Pearls on a String

Instructions

This activity is intended to facilitate collective storytelling as a large group. By the end of this activity, the group will have created a story.

Envision this sequence of events ("pearls") as a timeline ("string"). Each pearl represents an event occurring in your story.

As a facilitator, you can choose to have participants physically locate their bodies in space as a "pearl" in relation to one another, or you can use a document, with each "pearl" representing a line in a numbered list (1 = start / n = end).

Step 1: Choose/have participants articulate the first pearl. This is how the story will begin.

Step 2: Choose /have participants articulate the last pearl. This is how the story will end.

Step 3: Using 6-8 pearls, fill in the story. Similarly to making a pearl necklace, pearls can be chosen at random, just remember that the goal of your 6-8 pearls/events should connect the beginning of the story to the end of the story.

Step 4: Discuss the following prompts.

1. Where are the inflection points in the story?
2. What are the most critical elements of the story (e.g., the induction point, the climax, the resolution, etc.)?
3. What pearls are extraneous?
4. Are there any logical gaps in the story that need to be addressed by adding additional pearls?

You can also encourage participants to complete this activity as individuals, using notecards with one idea/sentence per card as the "pearls."