

GIANT STORY BOOKS

AREA/S OF FOCUS	Information sharing, visual communication, storytelling
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Giant Story Books can be used to call attention and educate about any issue in a visual way. By combining storytelling and images, you can engage your audience in two learning styles, auditory and visual, as well as with call and response. This also allows illiterate participants and people of all ages to engage.
TARGET GROUP	Community, students, stakeholders
INTENDED OUTCOMES	To make information visual, accessible, and easier to transmit in large comic book / graphic story form; capture people's attention and imagination; inspire participation and active learning
TOTAL TIME	Varies
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	No limit
MATERIALS	Local materials and consider upcycling what you already have. Canvas fabric, bed sheets, curtains, vinyl tarp, bamboo poles, long straight branches, PVC pipe, metal rings, paint, scrap fabric, glue, pencil, markers, bicycle inner tubes, fishing line.
SETTING	Create your books in a setting suitable for drawing and painting. Present your book where you can accommodate your target audience so that everyone is able to see the book and the presenter.

INTRODUCTORY FRAME

Giant Storybooks can be used to present important information in a captivating way. Through the use of visual images and storytelling, your audience will be learning in two different styles aiding in more information retention and more engagement. Similarly to a comic book, key bits of information or moments of the story are captured visually in each frame. The storyteller can elaborate verbally on each image and frame.

PROCESS

Step 1 – Determine and research the topic

- What information or concepts do you want to convey?

- Is there a popular story or character you can use to adapt and tell the story?

- What are the concerns of the audience that you should include in the message? *Summarize.* Create a summary of the main points and divide them up into pages to design the outline for your story. Once your outline is formulated this will help determine the length of the book. The book can range from 2-5 pages.

Step 2 - Design the layout

Make it visual

- Translate the concepts into images.
- You can work with artists to make drawings or look for images in books, photos or the internet.
- Each frame should convey a clear message or talking point.
- Decide how many frames fit comfortably on each page (8 maximum).
- Be sure to have a beginning, middle and end to your story, or present information in an organized way, which lead to a call to action.

Lay it out

- Design each page on paper first. Try to have a common style but vary the format. Some pages might have one single image that fits the whole canvas. Others can have multiple images using 4-6 comic book style frames and a solid background color.
- Try to avoid using words, or use as few as possible. Use them as headings or simple text. You want the images to guide the talking, not the words.
- Write titles for each page in large letters. Put shadows around the letters to give them dimension.
- Use different colors for each page!
- Now that your sketch is complete, each group can work on one page, or individuals can each work on a frame or page at a time. You can also split up the participants based on their skill set. If participants feel strongly about drawing, painting, constructing, story writing, storytelling, etc. allow them to focus on using their strengths.

Step 3 – Paint the pages

- Get white fabric, canvas or sheets.
- Cut them to the size you desire.
- Paint a base coat with a mix of white paint and Aqualock – this makes the surface much easier to paint on.
- Draw the outline with pencil first. Determine the center. Count the amount of letters and image and determine the amount of space you need for each letter.
- Once they are prepped, paint the book with water-based paint.

Step 4 - Assemble the structure

- Put holes along the top of each page, spaced 6-12 inches apart. Put eyelets on the holds so the fabric doesn't rip over time. Put silver rings through the holes to string through the top pole.
- Get three large poles or sticks and cut them to size.
- Make holes at the end of the poles and connect them together like a soccer goal.

You can use rope or bicycle inner tubes to tie the poles together so they are flexible

and can be collapsed. An options is to only have one top pole and two people can hold either side.

- When storing them – make sure to lay flat or roll them so they don't get wrinkled.

Step 5 - Tell the story

- The images will guide the main talking points but it's good to have pre-written cues or a storyline to help keep the audience engaged – you can use call and response or use the photo frames to ask specific questions, provide specific information and facilitate a dialogue with the audience.
- One person or a team could tell the story – consider developing a narrative character or a skit to go along with the storybook.
- Tell the story in different contexts – in the streets, on the cays, in classrooms, at community events, etc.

Additional resource: For a digital template of a giant story book on climate change, [click here](#) for a resource by David Solnit, Arts Organizer of 350.org.