendations, adjustments, and adaptations for bringing this back to camp!

- 1) Use your own poetry/writing to be the material that inspires both the discussion and writing!
- 2) If counselors / staff want to use a different theme for the writing prompt, it’s recommended they 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.