

ual:

Collective Digital Storytelling

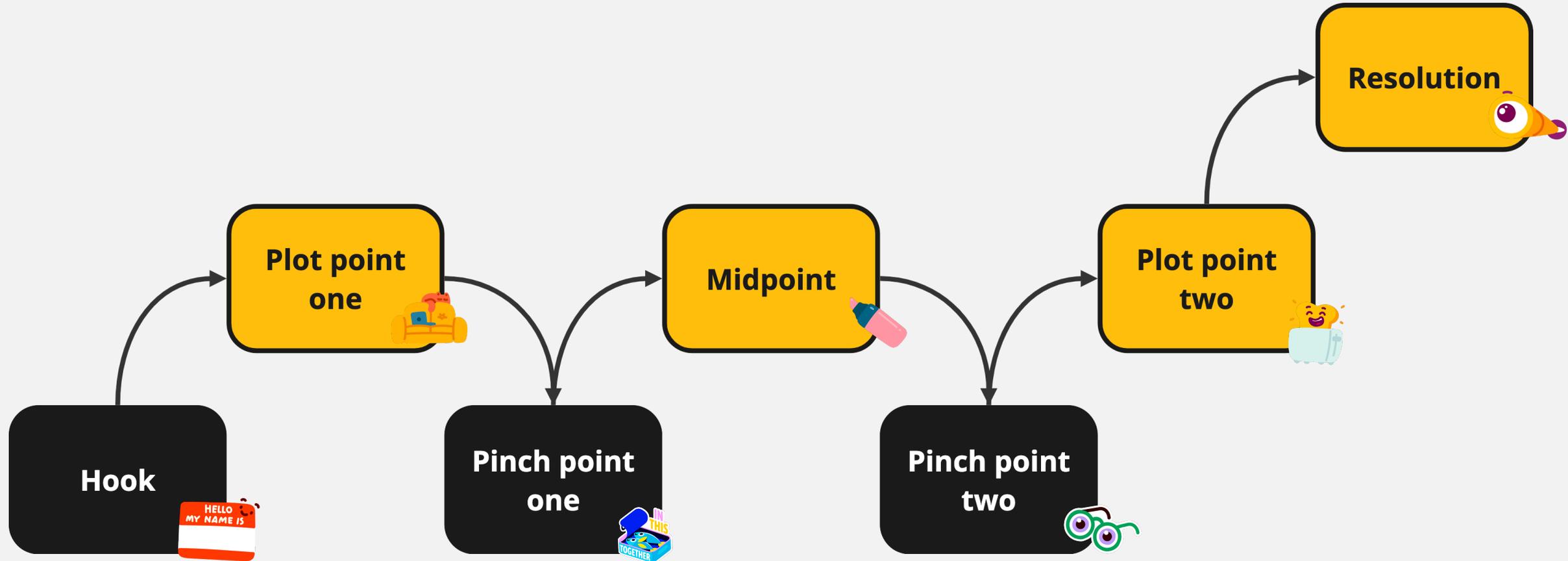
22/23 Action Research Project: Final Presentation

Sebastian May

"We're children of narrative"

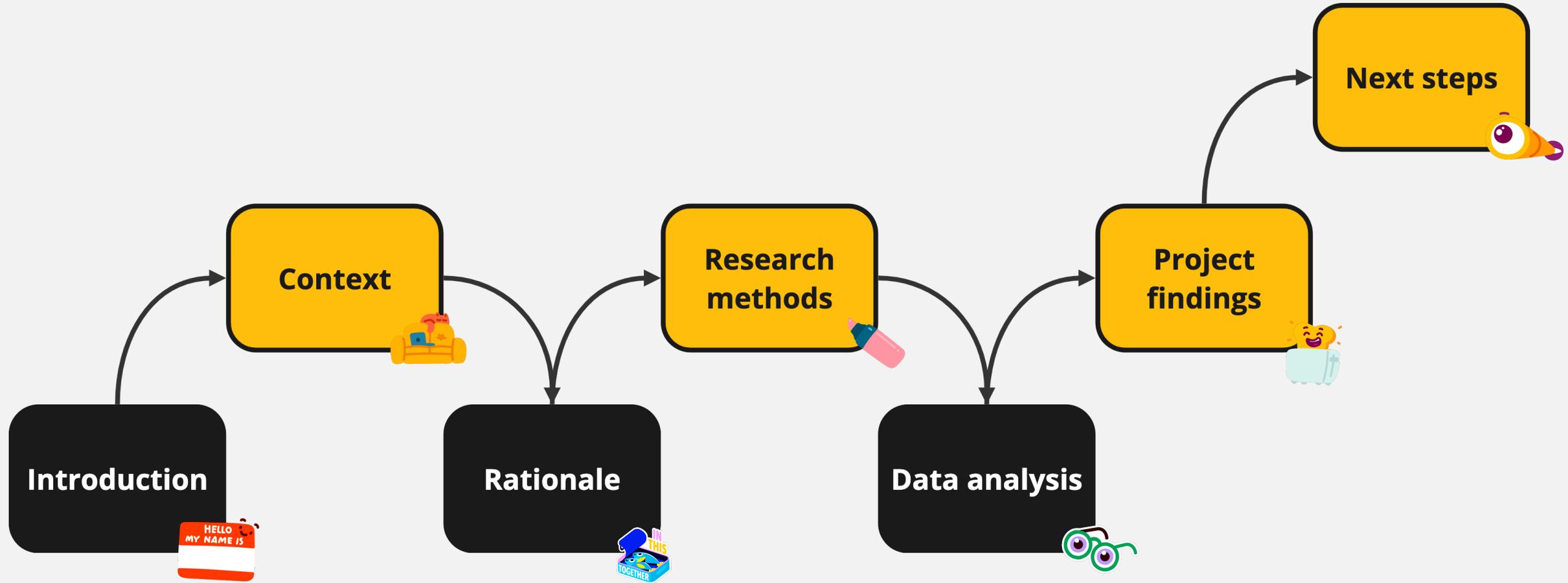
Atwood, 2002, p.13

Seven Point Story Structure (Wells, 2010)



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Content



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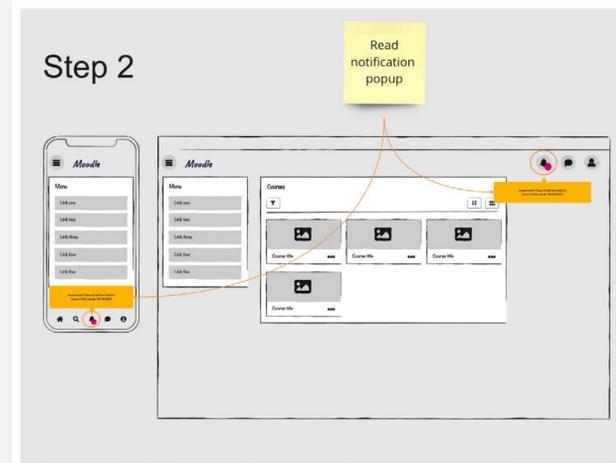
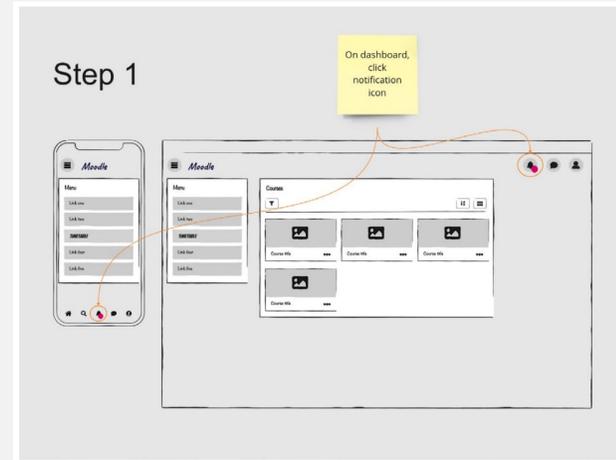


Plot point one: Context



Online education

- Student Experience Lead
- UAL Online Learning Framework: flexibility, inclusivity, scalability
- Student Partners
- Teaching and learning model: guided (45%), independent (40%), and live (15%)



Creative education online: action research report

UAL Online

December 2022

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Pinch point one: Rationale



Rationale

What is my concern?

(McNiff and Whitehead)

Storytelling to enable lived experiences and authentic voice

(Copeland and de Moor, 2018)

Power of community and belonging

(Hehir et al., 2021)

Support, care and ethics of teaching and learning

(Condorelli, 2009, p.188)



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How can I enable a sense of connectedness among creative students through digital storytelling?

Research Question

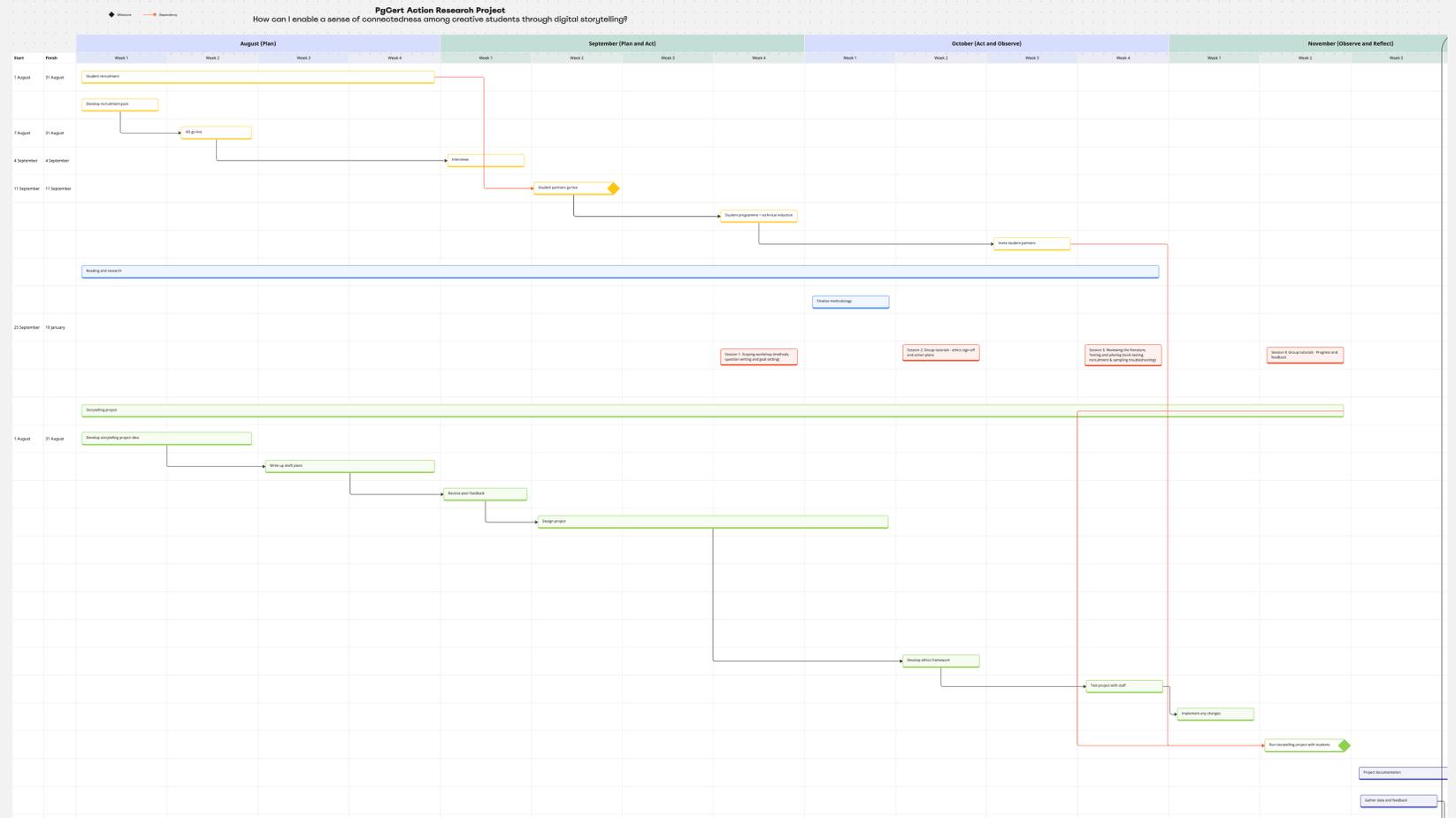


Midpoint: Research methods



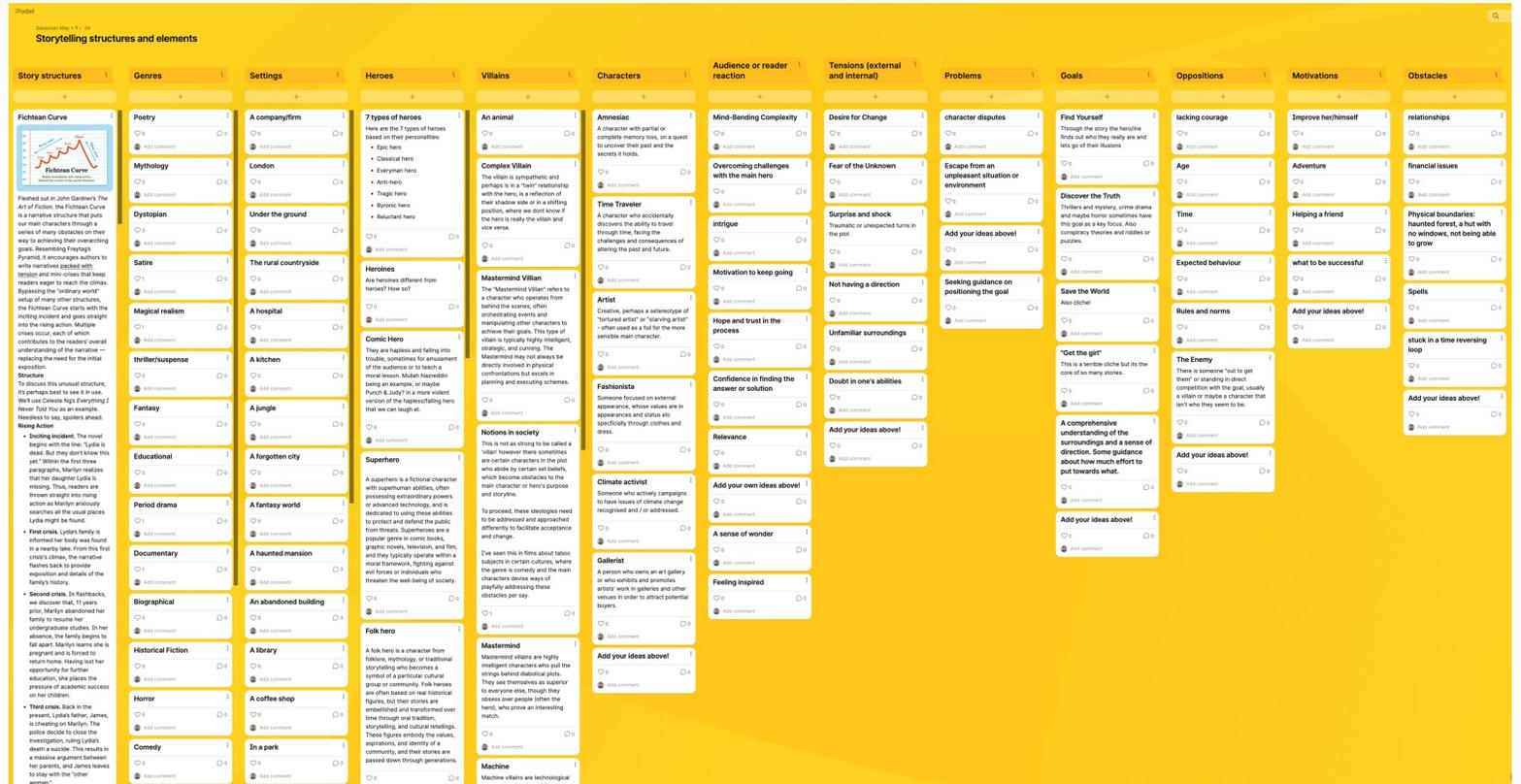
Selecting research methods

- Theme
- Context
- Practicality



Activities

Exploring and contributing to a Padlet containing storytelling elements



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Activities

Exploring and contributing to a collective map of individual student partner stories

Research Project Instructions

- 1 Stories come in many different shapes and forms; they can be structured in numerous ways and can include different genres, settings, characters and more. Start to think about what type of story you might want to tell, and which elements to include, by exploring the different [storytelling elements on our community Padlet](#).
- 2 Add at least one storytelling element of your own to any of the existing columns on Padlet. For example, under 'Goals' you may want to add a goal that a main character of a story is trying to achieve. For example, if your main character is a painter, this could be 'sell a painting'. You may also add additional columns to the Padlet or comment on any of the existing elements.
- 3 Open and explore the [Stories Map on Miro](#) (you're here now). At the beginning of the project, you may only see one other story at the centre of the map. As different participants contribute to the project by adding their own stories, this map will expand and become more complex.
- 4 Use at least one of the stories on the map as a springboard to create your own story. For example, if the existing story talks about a painter exhibiting a painting, consider how you would continue this story and how would you include your own arts practice in the story. See the full activity instructions for further information about potential story formats.
- 5 Add your story to the map, connecting it to the original story or stories you found with an arrow or a line.
- 6 Evaluate the activity by completing the [research project evaluation questionnaire](#), use the password 'storytelling'.

| Suggested activity timings | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Review relevant project information and activity instructions, provide your consent |
| 20 minutes | Explore and add to the storytelling elements on Padlet |
| 10 minutes | Explore the Stories Map on Miro |
| 20 minutes | Plan / outline your own story |
| 60 minutes | Create your short story |
| 10 minutes | Finalise and publish your story |
| 20 minutes | Complete the activity evaluation , use the password 'storytelling' |
| 150 minutes* | Total activity time* |

Links and resources

- [Storytelling elements on Padlet](#)
- [Stories Map on Miro](#)
- [Miro Quick Start guide](#)
- [Research project evaluation questionnaire](#), use the password 'storytelling'

*We understand that for an activity that takes around 150 minutes to complete, we have provided an additional 30 minutes of support in order to ensure you have time to complete any queries you have during the activity or to contact your health partner for support.

Story map

Activities

Complete an activity
evaluation

Project Evaluation Questionnaire

Page 3 of 6

4. The storytelling activity made me feel connected to some / any of the other students.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree or disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

6. There were elements of the storytelling activity that made me feel disconnected from some / any of the other students.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree or disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

8. The playfulness of the storytelling activity discouraged me from participating in the activity.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree or disagree

Disagree

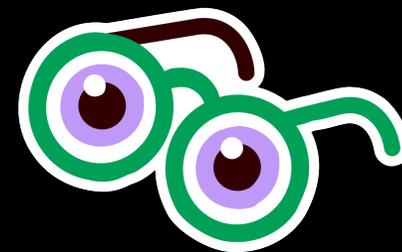
Strongly disagree

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

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Pinch point two: Data analysis

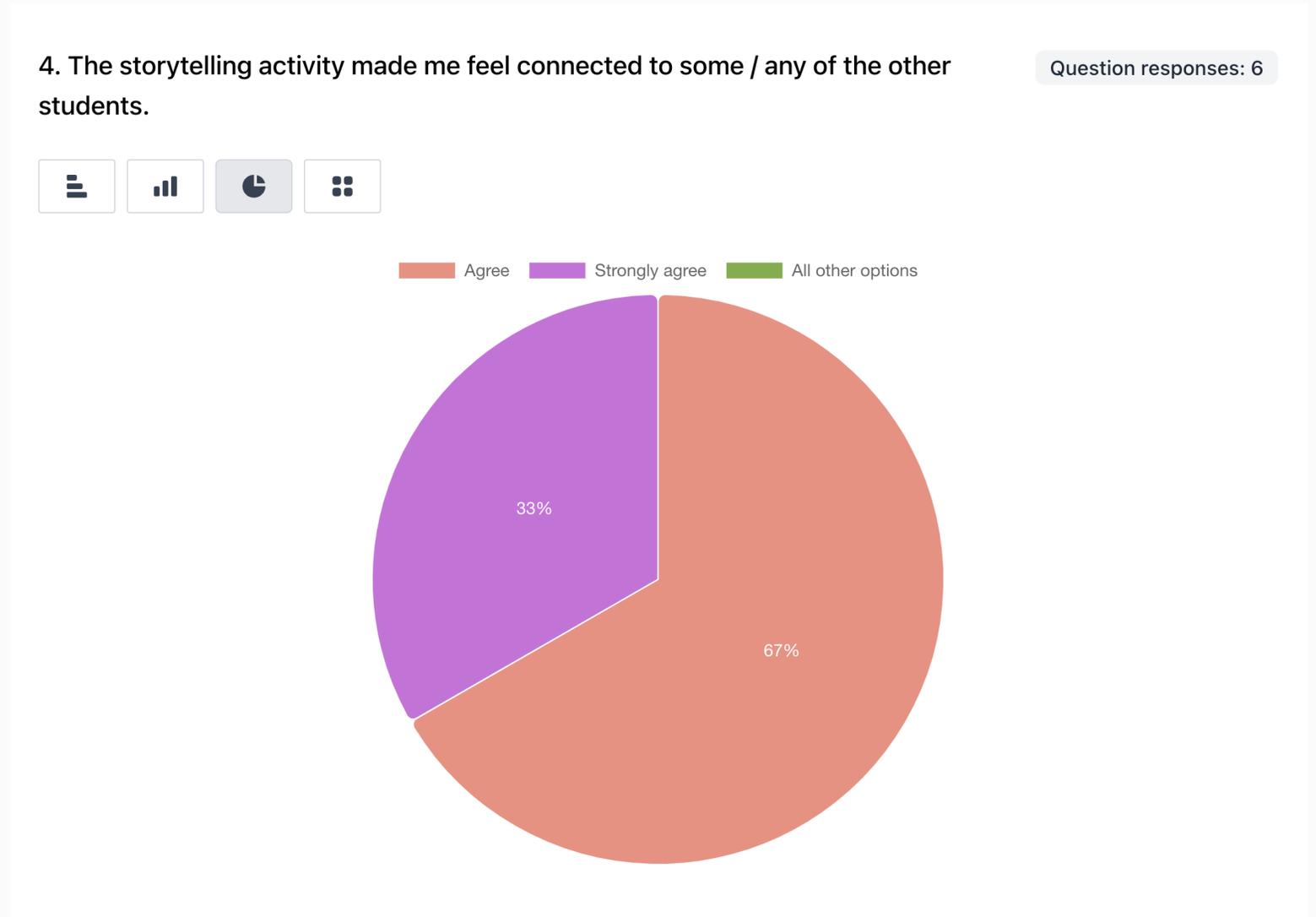


Data analysis

- Three concurrent flows of activity (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.10)
 - Data collection
 - Data reduction
 - Data display

Data analysis

Comparative data analysis, looking for trends and conflicts



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Data analysis

Thematic data analysis of over 170 key words extracted from student partners' Padlet submissions

Activity 1

Activity 1: thematic analysis

WHICH WORDS BELONG TOGETHER?

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| JUNGLE | FANTASY WORLD | HAUNTED MANSION | ABANDONED BUILDING | NO DIRECTION | UNUSUAL SPACE | CHANGE | SIDE | SHOCK | PATRIAL | KITCHEN | LACK | |
| LIBRARY | COFFEE SHOP | MAGICAL REALISM | THRILLER | SUSPENSE | UNUSUAL APPEARANCE | CIRCULAR STORY | LOSE | SHIPPING | TRAGIC | FROM POULDS | ANIMAL | COURAGE |
| INTRIGUE | WANT TO BE SUCCESSFUL | STUCK IN A TIME FOLDING LOOP | DYSTOPIAN | SATIRE | NOTIONS IN SOCIETY | ARABIAN NIGHTS | FIND | POSITION | UNDERSTOOD | WHO THEY ARE | DISPUTES | RELATIONSHIPS |
| MAINTAINING VALUES | SUPERHERO | FOLK HERO | TRICKSTER HERO | RELEVANCE | SHARING THE SAME JOURNEY SOLUTION | REBIRTH | LINK | FAVORITE | TURN | ILLUSION | RURAL | FINANCIAL |
| SENSE OF DIRECTION | GUIDANCE | EFFORT | SEEKING | POSTPONING THE BEST | ENDING THE JOURNEY | KARAN | LAYER | EXTERNAL APPEARANCE | PLOT | ENEMY | CONVICTION | ISSUES |
| HOPE | HOPE | TRUST | PROCESS | CONSEQUENCE | ENDING THE JOURNEY | ENDING THE JOURNEY | ENDING THE JOURNEY | ENDING THE JOURNEY | ENDING THE JOURNEY | ENDING THE JOURNEY | ENDING THE JOURNEY | AGE |
| UNUSUAL SPACE | IN A PARK | MOVE TO A NEW CITY | YOUR HOME | CAFE | EDUCATIONAL | PERIOD DREAM | PARTICIPATORY | CLOTHES | CLICHÉ | COMPETITION | NO GROWTH | TIME |
| COMIC HERO | HAPLESS | TROUBLE | EMPOWERMENT | MATERIAL | NEW | CREATIVE | AGENCY | SHADOW | CORE | SEEM TO BE | NO WINDOWS | IMPROVE YOURSELF |
| MORAL | LESSON | VIOLENT | LANGUAGE | HEROINES | COMPLEX PLOT | EMPOWERMENT | TWIN | REGULATION | USED THE WORLD | EMPOWERMENT | HUT | DESIRE |
| DRESS | ARTIST | STRONG | THAT'S HARD | STARVING | FOIL | STRONG | CHARACTER | SURPRISE | SHOCKER | CHALLENGED | FOREST | CHANGE |
| TRUTH | MYSTERY | CRIME DRAMA | HORROR | CONSPIRACY | THEORY | KEY | FOCUS | REBELL | ESCAPE | MANAHERO | RULES | FORM OF THE JOURNEY |
| NORMS | UNEXPECTED BEHAVIOUR | HELP | FRIEND | ADVENTURE | SPELLS | PHYSICAL | BOUNDARIES | HAUNTED | UNUSUAL | SITUATION | EMPOWERMENT | FROM PERIOD COMPLEXITY |
| FIRM | LONDON | UNUSUAL SPACE | POETRY | METAPHOR | INCIDENTS | ACTION | INICING | CRISIS | CLIMAX | COMPANY | TEAM TRAVELLER | AMNESIA |

Example

| | | | |
|------|-------|-------|---------|
| HUM | SODA | GROSS | STICK |
| MINT | GUM | SING | COUNT |
| TAFE | LIME | SUM | WHISTLE |
| SCAT | TOTAL | GLUE | RUM |

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

| Architecture | Name or description of category |
|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Library | Word or phrase |
| Coffee shop | Word or phrase |
| Cafe | Word or phrase |
| Your home | Word or phrase |
| | Word or phrase |
| | Word or phrase |
| | Word or phrase |

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Data analysis

Narrative data analysis focused on identity:

(Bamberg, 2012)

- Constancy and change across time
- Sameness vs. difference
- Agency

Constancy and change across time: routines, patterns, or the development of an identity

There was **once** a student from creative practices. They were independent and diligent in their work, however they did only what they were asked and **rarely explored** further. They wondered about their purpose, however had difficulties in articulating their goals and approach. Observing these limitations, their mentor asked them to create a piece of art that represented them. The student put their entire heart and soul into it and did whatever they knew best. The piece of work **turned out to be impressive**, however there was more to the task. Next they had to find a person who would be interested in purchasing the art piece for an amount they wanted from it. With a clear brief, they first spoke to their peers and tried to figure out an approach. They then fixed an amount, and practised their pitch.

Feeling comfortable, they set out to try. However, they struggled, people barely showed interest in the piece. With a heavy heart they retired to reflect on what their piece signifies, and who might be interested in it.

They further spoke with their peers who had found buyers for their pieces and made changes to their pitch, focusing on a certain audience.

People showed interest this time, but they pointed out **improvements** that could be made to suit their needs better. They **continued trying** without evident success.

Once again, they took some time off to **pause and reflect**. They **refreshed the piece** based on the feedback they received, thought more about what they wanted from it and importantly, who would appreciate and support them further.

Around this time, they set out to sell the piece, something had changed. Their attitude had shifted, where they approached this as a **marathon, not a sprint**, trying to focus on quality of interactions and devoting themselves to learning and re-adapting.

Sameness versus difference: contrasting or comparable elements, e.g. moral values

There was once a student from creative practices. They were independent and diligent in their work, however they did only what they were asked and rarely explored further. They wondered about their purpose, however had difficulties in articulating their goals and approach.

Observing these limitations, their mentor asked them to create a piece of art that represented them. The student put their entire heart and soul into it and did whatever they knew best.

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Around this time, they set out to sell the piece, **something had changed**. Their **attitude had shifted**, where they approached this as a marathon, not a sprint, trying to focus on quality of interactions and devoting themselves to learning and **re-adapting**.

Agency: a sense of self as actor or as undergoer

There was once a student from creative practices. They were independent and diligent in their work, however they did only what they were asked and rarely explored further. They wondered about their purpose, however had difficulties in articulating their goals and approach.

Observing these limitations, their mentor asked them to create a piece of art that represented them. The student **put their entire heart and soul into it** and did whatever they knew best.

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Plot point two: Project findings



Highlights

Connectedness and storytelling

Engaging students in an asynchronous storytelling activity allowed me to create connectedness among the group.

“The story represents a journey, me and most of my peers are currently experiencing. Writing the experience down, and incorporating their experiences **made me feel more connected** with them and see overlaps.” (1)

"Even though we didn't talk face-to-face, we had a **meeting of the minds.**" (2)

Highlights

Connectedness and identity

Stories that were more creative, diverse and individual, showed less of a connection to each other.

Student partner 1

In the vast urban landscape, I pursued architecture, **facing rejection** from renowned firms. **Determination fueled me**. After setbacks, I discovered 'Urban Dynamics,' a niche urban planning firm aligned with my aspirations. The rigorous application process culminated in an acceptance letter, marking the start of a transformative journey.

Student partner 2

The crowd began to notice what was wrong as the water droplets grew in size and in number. Lucas explained to me that it was ok. He said, "**the building is very old** and sometimes the pipes leak."

Interesting.

"Maybe you should check on the flat above..." I suggested.

His gaze shifted away from the stain and onto me. He looked confused. My cheeks flushed and I could feel them warm up amidst the embarrassment.

"There is no flat above", he said, "we turned the attic into storage years ago."

My mouth opened a bit and I managed to stutter a broken, "oh ok, I thought maybe someone left the tap on", and looked at my feet.

Highlights

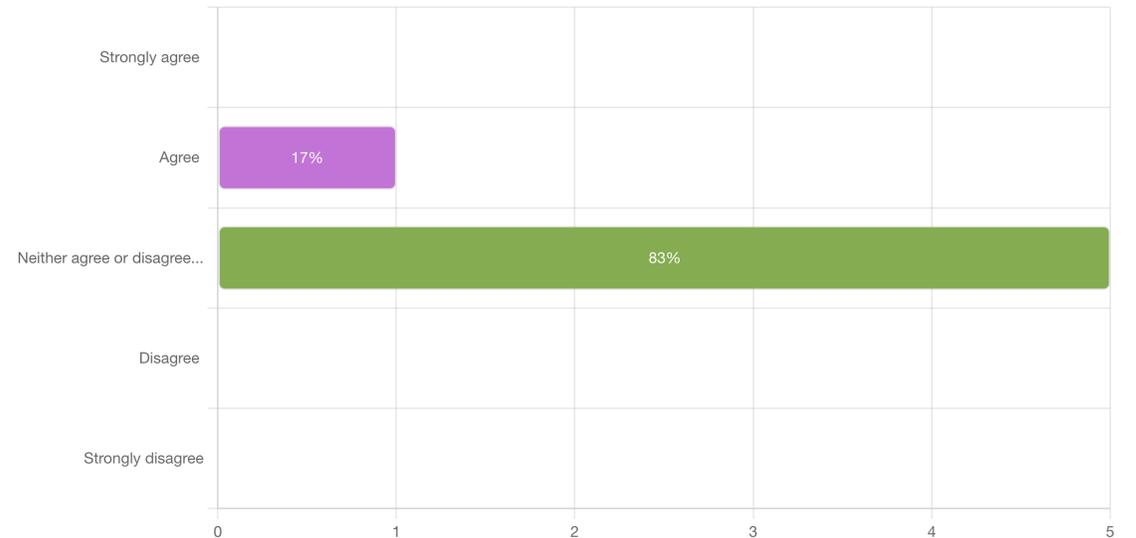
Connectedness and flexibility

Flexibility within the design, made students work more independently and at times in isolation.

“I personally feel that this activity would have more impact if done at once by all students (maybe during a lecture) **as opposed to doing it individually.**” (1)

6. There were elements of the storytelling activity that made me feel disconnected from some / any of the other students.

Question responses: 6



Highlights

Connectedness and collaboration

Where the storytelling activity created opportunities for collaboration, students were able to better connect with each other.

"Since the task asks us to springboard off another story it is very likely that each person will at least read 2-3 other people's story before writing their own and in this way get a rough **idea about each other's practices.**" (1)

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(1) Project Evaluation Question No. 4: The storytelling activity made me feel connected to some / any of the other students.



Resolution: Next Steps



Next steps

- Present to student partners
- Standardised activity for new cohorts of student partners
- Collaborate with learning design team to embed storytelling in future online courses
- Further research into collective storytelling approaches as part of MA

Selected references

Atwood, M. (2022). *Burning Questions*. United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus.

Bamberg, M. (2012). Narrative Practice and Identity Navigation. In: J.A. Holstein and J.F. Gubrium, eds., *Varieties of Narrative Analysis*. [online] Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc., pp.99–124. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506335117>.

Condorelli, C. and De Baere, B. (2009). Support for Culture. In: *Support Structures*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, pp.187–201.

Copeland, S. and de Moor, A. (2018). Community Digital Storytelling for Collective Intelligence: towards a Storytelling Cycle of Trust. *AI & SOCIETY*, [online] 33(1), pp.101–111. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s0014601707441>.

Hehir, E., Zeller, M., Luckhurst, J. and Chandler, T. (2021). Developing student connectedness under remote learning using digital resources: A systematic review. *Education and Information Technologies*, [online] 26(5), pp.6531–6548. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639021105771>.

McNiff, J. and Whitehead, J. (2002). *Action research: Principles and Practice*. 2nd ed. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd ed. [online] Thousand Oaks: SAGE. Available at: https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=U4IU_-wJ5QEC&lpg [Accessed 20 Dec. 2023].

Wells, D. (2010). *The 7-Point Story Structure*. [YouTube] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrP9604BEOM> [Accessed 15 Jan. 2024].

For a full bibliography, please visit [my blog: sebastianmay.myblog.arts.ac.uk](http://myblog.sebastianmay.myblog.arts.ac.uk).

Student Partner contributions

Remake of structures and elements on Padlet



artslondon.padlet.org/sebastianmay/structures

Remake of Miro stories map on Padlet



artslondon.padlet.org/sebastianmay/stories

Thank you

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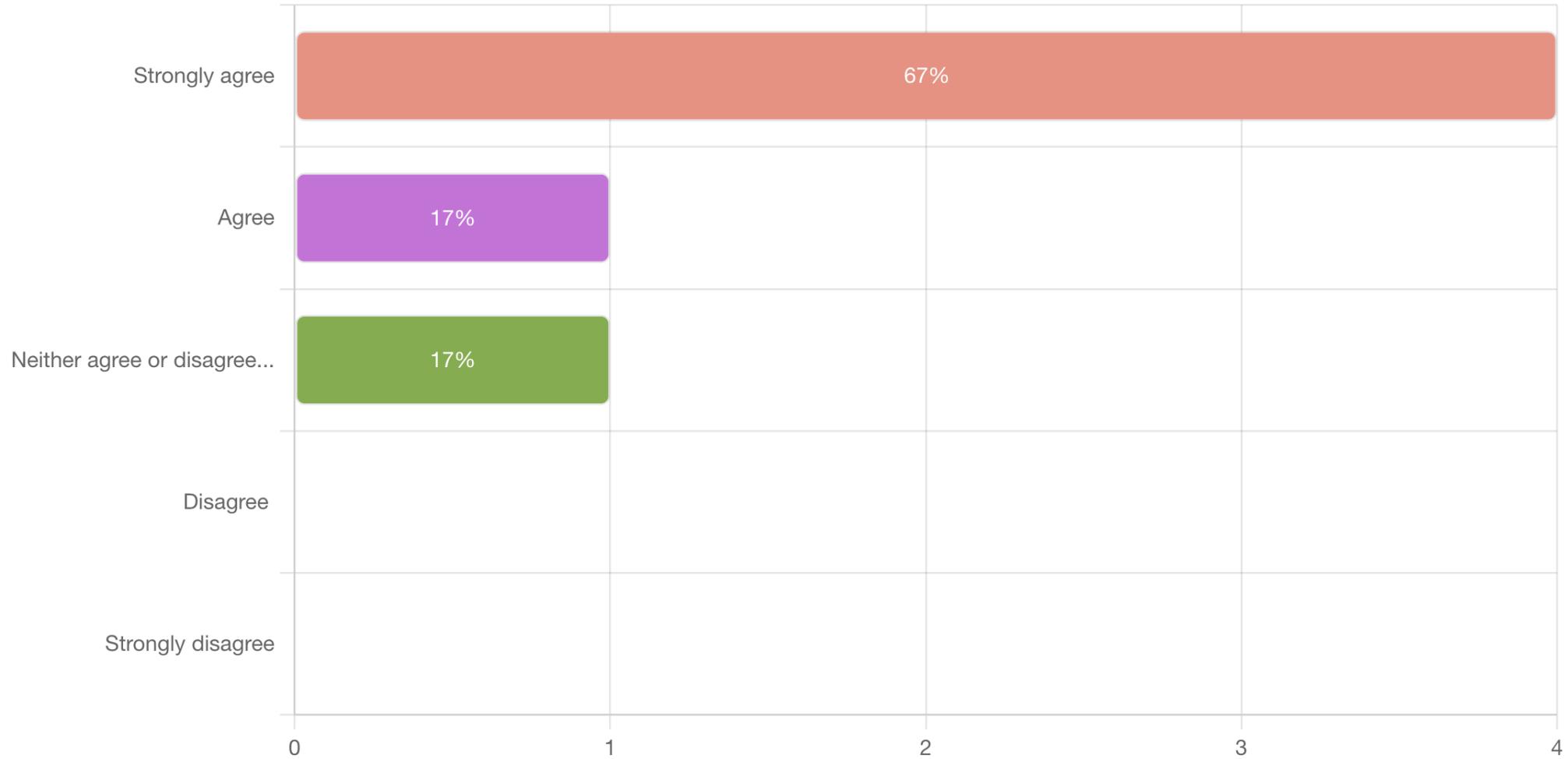


Appendix: Quantitative findings



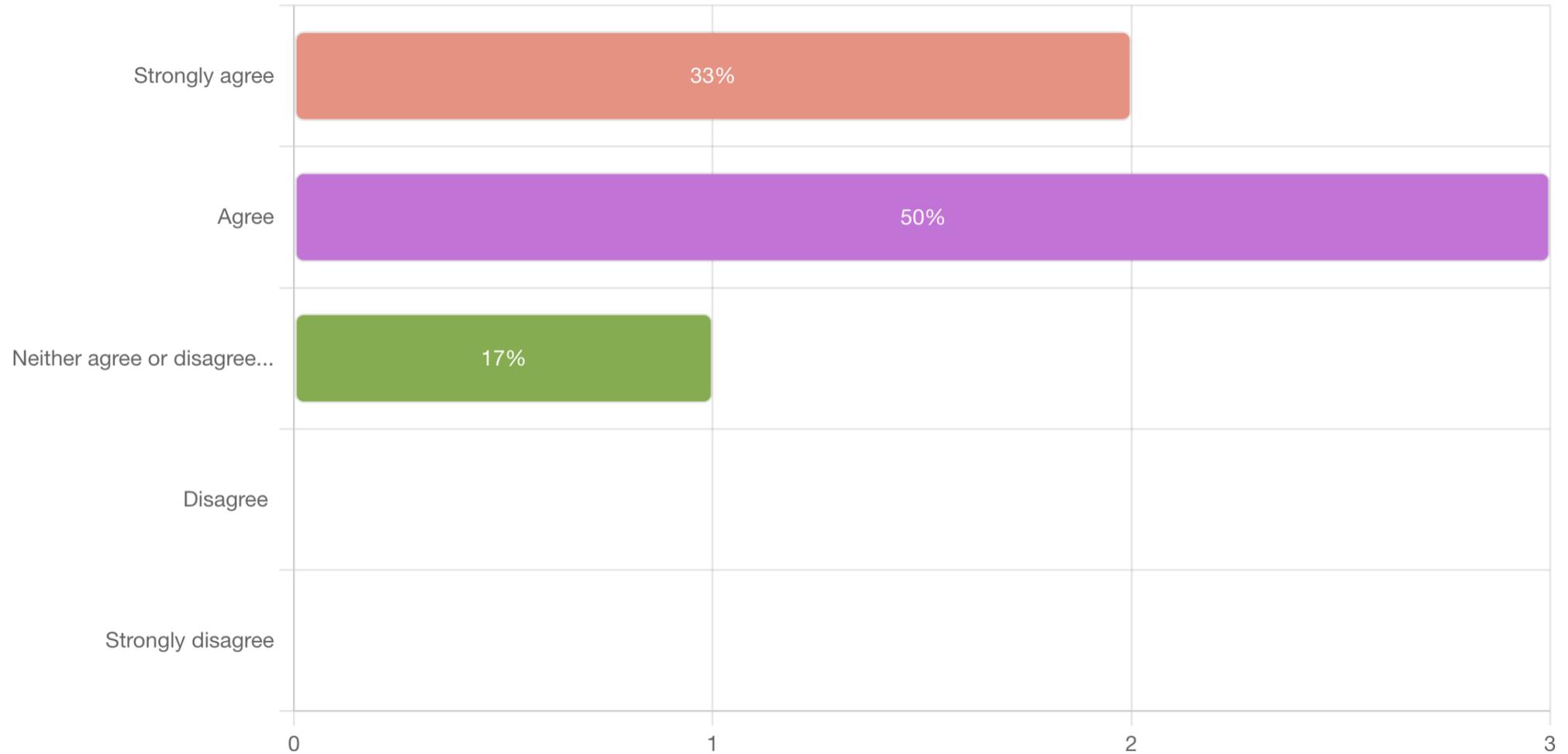
1. Generally, it is important to me to be part of a community of students.

Question responses: 6



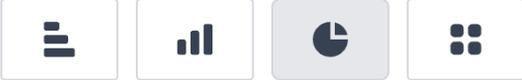
2. The storytelling activity made me want to be part of a community of students.

Question responses: 6

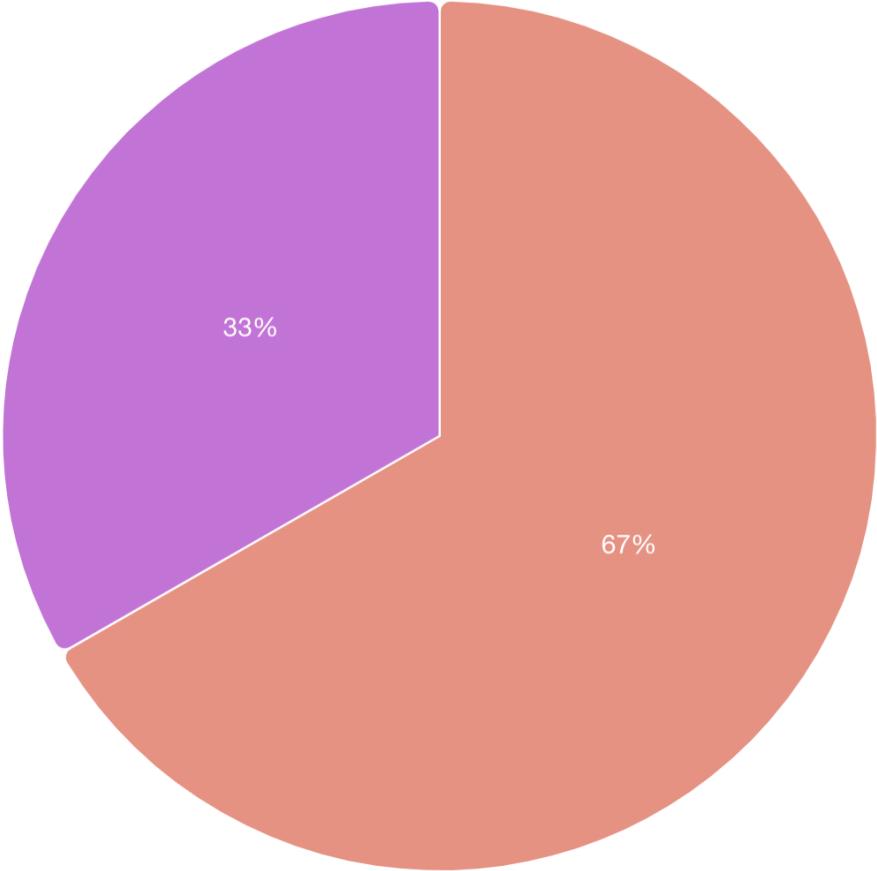


3. I felt like the storytelling activity allowed me to contribute to a community of students.

Question responses: 6

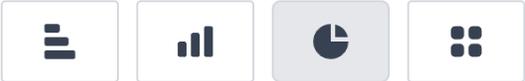


Agree Strongly agree All other options

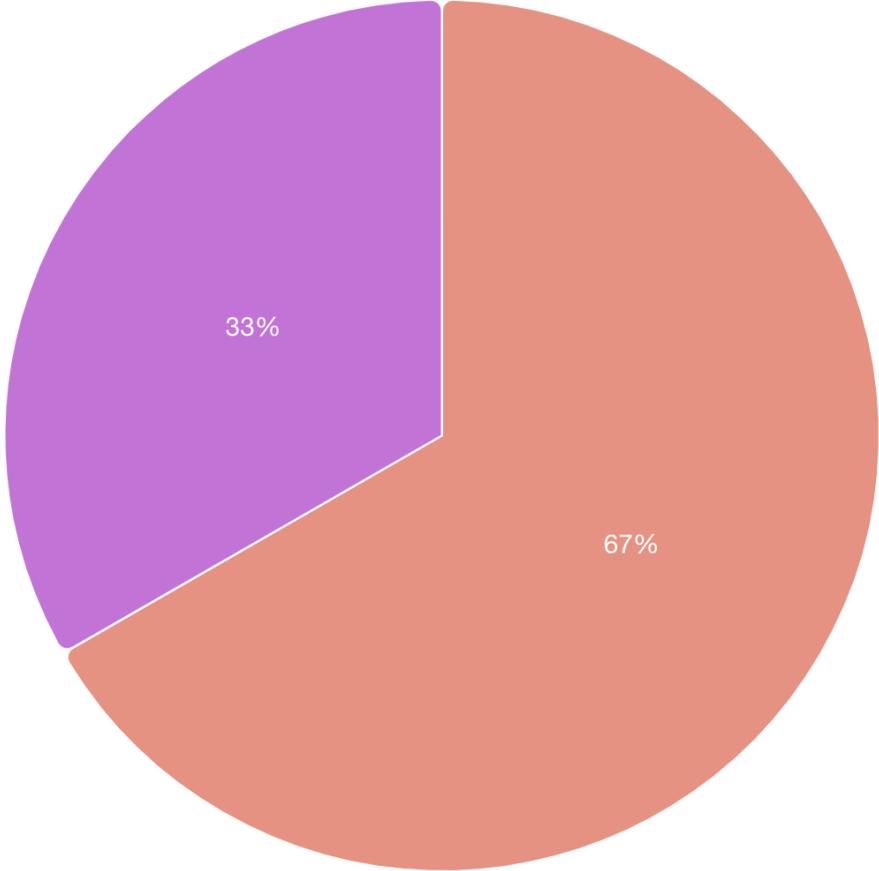


4. The storytelling activity made me feel connected to some / any of the other students.

Question responses: 6

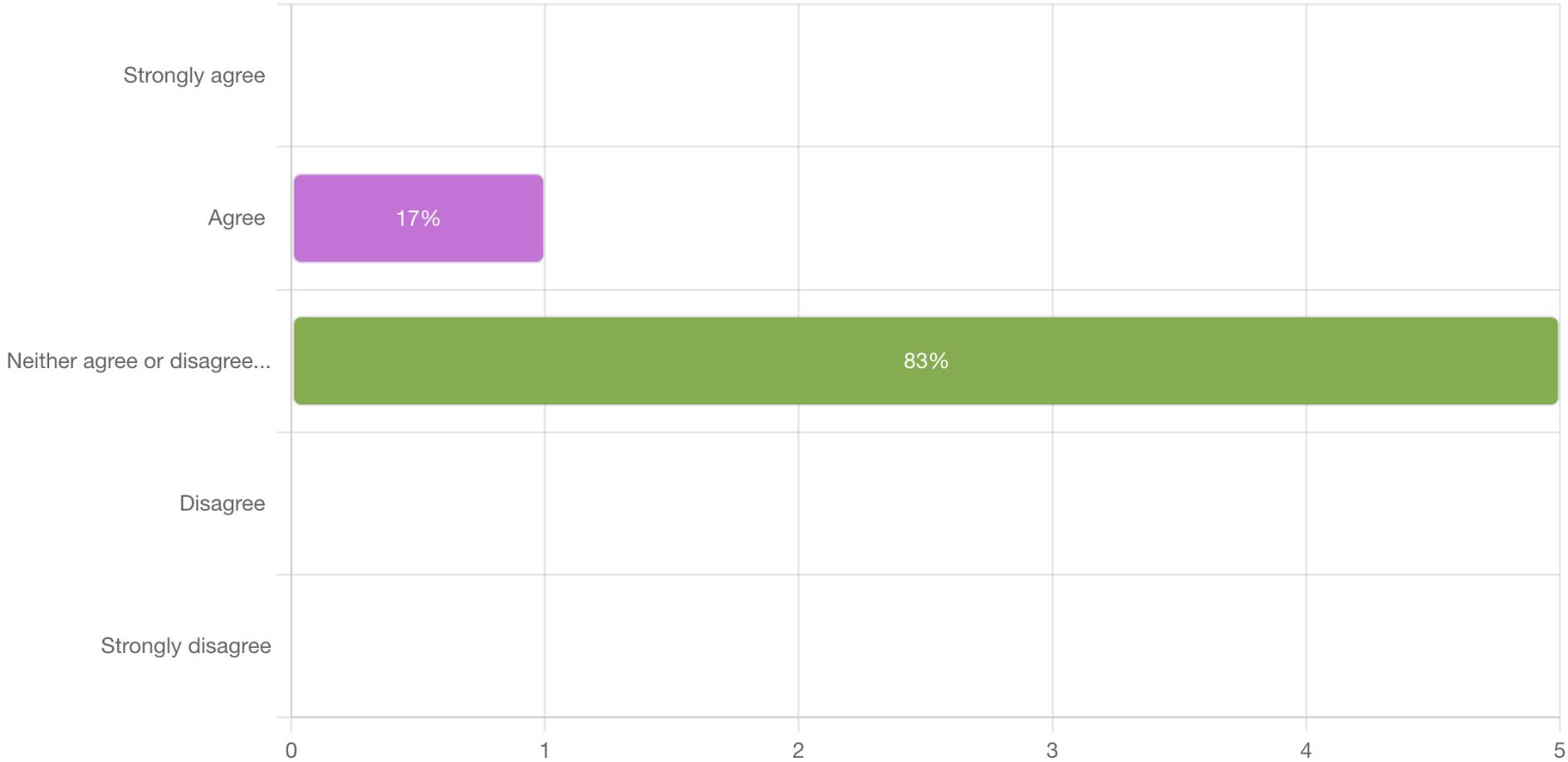


Agree Strongly agree All other options



6. There were elements of the storytelling activity that made me feel disconnected from some / any of the other students.

Question responses: 6

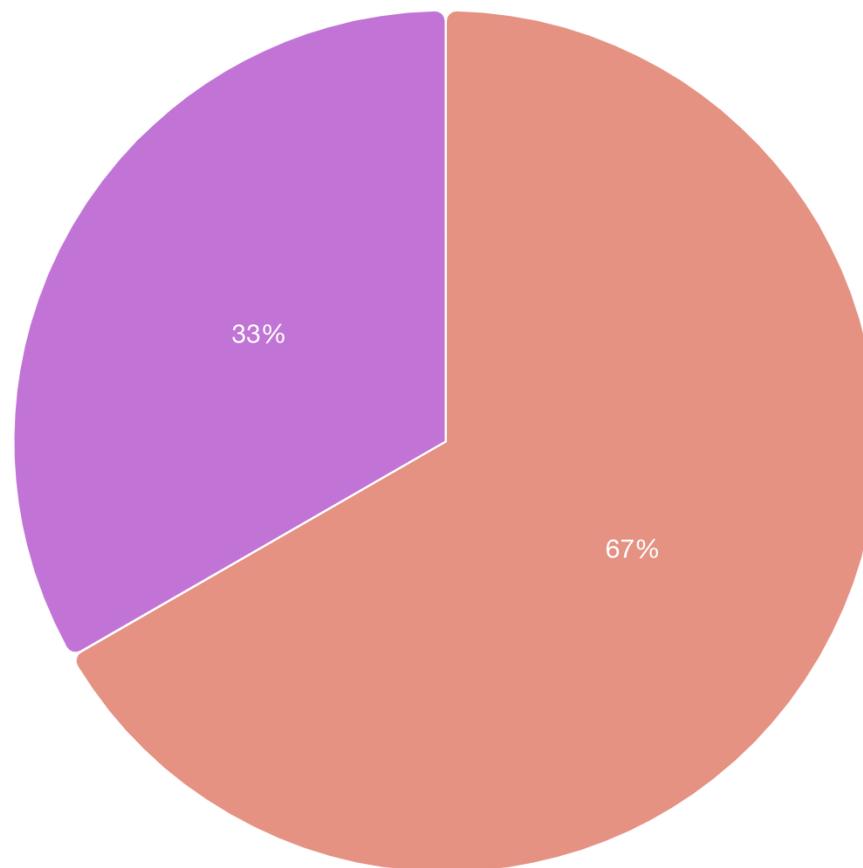


8. The playfulness of the storytelling activity discouraged me from participating in the activity.

Question responses: 6

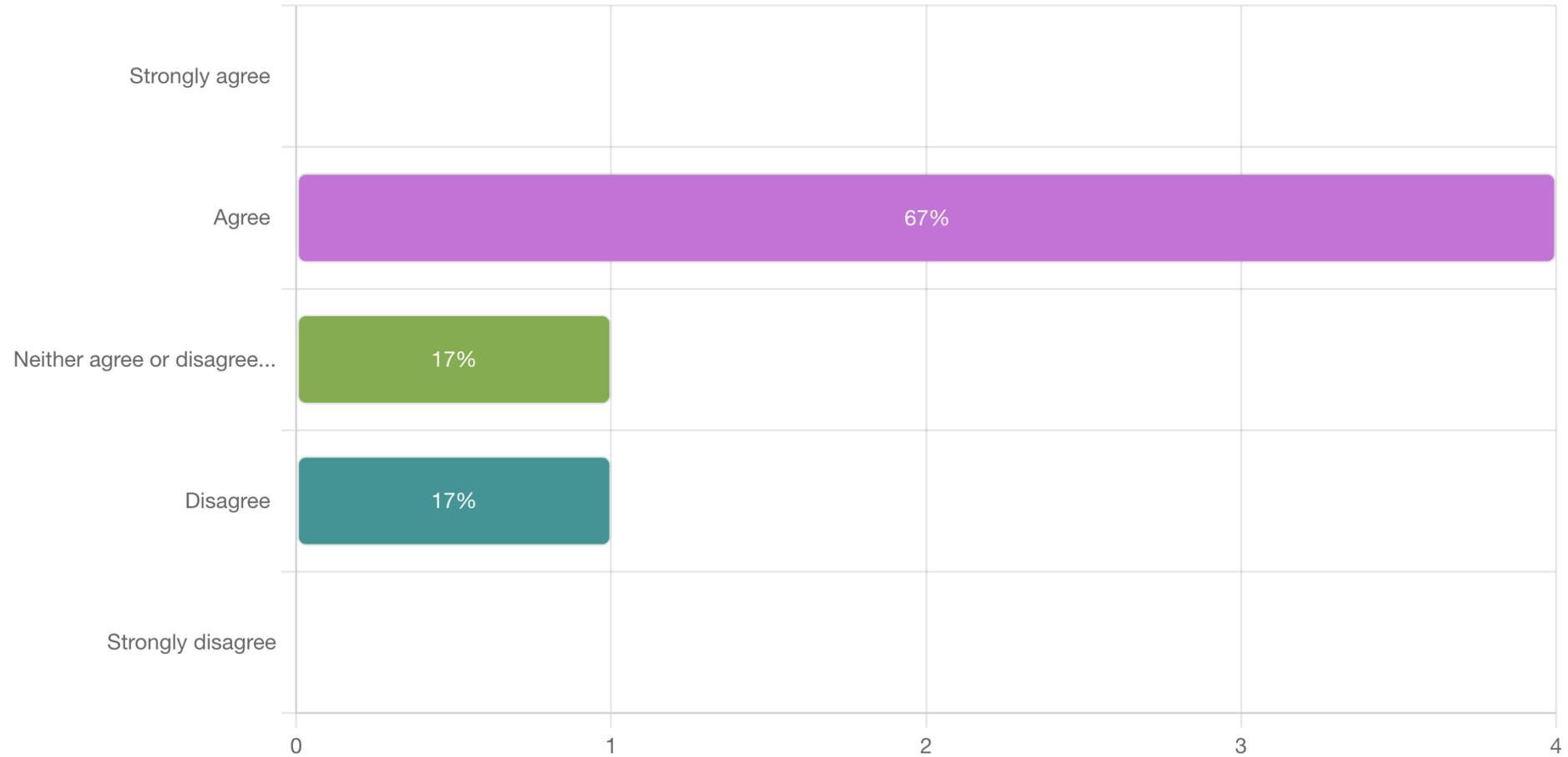


Disagree Strongly disagree All other options



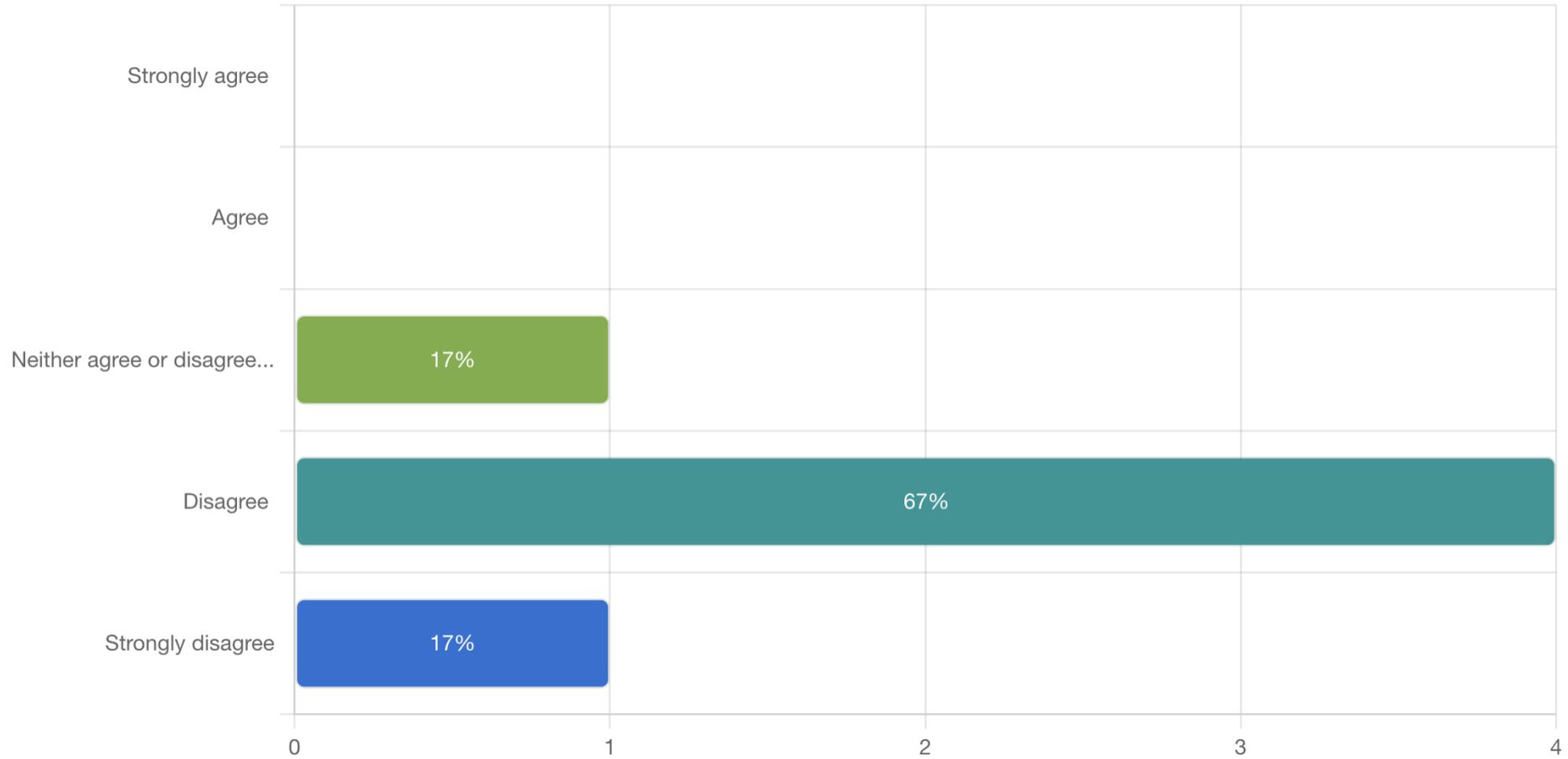
10. I felt like I was able to tell my own story as part of the storytelling activity.

Question responses: 6



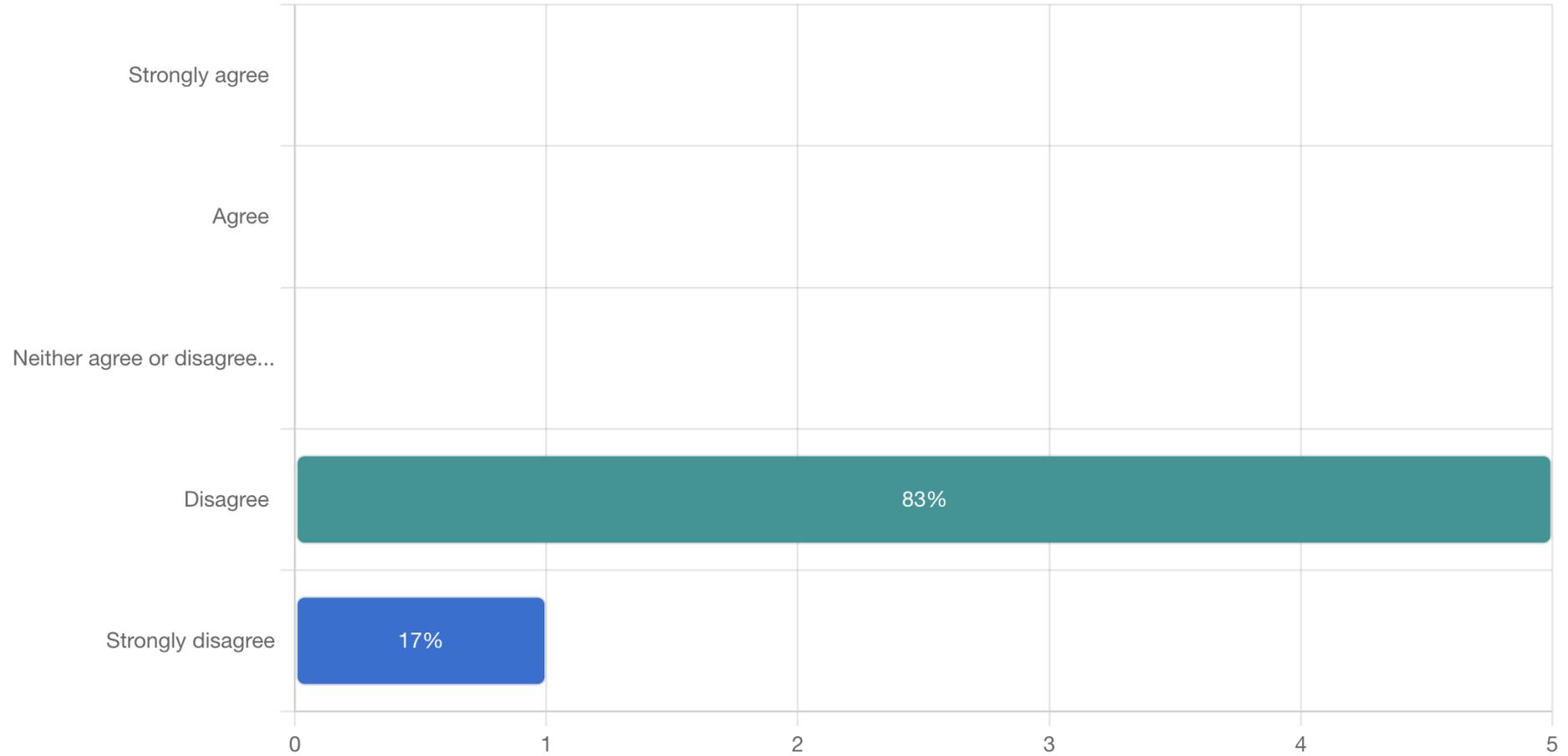
11. I felt unable to express myself freely as part of the storytelling activity.

Question responses: 6



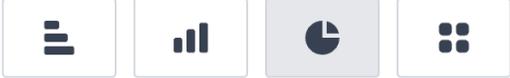
12. It felt difficult for me to take part in the storytelling activity.

Question responses: 6

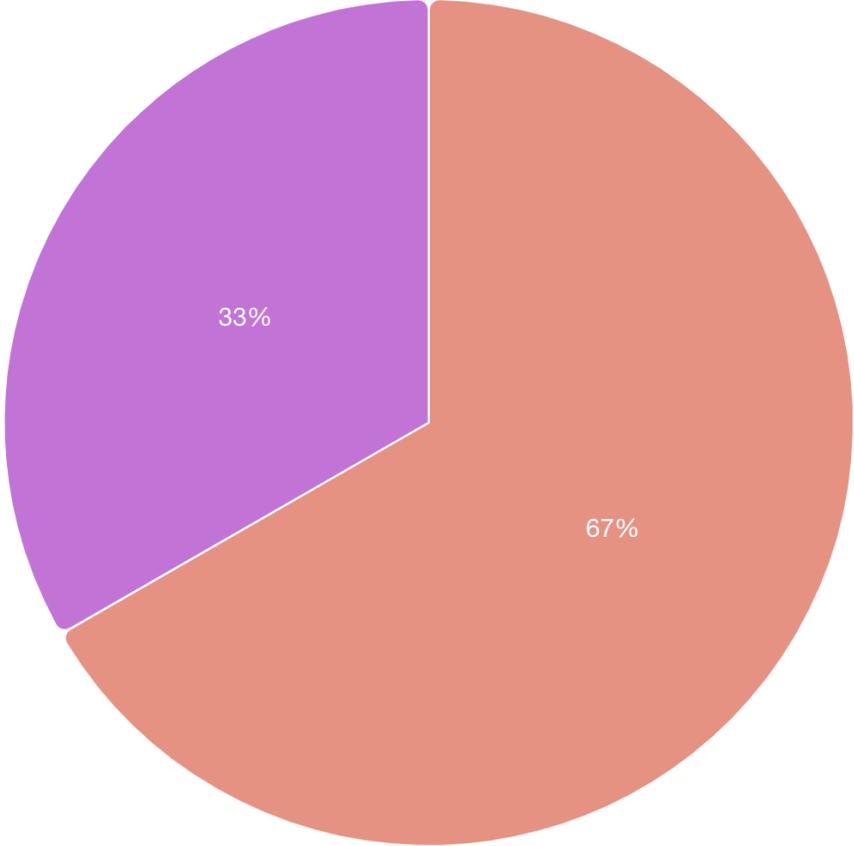


13. The storytelling activity felt fully accessible to me.

Question responses: 6

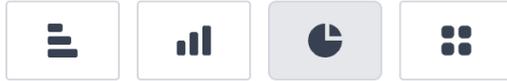


Strongly agree Agree All other options

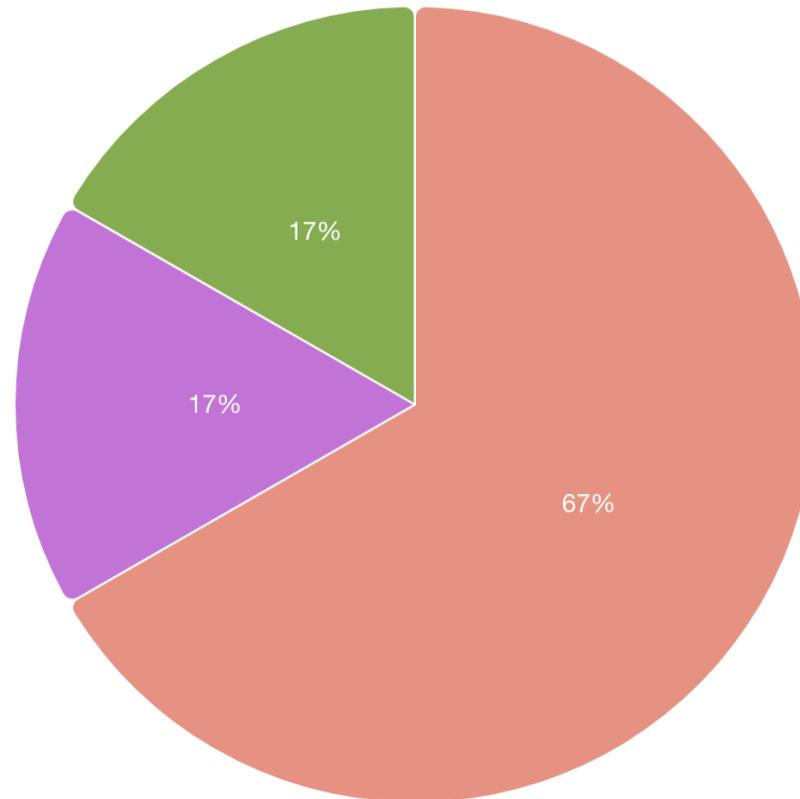


14. The storytelling activity felt inclusive to me.

Question responses: 6

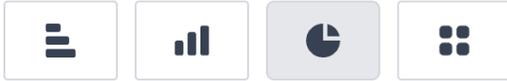


Strongly agree Agree
Neither agree or disagree... All other options

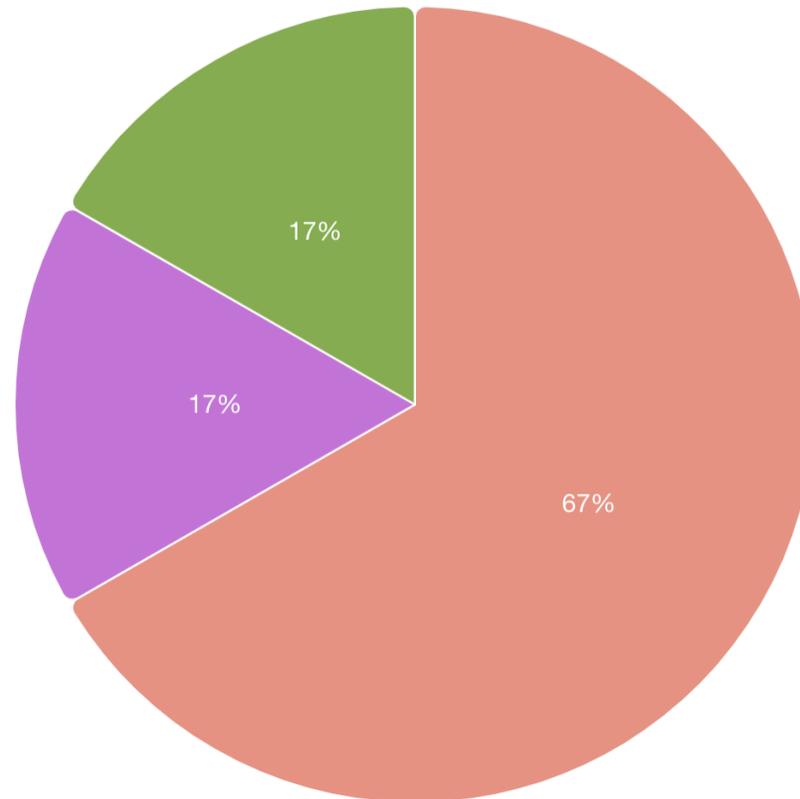


14. The storytelling activity felt inclusive to me.

Question responses: 6



Strongly agree Agree
Neither agree or disagree... All other options





Appendix: UAL Online



UAL Online Learning Framework

Six guiding values for the design, build and delivery of online learning and the student experience

1. Enable creative education through digital technology
2. Prioritise flexibility in learning design and student experience
3. Build on our strengths as a creative institution
4. Work with students as partners
5. Be proactively inclusive
6. Prioritise consistency and professionalism to support growth



Appendix: Student stories



There was once a student from creative practices. They were independent and diligent in their work, however they did only what they were asked and rarely explored further. They wondered about their purpose, however had difficulties in articulating their goals and approach. Observing these limitations, their mentor asked them to create a piece of art that represented them. The student put their entire heart and soul into it and did whatever they knew best. The piece of work turned out to be impressive, however there was more to the task. Next they had to find a person who would be interested in purchasing the art piece for an amount they wanted from it. With a clear brief, they first spoke to their peers and tried to figure out an approach. They then fixed an amount, and practised their pitch. Feeling comfortable, they set out to try. However, they struggled, people barely showed interest in the piece. With a heavy heart they retired to reflect on what their piece signifies, and who might be interested in it. They further spoke with their peers who had found buyers for their pieces and made changes to their pitch, focusing on a certain audience. People showed interest this time, but they pointed out improvements that could be made to suit their needs better. They continued trying without evident success. Once again, they took some time off to pause and reflect. They refreshed the piece based on the feedback they received, thought more about what they wanted from it and importantly, who would appreciate and support them further. Around this time, they set out to sell the piece, something had changed. Their attitude had shifted, where they approached this as a marathon, not a sprint, trying to focus on quality of interactions and devoting themselves to learning and re-adapting.

Alex, a talented yet struggling designer, yearned for a breakthrough that would elevate their career to new heights. The portfolio lacked that one groundbreaking project capable of capturing the industry's attention. Driven by the desire for inspiration and recognition, Alex received an invitation to an exclusive design retreat promising an environment that nurtured creativity. Without hesitation, they packed their bags and set off to an unfamiliar destination filled with potential. At the retreat, Alex encountered a diverse group of fellow designers, each facing their unique creative challenges. The group was tasked with designing a revolutionary product that would reshape the industry. As the days unfolded, Alex faced hurdles, from clashes with team members to personal doubts about their abilities. In the midst of chaos, Alex discovered a hidden talent within the group – a brilliant coder named Emma. Recognising the synergy between their skills, Alex and Emma collaborated to create a design that seamlessly integrated aesthetics and functionality. With a groundbreaking design in hand, Alex and Emma presented their project to the retreat's organizers. The response was overwhelmingly positive, attracting attention from industry leaders and media outlets. This was the breakthrough Alex had been yearning for. Empowered by their success, Alex returned home not only with a portfolio-transforming project but also with newfound confidence. The experience taught Alex the importance of collaboration and embracing the strengths of others. Back in their studio, Alex applied the lessons learned from the retreat to future projects. The once-struggling designer became a sought-after creative force, known for their ability to collaborate and push boundaries.

In the vast urban landscape, I pursued architecture, facing rejection from renowned firms. Determination fueled me. After setbacks, I discovered 'Urban Dynamics,' a niche urban planning firm aligned with my aspirations. The rigorous application process culminated in an acceptance letter, marking the start of a transformative journey.

"Urban Dynamics" was an innovation hub, focusing on the transformative power of urban planning. Colleagues became mentors, guiding me through subtle lighting design changes influencing neighborhood moods to grand urban planning manipulations shaping cities.

Guided by urban planners, I explored projects beyond individual structures, understanding the interplay of light and shadow in public spaces. Thoughtful urban planning turned neglected corners into vibrant hubs, breathing life into forgotten neighborhoods.

As rejection letters faded, Urban Dynamics embraced my creativity. Contributing to projects, I found fulfillment in a team valuing my ideas. I marveled at the impact of thoughtful designs on the city's pulse, from street layouts to skyline reshaping.

In the heart of Urban Dynamics, my journey evolved. I wasn't just designing structures; I contributed to the city's essence. Each project taught the intricate dance between architecture and the urban landscape, where my passion for shaping communities found its true home.

-Saamia Makharia

22/23 Action Research Project: Final Presentation

As the gallery's opening neared its end, a lady in striking red caught sight of one of my paintings. I approached her, introduced myself, and we chatted about how I got inspired to paint a mix of countryside and cityscape for that artwork. She mentioned being an art collector for a rich tech guy, and after a bit, she bought the painting. Happy about my first sale, I left and went home with a smile too big for my face.

The next day, I couldn't get the lady in red out of my head. She said her collection was missing a piece that combined 2D and 3D elements with the theme "This is where I belong." Excited, I worked hard for a week to create that missing piece and took it to Lucas for feedback. But, to my surprise, Lucas acted like we'd never met. Not wanting to make him feel embarrassed since after all he was a 60-year-old man, I just went along with it, and he agreed to showcase the new piece.

On the opening night of my new mixed media piece, the lady in red attended the exhibition again only now she was wearing blue. I went up to her, excited to show her the potential missing piece of her collection, but she acted as if we had never met before. However, she was very happy with my mixed media artwork and bought it. Oddly enough she mentioned again that she was a collector for a wealthy tech guy and needed another piece- maybe one that's digital and responds to the theme, "This is where I belong". Confused but happy about another sale, I went home.

(continued on a new sticky note as reached maximum word count on this one as it is not letting me add more text)

The next day, feeling a bit different, I decided to try digital art on my computer. A few days later, I showed Lucas my new digital creation. But, once again, he didn't recognize me and asked if this was what I was looking for and if "this is where I belong?". The cycle continued, leaving me to wonder if the real art was in the mystery of it all.

The crowd began to notice what was wrong as the water droplets grew in size and in number. Lucas explained to me that it was ok. He said, "the building is very old and sometimes the pipes leak."

Interesting.

"Maybe you should check on the flat above..." I suggested.

His gaze shifted away from the stain and onto me. He looked confused. My cheeks flushed and I could feel them warm up amidst the embarrassment.

"There is no flat above", he said, "we turned the attic into storage years ago."

My mouth opened a bit and I managed to stutter a broken, "oh ok, I thought maybe someone left the tap on", and looked at my feet.

The opening night continued and soon everyone was a little tired and a little tipsy. People were shuffling out the door, coats in hands, and began herding into taxis. I went to say goodbye to Lucas and thank him for the night when I caught a glimpse of that familiar black, woolen hat. I knew Lucas was on his way over by now but I couldn't help but try to catch up with the mysterious man from before. I had justified the strange behaviour in my head by figuring he was someone who would attend events and spread misinformation just to humiliate and confuse guests. It was a silly justification now that I look back at it but it kept me sane at the time. By now I was weaving through the collection of drunken art lovers and attempting to cross the street.

He saw me. He saw me!

At that moment I sped up but once I reached the wet pavement he was gone. I hastily checked neighbouring alleyways and eagerly pressed my face up against steamy bar windows. But I couldn't see that starched collar and blue waistcoat anywhere. I am unsure as to why I wanted to talk to him so much. Why

couldn't I let it go?

Defeated, I opened a door. The nearest door to me was the entrance to Bar 79A. As I walked in, wiping my face of sweat, I felt my nose tingle as it regained the heat it lost to the cruel winter air. Then I heard my name. Lucas had followed me.

As I lulled in the admiring glances of visitors, a conversation began in my mind, as if separate from my consciousness. Who were those people and why was I so eager to share my creations with them? They seemed to indulge in drinking champagne, chatting carelessly, looked interested in what I had to say. They came and went, perhaps for a chance to have a warm shelter from a windy evening or a to take another photo. I looked and waited: is this what I wanted? Is this where I so long strived to be?

I started to feel tired and closed my eyes. The same second, I clearly felt the warmth of the fireplace gently caressing my hands and face. The flames were swishing wildly and playfully, the sparks were shimmering and cracking. I opened my eyes and saw a tall elderly man, dressed in a traditional suit and a raincoat, entering the door. A starched collar of his white shirt was immaculately pressed against a raven blue buttoned jacket and a waistcoat. A dark charcoal woollen hat over his grey hair was not wet although it started to rain outside.

He looked at the crowd as if knowing every one of them and then glanced over my paintings on the walls, smiling. He caught my eye and greeted me silently by bowing and slightly raising his hat, sparks in his eyes reflecting the dimmed lights of the gallery. Drawn to him by some strange force, I approached.

Without hesitating, he called me by my name and said that the owner of the flat above the gallery had already turned the bath tap on but had not fallen asleep yet. Astound, I asked what his name was. He answered that the passport name did not matter because for the last thousands of years people had thought of different names for him. He continued,

"I once conversed with Michaelangelo in his studio and offered him a good deal. Years later, I visited Picasso's first exhibition and saw the same crowd as here, just clothed differently. I guess you want the same thing: to sell your paintings and become famous? I can do this for you."

I coughed and smiled, trying to politely bear the conversation with a lunatic and wondering how to escape and get back to my guests. I apologised and replied that I would rather have things go their natural way without hastiness. At that moment, a short moustached gentleman, neatly dressed in a uniform, entered the door and pronounced, in a slight accent, that the taxi was ready for sir. The stranger said goodbye and swished the air with his raincoat.

I turned around, relieved, searching for Lucas. He was there among the crowd, with his head up, looking at the ceiling. I followed his glance and saw a huge grey stain with uneven droplets of water falling down on screaming guests. That could only mean that the owner of the flat above had fallen asleep with his bath tap on...



Appendix: Additional information



Activities

Reviewing project information, providing consent and reviewing instructions

Document author
Sebastian May

Summary
This short research project investigates how digital storytelling supports connectedness amongst creative students. Storytelling may already be present in different aspects of your creative practice. Storytelling approaches could include your use of visual storytelling, symbolism, and other narrative devices. It might feature directly in some of your art as a theme, or you may use different aspects of storytelling to communicate ideas about the world. For example, you might use storytelling to pitch your ideas to someone who isn't familiar with your work.

Storytelling is an essential tool in talking to others about you as an individual or about your community. It also can help you form connections and establish relationships. Storytelling can also be used as a reflective and analytical tool when reviewing your positionality and it can help you develop your creative practice.

By taking part in this research activity as a creative practitioner you will be able to experience and practice storytelling and learn how you may be able to apply this to your own creative practice.

By participating in this project you will also make an important contribution to academic research that may shape the design of future learning activities. As part of the activity, you will be asked to:

1. Review a participant information sheet that provides a summary of the project.
2. Provide your participant consent.
3. Review instructions and supporting technical information.
4. Take part in an online learning activity on digital storytelling.
5. Evaluate your participation by providing your feedback via an online survey.

If you have any questions about the partnership project, please contact UAL Online (uatonline@arts.ac.uk)

Research project
Digital storytelling

Document author and contact for information
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Student Experience Lead UAL Online
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Version and date
V1, 31 October 2023

Project summary
The aim of this research project is to investigate the potential that digital storytelling may have in supporting connectedness among creative students. The study will make use of a collective storytelling activity to explore students' engagement in online learning. The activity will ask you to respond to a short story by continuing it 'in your own words', although this may be in any medium of your choice.

The research methodology of this study will be qualitative and consist of the evaluation of creative contributions from all participants and an analysis of participants' responses captured through an online questionnaire at the end of the activity.

The results of this study will contribute to the university's knowledge of digital storytelling and may inform the design of future digital learning activities for students engaged in online learning.

This project will be conducted by Sebastian May, Student Experience Lead Online, with the support of the UAL Online team.

Taking part in this study
If you take part in his project, you will be asked to complete the activity tasks mentioned below. In total, these tasks should take you no more than 3 hours to complete in total and can be completed at a time of your choice. You will be asked to submit your project contributions, including your evaluation, by 30 November 2023 (midnight) at the latest. Early completion of these tasks are encouraged.

- Review relevant project information and provide your consent
- Review research activity instructions

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Digital Storytelling: Research Project
Research Information, Consent and Project Activities

Participant Consent Form

1. I have read the 'Project Information for Participants' document about the research project, in which I have been asked to take part and have been given a copy of this information to keep. *

Yes
 No

2. I have had the opportunity to consider the information in the 'Project Information for Participants' document and have had the opportunity to discuss any relevant details and ask questions. *

Yes
 No

3. I fully give my consent to take part in the research project, including relevant project tasks and learning activities. *

Yes
 No

4. I understand that my personal contribution will be anonymised. *

Yes
 No

5. I understand that I have given my consent to be surveyed about my thoughts on digital storytelling. *

Yes
 No

Research project
Digital storytelling

Document author
Sebastian May

Version and date
V1, 31 October 2023

Summary
The following activity will ask you to respond to a short story by continuing the story in your own words. You may respond in writing or in any audio-visual format. Your content should be reflective of who you are as a creative practitioner. Please read through the full instructions (below) before you begin.

Highlights

Connectedness and engagement

Students require a purpose, incentive and a sense of urgency to engage.

Student engagement can be supported through communications and nudges.

Elements of play can contribute to student engagement.

"I think the playfulness actually encouraged me to engage with the project and more importantly enjoy the process." (1)