



STORY AS ENTRY TO **RELATIONSHIP**

A 1-1/2 hour classroom communication experience of quality Dialogue

TEACHER'S GUIDE

to accompany the 2007 documentary film
DIALOGUE AT WASHINGTON HIGH

Created by the
Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue Group
San Mateo, California, USA
2007

STORY AS ENTRY TO RELATIONSHIP

A 1-1/2 hour classroom communication experience of quality Dialogue.

PREPARATION

The teacher pre-screens and studies the 43-minute DVD film – *DIALOGUE AT WASHINGTON HIGH*.

Digital projector, audio system with speakers, and screen to play DVD

Wireless microphones will help everyone to be heard in this particular experience. They are ideal but not required.

Class arranged in a circle, if possible. It is ideal to be able to see each others' faces and not the backs of heads.

The full 90 minutes is needed. If possible, arrange for a two-hour time period to allow for more relaxed, complete assimilation and learning.

THE EXPERIENCE

WELCOME

(5 minutes)

Teacher welcomes the class to a very new kind of experience and quality of communication.

Present an overview of the whole morning.

If a guest is facilitating this experience, the teacher should set the context and thoroughly introduce the guest facilitator.

INTRODUCTION TO PRINCIPLES

(5 minutes)

Teacher describes the history, contemporary context, and principles and qualities of Dialogue.

Dialogue is that rare form of engagement with a new quality of compassionate listening – without "yes,but" – with the motive to learn, expand one's own frame of reference, explore the speaker, and together discover new meaning and new social intelligence.

Dialogue is between two individuals, and not between groups or institutions.

Dialogue usually begins with personal narrative, to give the listener an insight into the humanity of the speaker.

Dialogue is not:

Conversation – casual, superficial, safe

Discussion – from percussion, concussion – batting around well-formed ideas, waiting for what you want to say next

Debate – one wins and is elevated, the other loses and is diminished, with the purpose to be right rather than learn or grow closer

EXEMPLARS

(20 minutes)

Introduce the video **DIALOGUE AT WASHINGTON HIGH**, to view Palestinian and Jewish exemplars at <http://blip.tv/file/3942661> or on the DVD:.

- "You will be viewing an 18 minute segment on the Web or the DVD which models the sharing of personal narratives."
- "You will see a Palestinian man and a Jewish woman sharing their personal stories."
- "Be aware of the quality of their listening."

Begin on the DVD's main menu. Click on "Palestinian & Jewish stories."
Stop the DVD when the exemplars end, and before the facilitator speaks.

INVITATION TO TELL AND HEAR STORIES

(5 minutes)

The teacher instructs the students to each select a partner – to be in pairs, dyads.

- "Now, for a half hour you get to have this experience that almost no people ever get to have."
- "To hear each other's stories. To be truly heard. And to be able to listen to each other like almost never happens in our lives."
- "At first it may seem a little scary, but I promise you it's not. And the time will go by faster than you'd ever imagine."
- "In a moment, you will choose a partner – ideally someone who is not like you, perhaps someone you don't even get along with."
- "You will spend a half hour. For the first 15 minutes, one person will listen – only listen – while the other tells you her or his story."
- "You can begin many generations back, or even with your birth."
- "What did your family experience? Who were they? What were their high and low points? What was inspiring in your life and what was hard?"
- "What were you taught about others who were unlike you and your people? What have you learned and how have you changed?"
- "What has brought you to this point in your life in this classroom – today?"
- "For the first 15 minutes, one will be the Storyteller, and the other will be the Listener – to only listen in stillness."
- "But, for the last 5 minutes of that 15 minutes, the Listener will explore the Storyteller – inquire, to learn more from the person."
- "That seemed to mean a lot to you. Can you tell me a bit more about it?"
- "I was quite interested one thing you said. Would you say more about that?"
- "Then at the end of 15 minutes, you change. The Listener becomes the Storyteller, and the Storyteller will be the Listener."

- "Don't worry about time. Just focus on each other. I'll keep you fully informed about the time. It will go faster than you imagine."
- "Now choose a partner. Go to a quiet, comfortable part of the room. And begin."

EXCHANGE STORIES

(30 minutes)

During each portion of listening and inquiry, the teacher announces to the pairs:

- (1) when time is almost up. "Take one more minute to finish your present thoughts."
- (2) when to transition. "The Listener now becomes the Storyteller, and the Storyteller will be the Listener."

It is okay for the teacher to drift from dyad to dyad to remind them, if needed, there is just one Storyteller and one Listener. "The Listener is listening only. The Storyteller is speaking."

This can be a good time to take photographs, to document your experience for yet others to replicate.

ASSIMILATION AND CLOSING

(25 minutes)

To assimilate the experience, students return to the circle, this time sitting next to their Dialogue partners.

Teacher asks the students to go around the circle to share in their self-selected pairs about the experience they just had.

- "Say a few sentences about your experience."
- "What was it like?"
- "What happened?"
- "What did you realize from the experience and the stories you heard and told?"

Let this be student-driven as much as possible, with a very occasional affirmation or question:

- "How was the quality of your listening?"
- "How did it feel to be listened to?"
- "What was it like to be a listener only?"

Usually the unfolding group process reveals the different kinds of personal meaning and value – usually positive.

The number of participants will determine how much time each person can share. If time is very short, ask for sharing from several dyads who are moved to do so.

Depending on the nature of the group, in the final minutes it can be inspiring to close with a circle and affirmation of each other and the day.



RESOURCES

"A story is the shortest distance between people."

Pat Speight

"An enemy is one whose story we have not heard."

Ms. Gene Knudsen Hoffman

"God gave us two ears and only one mouth, that we should listen twice as much as we speak."

Universal proverb

"Listening is to communication what blood is to the body. It is one of the great acts of love and of healing."

Len Traubman

More thoughts about Story

<http://traubman.igc.org/story.htm>

Useful relationship building ideas and inspiration

<http://traubman.igc.org/peace.htm>

Streaming video and audio about Story and Dialogue

<http://traubman.igc.org/stream.htm>

An inspiring 15-minute video about CHALLENGE DAY

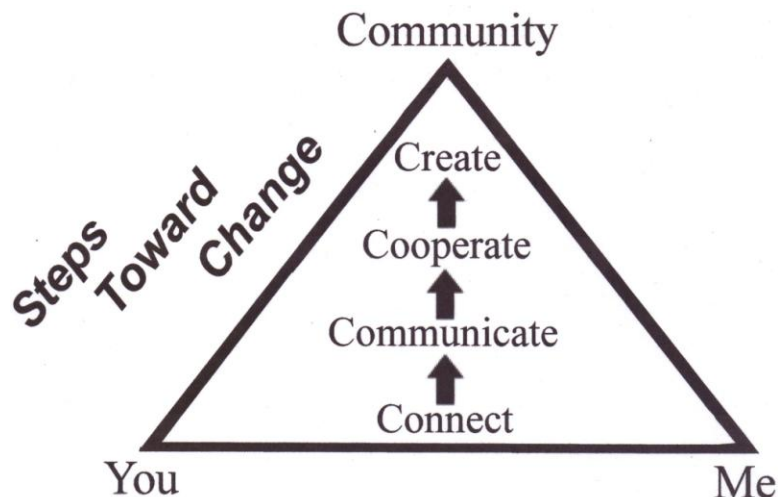
<http://challengeday.org/watch-our-videos/teen-files.html>

The instructional 2-hour film, available on DVD – FREEDOM WRITERS

<http://freedomwriters.com/>

The 43-minute documentary film and trailer – DIALOGUE AT WASHINGTON HIGH

<http://traubman.igc.org/vidschool.htm>



DIALOGUE AT WASHINGTON HIGH

DVD – 43 minutes – 2007

Fifty 10th grade students become more human and grow closer in their California classroom.

In pairs, they learn to tell their personal stories, uninterrupted and heard with a new quality of deep listening for the sake of learning.

In the beginning, a Palestinian and a Jew from a local 13-year-old Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue serve as exemplars by telling their own stirring personal narratives, and reflecting back to each other.

The students reveal their hopeful amazement at having experienced a new way of communication for life.

The 43-minute film is a perfect tool to help students begin to dispel incorrect stereotypes and assumptions about the “other,” freeing their energy for better learning and building healthy relationships together.

Although the exemplars focus on the Palestinian-Jewish relationship, the principles demonstrated in this film are universal and for all ages and places.

DVD provided and mailed free of charge worldwide
as a project of the
Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue Group of San Mateo County

To request the DVD, send your:

(1) intended use and (2) full contact information

Name - Organization - Address - Phone - E-mail

to

LTraubman@igc.org

or

Dialogue, 1448 Cedarwood Drive, San Mateo, CA 94403 USA – Tel: (650) 574-8303

