

# ERASMUS+ OPEN MIC!

RAISING AWARENESS OF HUMAN RIGHTS



## TOOLKIT FOR HRE

The power of Storytelling and Comedy

---

Erasmus+ | Training Course



# DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



Funded by  
the European Union



# WHERE'S WHAT

01 **ABOUT THE PROJECT**

02 **INTRODUCTION**

04 **STORYTELLING**

06 *Human Rights Story Starters*

08 *Building Human Rights Heroe*

10 *Mapping the Story of Rights*

12 *Advocacy through Storytelling*

14 *Your Spotlight: Human Rights Talks*

16 *The Story Weaver*

18 *Mapping the Story of Rights*

12 *Advocacy through Storytelling*

18 *The Picture Carosel*

19 **CREATIVE WRITING AND CREATIVE THINKING**

22 *Imagine a Better World: 'What If?' Scenarios*

24 *Mind Mapping*

26 *Walking in Their Shoes: Role Reversal Debate*

28 *Everyday Objects, Extraordinary Solutions*

30 *Weaving Stories Together*

32 *Story Dice*

34 *What are you doing?*

35 **THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING**

36 **DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMEDY**

37 **COMEDY TECHNIQUES FOR IMPACT**





# WHERE'S WHAT

38 **COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES: A TOOLKIT FOR RAISING HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS**

38 Puns (Wordplay)

39 Broken Assumptions

40 Broken predictions

41 Contrast and Comparison

42 Punch-to-Setup Method

43 Contradiction

44 *Learning from the Masters*

47 *Killer Punch(line)*

49 *The Power of Three*

52 *Humor for Change: Themed Joke Creation*

55 *Pass the Punch(line)!*

57 *Laughing at Ourselves: Breaking Down Stereotypes*

60 *Humor from Experience*

63 *Stereotype Breakers*

65 *The Human Rights Satire Show*

67 *Dad's Joke Competition*

68 **THE TEAM**

69 **PARTNERS**





# ABOUT THE PROJECT

The idea for this Erasmus+ Training Course project "Erasmus+ Open Mic! Raising awareness of HR" was born out of a simple yet challenging question: How can we make human rights education more engaging and appealing to young people? During our brainstorming sessions, one idea stood out—stand-up comedy. It's trendy, it's relatable, and, most importantly, it's a user-friendly medium that connects deeply with audiences. And just like that, the idea to explore stand-up comedy as a tool for discussing human rights took shape, and this project became a reality.

At first, we faced our fair share of skepticism. Many wondered, "Can comedy, often seen as pure entertainment, really address serious human rights issues?" Others questioned whether comedy, often thought of as an innate talent, could be taught. But over the course of this project, we proved that not only can comedy be learned, but it can also serve as a powerful vehicle for raising awareness and sparking conversations about human rights.

Throughout the week, participants dived into a range of creative exercises that bridged the worlds of humor and advocacy. Role plays, group brainstorming sessions, and simulation games became the backbone of our approach, enabling participants to explore fundamental human rights topics from fresh and often unexpected perspectives. They learned to write jokes, craft stories, and deliver punchlines that not only entertained but also educated and provoked thought.

We, the Loud & Clear team, are thrilled to share this toolkit with you. It's packed with the very activities that helped participants achieve what initially seemed like an impossible task: combining the seriousness of human rights with the lightheartedness of comedy. We hope it inspires you as much as it inspired us, and we can't wait to see how you use these tools to engage, educate, and entertain.



# INTRODUCTION

This toolkit was developed as part of the Erasmus+ training course “Erasmus+ Open Mic: Raising Awareness of Human Rights!”, which was approved by the Lithuanian National Agency, funded by the Erasmus+ program, and coordinated and implemented by Loud&Clear. The training course, held in Lithuania in June 2024, brought together youth workers, youth leaders, educators, and human rights activists from six countries: Lithuania, Latvia, Greece, Portugal, Italy, and Poland.

This toolkit is designed to help youth workers use stand-up comedy techniques to raise awareness about human rights. It serves as a guide for non-comedians to learn joke-writing and performance techniques, breaking down complex social issues in a relatable and engaging way.

The toolkit has several goals:

1. **Educate Youth Workers:** understand the basics of comedy writing and performance, and how it could be used in the daily youth work.
2. **Raise Awareness:** Use humor to address and highlight human rights issues like equality, fairness, and freedom.
3. **Empower Others:** Enable youth workers to engage their own audiences (likely young people) through workshops, presentations, or creative activities.
4. **Make Serious Topics Accessible:** Use humor to discuss sensitive topics in a non-threatening and thought-provoking way.

It is worth mentioning, that in this Toolkit you will not find the activities for the specific Human Rights topics. If you are looking specifically for them, we invite you to discover and explore [Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People](#).

This toolkit focuses on **creative writing, storytelling & public speaking, and comedy writing activities.**

# INTRODUCTION

**The toolkit is divided into three main chapters:**

## **Storytelling**

Methods to structure and share impactful narratives.

## **Comedy Writing**

Strategies for crafting humor to address complex or sensitive topics.

## **Creative thinking and writing**

Techniques to spark imagination and build a foundation for expressive communication.

Each chapter of this Toolkit starts with a brief theoretical framework, which should help youth workers to prepare themselves better to facilitate non-formal activities. Moreover, the theoretical information could be used for short intro sessions before starting the activities. The theoretical frameworks in the comedy writing chapter are drawn on established comedy writing techniques by Jared Volle and Greg Dean. These are complemented by non-formal education activities developed specifically for the training course, designed to enhance youth workers' daily practices. The activities aim to equip youth workers with tools to foster a deeper understanding of human rights among young people, while also helping them develop soft skills such as critical and creative thinking, confidence, and advocacy.

This toolkit serves as a practical resource for integrating innovative methods into youth work. By blending theory with interactive activities, it supports youth workers in effectively engaging young people, thoughtfully addressing human rights issues, and building skills essential for active participation in society.

# STORYTELLING

Storytelling is a timeless and universal practice, deeply rooted in every culture. It connects people through shared experiences, fosters understanding, and serves as a powerful medium for passing down knowledge, traditions, and values. In youth work, storytelling becomes a vital tool, engaging young people on topics among which identity, inclusion, and human rights.

Through storytelling, youth workers can inspire empathy, stimulate critical thinking, and provide a safe space for participants to express themselves. Whether tackling sensitive issues or celebrating diversity, stories create relatable pathways to understanding the world and our place in it.

Storytelling is more than just an art; it is a structured process that relies on key elements and principles to be effective.

## CORE ELEMENTS OF STORYTELLING

To craft compelling stories, consider the following components:

- **Characters:** They drive the story and connect the audience emotionally. Relatable, well-rounded characters are essential for impactful storytelling.
- **Plot:** The structure that holds the story together. A good plot typically follows a clear trajectory:
  - **Exposition:** Sets the scene, introduces characters, and establishes the context.
  - **Rising Action:** Builds tension as characters face obstacles.
  - **Climax:** The turning point where conflicts reach their peak.
  - **Falling Action:** Resolves the central tension.
  - **Resolution:** Offers closure and reflection.
  - **Themes:** The underlying messages or values that resonate with the audience, encouraging introspection and dialogue.





## BUILDING STRONG CHARACTERS

Effective characters are the heart of every memorable story. Here's how to develop them:

- Give them clear motivations and challenges.
- Show their growth through the story, reflecting real-life struggles and victories.
- Allow them to embody diverse perspectives to ensure inclusivity.



## NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES

Techniques like perspective, pacing, and descriptive language can enhance storytelling:

- **Point of View:** First-person narratives can make stories personal, while third-person allows broader exploration.
- **Imagery:** Vivid descriptions immerse audiences in the story.
- **Pacing:** Alternating between fast and slow moments builds anticipation and creates impact.



## STORIES AS TOOLS FOR CHANGE

When combined with social themes, storytelling becomes a powerful agent of change. Narratives about human rights, for example, can illuminate injustices and inspire collective action. By framing stories around shared values, youth workers can engage participants on sensitive issues in a relatable and non-threatening way.

## Human Rights Story Starters

### AIM

To introduce participants to storytelling through human rights themes using guided prompts and humor.

### OBJECTIVES

- To engage participants in creative thinking about human rights issues.
- To encourage collaborative storytelling with an emphasis on using humor to address serious topics.
- To foster empathy and understanding through shared narratives.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1: Group Formation (5 minutes)

Divide participants into groups of 4–5.  
Assign roles within the group:

- **Story Builder:** Develops the story structure (beginning, middle, end).
- **Character Creator:** Thinks about who the story is about and their motivations.
- **Comedic Spinner:** Finds ways to add light humor to balance serious themes.
- **Presenter:** Shares the story with the larger group.
- **Wild Card (optional):** Someone who adds a surprise element to the story.



20 - 25 pax



30 - 40 minutes



- A set of human rights - related prompts (on cards or printed sheets).
- Props (optional) like hats, scarves, or small objects to represent characters or situations.
- Flipcharts or paper and markers for brainstorming (optional).

## Step 2: Prompt Assignment (2 minutes)

Each group selects or is given a human rights-related prompt. Examples:

- “A young activist starts a protest about unequal pay and encounters surprising allies.”
- “A refugee finds a creative way to rebuild their career in a new country.”
- “A school introduces gender-neutral uniforms, and one student leads the charge.”

To add an element of surprise, include plot twists or constraints, like:

- A character has an unusual skill, like juggling or cooking.
- The story must include a line of dialogue like “That wasn’t part of the plan!”

## Step 3: Story Creation (15 minutes)

Groups brainstorm a short story based on their prompt, focusing on:

- **Character Development:** Who are the main players? What are their goals and challenges?
- **Plot:** What happens? How does the story start, escalate, and end?
- **Humor:** Find moments to inject light-heartedness or satire.
  - Example: A protest leader accidentally brings the wrong banner to a rally but wins hearts anyway.

## Step 4: Presentation and Discussion (10–15 minutes)

Each group presents their story in 2–3 minutes.

- Encourage them to act out parts of their story if they feel comfortable.
- Groups can incorporate humor in their presentation to make it engaging.

**After each presentation, the facilitator guides a short discussion:**

- What human rights themes stood out?
- What challenges did the characters face?
- How could humor help raise awareness about this issue?

## Building Human Rights Heroe

### AIM

To develop characters that reflect human rights issues and foster empathy through storytelling.

### OBJECTIVES

- To deepen participants' understanding of character development in storytelling.
- To encourage critical thinking about human rights perspectives.
- To use empathy as a tool for exploring and communicating complex issues.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1: Introduction to Character Development (5 minutes)

Briefly explain the importance of character development in storytelling:

- **Backstory:** A character's history gives depth to their personality and motivations.
- **Motivation:** What drives them to act or make decisions
- **Conflict:** Challenges they face, especially those tied to human rights issues.

Highlight how characters can represent real-life struggles, triumphs, and complexities of human rights challenges, such as discrimination, inequality, or freedom of speech.



20 - 25 pax



40 minutes



- Character profile templates (includes sections for name, background, personality traits, challenges, goals, etc.).
- Flipcharts or large paper and markers (optional).
- Props like hats, scarves, or objects to help participants visualize their characters.

## Step 2: Individual Character Creation (10 minutes)

Ask each participant to create a character who has experienced a specific human rights challenge.

- Provide examples to spark ideas:
  - A journalist fighting censorship.
  - A teenager confronting gender discrimination.
  - A community leader advocating for equal access to education

Encourage participants to think about:

- **Who is their character?** (Name, age, personality, and appearance.)
- **What is their backstory?** (What led them to their current situation?)
- **What motivates them?** (What are they fighting for? What are their hopes and dreams?)
- **What challenges do they face?** (External barriers like laws or societal attitudes, and internal struggles like fear or doubt.)

Participants can use a template or write freely. If preferred, they can sketch their character instead of writing.

## Step 3: Pair and Share (10 minutes)

Pair participants together to exchange character profiles.

Each participant introduces their character to their partner, sharing details like:

- Their character's background.
- The human rights challenge their character faces.
- How this challenge affects their character's actions, decisions, or outlook.

Encourage pairs to explore questions like:

- What emotions does this character experience in their situation?
- How does their story connect to broader human rights themes?
- What humorous, surprising, or inspiring elements could be added to make the character relatable?

## Step 4: Group Presentation and Discussion (15 minutes)

Each pair selects one character to present to the larger group.

- Describe the character's backstory, motivation, and challenges.
- Highlight how their story connects to broader human rights themes.

**Facilitate a group discussion after each presentation:**

- What stood out about the character?
- How does their story reflect real-world human rights issues?
- How can humor or storytelling make these challenges more relatable or accessible?

## Mapping the Story of Rights

### AIM

To help participants structure their stories using visual mapping techniques.

### OBJECTIVES

- To improve storytelling organization skills.
- To explore the core elements of a story in the context of human rights issues.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1: Introduction to Story Mapping (10 minutes)

Explain what story mapping is and why it's useful:

- A visual story map helps organize key elements of a narrative to create a clear and impactful story.
- In the context of human rights, story maps can help highlight the journey of those affected and emphasize the importance of action.

Share an example of a simple story map:

- **Character → Setting → Conflict → Climax → Resolution**
- Example:
  - *Character*: A teacher advocating for equal access to education.
  - *Setting*: A rural village where girls are excluded from school.
  - *Conflict*: Community leaders resist change.
  - *Climax*: The teacher organizes a campaign to raise awareness.
  - *Resolution*: The school opens its doors to all children.



20 - 25 pax



1 hour



- Large sheets of paper or flipchart paper.
- Markers, colored pens, sticky notes.
- Visual examples of story maps (optional).

**Step 2: Create Story Maps (30 minutes)**

Divide participants into small groups or let them work individually. Provide the following structure as a guide:

- **Characters:** Who is the story about? What are their goals, struggles, and motivations?
- **Setting:** Where does the story take place? What's significant about this environment?
- **Conflict:** What human rights issue or challenge does the character face?
- **Climax:** What is the turning point or most intense moment in the story?
- **Resolution:** How does the story conclude? What action or change occurs?

Encourage participants to use colors, drawings, or symbols to represent ideas visually.

Add an optional twist: Ask participants to include a surprising or humorous moment in their story to make it more engaging

**Step 3: Story Creation (15 minutes)**

Have participants pair up and present their story maps to one another.

Encourage them to give constructive feedback on each other's stories:

- Does the story have a clear structure?
- Are the characters relatable?
- How effectively does the story highlight the human rights theme?

**Step 4: Group Discussion (5 minutes)**

- Invite participants to reflect on the diversity of stories presented.
- Discuss how the human rights challenges in the stories relate to real-world situations.
- Highlight how visual mapping can be a valuable tool in workshops or advocacy campaigns.

# Advocacy through Storytelling

## AIM

To develop persuasive storytelling pieces that advocate for specific human rights issues.

## OBJECTIVES

- To improve storytelling organization skills.
- To explore the core elements of a story in the context of human rights issues.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Introduction to Advocacy Storytelling (10 minutes)

Provide an overview of advocacy storytelling:

- Stories have the power to evoke empathy, inspire action, and amplify underrepresented voices.
- Effective advocacy stories connect personal experiences with broader social issues, motivating audiences to support change.

Share the structure of an advocacy story:

- **Personal Connection:** What draws you to this issue? Why do you care?
- **Challenge:** What human rights problem is being faced?
- **Action or Resolution:** What needs to be done, and how can the audience contribute?

*Example:*

- *Personal Connection:* "As a child, I loved going to school, but my neighbor's daughter couldn't because her family couldn't afford it."
- *Challenge:* "Millions of children around the world still lack access to education."
- *Call to Action:* "Let's support programs that provide scholarships for children in need."



20 - 25 pax



1 hour



- Paper and pens for drafting stories.
- A timer or clock for managing the activity.
- Optional:  
Microphone or speaker for presentations.



## Step 2: Drafting Advocacy Stories (20 minutes)

Ask participants to choose a human rights issue they are passionate about, such as gender equality, climate justice, or refugee rights. Guide them to draft a short advocacy story, including the three elements:

- **Personal Connection:** Why does this issue matter to you?
- **Challenge:** What's the key problem your story highlights?
- **Call to Action:** What can the audience do to help?

## Step 3: Pair and Practice (15 minutes)

Pair participants and have them present their stories to one another. Ask each pair to provide feedback:

- Is the story clear and compelling?
- Does the call to action motivate you to act?

## Step 4: Group Presentations and Feedback (15 minutes)

Invite a few volunteers to share their advocacy stories with the entire group.

Facilitate a discussion after each story:

- What made the story impactful?
- How did it connect with the human rights issue?
- Was the call to action effective?

Wrap up by emphasizing the importance of storytelling in creating awareness and inspiring change.

## Your Spotlight: Human Rights Talks

### AIM

To develop in-depth public speaking skills and the ability to present ideas effectively.

### OBJECTIVES

- Create engaging, informative presentations using storytelling techniques.
- Practice confident delivery and effective communication in front of an audience.
- Explore human rights topics in a personal, impactful way.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Icebreaker: “One-Minute Talk Challenge” (10 minutes)

Build confidence and get participants thinking about clear, engaging communication.

- Participants pair up and take turns speaking for one minute about any topic they are passionate about (e.g., favorite food, a memorable trip).
- The challenge: Speak without pauses or fillers (like “um” or “you know”).
- Facilitator tip: Keep this light and fun, not overly critical. Reward effort!

Ask how it felt to speak for a full minute. Did they notice the importance of pacing and clarity?

#### Introduction: What Makes a Great Talk? (15 minutes)

Provide participants with a framework for creating engaging, structured presentations.

Explain the format of TED-style talks: 5–7 minutes long, with a focus on storytelling, structure, and strong delivery.

Highlight key elements of a great talk:

- **Introduction:** Start with a hook (a story, a surprising fact, or a question).
- **Body:** Share 2–3 key ideas, supported with examples or stories.
- **Conclusion:** End with a clear message or a “call to action.”

Play a short (2–3 minute) excerpt of a compelling TED Talk or speaker to demonstrate effective public speaking. Ask participants to identify what makes the speaker engaging (tone, body language, story).



up to 20 pax



1.5 hour



- TED-style talk guidelines (printed or shared digitally)
- Large timer or stopwatch for pacing
- Optional: props, flipcharts, markers, or visual aids (e.g., slides, posters)
- “Feedback Stars” cards (pre-made cards with prompts for constructive feedback, e.g., “Strongest part of the talk” “One suggestion for improvement”)

**Preparation: “Pitch, Plan, Perform” (30 minutes)**

Guide participants to prepare impactful and well-structured talks.

**Step 1:** Brainstorm Topics (5 minutes): Participants select a human rights topic or an issue they care about (e.g., freedom of speech, equality, access to education). They can also choose personal stories related to those themes.

**Step 2:** Pitch Your Topic (5 minutes): In pairs, participants briefly pitch their talk idea to one another (1 minute each). Their partner gives feedback on what sounds interesting or needs clarification.

**Step 3:** Plan (20 minutes): Participants write or outline their 5–7 minute talk:

- Use a clear structure: hook → main ideas → conclusion.
- Integrate a story or personal example to humanize the topic.
- Encourage participants to rehearse delivery: tone, gestures, and pacing.

**Creative Option:** Provide optional props or ask participants to include one visual aid, e.g., a drawing, a symbolic object, or a piece of music to make their talks more dynamic.

**“Spotlight Stage” (30 minutes)**

Provide a supportive space for participants to practice public speaking.

- Create an engaging atmosphere:
  - Set up a “stage” area at the front with a spotlight or microphone (real or improvised).
  - Encourage participants to imagine they are speaking to a global audience.
- Each participant delivers their 5–7 minute talk.
- Facilitator tip: Time each talk and gently signal (e.g., with a bell) when 1 minute remains.
- Audience Role:
  - Ask the audience to actively listen and take notes for constructive feedback.
  - Encourage clapping and positive energy to keep the environment supportive and engaging.

**“Stars and Suggestions” (15 minutes)**

Provide constructive feedback and celebrate participants’ efforts.

- After each presentation, ask 2–3 peers to share one “star” (what worked well) and one “suggestion” (an area for improvement).
- Use Feedback Stars cards to guide comments and keep them positive and constructive.
  - Examples: “You had great eye contact!” or “Your conclusion could be clearer.”
- Facilitator tip: Summarize feedback and encourage participants to reflect on their growth as speakers.

## The Story Weaver

### AIM

To develop storytelling skills through collaboration, improvisation, and public speaking.

### OBJECTIVES

- Foster creativity and imagination in constructing narratives.
- Practice public speaking techniques in a supportive and engaging environment.
- Highlight storytelling as a tool for raising awareness of human rights.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Setting the Scene: The Story Grid (10 minutes)

Provide a visual and collaborative way to set up the story elements.

Divide the whiteboard or paper into four labeled quadrants:

- **Characters** (Who is the story about?)
- **Setting** (Where and when does the story take place?)
- **Conflict/Challenge** (What human rights issue or conflict arises?)
- **Resolution** (How does the story conclude?)

Participants brainstorm together and write ideas into each section. Encourage imaginative and unexpected ideas while keeping the theme of human rights in focus. For example:

- **Characters:** A rebellious journalist, a town leader, and a child who sees injustice.
- **Setting:** A futuristic city where free speech is illegal.
- **Conflict:** The journalist discovers a secret law oppressing the people.
- **Resolution:** The child leads a peaceful protest that changes the town's laws.



20 - 25 pax



1 hour



- Large sheets of paper or a whiteboard
- Markers or sticky notes
- A timer or stopwatch
- Optional: Props (e.g., a hat, a small box, a scarf) to add spontaneity and fun

## **“The Story Relay: Build and Perform” (25 minutes)**

The facilitator begins with one opening sentence linked to a human rights theme, such as:

“In a city where people had forgotten how to listen, a child picked up a megaphone.”

Participants take turns adding one to two sentences to continue the story. Each participant has 30 seconds to contribute.

After the story concludes (around 15–20 minutes), have two volunteers read it aloud dramatically. Encourage them to use:

- **Tone** (serious, humorous, suspenseful)
- **Pacing** (pauses for effect)
- **Emotion** (joy, anger, curiosity)

## **Reflection and Debrief (15 minutes)**

- How did working together shape the story? Did anyone’s contribution surprise you?
- How did the “performance” element challenge or empower you?
- What human rights issues emerged in the story? Could the narrative help raise awareness?
- How can storytelling be used in your work to engage young people or bring attention to human rights



20 - 25 pax



30-45 minutes



- A projector and a series of varied images (one image per slide) to display on a wall or screen.
- A spacious area where participants can form a circle.

## The Picture Carosel

### AIM

To practice creative storytelling by adapting narratives based on unexpected visual prompts.

### OBJECTIVES

- To enhance improvisation and adaptability in storytelling.
- To encourage participants to think on their feet and build cohesive narratives.
- To develop observation skills and creativity through visual stimuli.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Setting the Stage (5 minutes):

Arrange participants in a circle.

Explain the rules of the storytelling activity, emphasizing the importance of adapting to new images.

Project a sample image on the wall and demonstrate how to incorporate it into a story.

#### Storytelling (20-30 minutes):

Select a volunteer to step into the center of the circle.

The volunteer begins telling a story inspired by the first image projected on the wall.

After a short while, the image changes without warning. The storyteller must seamlessly incorporate elements of the new image into the ongoing story.

Each storyteller describes 3-4 images before stepping aside for the next participant.

The activity continues until everyone has had a turn or the allotted time ends.

#### Reflection and Wrap-Up (5-10 minutes):

Gather the group to discuss their experiences during the activity.

Highlight moments of creativity and adaptability in the stories shared.

- How did you feel when the images changed unexpectedly?
- What strategies helped you adapt the story to fit the new visual elements?
- How does this activity help in developing storytelling and improvisation skills?



# CREATIVE WRITING AND CREATIVE THINKING

Creative writing and creative thinking are indispensable tools for youth workers, especially when addressing complex and sensitive issues like human rights. In an ever-changing world where young people are increasingly exposed to diverse perspectives and social challenges, fostering these skills enables youth workers to engage effectively with their audiences.

# CREATIVE WRITING

**Creative writing** provides a platform for self-expression, allowing young people to articulate their experiences and emotions surrounding human rights issues such as discrimination, inequality, and social justice. By encouraging them to craft their narratives, youth workers help participants process their feelings and gain a deeper understanding of their identities within broader societal contexts. This form of storytelling not only serves as a therapeutic outlet but also creates opportunities for dialogue about critical topics, ultimately fostering empathy and awareness among peers.

Creative writing empowers young people to articulate their experiences and emotions. It fosters self-reflection and provides a safe space for discussing sensitive topics like discrimination, inequality, and identity.

Activities such as journaling, poetry, and short story writing can:

- Help participants process personal experiences.
- Encourage empathy by sharing different perspectives.
- Explore social and political issues in a non-confrontational way.

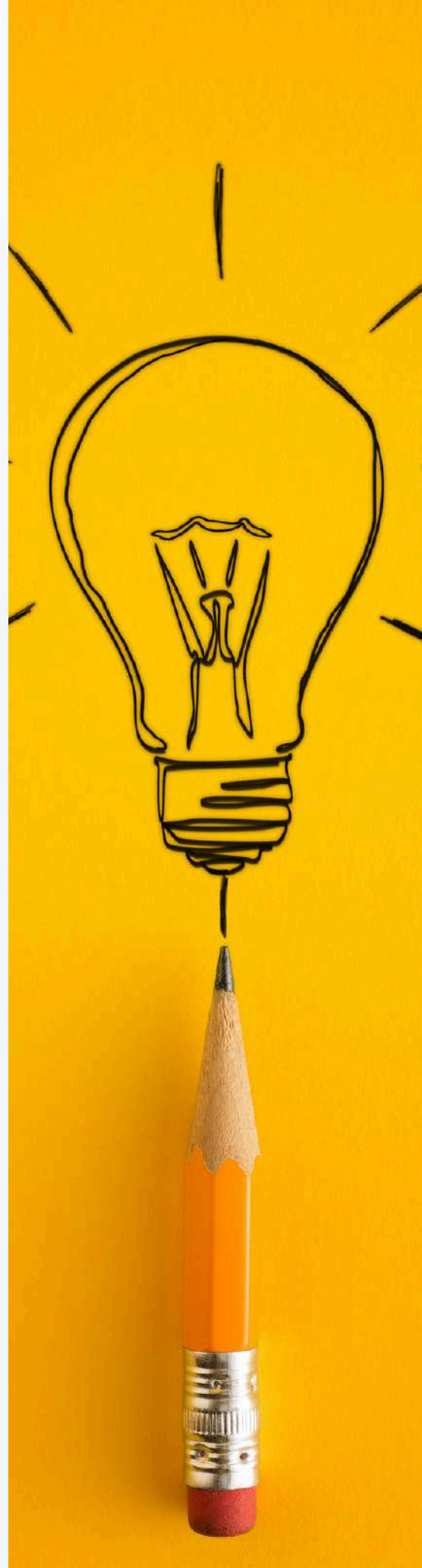




# CREATIVE THINKING

**Creative thinking**, on the other hand, empowers youth workers and young individuals alike to approach problems from innovative angles. In the realm of human rights, creative thinking equips youth workers with the ability to brainstorm solutions to systemic issues, advocate effectively for marginalized communities, and inspire young people to envision new possibilities for change. This skill set encourages adaptability, resilience, and collaboration, which are essential for tackling the multifaceted challenges posed by human rights violations.

Together, creative writing and creative thinking enhance youth workers' capacity to cultivate meaningful conversations about human rights, enabling them to facilitate discussions that resonate deeply with young people. By employing these skills, youth workers not only become advocates for social justice but also empower youth to find their voices and take active roles in their communities.



# Imagine a Better World: 'What If?' Scenarios

## AIM

To stimulate creative thinking and problem-solving through imaginative exploration of human rights scenarios.

## OBJECTIVES

- To encourage participants to explore diverse perspectives and possibilities related to human rights.
- To develop critical and innovative thinking skills for addressing global challenges.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Setting the Scene (5 minutes)

Start by introducing the concept of "What If?" scenarios:

- These prompts encourage participants to imagine alternative realities or solutions related to human rights challenges.
- The goal is to think beyond limitations and create bold, innovative ideas.

Share examples of human rights-related "What If?" prompts:

- "What if everyone had free access to healthcare?"
- "What if governments were required to prioritize climate action as a human right?"
- "What if discrimination was instantly detectable and punishable?"



up to 25 pax



45 min



- Papers and pens
- Prepared "What If" scenarios

**Step 2: Group Brainstorming (15–20 minutes)**

Divide participants into small groups of 4–5.

Give each group a unique 'What If?' scenario or allow them to draw one from a set of cards.

- Include prompts that vary in complexity, humor, and focus areas (e.g., gender equality, freedom of speech, etc.).
- For added creativity, you can combine prompts, such as "What if everyone had free access to education... but only if they taught someone else in return?"

Instruct groups to:

- Discuss how the "What If?" scenario might change the world.
- Identify potential benefits and challenges.
- Brainstorm creative solutions or outcomes for implementing the scenario.

**Optional Twist:** Provide props or images to inspire ideas. For example, a globe for global equality, a book for education, or a chain to symbolize breaking barriers.

**Step 3: Present and Discuss (10–15 minutes)**

Each group presents their "What If?" scenario and the ideas they brainstormed.

- Encourage groups to share both practical solutions and imaginative, unexpected outcomes.
- For example, a group discussing "What if every child had access to education?" might propose a global teacher-sharing program or an AI-driven school system accessible via smartphones.

**After each presentation, facilitate a short discussion:**

- What inspired their ideas?
- What real-world barriers might arise, and how could they be addressed?
- How could humor, art, or storytelling make these ideas more relatable and actionable?

# Mind Mapping

## AIM

To visually organize thoughts and ideas, fostering connections between human rights concepts and solutions.

## OBJECTIVES

- To develop critical and creative thinking about human rights issues.
- To enhance organizational skills in presenting and connecting ideas.
- To inspire actionable solutions through brainstorming.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Introduction to Mind Mapping (5 minutes)

Explain the purpose and benefits of mind mapping:

- Mind mapping is a visual way to organize ideas and discover relationships between concepts.
- It helps participants think creatively and systematically about complex topics like human rights.

Demonstrate a simple mind map on the board:

- Write a central theme (e.g., Freedom of Speech) in the middle.
- Draw branches for related ideas (e.g., censorship, media access, protests).
- Add smaller branches for specific issues, examples, or potential solutions.
- Encourage participants to make their maps colorful and include drawings, symbols, or even humor to make the process enjoyable.

### Step 2: Individual Mind Mapping (20 minutes)

Provide participants with large sheets of paper and markers. Assign a central theme related to human rights, or let participants choose their own. Examples:

- Freedom of Speech
- Equal Access to Education
- Gender Equality
- Climate Justice as a Human Right

Guide participants to:

- Start with the theme in the center of their paper.
- Branch out with related ideas, challenges, and examples.
- Add solutions, actions, or imaginative possibilities for addressing the challenges.

Encourage creativity:

- Use symbols or visuals to represent key ideas.
- Include humorous or playful branches to keep the process lighthearted.



20 - 25 pax



45-50 minutes



- Large sheets of paper or flipchart paper.
- Markers, colored pens, and sticky notes.
- A whiteboard or flipchart for the facilitator.

### **Step 3: Small Group Sharing (15 minutes)**

Divide participants into small groups of 4–5.

Have each participant present their mind map to the group, explaining:

- Their central theme and key branches.
- Insights or creative ideas they discovered during the process.
- Any solutions or actions they brainstormed.

Encourage group members to:

- Identify common themes across their maps.
- Highlight unique perspectives or innovative ideas.
- Discuss how the ideas could work together in real-world applications.

### **Step 4: Full Group Discussion (10 minutes)**

Bring everyone back together to reflect on the activity:

- Ask each group to share a few highlights or standout ideas from their discussions.
- Write these highlights on the board to create a “collective mind map” for the entire group.

Facilitate a conversation about:

- The diversity of ideas and perspectives is represented.
- Potential real-world actions inspired by the brainstorming.
- How mind mapping can be used in advocacy or workshops to organize and present ideas effectively.

# "Walking in Their Shoes: Role Reversal Debate"

## AIM

To foster empathy and critical thinking by understanding and arguing multiple perspectives on human rights issues.

## OBJECTIVES

- To encourage participants to consider and articulate opposing viewpoints on human rights challenges.
- To develop skills in argumentation and the ability to empathize with differing opinions.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Introduce the Activity and Set the Stage (5 minutes)

Begin by explaining the concept of a role reversal debate:

- Participants will explore a human rights issue by arguing both for and against it, regardless of their personal beliefs.
- The goal is to develop a deeper understanding of the issue and the ability to empathize with opposing perspectives.

Share a brief example to illustrate:

- **Topic:** "Should surveillance be increased for public safety?"
- One side argues for surveillance as a necessary tool to protect people, while the other critiques it as a violation of privacy.

### Step 2: Group Division and Topic Assignment (5 minutes)

Divide participants into two groups.

Assign a human rights topic and a stance to each group.

Examples:

- **Censorship:** "Censorship is necessary" vs. "Censorship is harmful."
- **Freedom of Expression:** "Social media companies should regulate speech" vs. "Social media companies should allow all speech."
- **Refugee Rights:** "Governments should prioritize national security" vs. "Governments must prioritize refugee protection."



20 - 25 pax



1 hour



- Flipcharts, whiteboards, or large sheets of paper for brainstorming.
- Markers or pens.
- Pre-prepared debate topics related to human rights.

**Step 3: Argument Preparation (15 minutes)**

Each group brainstorms arguments supporting their assigned stance.

- Use flipcharts or whiteboards to organize ideas.
- Encourage groups to assign roles, such as lead speaker, note-taker, and idea contributor.
- **Guiding Questions for Brainstorming:**
  - What are the main reasons to support this stance?
  - What evidence or examples can back up these points?
  - How might the other side argue against this stance?

Remind groups to anticipate counterarguments and prepare rebuttals.

**Step 4: Role Reversal and Debate (20 minutes)**

After 15 minutes of preparation, inform participants they will now switch roles and argue the opposite stance.

- Group A now argues the position originally assigned to Group B, and vice versa.

Conduct the debate:

- Each group presents opening statements (2–3 minutes per group).
- Groups then engage in rebuttals, responding to the other side's arguments (8–10 minutes).
- Conclude with closing arguments (2–3 minutes per group).

As a facilitator, keep the debate structured and encourage respectful exchanges.

**Step 5: Reflection and Discussion (15 minutes)**

Lead a group reflection to unpack the experience. Use the following prompts:

- What was challenging about arguing a perspective you might not personally agree with?
- Did seeing the issue from another perspective change your understanding or opinion?
- How does this exercise relate to real-world human rights debates, where different perspectives must often be reconciled?

Highlight the importance of empathy and understanding opposing viewpoints in fostering dialogue and collaboration on human rights issues.

# Everyday Objects, Extraordinary Solutions

## AIM

To stimulate imaginative thinking by transforming everyday objects into innovative solutions for human rights challenges.

## OBJECTIVES

- To foster innovation and creativity in problem-solving.
- To promote collaboration and teamwork through brainstorming and presentation.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Introduce the Challenge (5 minutes)

Explain the purpose of the activity:

- Participants will use their creativity to transform everyday objects into tools or solutions that address human rights issues.
- This activity highlights the importance of innovative thinking in tackling big challenges with limited resources.

Share examples to spark creativity:

- A plastic bottle turned into a water filtration system to provide clean drinking water.
- A paper clip repurposed as a makeshift tool for fixing broken classroom supplies in under-resourced schools.

### Step 2: Group Formation and Object Selection (5 minutes)

Divide participants into small groups of 4–5 people.

Allow each group to draw or choose one object from the box. Encourage groups to brainstorm initial ideas by asking:

- What unique properties does this object have (e.g., flexibility, strength, shape)?
- How might these properties be used to solve a real-world human rights problem?



20 - 25 pax



30–40 minutes



- A variety of common objects (e.g., paper clips, rubber bands, plastic bottles, clothespins, cardboard tubes, string, buttons).
- A box or bag to hold the objects.
- Flipchart paper or markers for groups to sketch or write their ideas (optional).



### **Step 3: Brainstorming and Creation (15 minutes)**

Groups spend 10–15 minutes brainstorming creative uses for their object, focusing on addressing a specific human rights issue.

Encourage them to think broadly and innovatively:

- Choose a Human Rights Focus: Assign or let groups select a theme like access to clean water, education, gender equality, or freedom of expression.
- Explore Multiple Ideas: Generate as many uses for the object as possible, then refine the best idea.
- Visualize the Solution: Sketch, write, or prototype how their object would work in practice.

Facilitators can circulate to prompt deeper thinking with questions:

- How does your solution directly address the human rights issue?
- What challenges might arise, and how could they be overcome?
- How can your idea inspire action or raise awareness?

### **Step 4: Presentation and Feedback (15 minutes)**

Each group presents their innovative idea to the larger group in 2–3 minutes.

- Describe the object, the human rights issue it addresses, and how their solution works.
- If possible, include a story or example of how the object could be used in real life.

Facilitate a brief discussion after each presentation:

- What do you like about this idea?
- How might this solution work in real-world settings?
- Could it be scaled up or combined with other solutions?

# Weaving Stories Together

## AIM

To enhance creative thinking and storytelling skills through collaboration.

## OBJECTIVES

- To develop narrative-building skills by working as a team.
- To encourage spontaneity, adaptability, and creative problem-solving in storytelling.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Set the Stage (5 minutes)

Gather participants in a circle to emphasize teamwork and equal contribution.

Introduce the activity:

- Explain that participants will build a story collaboratively, with each person contributing one sentence at a time.
- Highlight the goal of using creativity and teamwork to explore human rights themes.
- Emphasize spontaneity: Participants don't need to plan ahead—just build on the previous contribution.

### Step 2: Choose a Starting Prompt (5 minutes)

Provide a starting prompt related to human rights, such as:

- "Once upon a time, in a land where everyone was free..."
- "In a village where girls were finally allowed to attend school..."
- "A group of friends discovered a way to bring clean water to their community..."
- For a humorous twist: "One day, the mayor decided to outlaw laughter..."

Alternatively, invite participants to suggest a prompt together.



20 - 25 pax



45 minutes



- A list of human rights-related prompts (optional, if inspiration is needed).
- A timer or stopwatch.
- Optional: A flipchart or paper to jot down key parts of the story as it unfolds.

**Story spine should go as follows:**

Once upon a time...

Everyday...

But one day...

Because of that... (repeat it as many times as you need)

Finally...

Ever since then...

The moral of the story is...

**Step 3: Build the Story (25 minutes)**

Explain the Rules:

- Each participant contributes one sentence to the story.
- A timer (10–15 seconds) keeps the flow spontaneous and prevents overthinking.
- Encourage participants to:
  - Build on what the previous person said.
  - Add humor, twists, or challenges related to the human rights theme.
  - Keep the tone appropriate but creative—serious or lighthearted, depending on the group's comfort level.

Begin the Story:

- The facilitator starts with the opening sentence based on the chosen prompt.
- Go around the circle, ensuring everyone gets a chance to contribute.
- If the group gets stuck, the facilitator can introduce a twist or guiding question like:
  - "What challenge did the main character face next?"
  - "How did the community respond?"
  - "What surprising event happened to change the course of the story?"

Continue until the story feels complete or after a set number of rounds (e.g., 2–3 times around the circle).

**Step 4: Reflect on the Story (10 minutes)**

Discuss the collaborative process:

- What made the story engaging or fun?
- How did participants build on each other's ideas?
- Were there any surprises or challenges in working together?

Analyze the narrative:

- What human rights themes emerged in the story?
- How did the characters and events reflect real-world issues?
- What message or call to action might the story inspire?

# Story Dice

## AIM

To encourage creative storytelling through visual and word prompts, enhancing spontaneous narrative building.

## OBJECTIVES

- To develop participants' ability to think quickly and creatively while incorporating human rights themes.
- To stimulate imagination through unexpected combinations of visual elements and ideas.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Introduction to the Activity (5 minutes)

Introduce the concept of **Story Dice**:

- Story Dice are dice with images or words on each side, used to inspire creative storytelling. The dice create unexpected combinations, leading to spontaneous narratives.

#### Human Rights Focus:

- The dice prompts will encourage participants to explore themes related to human rights, such as freedom of speech, education for all, equality, and justice.

#### Quick Thinking:

- Explain that the goal is to think on their feet and combine the elements from the dice into a cohesive story in a short amount of time.

### Step 2: Group Division and Dice Distribution (5 minutes)

Divide participants into small groups of 4–5 people.

Provide each group with a set of Story Dice (either physical dice or virtual dice, if using an online tool).

- If you're using physical dice, each group will take turns rolling the dice.
- If you're using an online tool, share the screen and roll the dice collectively.



20 - 25 pax



30–40 minutes



- Story Dice: dice with images, words, or both on each face. Use human rights-related prompts, such as symbols
- Example images/words: A globe, a handcuff, a megaphone, a book, etc.
- Timer
- Optional: Large sheets of paper or whiteboards for group brainstorming.

### **Step 3: Story Creation (15 minutes)**

Roll the Dice:

- The group rolls the dice and must immediately begin creating a story based on the images or words rolled.
- Each die should be used in the story, but the groups can decide how the elements connect. For example, a globe and a book could inspire a story about global education.

Collaborative Creation:

- Encourage all members of the group to contribute ideas for the narrative. They can take turns adding to the story or developing it collectively.
- The story should reflect a human rights issue, and participants should aim to convey a message or solution.

### **Step 4: Group Presentations and Feedback (10–15 minutes)**

Sharing the Story:

- Each group shares their story with the larger group. They should explain how they combined the prompts from the dice and how the human rights theme emerged in their narrative.

Discussion:

- After each presentation, open the floor for a brief discussion:
  - How did the random prompts influence your storytelling process?
  - What human rights issue did you focus on, and how did the dice help frame that issue?
  - Did the unexpected combinations lead to new ideas or insights?

*Optional:* Encourage feedback from other participants on the creativity and impact of the stories.

# What Are You Doing?

## AIM

To encourage creative thinking and quick improvisation by using verbal and physical actions in unexpected ways.

## OBJECTIVES

- To foster imagination and creativity through spontaneous physical and verbal responses.
- To develop teamwork and adaptability in a group setting.
- To practice active listening and quick thinking in a fun and engaging manner.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Setting the Stage:

Arrange participants in a large circle.

Explain the rules of the game and provide a quick demonstration.

### Game Play (20 minutes):

Select a volunteer to begin in the center of the circle.

The volunteer starts performing a simple physical action (e.g., pretending to brush their teeth, jogging in place).

A second participant steps into the circle and asks, "What are you doing?"

The first person responds with an action that is completely different from what they are physically doing (e.g., while brushing their teeth, they might say, "I'm painting a masterpiece").

The second participant then begins physicalizing the verbalized action (e.g., miming painting).

The next participant steps in, asks, "What are you doing?" and the process repeats.

### Reflection and Wrap-Up (5 minutes):

Once everyone has participated, gather the group to reflect on the activity.

Discuss how thinking creatively and responding quickly helped with their communication and improvisation skills.

- How did you come up with your responses so quickly?
- Did this activity challenge you to think outside the box? How?
- What did you learn about adapting to unexpected situations?



20 - 25 pax



30 minutes



- A spacious area where participants can stand in a circle.



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

---

Comedy is an unexpected yet impactful way to address serious issues like human rights. By blending humor with critical reflection, youth workers can engage participants in challenging topics without alienating or overwhelming them. Here is the brief theory before getting into comedy-writing:

## BASIC JOKE STRUCTURE

A strong joke is built on:

**SETUP:** Establishes the context and expectation.

- *Example:* "Why did the activist bring a ladder to the protest?"



**PUNCH(LINE):** Breaks the expectation with a humorous twist.

- *Example:* "Because the system's so broken, you've got to climb over it!"



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

---

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMEDY

### ONE-LINERS

**Short and witty, delivering immediate impact.**

*Example:* "Equal pay is great—if only it were equally distributed."

### PUNS

**Wordplay that amuses and engages.**

*Example:* "Justice delayed is justice de-nied."

### DARK HUMOR

**Tackles serious topics with wit and sensitivity.**

### OBSERVATIONAL COMEDY

**Highlights everyday absurdities related to social issues.**

*Example:* "Human rights are universal... unless you need a visa."





# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

---

## COMEDY TECHNIQUES FOR IMPACT

### MISDIRECTION

**Lead the audience one way, then surprise them.**

*Example:* "They said the law was blind. Turns out it just wears rose-colored glasses."

### RULE OF THREE

**Deliver two normal items and end with a twist.**

*Example:* "I want three things in life: happiness, health, and equal rights."

### EXAGGERATION

**Make a point by stretching reality.**

*Example:* "I was so mad at inequality, I wrote a letter to the government. It's been 10 years, and I'm still waiting for their LOL."



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

## COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES

This framework outlines techniques for writing stand-up comedy to engage audiences and spark conversations about human rights. Each section provides definitions, examples, and a clear process to help beginners write jokes effectively.

### 1

## PUNS (WORDPLAY)

**DEFINITION:** Puns are jokes that rely on the double meanings of words or phrases. Humor comes from the shift between two interpretations.

### HOW IT WORKS:

- The setup uses one meaning of a word, leading the audience to assume this interpretation.
- The punchline surprises them by revealing a second meaning.

### STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

1. **Choose a Word or Phrase:** Find one with at least two meanings.
2. **Write a Setup:** Frame the sentence to highlight the first meaning.
3. **Add a Punch(line):** Reveal the unexpected second meaning.
4. **Polish the Joke:** Refine the setup and punchline for clarity and flow.

### EXAMPLE (FOR HR):

Highlight the irony in language, such as the phrase "**justice served**":

*"They said justice was served... but it looks like they forgot my order."*



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

## COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES

### 2

## BROKEN ASSUMPTIONS

**DEFINITION:** These jokes trick the audience into making a logical assumption, only to surprise them when the assumption is broken.

**HOW IT  
WORKS:**

- The setup introduces familiar details that lead to a clear expectation.
- The punchline subverts that expectation with a surprising twist.

**STEP-BY-  
STEP  
PROCESS:**

1. **Start with a Story or Statement:** Use relatable situations to build assumptions.
2. **Identify Assumptions:** Predict what the audience will expect.
3. **Break the Assumption:** Introduce an unexpected outcome in the punchline.
4. **Refine the Delivery:** Ensure the joke transitions smoothly from setup to punchline.

**EXAMPLE  
(FOR HR):**

Challenge **stereotypes:**

*"They said I should know my place—I guess that's why they always keep moving it."*



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

## COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES

### 3

#### BROKEN PREDICTIONS

**DEFINITION:** Similar to broken assumptions, but instead of breaking the audience's understanding of the setup, these jokes break a pattern established within the joke itself.

**HOW IT  
WORKS:**

- A predictable pattern is created in the setup.
- The punchline breaks the pattern in a surprising way.

**STEP-BY-  
STEP  
PROCESS:**

1. **Establish a Pattern:** Use repetition to create a rhythm.
2. **Break the Pattern:** Add an unexpected twist in the punchline.
3. **Polish the Delivery:** Ensure the punchline lands smoothly after the setup.

**EXAMPLE  
(FOR HR):**

*"Equal pay is like a unicorn—beautiful, magical, and completely imaginary."*



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

## COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES

### 4

## CONTRAST AND COMPARISON

**DEFINITION:** Contrast jokes highlight differences between things that seem similar. Comparison jokes find surprising similarities between unrelated concepts.

**HOW IT WORKS:**

- Humor arises when you show how things should logically align but don't (contrast) or
- When they shouldn't align but do (comparison).

**STEP-BY-STEP**

**PROCESS:**  
(Comparison)

1. **Pick Two Similar Ideas:** Identify concepts or items that seem comparable.
2. **Find the Difference:** Highlight a surprising way they diverge.
3. **Write the Punch(line):** Emphasize the unexpected difference.

**STEP-BY-STEP**

**PROCESS:**  
(Contrast)

1. **Pick Two Different Ideas:** Start with unrelated concepts.
2. **Find a Similarity:** Identify a trait they surprisingly share.
3. **Write the Punch(line):** Reveal the connection.

**EXAMPLE (FOR HR):**

- *Contrast:* "The law says we're all equal, but apparently, some people are more 'equal' than others."
- *Comparison:* "Human rights violations are like bad haircuts—no one wants them, but we keep seeing them everywhere."



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

---

## COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES

5

### PUNCH-TO-SETUP METHOD

**DEFINITION:** This technique starts with a funny or impactful punchline, then builds a setup to lead into it.

**HOW IT WORKS:**

- The punchline carries the humor, and the setup frames it in an unexpected way.

**STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:**

1. **Start with a Punch(line):** Think of a surprising or clever statement.
2. **Explore the Meaning:** Identify multiple interpretations of the punchline.
3. **Write a Setup:** Guide the audience toward one meaning before surprising them with the punchline.

**EXAMPLE (FOR HR):**

**Punchline:** *"Turns out, justice is BYOB—bring your own bribes."*

**Setup:** *"I thought courts were fair and free, but then I looked at the fees."*



# THE ART OF COMEDY WRITING

## COMEDY WRITING TECHNIQUES

### 6

## CONTRADICTION

**DEFINITION:** These jokes use irony, showing how words, actions, or beliefs don't align.

**HOW IT WORKS:**

- The setup makes a serious statement or rule.
- The punchline breaks it with an action or comment that contradicts the rule.

**STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:**

1. **State a Rule:** Introduce a clear belief or expectation.
2. **Break the Rule:** Contradict it with an unexpected punchline.

**EXAMPLE (FOR HR):**

*"They say everyone's innocent until proven guilty—unless you're poor; then it's the other way around."*

# Learning from the Masters: Analyze and Rewrite Jokes

## AIM

To study and analyze successful comedic routines to understand joke structure, technique, and delivery, and to apply these skills creatively.

## OBJECTIVES

- To break down and analyze the components of successful jokes.
- To identify and understand comedic techniques like setup/punchline, misdirection, rule of three, and wordplay.
- To practice rewriting and innovating jokes while applying learned techniques.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Introduction and Key Concepts (5–10 minutes)

Introduce the Key Joke Structures:

- Setup and Punchline: Explain how the setup creates expectation, and the punchline surprises the audience by breaking that expectation.
- Rule of Three: A structure where the first two items in a list create a pattern, and the third breaks it for comedic effect.
- Misdirection: Leading the audience to expect one thing and delivering something unexpected.
- Wordplay: Using double meanings or twists on common phrases.

Distribute handouts with clear examples of each concept to guide participants as they analyze routines.



20–25 pax



1 hour



- Video clips of stand-up comedians (e.g., Kevin Hart, Ali Wong, etc.).
- Notebooks and pens.
- Handouts outlining joke structures and techniques (e.g., setup, punchline, rule of three, misdirection).
- Structured worksheets for the rewrite exercise.
- A projector or screen for video playback.



**Step 2: Watch and Analyze (20 minutes)**

Show a 3–5 minute video clip of a stand-up comedian performing a routine. Choose a routine with clear joke structures and relatable humor (keep it appropriate for your group).

- Examples:
  - Kevin Hart (relatable storytelling, rule of three).
  - Ali Wong (wordplay and misdirection).
  - Trevor Noah (humor tackling serious themes like human rights or cultural differences).

As the group watches the clip, ask participants to take notes on:

- The setup and punchline of each joke.
- How techniques like misdirection, rule of three, or wordplay are used.
- What makes the jokes effective: Is it the delivery, the surprise twist, or the relatability of the humor?

After the clip, facilitate a group discussion (5–10 minutes):

- “What joke stood out to you and why?”
- “Where was the setup, and how did the punchline break the expectation?”
- “Did the comedian use wordplay, exaggeration, or misdirection? Can you identify where?”

**Step 3: Joke Rewrite Challenge (25 minutes)**

Select a Joke: Ask each participant to pick one joke from the video clip that they found particularly effective.

- Alternatively, provide a few pre-selected jokes from the clip for participants to choose from.

Structured Worksheet: Give participants a worksheet with the following sections:

- Original Joke: Write down the comedian’s joke (setup and punchline).
- Identify the Technique: Was it misdirection, rule of three, or wordplay?
- Your Rewrite: Rewrite the joke using a different punchline, setup, or context. Encourage creativity!
  - Change the characters involved (e.g., make the joke about a human rights activist or a schoolteacher).
  - Change the setting (e.g., a protest, a courtroom, or a community meeting).
  - Add a new twist or reinterpret the original joke’s connector.

Example Rewrite:

- Original Joke:
  - Setup: “I’m not saying my mom’s cooking is bad...”
  - Punchline: “But the smoke alarm is our dinner bell.”
- Rewritten Joke (New Setup and Punchline):
  - Setup: “I’m not saying my mom can’t multitask...”
  - Punchline: “But she uses a fire extinguisher as her kitchen timer.”

Encourage participants to use techniques like misdirection, exaggeration, or literal reinterpretation.

#### Step 4: Sharing and Reflection (10 minutes)

Invite volunteers to share their rewritten jokes with the group.

After each joke:

- Discuss the technique used: Did they use misdirection, wordplay, or exaggeration?
- Compare it to the original joke: How did the rewrite add a new twist or fresh perspective?

Group Reflection:

- "What did you learn about joke structure and humor?"
- "How can humor help us talk about serious topics like human rights?"
- "Was it challenging to rewrite someone else's joke? Why?"

#### Optional Add-Ons for Engagement

Group Rewrites: Instead of rewriting individually, form small groups to collaboratively rewrite one joke. This encourages teamwork and bouncing ideas off each other.

"Funny for a Cause" Challenge: Ask participants to rewrite the joke so that it connects to a human rights theme. For example:

- Original joke about cooking → Rewrite it to include a message about food access or hunger.
- Joke about freedom of speech → Add a punchline about its limits or consequences.

Quick-Fire Round:

- Provide random words or phrases (e.g., "school," "justice," "microphone") and challenge participants to incorporate them into their rewritten joke.

#### Debrief Questions

- "How do comedians use surprise and structure to make their jokes effective?"
- "What techniques (e.g., misdirection, rule of three) do you feel most comfortable using in your own jokes?"
- "How can humor and well-crafted jokes help us raise awareness about important issues like human rights?"

# Setup and Surprise: Writing Killer Punchlines

## AIM

To practice writing jokes by focusing on creating punchlines for pre-written setups.

## OBJECTIVES

- To strengthen participants' understanding of joke structure (setup and punchline).
- To develop creativity by generating multiple punchlines for a single setup.
- To practice applying different comedic techniques (e.g., misdirection, wordplay, exaggeration).

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction to Setups and Punchlines (10 minutes)

Begin by explaining the joke-writing structure:

- Setup: The first part of the joke that sets up an expectation for the audience.
- Punchline: The surprising twist that breaks the expectation and creates humor.

Provide examples of effective setups and punchlines to demonstrate the concept:

- Example 1 (Wordplay):
  - Setup: "I tried to catch fog yesterday..."
  - Punchline: "...But I mist!"
- Example 2 (Misdirection):
  - Setup: "My doctor told me I need to watch my drinking..."
  - Punchline: "...So now I drink in front of a mirror."
- Example 3 (Exaggeration):
  - Setup: "I started jogging to get in shape..."
  - Punchline: "...Now I get out of breath just putting on my running shoes!"

Highlight common comedic techniques participants will use:

- Misdirection: Leading the audience to expect one thing, then delivering something unexpected.
- Wordplay: Playing with words or double meanings.
- Exaggeration: Taking an idea to an extreme for comedic effect.



20 - 25 pax



45 minutes



- Handouts with pre-written joke setups.
- Notebooks and pens.
- Whiteboard or flipchart (optional, for sharing examples).
- Small timer or stopwatch.

**Group Exercise – Writing Punchlines (20 minutes)**

Divide participants into pairs or groups of 3.

Distribute Setup Handouts: Hand out pre-written setups for participants to work with. Examples:

- I was so bad at cooking...
- I told my teacher I didn't do my homework because...
- I joined a gym last week...
- I love human rights so much, I...

Explain the Challenge:

- Each pair/group will write as many punchlines as possible for each setup using different comedic techniques.
- Set a timer for 5 minutes per setup to encourage quick thinking and creativity.
- Remind participants: "There are no wrong answers—be bold, funny, and even a little silly!"

Tips to Guide Participants:

- For each setup, ask:
  - What's the audience expecting?
  - How can we surprise them?
  - Can we twist the meaning of a word (wordplay) or exaggerate the situation?

**Selecting and Polishing Punchlines (5 minutes)**

After brainstorming, each pair/group selects their favorite punchline for each setup.

Encourage them to refine their chosen punchlines for clarity and flow.

**Sharing and Group Discussion (10 minutes)**

Each pair/group shares:

- The setup they worked with.
- Their chosen punchline(s).

Facilitate a lighthearted group discussion after each punchline:

- What surprised you about this punchline?
- Which comedic technique did they use (misdirection, wordplay, exaggeration)?
- How could this punchline relate to a human rights theme?
- 

Optional Audience Vote:

- Have the group vote (by clapping or cheering) on categories like:
  - Funniest Punchline
  - Most Creative Twist
  - Best Wordplay

**Debrief and Reflection Questions**

- How did the setup guide you to create your punchlines?
- Which techniques (misdirection, wordplay, exaggeration) did you find easiest or hardest to use?
- How can humor help raise awareness about serious issues, as human rights?
- What surprised you most about writing jokes?

# The Power of Three: Crafting Punchlines with the Rule of Three

## AIM

To explore, understand, and practice the comedic principle of the Rule of Three in joke writing.

## OBJECTIVES

- To understand how the Rule of Three creates humor through structure, rhythm, and surprise.
- To practice crafting jokes and observations using this principle.
- To foster creativity and critical thinking through focused writing exercises.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction to the Rule of Three (10 minutes)

Explain the Rule of Three:

- The Rule of Three is a comedic principle where the first two items in a list establish a pattern or expectation, and the third item breaks the pattern to surprise the audience and create humor.
- The rhythm of three feels natural and satisfying to listeners.

Share Examples:

Provide a mix of simple and human rights-related examples to illustrate the concept:

- Classic Example:
  - "I like my coffee like I like my mornings: dark, strong, and too hot to handle."
- Example with Misdirection:
  - "I'm on a diet. No carbs, no sugar, and no happiness."
- Human Rights Example:
  - "Equal pay sounds fair: the same hours, the same work, and the same empty paycheck."

Ask participants:

- Why does the third item stand out?
- How does breaking the pattern make the joke funny?



20–25 pax



30–40 minutes



- Examples of jokes that use the Rule of Three (prepared handouts or slides).
- Notebooks and pens.
- A whiteboard or flipchart for brainstorming ideas as a group.

### Group Brainstorming Exercise (10 minutes)

Choose a Topic: As a group, brainstorm topics that lend themselves to humor using the Rule of Three.

- Examples of topics:
  - Bad Habits: procrastinating, overeating, buying things you don't need.
  - Human Rights Misconceptions: "Freedom of speech means I can say whatever I want, wherever I want, and still get invited to dinner."
  - Funny Pet Behaviors: running in circles, barking at nothing, stealing your spot on the couch.

Quick Group Brainstorm: Write the brainstormed ideas on a whiteboard or flipchart so participants can use them for inspiration.

### Individual or Pair Writing Exercise (15 minutes)

Divide participants into pairs or let them work individually.

Challenge participants to:

- Select one of the group brainstormed topics (or their own topic).
- Write a joke or humorous observation using the Rule of Three.

Guidelines for Writing:

- The first two items in the joke should logically fit together and create a pattern.
- The third item should break the pattern—it can be absurd, exaggerated, or unexpected.
- Encourage participants to use misdirection, wordplay, or literal interpretations for the third item.

#### Example 1: Literal Twist

- Topic: Healthy eating habits.
- Joke: "I've started eating clean: no fried foods, no processed sugar, and no fun."

#### Example 2: Exaggeration

- Topic: Traveling for work.
- Joke: "I love traveling for work: the new sights, the new people, and the same terrible hotel breakfasts."

#### Example 3: Human Rights Focus

- Topic: Equality.
- Joke: "They say we're all equal: under the law, in opportunity, and in the size of our tax bills."

### Sharing and Feedback (10 minutes)

1. Invite participants to share their jokes with the group.

- Encourage enthusiastic clapping or cheering after each joke.

After each joke, briefly discuss:

- What worked well: How did the third item surprise or break the pattern?
- What technique was used: Was it exaggeration, wordplay, or absurdity?

If time allows, ask the group:

- Which jokes did you find most surprising and why?
- How could this structure be used to make serious topics like human rights more relatable?

## Optional Add-Ons for Engagement

### Speed Round:

- Set a timer for 5 minutes and challenge participants to write as many jokes as possible using the Rule of Three.
- Have a mini “stand-up showcase” where participants quickly share their best joke.

### Human Rights Twist:

- Provide specific prompts tied to human rights themes and ask participants to write jokes using the Rule of Three.
- Example prompts:
  - Freedom of Speech: “Freedom of speech is great—until you post on Twitter, say the wrong thing at dinner, or criticize your boss.”
  - Education: “School taught me three things: how to read, how to write, and how to survive being bullied.”

### Wildcard Words:

- Give participants three random words (e.g., justice, homework, pineapple) and challenge them to use all three in a Rule of Three joke.
- Example: “Justice should be swift, fair, and not served with a pineapple on pizza.”

## Debrief Questions

- What makes the Rule of Three so effective in joke writing?
- How does breaking a pattern surprise and engage an audience?
- How can you use the Rule of Three to talk about complex or serious topics like human rights?
- Did you find any unexpected punchlines or ideas during the exercise?

# Humor for Change: Themed Joke Creation

## AIM

To generate jokes around specific human rights themes while balancing humor and thoughtful messaging.

## OBJECTIVES

- To encourage participants to integrate humor into serious human rights topics.
- To practice structured joke writing using setup and punchline techniques.
- To improve performance skills such as timing, tone, and delivery.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Theme Selection (10 minutes)

Present a list of human rights themes and write them visibly on a flipchart or whiteboard. Examples include:

- Freedom of Speech
- Gender Equality
- Right to Education
- Discrimination and Inclusion
- Climate Justice as a Human Right
- Access to Clean Water and Healthcare

Facilitate a quick vote:

- Allow participants to choose 2–3 themes they find most interesting or relevant. These will form the focus for the activity.
- Assign themes to pairs or small groups (4–5 people per group). If some groups want to work on the same theme, that's fine—it will highlight different approaches to humor.



20–25 pax



1 hour



- A list of human rights themes on a flipchart or printed slips (e.g., freedom of speech, gender equality, climate justice, education for all, discrimination, access to clean water).
- Notebooks and pens.
- A timer or stopwatch.
- Optional: Microphone or small stage area for performances.



## Setup and Punchline Creation (30 minutes)

Brainstorming Setups (10–15 minutes):

- Explain to participants that the setup introduces the theme and sets the audience's expectation.
- Groups brainstorm several setups that reflect or highlight their chosen theme.
- Encourage them to focus on relatable scenarios or common misconceptions about human rights.

Creating Punchlines (15 minutes):

- For each setup, groups write punchlines that break the expectation in a surprising, funny way.
- Remind participants to use humor techniques like:
  - Misdirection: Lead the audience in one direction and surprise them with the punchline.
  - Exaggeration: Take an idea to its extreme for comedic effect.
  - Wordplay: Twist words or phrases to create humor.
  - Reinterpretation: Give a new meaning to a familiar idea.

Example Process:

- Theme: Gender Equality
  - Setup: "They say women can do anything men can do..."
  - Punchline 1 (Exaggeration): "...except earn the same paycheck for it."
- Theme: Freedom of Speech
  - Setup: "Freedom of speech is a beautiful thing..."
  - Punchline: "...until you tell your parents you're dropping out to become a stand-up comedian."

Encourage creativity: Remind participants that humor can be lighthearted but should still respect the seriousness of the human rights issue. Balance is key!

## Group Performances (15 minutes)

Invite groups to share their jokes with the larger group in a performance-style format.

- If possible, set up a "stage area" to create a fun, stand-up comedy vibe.
- Each group performs 1–3 of their best jokes. Encourage confident delivery, emphasizing timing and tone.

Tips for Delivery:

- Timing: Pause briefly after the setup to let the audience form their expectation.
- Emphasis: Highlight keywords or phrases in the punchline to land the joke effectively.
- Confidence: Remind participants to deliver with energy and enthusiasm, even if they're nervous.

**After each group performs, provide lighthearted feedback:**

- What worked well in their delivery?
- How did the punchline surprise us?
- How did the joke connect to the human rights theme?

## Optional Variations to Enhance Engagement

The Twist Challenge:

- Ask participants to write a serious version of their joke's punchline first, then rewrite it to add humor.
- Example:
  - Serious: "Women still earn 20% less than men."
  - Humorous: "Women are so good at saving money, we even get paid 20% less to prove it."

Speed Round:

- Set a timer for 5 minutes and challenge groups to write as many jokes as possible on their theme.
- Have a quick-fire "open mic" where each group shares one punchline.

Theme Mix-Up:

- Halfway through the activity, have groups swap themes with another group to encourage flexibility and quick thinking.

Audience Vote:

- At the end, let participants vote on categories like:
  - "Funniest Joke"
  - "Most Thought-Provoking Joke"
  - "Best Delivery"

## Debrief and Reflection Questions

- How can humor help us talk about serious topics like human rights?
- What was challenging about writing jokes on these themes?
- Did creating humor around human rights change how you think about these issues?
- How did delivery and timing affect how the jokes landed?

# Joke Writing Relay: Pass the Punchline!

## AIM

To collaboratively write jokes in a fun, energetic, and dynamic format.

## OBJECTIVES

- To foster teamwork and collaborative creativity.
- To practice writing jokes using structured setups and punchlines.
- To encourage spontaneity and quick thinking while maintaining humor.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction and Rules (5 minutes)

Explain the Activity:

- We're going to create jokes as a team in a relay format. Each group will write setups and punchlines collaboratively by passing the sheet to other groups.

Highlight the Joke Structure:

- Setup: The opening line that creates an expectation.
- Punchline: The surprising twist that breaks the expectation and makes the joke funny.

Set the tone: Emphasize that this is about creativity, teamwork, and fun—there are no wrong answers!

### Group Setup and Starting Round (5 minutes)

Divide participants into 4–5 small groups (4–5 people per group).

Hand each group a large sheet of paper and a marker.

Provide each group with a pre-written setup to start with (write it clearly at the top of their sheet). Examples:

- "Why did the chicken join a band?"
- "I started exercising to get in shape..."
- "I tried cooking for the first time yesterday..."
- "My teacher told me to stand up for what I believe in..."

Groups write the punchline for their assigned setup. Encourage creativity—remind them they can use techniques like misdirection, wordplay, or exaggeration.



20–25 pax



45 minutes



- Large sheets of paper or flip charts (one per group).
- Markers (one per group).
- Pre-written setups prepared by the facilitator for the starting round (e.g., "Why did the chicken join a band?" or "I started exercising to get in shape...").
- Timer or stopwatch to manage the rounds.
- Optional: Funny props (hats, wigs, or objects to lighten the mood for sharing).

## Writing Relay (25 minutes)

Round 1 (5 minutes):

- Each group writes a punchline to the starting setup provided.
- Once finished, they fold the paper so only the punchline is visible and pass the sheet to the group on their right.

Round 2 (5 minutes):

- Each group reads the punchline they received and writes a new setup that logically (or illogically!) leads to it.
- Example:
  - Punchline: "...because it already had drumsticks!"
  - New Setup: "Why did the turkey refuse to join the band?"

Repeat the Relay:

- Continue alternating rounds of punchlines and setups. Set a timer for 3–5 minutes per round to keep the energy high.
- Groups should write quickly and focus on fun, spontaneous ideas.

End the Relay:

- After 4–5 rounds, each sheet will have a series of alternating setups and punchlines.

## Sharing and Group Highlights (10 minutes)

Give each group their original sheet back and ask them to:

- Pick their favorite setup-punchline combination from the relay.
- Assign someone to perform or read it to the larger group.

Group Presentations:

- Each group presents their best joke to the entire room.
- Optional: Groups can use props (e.g., a microphone or silly hats) to add a playful stand-up comedy vibe.

## Debrief and Reflection Questions

- How did working collaboratively affect your joke-writing process?
- What techniques (misdirection, wordplay, exaggeration) worked best for creating humor?
- How can humor help us address serious topics, like human rights or equality?
- What surprised you about the jokes you created?

# Laughing at Ourselves: Breaking Down Stereotypes Through Humor

## AIM

To use humor to reflect on, laugh at, and break down stereotypes about different social, ethnic, or personal groups that participants belong to, ensuring the focus is self-deprecating and non-offensive.

## OBJECTIVES

- To foster self-awareness and reflection on personal stereotypes in a safe, non-judgmental way.
- To encourage inclusive humor that uses self-deprecation to lighten the mood.
- To practice writing jokes that play on stereotypes while maintaining a respectful tone.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction to Stereotypes and Humor (5–10 minutes)

#### Define Stereotypes:

- Discuss stereotypes as generalized beliefs or assumptions about a group of people. These can be based on ethnicity, gender, age, profession, or any other identity.
- Explain that the goal of the activity is to laugh at ourselves and use self-deprecating humor to reflect on these stereotypes, not to reinforce harmful biases.

#### Self-Reflective Humor:

- Explain that the activity encourages lighthearted, playful humor about the groups participants belong to (e.g., nationality, hobbies, work culture).
- Emphasize that the humor should be respectful, inclusive, and non-offensive. The goal is to break down stereotypes in a way that builds understanding, not division.

#### Examples of Safe, Self-Reflective Humor:

- “As a person who loves coffee, I spend 90% of my life deciding which mug to use. The other 10% is drinking it.”
- “I’m not saying I’m lazy, but my plants have started to grow without me.”
- “As a writer, I’ve mastered procrastination—my deadlines have deadlines.”



15– 25 pax



45–60 minutes



• Notebooks and pens.

• A whiteboard or flipchart for brainstorming (optional).

• Sticky notes or cards for participants to write their jokes on.

## Group Brainstorming (10 minutes)

Create Safe Groups:

- Divide participants into small groups based on shared identity or experiences (e.g., same nationality, same profession, similar hobbies). This creates a safe space where they can reflect on their own personal stereotypes.

Brainstorm Stereotypes in Each Group:

- Ask each group to brainstorm a list of lighthearted stereotypes about themselves. For example, if the group is made up of people who work in an office, they might joke about their love for coffee or the tendency to work late.
- The goal is not to offend anyone, but to identify and laugh at these stereotypes.

### Example Prompts for Brainstorming:

- What do people often assume about you based on your job, nationality, or hobbies?
- What's a common (but exaggerated) stereotype about your group?
- How can you play with this stereotype to make it funny?

## Writing Jokes (15–20 minutes)

Creating Jokes:

- After brainstorming, participants will write 1–2 jokes based on the stereotypes they discussed, ensuring the jokes are self-deprecating and good-natured. They should aim to twist the stereotype in a surprising way or exaggerate it for comedic effect.

Encourage Creative Thinking:

- Participants should aim to take ownership of the stereotype and make it humorous, rather than reinforcing it. For example:
  - "As a writer, I spend 90% of my time on the internet, 10% of my time writing... and 100% of my time thinking about food."
  - "As a teacher, my day is filled with deep philosophical debates with students. Like, 'Can I use my phone in class?'"

Example Jokes:

- Stereotype: "People from my country are always loud and talkative."
  - Joke: "As a proud member of my nationality, I only talk loudly when I have something important to say... which is, like, always!"
- Stereotype: "Tech workers always speak in jargon and are glued to their computers."
  - Joke: "As a techie, I only speak in code, especially when asking for food delivery. 'I'm hungry. Can you debug my dinner order?'"

## Sharing and Performance (10–15 minutes)

### Sharing Jokes:

- Invite participants to share their jokes with the larger group. For a fun touch, encourage them to perform their joke as if they were doing a stand-up routine. This allows for emphasis on timing and delivery, which are key to making jokes land effectively.

### Feedback and Discussion:

- After each joke, ask the group:
  - What did you like about this joke?
  - How did the stereotype break down in a funny way?
  - How did this joke help reflect the shared experience of the group?

## Debrief and Reflection (5–10 minutes)

### Group Reflection:

- Ask participants to reflect on the activity:
  - How did it feel to laugh at your own stereotype?
  - What was fun about breaking down stereotypes with humor?
  - How can humor be a tool for building understanding and challenging biases?

### Wrap-Up:

- Emphasize that humor is a powerful tool for bringing people together, and that self-reflection through humor can humanize the stereotypes we might hold about ourselves or others.

## Optional Additions for Further Engagement

### Joke Performance with Audience Feedback:

- Turn the sharing part into a mini “comedy show.” After each joke, let the audience give a quick feedback or cheer (e.g., “That was hilarious!” or “Great twist!”). This builds confidence and allows the performer to hone their comedic timing.

### Twist on Stereotypes:

- Ask participants to reframe their jokes to address a social or ethnic stereotype that others often impose on their group. The goal is to use humor to empower rather than reinforce the stereotype.

# Humor from Experience: Writing Jokes About Human Rights Violations

## AIM

To use personal experiences or witnessed events related to human rights violations as inspiration for writing jokes, while navigating the balance between humor and serious topics.

## OBJECTIVES

- To empower participants to use their personal experiences or stories they've witnessed to create jokes.
- To explore how humor can highlight serious issues like human rights violations in a thoughtful way.
- To develop skills in using self-deprecation and personal reflection in humor without trivializing sensitive issues.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction to Personal Experience and Humor (10 minutes)

Introduce the Activity:

- Explain that the goal is to write jokes based on personal experiences or stories participants have witnessed. These could be related to human rights violations they've faced personally or events they've witnessed that involved inequality, censorship, discrimination, etc.
- Emphasize that humor should come from a place of self-reflection and empowerment, with the focus on using humor to reflect on or disarm serious situations.

Share examples of how humor can address human rights issues without undermining their seriousness. For example:

- Example 1: "I once had to wait an hour at the immigration office for my visa to be approved—thankfully, the delay helped me perfect my 'sad tourist' look."
- Example 2: "They say silence is golden, but I learned that in a protest, silence is just a good way to avoid getting arrested."

Address Sensitivity:

- Explain that the activity involves reflecting on personal or witnessed experiences but should be done in a respectful way that doesn't diminish the seriousness of the issue. The humor should aim to empower participants and help them share their experiences in a way that others can relate to, not offend or hurt others.



15- 25 pax



1 hour



- Notebooks and pens.

- A whiteboard or flipchart for brainstorming.

- Optional: A projector to share jokes or visual aids.

- Pre-prepared list of human rights violations or examples that can serve as inspiration (e.g., freedom of speech restrictions, discrimination, inequality).



## Brainstorming Personal Experiences (10 minutes)

Reflect on Experiences:

- Ask participants to take a few minutes to reflect on their personal experiences related to human rights violations, inequality, discrimination, or censorship.
- If participants feel comfortable, they can jot down ideas or stories they want to explore. Encourage them to think about moments where humor could have been used to cope, highlight absurdities, or break tension in those situations.

Brainstorm Themes or Scenarios:

- In pairs or small groups, participants can brainstorm common human rights violations they've witnessed or experienced.

Group Discussion:

- Invite a few participants to share their ideas or scenarios. This will help others think about their own experiences and frame them in a way that's suitable for humor.

## Joke Writing and Reflection (25 minutes)

Write Your Jokes:

- Now, participants will choose one experience or scenario they've reflected on and write a joke or a humorous observation based on it.
- They should focus on the setup and punchline, making sure their joke incorporates humor while addressing the human rights issue they've chosen.

Guidelines for Writing Jokes:

- Self-Deprecation: Use humor that's self-reflective or playful about the personal experience, but avoid making light of the violation itself.
- Surprise Element: Make sure the punchline provides a twist or surprise that catches the audience off guard, while keeping the focus on the core issue.
- Exaggeration or Absurdity: Sometimes, taking the situation to the extreme or absurd can make it funny while drawing attention to the ridiculousness of the issue.

Example Process:

- Scenario: Discrimination in the workplace (e.g., not being considered for a promotion because of gender).
  - Setup: "I've been working at the same company for years, never missing a deadline..."
  - Punchline: "...but apparently, that's still not enough to get promoted until I start wearing more suits and less 'pink.'"

## **Sharing and Feedback (10 minutes)**

Sharing the Jokes:

- Invite participants to share their jokes with the group. Depending on the group dynamics, they can either read their jokes aloud or perform them in a stand-up style.
- Encourage participants to focus on delivery and timing to make the joke as effective as possible.

Group Feedback:

- After each joke, provide positive feedback:
  - What worked well in this joke?
  - How did the joke connect the personal experience with humor?
  - Did it feel empowering or relatable?
- Ensure that feedback is constructive and supportive, emphasizing the creativity and bravery involved in sharing personal experiences.

## **Debrief and Reflection Questions**

- How did humor help you process or cope with the experience you reflected on?
- What was the most empowering part of writing and sharing your joke?
- How can humor be used to raise awareness about human rights violations in a way that engages others?
- What surprised you about using humor to address serious issues?

# Stereotype Breakers: Using Humor to Challenge HR Assumptions

## AIM

To create jokes that challenge stereotypes and misconceptions related to human rights topics (e.g., gender equality, freedom of expression, access to education) through humor.

## OBJECTIVES

- To use humor to reframe stereotypes about different social, cultural, and human rights issues.
- To practice creating jokes that challenge biases and promote a more inclusive perspective.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction (5 minutes):

Discuss how stereotypes can be harmful and how humor can break down and reframe these assumptions. Explain that the goal is to use self-aware humor to challenge stereotypes about human rights issues.

### Brainstorming Session (10 minutes):

Provide a list of misconceptions and ask participants to choose one they want to challenge. Examples could be:

- "Women are too emotional to lead."
- "Refugees are a burden to society."
- "Activists are always angry."
- "Disabled people can't live independently."

Allow participants to reflect on the absurdity of these stereotypes.



20 pax



45 minutes



- Pre-written stereotypes or misconceptions about human rights issues (e.g., "Women are too emotional to lead," "Refugees are a burden to society," "Activists are always angry").
- Notebooks and pens.

## **Joke Creation (15 minutes):**

Have participants write jokes that debunk these stereotypes, using techniques like exaggeration, irony, or absurdity.

Encourage them to make fun of the stereotype by taking it to extremes, using sarcasm, or twisting it in an unexpected way.

An example of “Refugees are a burden to society” could be:

- Joke: “I’ve heard refugees are a burden to society... so, how come my roommate, who’s been on the couch for three weeks, hasn’t left yet?”

## **Sharing and Reflection (15 minutes):**

- Have each participant share one of their jokes with the group.
- Facilitate a discussion about the power of humor in challenging stereotypes and how humor can make complex issues more relatable.

## **Debriefing Questions**

- How did it feel to use humor to challenge stereotypes or misconceptions about human rights issues?
- What was your experience of reframing or reinterpreting stereotypes in a humorous way?
- How did humor help to lighten the seriousness of human rights issues without diminishing their importance?
- Do you think humor can shift public perception of human rights issues? Why or why not?

# The Human Rights Satire Show

## AIM

To create satirical jokes that comment on or exaggerate human rights issues in a humorous way.

## OBJECTIVES

- To practice using satire as a form of social commentary on human rights topics.
- To encourage critical thinking and creative exaggeration of societal issues.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction to Satire (5–10 minutes):

Explain what satire is: using humor, irony, or ridicule to criticize or mock human rights issues, societal norms, or powerful institutions.

Provide a couple of satirical joke examples about social or political issues (e.g., “The government says everyone has a voice—except when you try to vote on anything.”).

Discuss how exaggeration and irony play an important role in satire.

### Brainstorming Satirical Topics (10 minutes):

In pairs or small groups, have participants choose a human rights issue they want to satirize (e.g., discrimination, environmental justice, refugee rights, freedom of expression). Brainstorm absurd situations or exaggerated scenarios related to the issue. For example:

- “What would happen if human rights were treated like a retail store: ‘Sorry, no returns on freedom of speech, but you can exchange it for a good protest.’”



25 pax



1 hour



- Examples of satirical jokes (e.g., political satire, social commentary).
- Notebooks and pens.

## **Creating Satirical Jokes (20 minutes):**

Participants will now create satirical jokes based on the scenarios or ideas they brainstormed.

Encourage them to use hyperbole (exaggeration), sarcasm, and irony to drive the point home humorously.

## **Sharing and Discussion (15 minutes):**

- Have participants share their satirical jokes with the group.
- Discuss how satire helps bring attention to serious human rights issues in an entertaining but thought-provoking way.
- Reflect on the balance between humor and respect when discussing sensitive topics.

## **Debriefing Questions**

- How did satire help you highlight human rights issues in a more engaging or memorable way?
- In your opinion, how does satire make complex human rights topics more accessible to a wider audience?
- How does humor, especially satire, help us question societal norms and systems that contribute to human rights violations?

# Dad's Jokes Competition

## AIM

To practice the art of timing and delivery in humor through a playful and competitive setting.

## OBJECTIVES

- To enhance comedic timing and confidence in joke delivery.
- To foster a lighthearted and engaging atmosphere among participants.
- To encourage active listening and quick thinking.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction to Joke Timing (5–10 minutes):

- Explain the importance of timing in humor: how pauses, pacing, and delivery impact the effectiveness of a joke.
- Share a few examples of dad jokes and demonstrate effective timing (e.g., pausing before the punchline).

### Competition Setup (20–25 minutes):

Form participants into a circle or two lines if competing head-to-head.

Each participant takes turns delivering a dad joke to the group.

- Participants can either prepare their jokes in advance or select one spontaneously.
- Encourage them to focus on timing, expression, and delivery to maximize the joke's impact.

Optional: Add a competitive element:

- Judges or the group can rate each joke on timing, creativity, and laughter generated.
- Participants can compete in pairs, with the winner advancing to the next round.

Continue until every participant has had a chance to deliver their joke.

### Reflection and Wrap-Up (5 minutes):

Discuss the role of timing and audience engagement in delivering jokes successfully.

Share the funniest moments from the competition and celebrate the participants' creativity.

- How did timing affect the success of your joke?
- What strategies worked best to make the audience laugh?
- How can mastering timing in humor help in other forms of communication?



20 pax



1 hour



- A collection of dad jokes (optional, in case participants need inspiration).
- A timer or stopwatch (optional, for time limits).
- A designated judge or panel of judges (optional).



## THE TRAINERS

*Behind this toolkit are us, two trainers with experience in non-formal education and a deep passion for human rights.*

*Combining these two passions – human rights education and the art of stand-up comedy – was no small challenge, but we embraced wholeheartedly.*

*Driven by a commitment to innovation in youth work and a belief in the transformative power of humor, we embarked on this journey to find new ways to connect with young people on serious topics.*

*We've seen firsthand how laughter can spark conversations and break down barriers, thus we decided to promote it ourselves. This project is just the beginning, and we're excited to keep exploring how comedy can open minds and amplify voices in the fight for equality and justice.*




### TRAINERS

*Rasa Tucinskaite*

*Stefano Esposito*

 website

 loudandclear\_eu

 Loud & Clear



# PROJECT COORDINATOR



Loud & Clear  
LT

# PARTNERS



Youthfully Yours  
GR



APS FLOW  
IT



10x10  
LV



CHECK-IN  
PT



GREEN ELEPHANT  
PL



Funded by  
the European Union