

# Activity Guide



## Research Process

Understanding research as a journey that begins with curiosity and questions through collective storytelling

### Summary

Research, much like a story, unfolds through a series of moments, including questions, choices, challenges, and potentially turning points or discoveries that shape where it leads. To learn about scientific research and the typical steps of a research project, participants are invited to create a simple and fun story together.

Using a guiding story structure based on key elements of a research process, participants are prompted to come up with story elements. For example, starting with who is the main character, what is their quest, and what do they want to know. Working through the steps, participants come up with planning the investigation, describing what information and tools are needed, what the character will do, what they learn, and how they will make sense of what they discover. Co-creating a story allows participants to understand the logic of research, the steps, and how they are connected to each other.

### Why It Works

Storytelling is a familiar and powerful way of organizing experience and making sense of the world. As participants build a story together, they negotiate ideas, make decisions, and share different perspectives. The activity makes room for imagination and play while helping participants engage with the key elements of the research process.

### What You Need

- **Materials:** paper and markers
- **Time:** 45–60 minutes

- **Ideal Group Size:** 2–3 participants (multiple groups can run at the same time)
- **Format:** in person or online

## How It Works

### 1. Welcome and Warm Up

10 mins

Invite participants to get to know one another, build a comfortable space for discussion, and start reflecting on their experiences with science and research.

*Icebreaker questions: What can make learning about science boring? What can make it exciting ?*

### 2. Create the Characters

10 mins

Invite participants to imagine the main characters of the story.

*For example: Who are they? What are their names? What are they like?*

The facilitator, or a designated participant, takes notes. Participants are invited to draw and add visual elements as the story unfolds.

### 3. Build the Story Together

20 mins

Once participants have identified the character (or characters), they work together to build a story that follows the steps of a research project. At each stage, the facilitator introduces a key element of the research process and invites participants to imagine what happens next.

- **Curiosity and questions:** Research begins with curiosity. What does the character want to know, understand, or find out?
- **Planning the Investigation:** How will the character answer their question? What information, tools, or resources will they need? What steps will they take?
- **Collecting Information:** How does the character gather information? Do they conduct experiments, make observations, ask questions, or search for evidence? What challenges do they encounter along the way?

- **Making Sense of What They Found:** What has the character discovered? Are there any surprises? What patterns or insights emerge from the information they collected?
- **Sharing What They Learned:** How will the character share their discoveries? Who needs to know? What is most important to communicate?

#### **4. Story Recap and Reflection**

10 mins

Read the completed story back to the group in a fun way. Invite participants to reflect on the experience of creating the story together and discuss what they learned about the research process.

*Possible reflection questions: What was it like to create a story together? What did you learn about research?*

#### **5. Bring the Story to Life**

If possible, type up and illustrate the story after the workshop and share it with participants. This provides a lasting record of their collective creation and celebrates their contribution.