

# Queering the Narrative

## Worksheet Six



### **Inclusive Practice Tips**

*This worksheet is designed to be used alongside the 'Queering the Narrative' videos, found here: <https://ytas.org.uk/resources/queering-the-narrative/>*

*The worksheet refers to video number six and includes all links and references mentioned by Drew in the video.*

### **Before you start the session...**

- Make sure you know where all the toilets are, in order to guide your participants to them should they need. If there's a not a gender-neutral space, any accessible toilet can easily be turned into an all-genders bathroom. Enquire with any staff from the premises to do so, but a well-written sign: "ALL GENDERS / ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM" can easily be created and blue-tacked to the door for the duration of the workshop, allowing any gender-non-conforming and trans participants to feel safe and comfortable.

Download an editable one from YTAS here: <https://ytas.org.uk/resources/lgbtqia-toolkit/>

- If possible, find a breakout space in the building – an unoccupied quiet room that, should any participant need to, they can come and hang out in if they feel overwhelmed. This is a particularly useful tool for your neurodiverse participants.
- Be sure to find out if there's any neurodiversity in the room before the young people enter – whether that be through a school referral, or an information form the participants fill out before they arrive. The more informed you are, the better you can deliver the best workshop possible.
- Where funding allows always try and have an assistant with you in the room. Having an assistant is particularly important if any of your neurodiverse young people need to leave the room if they feel overwhelmed, and the assistant can be sure to monitor them, guiding them back into the room should they want to, with you confidently leading the rest of the room.
- For the neurodiverse young people, encourage them to bring a stimming toy with them if they find them comforting, and if possible have a few on hand in the session. These tools are particularly useful when delivering instructions.
- If possible, on the information sheet you ask participants to fill out, try to include a box where they can fill out their pronouns – again, the more you know, the better.

So, you've planned your session, you've chatted to your assistant, you've had correspondence with the staff in the building, you know who's coming... and then, the doors open.

## Tips for the first few minutes

- Do a check-in with the group – find out how everyone is feeling.
- During check-ins, try using a poetic type of question so that it's not just about overtly expressing feelings. Eg. Ask people to identify what weather system they feel like today. This is an excellent way of softly evaluating the session at the end, judging by how their weather's have changed, and indeed, monitoring how the group are now feeling.
- As part of the check-in, feel free to offer your pronouns and ask others to do so to, should they wish.
- In addition, you may also offer that the team can introduce themselves by whatever name they wish to be known by – this creates an offer for those who are considering transition, who are somewhere within the non-binary, gender-non-conforming spectrum to use a new name that befits them at that time.

## General advice for inclusively running your workshop

- Try using the word 'team' to refer to the young people, and indeed everyone else in the room. The phrase implicitly says that we're all here to work together, and it doesn't carry any of the gendered implications of "guys". "Folks" also works in this context too.
- Try working from a gender-neutral – they/them – place when thinking about everyone's pronouns in the room. Of course, try your absolute hardest to remember everyone's as they provide them – writing them down may help you to do so... but should you slip up then they/them can be used for everyone.
- Drew explains *"I don't play the pronoun game with regards to my life – I am a non-binary person, born into a male body, and I have been married to my husband since 2015. Now, I'm not saying that I offer huge amounts of information about my life... but if I happen to, I won't shy away from saying that I am married to a man. This sort of projecting upwards – where queer young people can see someone older and (relatively) successful living a happy life can be a vital tool for self-acceptance."* Allow your LGBTQIA+ colleagues to manage their own relationships and personal contexts within the working environment.
- As a practitioner, you may be the only person in a young person's life at the time who can listen to them, respect them, be excited by them in the privileged way that we are able to do so in a workshop space. This privilege can mean that you are actively listened to, respected, and that you are an adult they can have fun with. Being deliberate about what information is provided in the space is vital – you can really make a difference in someone's life.