



Reset digital facilitation toolkit



A New Direction with B+A

B
+ A
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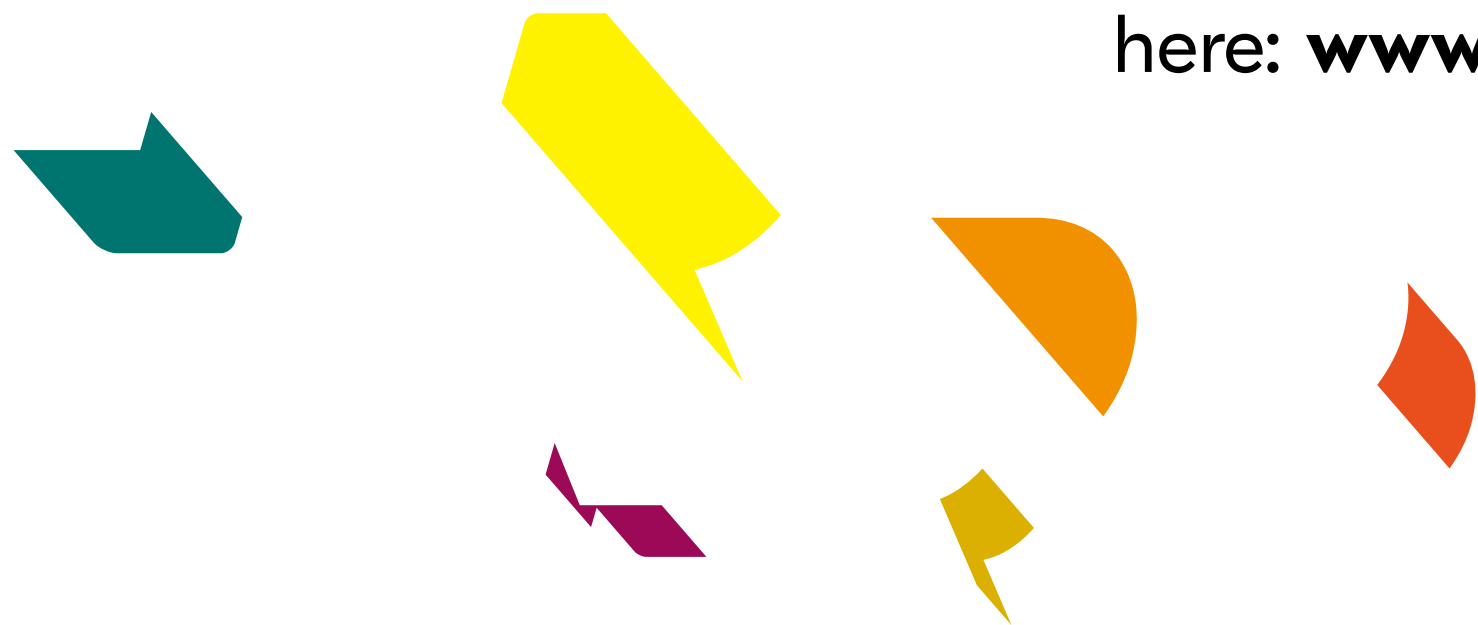
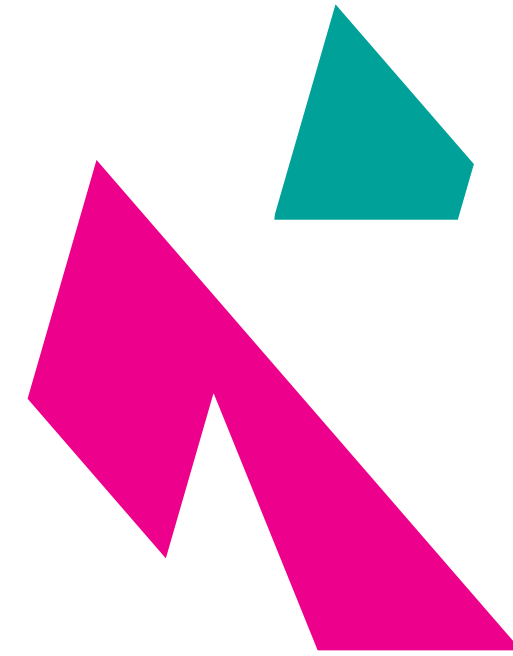
**A NEW
DIRECTION**
We create opportunity



Though COVID-19 has caused huge disruption to our lives, our professions, and our learning, it is important to remember that we are resilient, strong and good at what we do.

We know that we can adapt and work differently, move quickly and innovate. Let's take this chance to reset and move forward with what we know works, leave behind what doesn't and introduce new ways of working together.

Find out more about our Reset programme here: www.anewdirection.org.uk/reset



Intro

As a part of our Reset programme, we held an exploratory session on digital practice for people working in cultural learning teams. The session was hosted by A New Direction and led by B+A, who shared their digital skills and challenged participants to develop activities for use with colleagues, partners and participants.

As the sector continues to respond and evolve through the recovery phase of COVID-19, cultural learning teams are exploring and redefining what digital participation can be, including developing blended delivery models for a mix of online and face-to-face based participation.

Our sector is used to cultivating learning experiences that are collaborative, creative, and experiential. When working in our usual physical spaces we know what information, tools and conditions are needed to support learning, and prepare for our workshops and events accordingly. In the session, we invited cultural sector educators to consider how we create digital spaces for learning, exploring the connections between digital spaces and atmosphere (safety), wellbeing (self-validation), and engagement (evaluations). They then created adaptable activities for online and offline, which can be embedded into blended learning models to create stronger engagement.

This resource features:

Activities – creative ideas ready for you to bring into your online and blended delivery work, developed and tested by people working across the sector – including tried and tested ideas that work for the team at A New Direction and B+A

Principles – learning highlights and principles for digital work, identified through this workshop

An invitation – we would also like to invite you to consider these themes in your own practice, and encourage you to design your own activities to make the most out of your participants' digital learning experience

Creative digital spaces

The digital space brings fresh challenges. To support collaboration online, we need to fill digital spaces with an atmosphere that encourages curiosity, creativity, and exchange. The digital space is a new learning and working environment for many of us, so these activities are all about making people feel safe right from the start and bringing people into the space as active participants rather than passive observers.

To have a go at creating your own activity, click [here](#) for the full brief.

Task

Create an icebreaker to improve people's comfort and confidence to speak up in a digital session. Consider how the task might help democratise the space, set the tone for collaboration and take people's emotional health and wellbeing into consideration.

Consider:

- Democratising the space
- Awareness of participants' emotional health

Activity I Welcome box



This could be done with families, teachers, young people, or team members

Set up a digital white board ([Jamboard](#), [Miro](#), [Whiteboard on Zoom](#), etc.) and invite people to add a scribble as they join the session. The scribble should reflect how each participant is feeling upon joining the session. By asking for a scribble, participants have the option to be abstract, draw something real, or just use words.

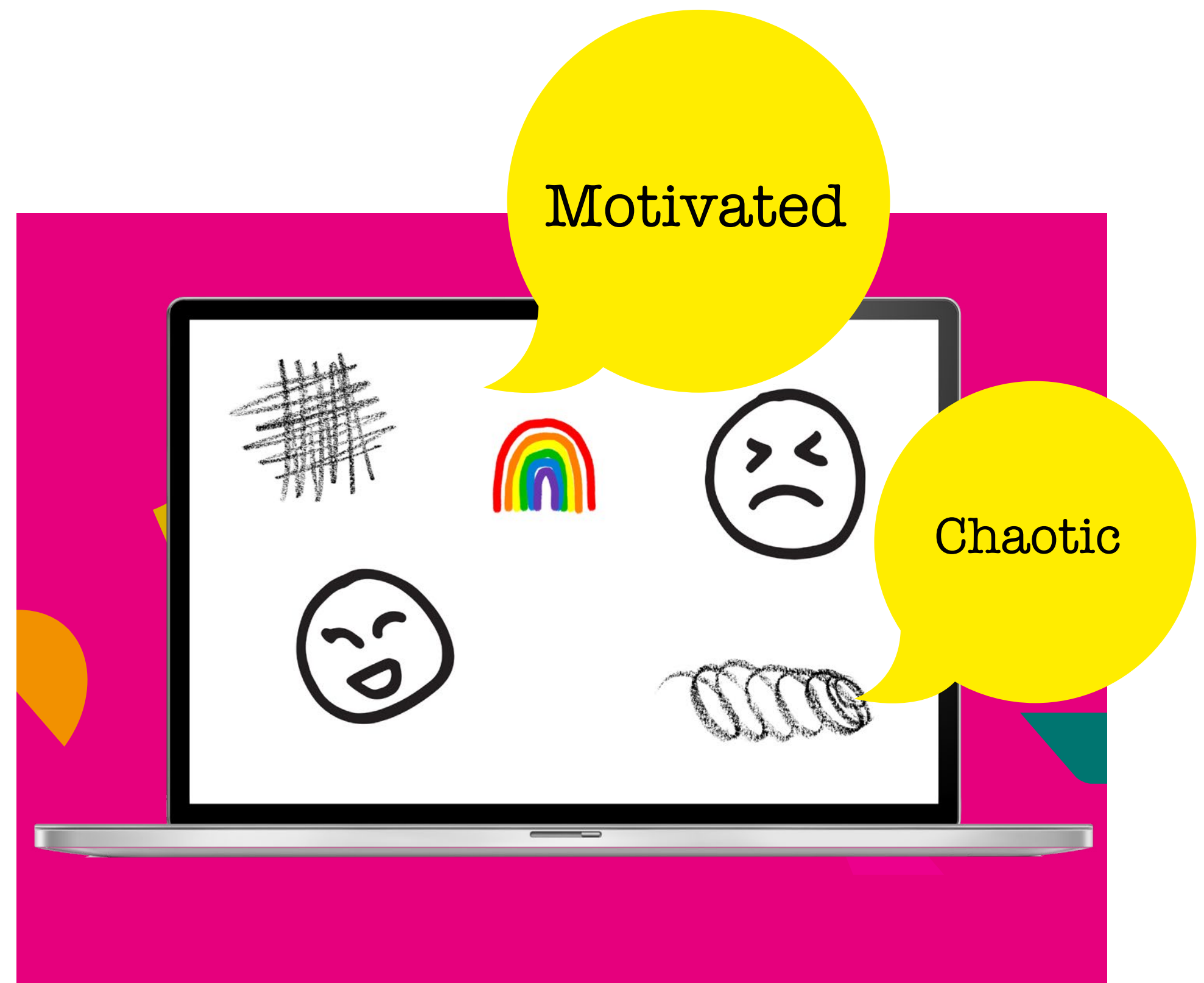
This can also be done using physical materials, such as pieces of paper and markers. Participants can hold up their scribbles to the camera all at once to make a collage, or even create a mix of digital and physical scribbles.

Explore

Ask participants to share and reflect on their own scribbles

Ask participants to notice how other's scribbles draw them in, and invite comments on how they interpret them

Use the scribbles as a starting point for a drawing, or invite people to add throughout the meeting



Activity 2 Object storytelling



This could be adapted for any audience and used for any purpose

Ask everyone to grab an object from their surrounding areas and hold it up to the camera (this could be done in person if people are asked to bring an object from home or select an object from a random assortment, alternatively you could give participants a timeframe to explore the area and find an object). The exercise invites the group to tell a story using the objects they see other people are holding. You could do this in a few ways:

1. One person starts the story with a sentence and then holds up their object, passing the story on to another person in the session. The next person must continue the story, but work in the object that the previous person is holding up. The game continues until everyone has been included

OR

2. One person starts the story, while everyone holds up their objects. The first person then continues the story by choosing one of the objects they see and working it into the story. The person holding the chosen object then has to pick up the story and continues passing until everyone is included



Activity 3 What's in a word



This could be adapted for any audience

Ask participants for a one-word response to a piece of art or media. This could be done in a blended learning setting, including settings where digital participants are in families or team groups.

- Share a piece of art or media that relates to the meeting or workshop
- Invite participants to consider a single word in response. Participants could discuss their words in groups or in breakout rooms, as well as contribute to a word cloud or chat so that there is a record of the words collected
- Words could be the starting point for another creative activity, poetry, dialogue, writing, or discussions – i.e. select three words, select two opposing words, etc.



Principles



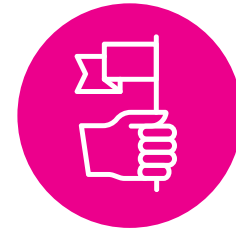
These activities are easily achievable and are low-pressure as participants cannot fail



They bring personal feelings or objects from personal spaces into the digital space, which helps build connection and situates participants in the event



These are activities that focus more on how people are feeling or where they are at, rather than who they are or what they do



What's worked for us

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Walkie talkies: During the event, B+A split up attendees into random breakout rooms in pairs, then invited them to turn cameras off, exchange phone numbers, and call each other. This started the meeting off with a more personal connection and allowed people to get up and walk around their homes, gardens, or other spaces they were in. This is a fun and personal way to start a digital event and reinforces everyone's presence in the meeting when participants return and switch cameras on.

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Scavenger hunt: Having a social agenda item on team meetings has helped our team stay connected when working from home. Scavenger hunts have been popular in our virtual team meetings. Simply put groups into break out rooms and provide everyone with a list of items to find within their homes. This activity supports communication and informal social time within teams. The team who finds all the items first must return to the main room to declare they are a winner!

Top tip: put some things on the list that builds links between team members, for example two copies of the same book in different households.

Wellbeing and self-validation

Who would have thought a year ago that so many of us would be doing our jobs digitally? We have heard from the sector that a lot of people have struggled with this change, so this challenge is about instilling ourselves with confidence ahead of a working day, ahead of a session we are leading, or whenever we need a spruce.

To have a go at creating your own activity, click [here](#) for the full brief.

Task

Create an internal exercise to encourage self-confidence in the digital space. This needs to be a tool to help break down our own barriers and big ourselves up. The tool should be able to be used solo but can rely on the input and support of those around you if desired.

Consider:

- Self-confidence
- Self-acceptance
- Working with your strengths and weaknesses

Activity 1 Top trumps



Learning teams, creative partners, organisation-wide meetings

Use the online [Top Trump generator](#) to create a Top Trump for yourself or do this as an exercise with your team or creative partners.

- Use the activity to consider your own strengths or do it together as a group exercise and encourage teams to contribute to each other's cards. Top Trumps can be exchanged or played at significant times to boost and support confidence
- As a personal practice, you can make one for yourself and reflect on it before significant events to:
 - » Remind yourself what your skills are and what you can bring to the table
 - » Look back and consider whether anything has changed about you
 - » Remind yourself of a particular moment, conversation, or time in your life
- Teams undertaking new projects or working collaboratively for the first time could prepare and bring their top trumps to a project meeting, to help connect and bring creativity into the space before 'meeting mode' kicks in

Joseph

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| MOTIVATING | 99 |
| CREATIVE | 100 |
| CALM UNDER PRESSURE | 80 |
| ADAPTABLE | 75 |
| TOP TRUMP RATING | ★★★★★ |

Activity 2 The award for...



Can be used with audiences of any age, including participants, partners or teams

Find an object in your space and award it to yourself. Think about what praise you could give yourself. What might you say in your acceptance speech?

What can you say to yourself that deserves a little bit of praise? What are the small wins you want to recognise, or what are the big wins you want to remind yourself of?

As a team exercise, you could invite team members to give awards to each other.

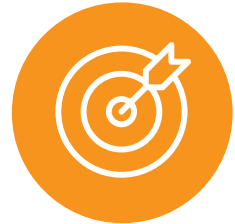


What are the big wins you want to remind yourself of?

What can you say to yourself that deserves a little bit of praise?

What are the small wins you want to recognise?

Principles



These activities build relationships, ensuring that participants know they are fully understood, and their emotions are accepted by others



Self-validation activities help participants to accept their own internal thoughts, feelings, and experiences



These activities can help participants to be more mindful in digital spaces and manage their thoughts and emotions more effectively throughout a session



What's worked for us

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Superpowers: B+A have done a superpower exercise in their teams, asking team members to name and describe each other's superpowers. Sometimes the things we are best at are the things that we take for granted. What are your superpowers, and how do you recognise them? What powers do you recognise in others, and how could you share this within your team?

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Secret cheerleader: Sometimes it helps to have someone in the room who is a source of support. For example, at a live event you might ask someone to stand at the back and signal about volume or mic levels. Aside from the practical management of digital events, what could you ask a colleague for during a live event you are leading? Is it a signal they could give you on screen, or a few extra notes of encouragement via chat? Thinking about what you need to be at your best in a digital event and ask for it.

Evaluation

So often we can get a sense of how something is going by reading the room, but many of these cues are lost or manifest in different ways when working digitally. As educators, we are used to preparing for all possibilities and thinking on our feet when things don't go as planned, yet in a digital space this can feel daunting! When we work online it is harder to understand our participants and adapt to their needs, and when it comes to working in blended models we need to consider how we capture a mix of feedback from those in person and those we are working with remotely.

To have a go at creating your own activity, click [here](#) for the full brief.

Task

In this brief, we invite you to create a tool or method to measure impact during or immediately after delivery.

Consider:

- Simplicity of method
- Clarity

Activity 1 Active feedback



This could be adapted for any audience

Use a mix of evaluation and feedback points throughout the event, not just a survey after it ends. This can help you take a read of the room and act as a barometer for others to also 'read the room' as a participant. It can be important for participants to feel and see where each other are at as part of their learning process.

Some of the ideas are:

Get feedback by **colour** – for example, ask participants to find objects in traffic light colours in the spaces they are working in to represent their feedback (red for stop, yellow for caution, green for continue). This requires participants to think, get up and move, as well as consider their choices

Use **post-it boards or digital Jamboards** as a separate space for making and sharing notes. Ideas can be added and arranged, with questions put into a queue or a holding place. This can make it easier to group and manage many different ideas in a less linear way than chats

Use **cameras** as a voting mechanism – invite participants to move closer/away/side to side depending on their feedback, or cover camera for interactive decision making

Live polls such as [Mentimeter](#) and [Kahoot](#) are good for anonymity, which gives participants the opportunity to feedback honestly and can help build trust. It can disrupt the feeling that the presenter is simply a 'live feed'



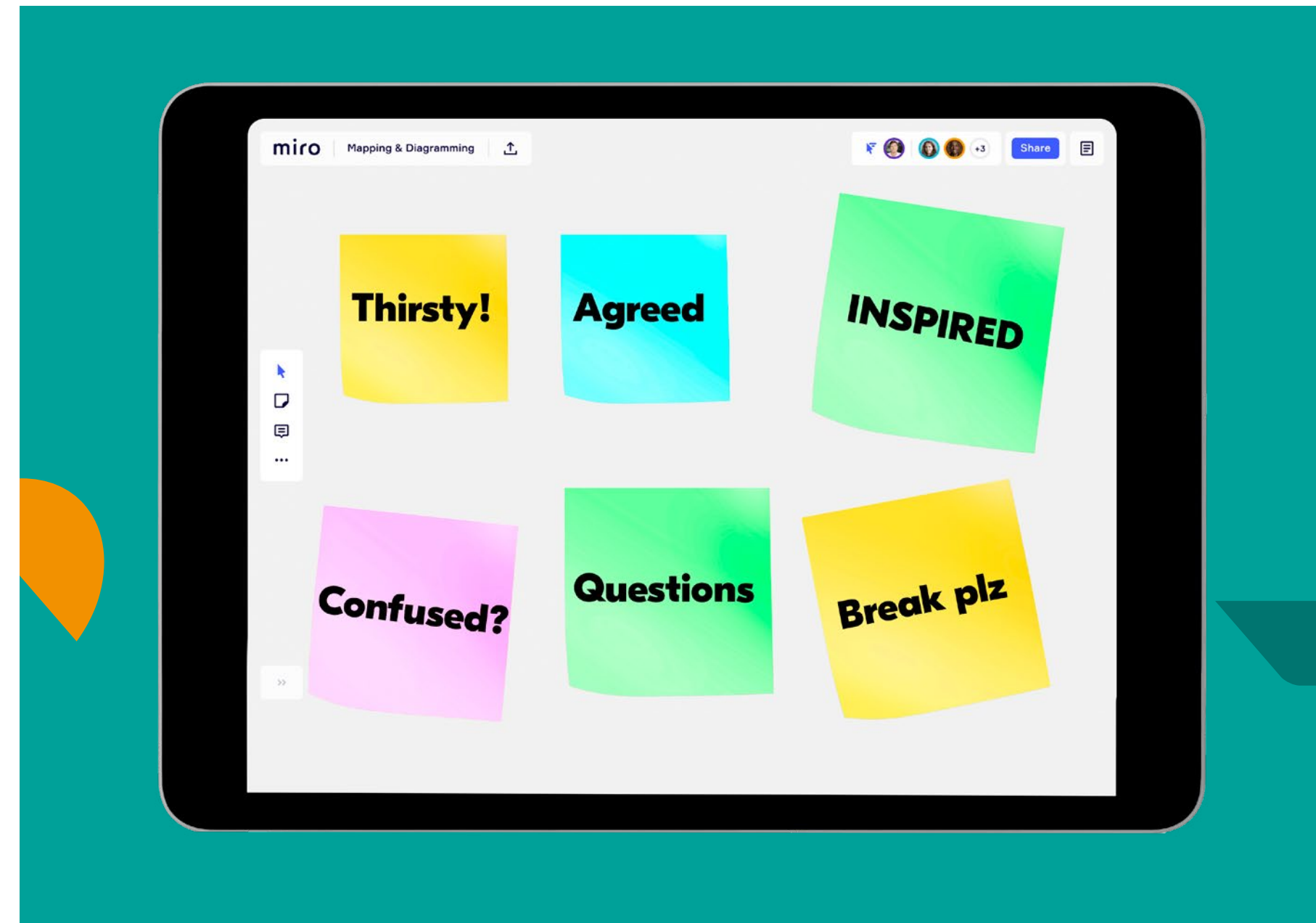
Activity 2 Chart your vital signs



This can be adapted for any audience, and is suited to longer sessions or programmes with multiple sessions

This activity creates an incentive and invitation to give feedback during and throughout the session. It takes active feedback a bit further and invites you to chart and track feedback to understand the journey of a project or programme. This could be useful for a longer session or used over several sessions. Actively charting participants' reactions and interests is a useful tool for reflection and could help with devising future events.

- Build regular check-ins throughout the session and chart feedback — use creative activities showing images, selecting objects, or feeding back anonymously about a specific part of the session
- Think about how evaluation can be useful for participants, working in how creative activities can allow them to think and reflect
- Create an anonymous board such as a [Jamboard](#) or [Miro](#) where participants can add words at specific 'pulse points,' which could be arranged around intros and breaks to track how participants are feeling at different stages of the learning process



Principles



Consider accessibility and create a space of diversification for your practice through the evaluation process



Sometimes pictures can say so much more than the words you use



Consider how you could shift away from words, instead using images, visual cues from body language, movement, colour, feelings, and emotions



What's worked for us

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Joker cards: B+A run a quick activity that invites everyone in a session to craft a 'joker card' using paper, post-its, pens and anything else they have in front of them. Each person is then invited to play their joker card (waving it in front of the camera) once during the session, when they hear something that resonates or if someone wants to show appreciation for a point another participant has made.

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Mentimeter: Building interactive presentations into our events has been a great way to get live feedback from our participants. With Mentimeter, participants can use their smartphones to connect to interactive presentations and answer questions, polls, quizzes, and more. These colourful presentations have been helpful for us to visualise participants' responses in real time and create a more joyful and engaging digital experience. Once you complete your Mentimeter presentation, you can export your results for further analysis and even compare data over time to measure the progress of your participants over several sessions.

Further resources that inspired us

Remote learning in museums, heritage, and cultural settings, Case Studies from GEM, Vol. 26, 2020, PDF →

An online toolkit developed by The Children's Society with design agency Deeprr
"From Wifi Connections to Human Connections," Ellen Fruijtjer, Medium, Nov 03, 2020 →

"The Next Time Someone Compliments You, Ask Why," Ashley Abramson, Medium, Mar 08, 2021 →

"Write Down Every Compliment You Get," Lauren Sieben, Medium, Jul 30, 2019 →

Online tools at a glance

From free and open-source tools to paid subscriptions, there are a wide range of online tools out there than can support your digital creativity. Here are a few we've come across.

Presentation tools



Mentimeter allows you to create interactive presentations with integrated feedback tools that participants can take part in

Kahoot!

Kahoot is a games-based learning platform used in educational settings which can also be adapted for a mix of online activities

Digital whiteboards and collaborative tools



Jamboard – Google's digital whiteboard tool

miro

Miro is a free digital whiteboard tool with a large surface area and a mix of tools for adding visuals, images and notes



Mural is an online platform that supports visual collaborations with a number of tools that support meetings and doesn't require a sign-in for participants

An invitation

All of the activities and principles shared in this resource were developed through practice-sharing and were devised within a two-hour collaborative session. Participants were grouped randomly and used Zoom break out rooms and Miro boards to map out their ideas.

We wanted to share the briefs that were the starting point for this resource and invite you to develop and create your own toolkit with your work and teams in mind.

For each of the following briefs we asked the devisers to consider:

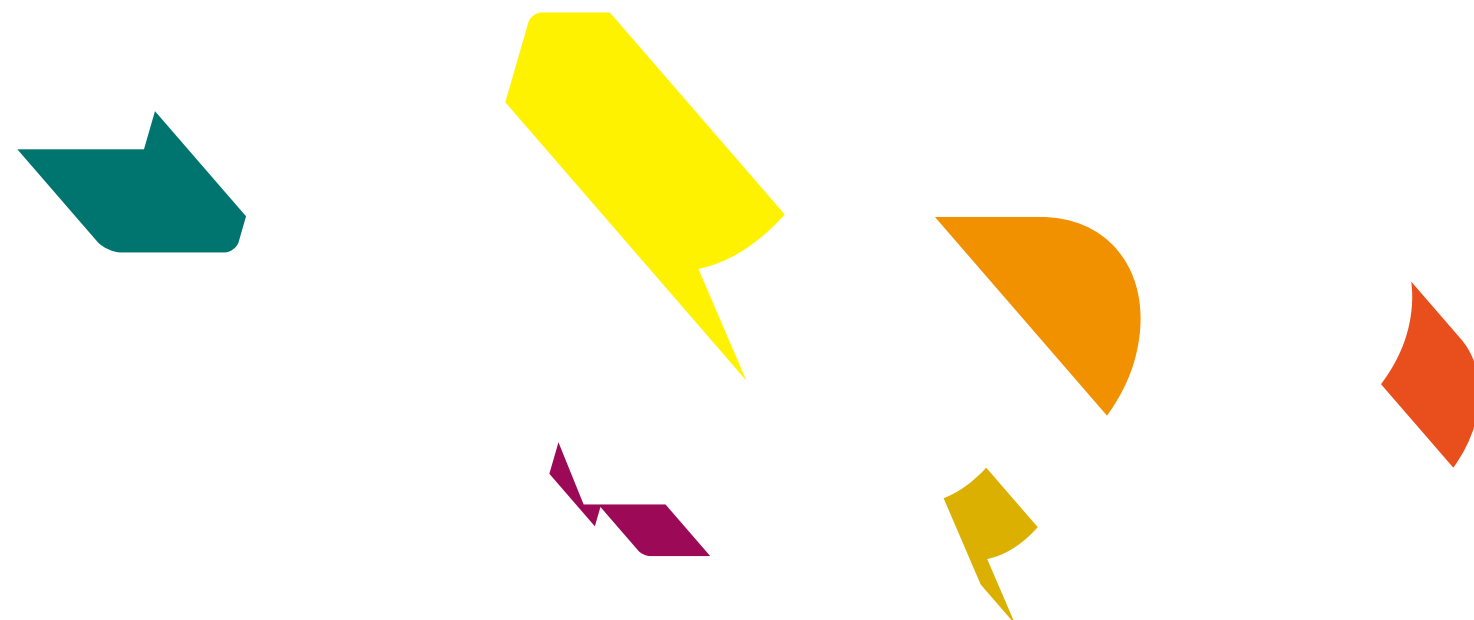
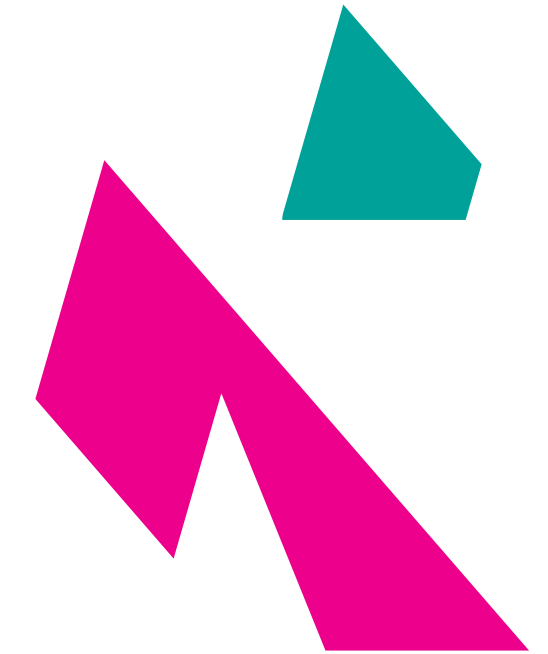
1 What's the exercise called?

2 Who is the exercise for? E.g. teachers, children, young people, team-members

3 What is the exercise?

4 How can the exercise be adapted for different audience groups?

5 How can the exercise be adapted for different settings?



1

Create an icebreaker to improve people's comfort and confidence to speak up in a digital session



- The task needs to blend the online and offline
- It should also be scalable so it can work with a small group all the way up to a larger group

Why do we need this?

The digital space brings fresh challenges. Doing amazing creative learning work requires people to be safe and comfortable. It's a new environment for lots of us, so this is all about making people feel safe from the start.

Thought starters

- When have you previously been in a participatory group within the digital space?
- What do you think enabled people to feel a part of the space, and feel able to contribute?

Principles to aim for

- Democratising the space
- Awareness of participants' emotional health

The output: An icebreaker exercise

- No more than 10 minutes to complete
- Should be able to work both online and offline and should incorporate both when working online

2 Create an internal exercise to encourage self-confidence in the digital space



This needs to be a tool to help break down our own barriers and big ourselves up. The tool should be able to be used solo but can rely on the input and support of those around you, if desired.

Why do we need this?

Who knew a year ago so many of us would be doing our jobs digitally. We've heard from the sector that a lot of people have struggled with this shift.

Normally we'd be doing this with you in the room so we've also had to pivot. This is about instilling ourselves with confidence ahead of a working day, ahead of a session we're leading, or whenever we're in need of a spruce.

Thought starters

- When have you felt confident going into a new space, or quickly able to be yourself in a new space?
- What resource did you call on to get you there?

Principles to aim for

- Self-confidence
- Self-acceptance

The output: Your solo exercise

- Up to 10 minutes to complete
- Something you can do alone

3 A tool or method to measure impact during, or immediately post-delivery



Why do we need this?

So often we can get a sense of how something is going by reading the room. However, so many cues are lost or manifest in a different way in this Zoom life.

Thought starters

- When have you had feedback previously that has had a positive impact?
- When and how have you expressed feedback in person, or digitally?

Principles to aim for

- Simplicity
- Clarity

The output

The output needs to be able to be integrated into digital or in-person sessions, enabling learning teams to get real-time or immediate feedback.

Acknowledgements

This resource was developed as a collaboration between A New Direction and B+A. We would like to acknowledge all the participants who joined us for our online devising event and dove into our digital ball-pit experience to help us devise these activities:

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