

# Lost & Found<sup>®</sup>

## Curriculum Guide

For facilitators working with 7–12 year olds

**Running the Lost & Found workshop  
should be fun and straightforward—  
and always an adventure!**

This guide will walk you through the curriculum step-by-step, with instructions on how to lead each activity, how to set up for sessions, and more.

Throughout, you'll find references to more helpful tips and information found in your Toolkit.

**Let's get started!**



Canadian  
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## About the Project

Lost & Found encourages collective storymaking in pursuit of stronger literacy across Canada. The workshop provides a framework to elicit children's pandemic stories as they reflect on things lost, and things found.

Through fun writing and art activities, children will recall, shape, and share their pandemic stories. The resulting stories will take many different forms, including poems, drawings, letters, and video and audio recordings.

Through the process, the group will build community, confidence, and empathy by listening to and honouring one another's experiences in a safe and supportive space.

# Workshop Basics

## Structure

There are four sessions, each 75 minutes long; they're ideally delivered once a week but can also be grouped differently as needed.

### **SESSION 1:** *CONNECTING*

Participants recall and share their pandemic experiences

### **SESSION 2:** *EXPLORING*

Participants explore different ways of writing about and drawing their pandemic experiences

### **SESSION 3:** *FOCUSING*

Participants focus on one story to develop further

### **SESSION 4:** *SHARING*

Participants complete their story and celebrate!

## Overall Flow of Each Session

1. Welcome circle and warm-up
2. Agenda for the day
3. Grounding exercise
4. Writing and drawing activities
5. Sharing circle
6. Grounding exercise
7. Instructions for next time and goodbyes

## People Needed

### REQUIRED:

- 1 **lead** facilitator
- 1 **supporting** facilitator

### OPTIONAL:

- Guest **artist** or **author**
- 2–3 **volunteers**

*Detailed role descriptions can be found in Facilitator and Artist Roles in your Toolkit.*

## Creativity Tools You'll be Using



### *MEMORY BOX*

A cardboard box that can hold the work your group creates during the workshop. At the end, the contents can be displayed to share with the community. The box can be decorated over the four sessions.

### *MEMORY CARDS*

A set of visual prompts to help kids remember different things from the past three years.

### *LOST & FOUND JOURNAL*

A workbook for participants that includes activities and writing and drawing pages.

### *IDEAS GALLERY*

A collection of pandemic stories, art, poems, and letters by kids, to inspire participants in their own writing.

# Session One:

## Connecting

*Participants recall and share their pandemic experiences*

### Session One Goals

- » To create a **safe, supportive, and fun space** where kids feel comfortable sharing
- » To ensure that kids **understand the Lost & Found project** and what is being asked of them, and that they have a choice to participate
- » **To begin reflecting** on, talking about, and writing/drawing their pandemic experiences

### Session One Prep List

- ❑ **Memory Box:** a cardboard or plastic box large enough to hold approximately 12 small objects (books, mugs, etc.)
- ❑ **Lost & Found Journals**, printed and stapled, one per child plus a couple of extras
- ❑ **Memory Cards**, printed (preferably on cardstock/heavy paper) and cut
- ❑ Three **large sheets of paper** or Bristol Board/poster board, taped or tacked to the wall (not too close together!)
- ❑ **Pencils, pens, markers**
- ❑ Extra **blank paper**
- ❑ **Glue and tape**, in case kids want to decorate the Memory Box

## Breakdown of Session

ACTIVITY	LENGTH
» Welcome circle	10 min
» Introduction to the project and welcome video	5 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Community Agreement activity	10 min
» Optional break	10-15 min
» Memory Cards activity	25 min
» Sharing circle	10 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Closing	3 min

## Welcome Circle | 10 min

1. **Gather in a circle** and welcome everyone!
2. Run the **introductions** and **ice breaker** activity.
  - Pass around an item of your choice to help people take turns.
  - As the item is passed, say your names and pronouns. Leading the exercise by example, explain that your pronoun is what you want people to use to talk about you: "She loves pouring orange juice in her cereal."
  - As you introduce yourselves, each person answers the question: If you could only eat one food for breakfast, lunch and dinner, what would it be?
  - The lead facilitator should go first.

**Note:** *Other options for this introductory activity are available in your Toolkit.*



## Introduction to the Project | 5 min

### 1. Play the **introductory video**.

- If this is not possible, explain what Lost & Found is and what kids will contribute to and receive from their participation.

#### *SAMPLE SCRIPT:*

*"The pandemic has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all of us. For you, it may have felt like a roller coaster of online school, stores closing, not being able to see friends and family, and everything else. We haven't heard enough about what the pandemic has been like for kids, so we wanted to create a way for you to share your experiences with one another and with people across Canada!*

*Why is this so important? Because if we can understand the experience of others, it helps us to empathetically find a way forward. Your stories of truth, love, grief, and community can connect us all to your strength and potential as our youngest generation."*

**PLEASE NOTE:** For your reference, the Welcome Video script is available in your Toolkit.

### 2. Present the **Memory Box**.

#### *SAMPLE SCRIPT:*

*"This is our Memory Box! We'll be using it to collect the writing and art you create in this workshop that you'd like to share with others. We'll be adding to this box throughout the workshop, and at the end, we'll have a collection of memories that we can display for the community to see, so you can tell other people what the pandemic was like for you.*

*Feel free to decorate the box when you have a free moment—bring in stickers and other things, and draw and write on it. It will be available as we set up for each session."*

3. Present each child's **Lost & Found Journal** and explain what it will be used for.
  - Make sure each child writes their name on it. Explain that the journal is where they'll be writing and drawing. The sheets can be cut out and put into the Memory Box if they choose to share them.

### Grounding Exercise | 3 min



1. Explain what "**grounding**" is.

#### *SUGGESTED SCRIPT:*

*"Each time we meet we'll begin and end with an activity to calm our bodies and minds. This is called grounding. Grounding can help us relax and remind our brains and bodies they are safe, especially if we're thinking of hard memories or have uncomfortable feelings."*

2. Lead the **grounding exercise**.

#### *SUGGESTED SCRIPT:*

*"Try a butterfly hug by crossing your arms, as if giving yourself a hug! Now gently tap one arm and then the other arm. Keep breathing and alternately tapping your arms for a minute or two, or as many times as you want to and feels good!"*

**Note:** Other options for this introductory activity are available in your Toolkit.

## Community Agreement | 10 min

1. Explain that a "**community agreement**" is an opportunity for the group to decide what they need to make the space and their time together enjoyable and comfortable.
2. Show everyone the three sheets of paper taped to the wall. Write a large one-word **heading** at the top of each sheet:

» **KIND**

» **FUN**

» **SAFE** *(write the word 'choice' under this heading as an example)*

3. Hand out markers and ask the kids to write **words** or **phrases** on each sheet of paper.

### *SAMPLE SCRIPT:*

*"Talking and writing about yourself can be hard sometimes. We want to make sure we create a space where you feel valued, where you're having fun, and where you feel safe and free to make choices.*

*You'll see around the space big sheets of paper with these words on them. In a minute, you can all get up and, using markers, write down what you would need to feel valued, have fun, and feel safe. These will be up every time we meet so we remember."*

4. Actively **participate** in the activity making sure to share why you are choosing certain words or phrases.

## Memory Cards | 25 min

1. Have the kids help you lay out the 45 **Memory Cards** face up in the centre of the circle so everyone can see them.
2. Invite them to look over the images and **choose one or two** that “speak to” them—that calls to mind a particular memory or experience from the pandemic.

**Note:** *If two people want the same card, they can share it. There are also nine blank cards among the 45. Kids can choose one of these if they wish to draw their own card.*

3. Once they’ve chosen, have them work on the activities on pages 4–9 in their journals. They can stay where they are or find any other comfortable place in the room.
4. Walk around as kids are working, helping as needed. You may participate in the activity as well, writing your own responses on a sheet of paper.

### Sharing Circle | 10 min

1. Bring the group into a **circle** once again. Place the Memory Box in some easily visible and accessible location.
2. **Share your own** thought or memory related to a Memory Card, then ask folks if they'd like to share what the cards helped them remember.
3. Invite the kids to **add to the Memory Box**. They may carefully tear or cut out their page of writing from their journals. They may also choose to write more at home and submit their writing to the box next session.

### Grounding Exercise | 3 min

1. **Check in** with the group: How did everyone feel today?
2. Either **collect the journals** or ask the kids to bring them home and back for the next session.
3. Ask them to bring in at least **one object** that reminds them of the pandemic; they will share this object and their story with the group. The object can be anything, including a photo or drawing.

### Closing | 5 min

- » Repeat the **grounding exercise** used at the beginning of the session.

## Session Two: Exploring

*Participants explore different ways of writing about and drawing their pandemic memories*

### Session Two Goals

- » To continue to **build group connections**
- » To explore different ways to **write about memories**
- » To experiment with creating and writing in **different forms** (poems, stories, letters, art)

**Note:** *A guest artist or writer would be a fabulous addition to this session. They should hang their own pandemic piece in the Ideas Gallery and take part in every activity alongside the children and facilitators. For instructions on how to incorporate a guest author or artist, refer to Facilitator and Artist Roles in your Toolkit*

## Session Two Prep List



- **Memory Box**
- **Memory Cards** from last time
- **Ideas Gallery**, printed and set up
- **Community Agreement** sheets, on wall
- A couple of **spare Lost & Found Journals**; if you have allowed your group to bring home their journals, also print some spare pages of the day's relevant activities in case any children forget to bring them back
- **Pencils, pens, markers**
- Extra **paper**
- **Glue** and **tape**, in case kids want to decorate the Memory Box

## Breakdown of Session



ACTIVITY	LENGTH
» Welcome circle	10 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Show & Share	15 min
» Ideas Gallery activity	15 min
» Optional break	10-15 min
» Writing and creating time	20 min
» Sharing circle	10 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Closing	3 min



## Welcome Circle | 10 min

1. Gather everyone in a circle and **check-in**: How are they feeling? Try asking them to use a creative, fun way to express how they feel: "I feel like I lay in a bed of flowers because I had such a good night of sleep. How did you sleep?"
2. **Introduce** the guest artist or writer, if present.
3. Remind kids they can **continue to decorate** and add to the Memory Box whenever they like.

## Grounding Exercise | 3 min

1. Lead a **new grounding exercise**. Invite kids to participate. Let them know they can participate standing up or sitting down, with their eyes open or closed.
2. Guide them through **imagining themselves as a tree**, growing roots into the floor.

### SAMPLE SCRIPT:

*"Pretend that you are like a tree. Feel your feet on the ground. Now imagine your feet becoming roots, growing down through this floor, to the earth and dirt below, weaving together with other tree roots. Notice yourself growing bigger and stronger, so solid that not even the biggest wind could knock you down."*

## Show & Share | 15 min



The Show & Share should be a fun **icebreaker**-like activity as kids show and talk about what they've brought from home. If kids have forgotten to bring something, they can simply present an imaginary object that brings to mind a pandemic story or memory.

1. If the group is slow to start, **kick off the sharing** with your own object and story.
2. As kids present, **moderate the conversation** and invite the other kids to ask questions about the objects they're seeing. If a child finds it hard to think of something to say, use prompting questions: How did you get it or make it? Is it special to you? In what way? What or who does this object remind you of?
3. If you have not already shared by the end, be sure to do so! The **equal participation of all** helps establish a sense of collaboration in creating a shared experience.

**Note:** *There is no need to force kids to participate. If someone does not wish to share, remind them that they can do so next session, if they choose.*

## Ideas Gallery | 15 min

The Ideas Gallery **showcases pieces of writing** done by other kids in different forms. Its purpose is to provide inspiration and examples for kids as they begin to write about their own memories.

The gallery can be kept in place for the remaining of the workshop series so kids can re-visit whenever they need inspiration or want to explore more. If this is not possible, kids can always refer to their journals, where the same samples are printed.

1. Begin by **explaining the activity** to the group.

### SAMPLE SCRIPT:

*"You'll see that we've displayed a bunch of writing and art in the room. These are stories written and drawn by kids from Canada and around the world. All of these pieces are reflective of their experience living in a pandemic, as we go around reading and observing feel free to make notes of things you find interesting!"*

2. As kids circulate, be available to **address questions** and ideas they may have about the different forms they see. Prompt them with questions: Do you like this piece? Why? What do you notice about this piece?
3. Afterwards, ask them to **grab their journals** and pens and find a comfortable working spot.

## Writing and Creating Time | 20 min

Page 13 of the Lost & Found Journal will guide kids through the process of creating **Word Clouds** and, if they have time, experimenting with the different writing forms shown in the Ideas Gallery.

- » Point out that some of the writing and art from the gallery is reprinted in their journals, so they can read them in more detail.
- » If kids forgot their journals, provide extra copies of the relevant pages.

### Sharing Circle | 10 min

1. Gather again and invite kids to **read aloud** what they chose to write or draw with everyone.
2. Ask kids to cut out and **add any work they like** to the Memory Box.

### Grounding Exercise | 3 min

1. Repeat the **grounding exercise** used at the beginning of the session.

### Closing | 3 min

1. Collect **Journals**.
2. Encourage the kids to **try new forms** if they want to at home. They can also bring in another object to share next time if they like.

## Session Three: Focusing

*Participants focus on one story to develop further*

### Session Three Goals

- » To have each participant focus on **one memory** to develop further
- » To continue inviting kids to **share their stories** and perspectives with their group

### Session Three Prep List

- ❑ If your **Memory Box** contains a lot of pieces of writing and art, consider laying them out for kids to look at as they enter
- ❑ **Community Agreement** sheets, on wall
- ❑ **Pencils, pens, markers**
- ❑ **Journals** of any kids who haven't taken theirs home
- ❑ Extra printouts of relevant **activity pages** in case journals have been left at home
- ❑ **Memory Cards**, as added inspiration to have on hand
- ❑ Extra **paper**
- ❑ **Glue** and **tape**, in case kids want to decorate the box

## Breakdown of Session



ACTIVITY	LENGTH
» Welcome circle	10 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Choosing a memory	5 min
» Writing and creating time	40 min
» Optional break <i>(halfway into "Writing and creating time")</i>	10-15 min
» Sharing circle	10 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Closing	2 min

## Welcome Circle | 10 min



1. **Check in** with everyone. If anyone has brought an object they would like to share, allow a few minutes.
2. Run the **warm-up activity**:
  - Divide kids into pairs and have them teach their partners something interesting or unique that they know (i.e. a hip hop dance move, how to say a phrase in another language, a yoga pose).
  - Invite them to share what they have learned from each other after a few minutes.

**Note:** *Other options for this activity are available in your Toolkit.*

## Grounding Exercise | 3 min



With repetition, we hope kids become very familiar and comfortable with two grounding exercises that they can have as tools to use on their own in the future.

1. Lead the **same grounding exercise** you used in Session One.

## Choosing a Memory | 5 min

For the remainder of the workshop, kids will be working on the final piece they will be displaying for the community and, if they wish, submitting to the Lost & Found national project. The hope is that some of the activities thus far will have sparked an interest in writing more about one particular story or memory.

1. While still in a circle, explain that they will now be **choosing one memory** that they want to develop further and work on for the next two sessions
2. They have the option to **connect** their memory to one of their chosen objects but do not have to. If they have no idea where to begin, remind them that they can find inspiration in the Memory Cards and read through the Ideas Gallery and the prompts on page TBD in their journals.

**Note:** *Kids are welcome to create more than one piece if they want to.*

## Writing and Creating Time | 40 min

Having extra volunteers on hand for the independent writing time would be ideal. Some kids will likely have a hard time getting started. Find strategies and approaches for supporting them in your Supporting Resources.

1. Ask kids to find a comfortable place to **work with their journals**.
2. As you guide kids through their independent work time, circulate around the room to **check in** with them and gauge how they are feeling/progressing through their storymaking.

**Note:** *For kids who are writing stories, a good guideline is to keep their stories to a couple pages of writing to ensure they have time to edit their work in the next session.*



### Sharing Circle | 10 min



1. Invite kids to **read aloud their writing** and share their artwork or any memories they like.
2. Ask kids to **add any finished work to the Memory Box**. If any children have recorded a story, please add a note to the box indicating the story title and their name.

### Grounding Exercise | 3 min



1. Repeat the **grounding exercise** used at the beginning of the session.

### Closing | 2 min



1. **Collect journals** or allow kids to bring them home to continue working.

## Session Four: Sharing

*Participants complete their story and celebrate!*

### Session Four Goals

- » To **complete their pieces**
- » To work together to create a **collective art piece**
- » To **reflect on** and **evaluate** their overall workshop experience
- » To **honour their participation** in the Lost & Found project

### Session Four Prep List

- ❑ If your **Memory Box** contains a lot of pieces of writing and art, consider laying them out for kids to look at as they enter
- ❑ **Community Agreement** sheets, on wall
- ❑ 1 sheet of medium to large **Bristol Board/poster board**
- ❑ **Pencils, pens, markers**
- ❑ Lost & Found thank you cards for each child, printed and signed
- ❑ Extra **paper**
- ❑ End-of-workshop **reflection group guidelines**

## Breakdown of Session



ACTIVITY	LENGTH
» Welcome circle	5 min
» Grounding exercise	3 min
» Writing and creating time	40 min
» Optional break	10-15 min
» Collective name poster	15 min
» Reflection and honouring	10 min
» Final grounding exercise and goodbye	5 min

## Welcome Circle | 5 min

1. Welcome everyone!
2. Remind kids that **this is the last day** for them to complete their stories to the best of their abilities and to add any memories or objects to the Memory Box, that will soon turn into a **gallery** to share with the community!

## Grounding Exercise | 3 min

1. Lead the **grounding exercise** from Session Two.

## Writing and Creating Time | 40 min

- » Be available to **provide as much support as possible**. This will be hugely important this session. The needs for kids will range greatly as some require scribing help, editing, and prompts to expand upon their ideas.
- » Some kids may be farther along. Consider pairing those to **have them "workshop" each other's work**.

## Collective Word Poster Activity | 15 min



The collective word poster is a chance for kids to sign their names and express their wish for the future. It will be hung up along with their creative work for the community to see.

- » Invite kids to **add their name and thoughts** to the poster, either as a break during their work time or after they are finished.
- » They can also add their thoughts about **things they're grateful for** and **what they hope for the future**.

### SUGGESTED SCRIPT:

*"We want to create something for us all to remember, and that connects our names and some of the thoughts that we might be experiencing. On the poster, sign your name and write down some of what you are hoping for when it comes to the future, and continued recovery for the pandemic. Remember, this is an art representation, so you can express these ideas anyway through words or pictures! We'll all take turns adding to it."*

## Reflection and Honouring | 10 min

1. Ask kids to **submit their work for the final time** to the Memory Box. Remind them that this is the content that will be displayed in their community Memory Gallery at a later date, and will be submitted to the Lost & Found project.
2. Lead the end-of-workshop **reflection group** per the guidelines provided in your Supporting Resources.
3. To close it off on a celebratory note, **give each child the Lost & Found thank you card** with their name, story title, and a congratulatory greeting—signed by you! Feel free to create a celebration for your group with special food, sharing of work, or anything else that feel appropriate and fun.

### SUGGESTED SCRIPT:

*"This project has been an amazing journey, and we're so proud of what you've accomplished throughout these four fantastic sessions! We've made so many new memories together while writing about our own, and to close off this amazing chapter, we'd like to congratulate our amazing young authors and artists here today!"*

## Final Grounding and Goodbye | 5 min

1. At the end of the session, make sure **all work is collected** in the Memory Box. If any children have recorded a story, please add a note to the box indicating the story title and their name.
2. Gather for **one last grounding exercise**, and say goodbye!

## Facilitator Debriefing Sessions

After each session, take time to debrief about how things went:

- » What **worked**? What **didn't work**?
- » What could've been **done differently**?
- » Does anyone **need support** or checking in with?
- » Did any **issues** come up that need to be addressed?