

tales from the dalí

innovation labs at the dalí

dalí once called his paintings his hand painted dream photographs. this evocative phrasing brings two important ideas to the fore: 1) his paintings, like a dream, tell a story, and we decipher this tale in our viewing and 2) the story his works tell need not be of the realistic or feasible variety but can be one that allows us to slip beyond the bounds of reality to imagine new possibilities. one of our favorite warm-up activities involves using his images to create just such stories, and it works equally well when done solo or with a group.

before engaging in any activity that requires you to generate creative ideas or engage in freeform interaction, try this storytelling activity as a warm-up for your brain:

1. print out card sheet (dalí image cards, which can be found at: <https://thedali.org/the-dali-on-line/>) and cut out individual cards
2. place cards face down in front of you
3. select five cards and place them in any order in a line in front of you
4. come up with a story using the images and their order as visual prompts
5. don't stop; just keep talking and keep the flow going

tips: if using with a group, give each person in the group one card and tell them to only flip it over when it is their turn. then, select one person to start, and that person looks at his or her card and starts the story. the next person in line then flips over his or her card and continues the story. this goes on until you arrive at the first person again. in essence, this is a structured version of “yes, and...” improvisational thinking and will get everyone comfortable with sharing thoughts and building on others' ideas.