



Links to the Past

This activity is all about expressing feelings, memories, or experiences prompted by a single image. A single image is shared with a small group and participants respond by writing a word or phrase that the image provokes on their "link" in the chain. The activity continues with people responding to the other links in the chain.

We want to be able to connect with and speak with the participants of this activity. Once everyone has written down their thoughts and added to the final chain, just read off what each link is right from the beginning and then get into a brief discussion about what each person wrote and why they chose that particular thing. This activity can take anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes, it all depends on how many people participate and how long the discussion is.



Supplies

- An image used to elicit memories from participants, 8' x 10" or larger
- A digital printer and standard 8.5x11" printer paper
- Scissors
- Clear tape to secure the image to the wall, and to make each link

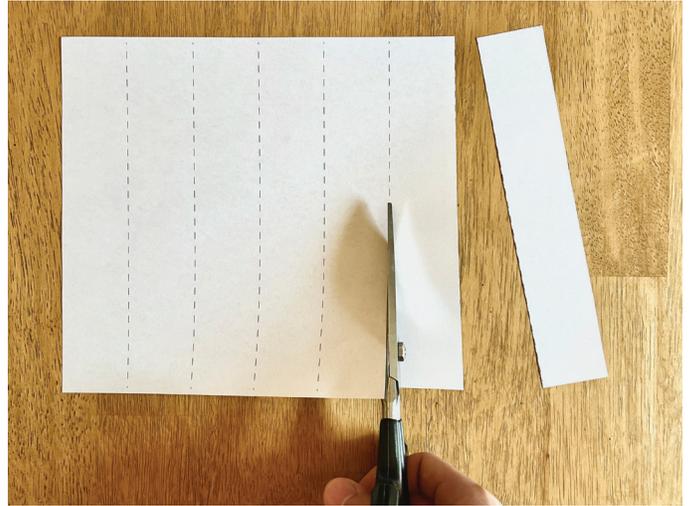
Tips for Success

- Try using images of things that:
 - Are likely familiar to multiple participants
 - May remind participants of a place or period of time
 - Are landscapes
 - Have something to do with food or sweets
 - Are known to be something that participants have in common with each other
 - Are historical artifacts of the local area or community
- The suggested group size for this activity is around 5-6 people, but smaller and larger groups will still enjoy the activity. For larger groups, consider the length of the chain that will be created, and place the image on the wall accordingly.
- Consider the demonstration of creating the first link before the activity begins (step #3 in the instructions). Some individuals may be nervous or unsure about participating in this activity, so providing the first link might make it easier for them to contribute

Instructions

1. Setup the Activity

- a. Print one copy of page 5 of this document for each participant
- b. Cut along the dashed lines — these will be the “links” for this activity
- c. Print the image to use as the prompt and tape it to the wall in a spot that all participants will be able to see it
- d. Create a blank “link” by taping one of the cut pieces of paper into a loop, and secure it to the bottom of the image with tape



2. Prepare the Participants

- a. Give a brief explanation of the activity to the participants
- b. Remind participants to focus on senses and memories
- c. Ask participants to consider past experiences or emotions that the image may remind them of

3. Demonstrate how to contribute

- a. Share a thought or memory of your own
- b. Write it on one of the links
- c. Loop your link through the one already attached to the image and secure with tape



4. Invite participants to contribute to the chain

5. Repeat the activity with additional words sparked by the image and the words/phrases already linked

6. The activity is complete when there are no remaining links to add



