

2nd Annual Oregon Arts Education Congress Teambuilding Activity

Title of Activity: Collective Poetic Dreaming Discovery

Facilitator Name: Mary Rechner, Writers in the Schools Program Director, Literary Arts

Introduction: 2 -3 sentence overview of activity

Participants begin by looking at surrealist imagery and writing about a powerful remembered dream. Participants then write a number of collective “exquisite corpses,” title them, and then share.

Ideal group size for this activity: 6-10

Age Range/Appropriateness: 4th grade and up

1-3 Learning Outcomes *What will participants gain from the activity?*

1. Artists often try to access and use images and ideas from their unconscious or subconscious minds
2. Writing can be a collaborative process; surrealists called this “mental contagion”
3. Surprise / chance is often a positive element in art-making / writing

Materials needed: lined paper, pens or pencils (enough for the group)

Procedure:

1. Participants take a moment to look at surrealist images (Mary will supply postcards)
2. Participants each recall and write—for four minutes—about a powerful remembered dream.
3. Participants choose two sentences from their writing and copy it to the top of a lined sheet of paper.
4. Participants fold the paper down so that only one line is showing,
5. Participants all pass their papers to the right; they read the one exposed sentence and add their own line or sentence, and fold down the paper so only one line is visible.
6. Repeat until each participant has added a line to every paper.
7. Participants open the paper, read the writing, and write the first title that pops into their heads.
8. Participants read the pieces out loud.

Opportunities to expand/follow-up questions: *if any*

Participants can keep dream journals, can read dreams in stories / poems, can look at more surrealist-style art / writing.

Notes from the facilitator: *pitfalls to avoid, things to think about, lessons learned, etc. if any*