

Bringing Your Best, Wildest, and Most Memorable Camp Stories to Life!

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SUMMARY: In this session we will use the world of theater to express our most memorable, silly, and fun camp stories, in order to uncover what they've taught us about ourselves and the world, so we can bring them back to camp and inspire those around us.

GOALS:

- Tap into the inherent joy that camp people get from telling their camp stories by giving them the opportunity to reflect on and share their most memorable and silly memory from camp
- Get the fellows moving, laughing, and sharing stories with one another
- Fellows will have a chance to practice the skill of telling a great story in an engaging way

AUDIENCE: Preference for at least 16+ (for tournament style)

TIMING: 75 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Index card resource (participants will fill it in as the program unfolds)
 - Side 1: List of characteristics that make a good story great
 - Learned a lesson from this
 - Made me laugh
 - Didn't require much background information
 - Sensory details, setting the scene
 - Etc.
 - Side 2: Thought starter prompts to make fellows think about their story in new ways and dig deeper into how they tell their story
 - What did this story teach you about yourself?
 - How did you grow as a human from this story?
 - What lesson could this story teach a young camper?
 - How can other people "participate" as you tell the story?
 - Etc.
- Markers
- Big Post-It sheet
- Post-It notes
- Costumes (whatever variety is available)

SET-UP: A space where we can spread out, will need some sort of wall to populate sticky notes

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 – Welcome in participants
- 00:05-00:10 – Leaders open the program with dramatic storytelling
- 00:10-00:15 – Discuss elements of a great story
- 00:15-00:20 – Participants reflect and think through their own story to tell
- 00:20-00:45 – Participants share their stories in a tournament style
- 00:45-00:55 – Groups of 4 prepare their story to tell the group through multiple mediums
- 00:55-00:70 – Groups present stories to one another
- 00:70-00:75 – Populate wall with stickies reflecting on the growth of their own stories

SESSION OUTLINE

00:00-00:05 – Welcome in participants

00:05-00:10 – Leaders open the program with dramatic storytelling

- Staff 1 takes center stage and tells participants a dramatic story from their experience at camp. In this example, Staff 1 recited the story of the bear and the log, digging into the elements of a great story and actively sharing what they learned about themselves from the experience and what they want the listeners to get out of this story
- Other facilitators are “interpreting” the story through a variety of mediums
 - Staff 2 is dancing wildly in the background
 - Staff 3 is drawing on a large Post-It sheet how they imagine the scene
 - Staff 4 is using hand/sock puppets
- Explain to participants these are the modalities that we chose, but we encourage them to be creative with how they decide they will support their storyteller. As you lead this program, feel free to use any variety of modalities that feel right and serve the audience.

00:10-00:15 – Discuss elements of a great story

- Hand out the index card and as a group write out the list of characteristics/elements that make a great story. As leading questions like: “What keeps you most engaged when someone is telling a story?” “What did you notice the storyteller did?” “What was your favorite part of the story you heard and how did it add to the story?” Example characteristics/elements include:
 - Learned a lesson from this
 - Made me laugh
 - Didn’t require much background information
 - Sensory details, setting the scene
 - Etc.
- On the other side, they can populate the thought starter questions that push a storyteller to deliver an even more powerful, entertaining, and engaging story. Examples include:
 - What did this story teach you about yourself?
 - How did you grow as a human from this story?
 - What lesson could this story teach a young camper?
 - How can other people “participate” as you tell the story?
 - Etc.
- Connect these elements to the story Staff 1 just shared with the group

00:15-00:20 – Participants reflect and think through their own story to tell

- Give participants their own chance to brainstorm and think through one of their favorite camp stories that they love to tell
- Encourage them to write down some notes for themselves if they need it, and prepare to share out with a partner

00:20-00:45 – Participants share their stories in a tournament style

- 00:20-00:25 – *Chevruta* story telling
- 00:25-00:30 – Use index card resources to help one another improve and add more details to their stories by asking each other thought starter questions, sharing notice/wonders, etc.
- 00:30-00:40 – Pair up with another *chevruta* to form groups of 4 and share out the same story, but the improved and more rehearsed version
- 00:40-00:45 – Dig a bit deeper as a group to verify these **good** stories have all the elements of a **great** story, determine one story your group wants to elevate to the entire group

00:45-00:55 – Groups of 4 prepare their story to tell the group through multiple mediums

- Give them any resources, from markers and paper to costumes, to think through and rehearse how their group's story can be performed in an engaging, hilarious, and meaningful way to the entire group.

00:55-00:70 – Groups present stories to one another

- Can pull out of a hat or ask which group is excited to perform first, second, etc.

00:70-00:75 – Populate wall with stickies reflecting on the growth of their own stories

- Chance to reflect on their own story and share back with the group "how their story grew?"
- These can be anonymous, but this wall of growth will be an exciting symbol for fellows to see how their stories have been elevated

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP

At your camp, an activity like this can be used to enhance campfire activities, facilitate group bonding moments, or encourage campers to just be silly and exchange stories in unstructured times at camp.

Storytelling can become a full activity, an icebreaker, a filler activity, whatever excites you! Use this index card resource to help campers grow their stories into meaningful and memorable moments and keep encouraging them to always learn from their stories.