Tactile Storying *(Sequential Tactile Narration)*

Description: In a circle or line, participants take turns touching a shared object or person and adding to an ongoing narrative, with touch cues marking the transitions. The haptic transfer of a "talking object" makes the tactile act itself part of the storytelling process (Hutchins 1995; Wegner 1987).

In practice: Sit participants in a circle. Provide a single tactile object with multiple textures and affordances (e.g., varied surfaces, edges, and attachments). The first person touches the object and begins a story or describes an experience. When finished, they pass the object (with touch) to the next person (the handover may include a gentle tap, pat, or specific haptic cue) and the next person continues the story or adds a related anecdote. Each speaker is encouraged to add a short physical gesture at the end of their turn (e.g. rubbing a friend's hand to pass warmth, lightly squeezing the object). Continue around the circle until everyone has contributed, emphasising listening: each person should feel the object and the previous person's gesture as a cue. In some contexts touch is used specifically to manage next-speaker selection; this manuo-tactile turn-taking has been described in interactional studies of tactile signed and spoken interaction (Iwasaki et al. 2022; Blythe et al. 2024).

The session concludes with collective reflection: discuss how the chain of touch shaped the story and how the object's haptic history can be read back through touch. The "touch baton" ensures even silent participants are physically involved and makes turn-taking explicit, building continuity as the communal story literally passes hand-to-hand.

Relevance: Tactile story chaining fosters active listening, inclusion and group cohesion. It trains narrative skills and empathy by making speaking presence physically legible; in arts education it can generate collective material for performance or exhibition. The tactile token can function as a distributed memory or transactive memory device for the group — the object carries cues and sequential history that participants can re-access (Hutchins 1995; Wegner 1987). Storytelling through material artefacts supports pedagogical access to narrative structures and imaginative framing (Egan 1988). For mixed-ability groups it is highly inclusive: blind participants access the same haptic turn cues and can lead or respond equally, and the tactile object becomes a shared mnemonic for later retelling.

Blythe, Hamdani & Barnes 2024 https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404523000441
Egan 1988 https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/T/bo3623439.html
Hutchins 1995 https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262581462/cognition-in-the-wild/
Iwasaki, Bartlett, Willoughby & Manns 2022 https://doi.org/10.1080/08351813.2022.2101293
Wegner 1987 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4612-4634-3_9

Object-As-Score Sculptural Tracing *(Material-Led Choreographic Notation)*

Description: Participants explore a single sculpture or object by hand and let its shape and texture "score" a movement or narrative response. The object's form inspires gestures or stories that emerge from tactile exploration.

In practice: A distinct tactile object (such as a carved wooden sculpture, a 3D-printed form, or a patterned fabric board) is placed in front of the group and passed around. Each participant traces its edges, contours, and textures, and responds by shaping a spontaneous gesture or movement. For example, following a curved relief might lead to a swirling arm motion. One at a time, or in pairs, participants perform these movements, and afterward describe either verbally or gesturally what aspect of the object prompted their response. Objects and partners may be swapped to expand the repertoire, and blindfolds can be used to heighten tactile focus.

The session concludes with collective reflection: participants may guess which object inspired a movement, or combine all gestures into a group choreography. This strategy strengthens tactile imagination, translates sensation into embodied expression, and emphasizes material presence as a dramaturgical source. It connects to enactivist accounts of situated sense-making (Di Paolo & De Jaegher 2007), material-led choreography in dance studies, and multisensory museum pedagogy (Candlin 2006).

Relevance: Object-led tracing bridges tactile perception and expression, promoting creativity and empathy. In educational or museum contexts, this approach encourages deeper engagement: children invent dance moves from dinosaur fossils or textile patterns, linking science or history with art. It also models cross-modal thinking (touch→motion, texture→story). In participatory art, it transforms sculpture into a dynamic collaborator. Importantly, it can be fully inclusive: blind participants can create equivalent gestures, making it useful for mixed-ability groups.

Candlin 2006 https://doi.org/10.1177/1470412906066906
De Jaegher & Di Paolo 2007 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-007-9076-9

Collaborative Tactile Weaving *(Material Mnemonics and Storymaking)*

Description: A group collectively weaves, knots, or interlaces materials (yarn, strips of cloth, branches) to encode shared stories or memories into the textile pattern. Each strand functions as a narrative token; the emerging fabric records sequential contributions and becomes a tactile archive of communal authorship (Malafouris 2013).

In practice: Prepare long strips of fibre or yarn and a simple communal loom or frame; brief participants on a story, poem, or collective theme and assign each person a position at the loom or line. One by one, participants weave or tie a strand into the textile while verbally narrating a brief piece of the story or recalling a memory—for example, each person might weave a different-coloured strand while speaking one line of a poem. As the fabric grows, everyone touches and attends to the emerging pattern; facilitators encourage texture–meaning mapping (if someone says "I felt calm by the lake," they might select a smooth blue strand). The activity can be conducted with speech or as a tactile-only protocol in which agreed haptic cues (e.g. a pulled knot = "happy memory") encode meaning. Objects and partners may be swapped to expand the repertoire, and motor-access adaptations (larger loops, pre-cut strands) can be provided to enable full participation (Case-Smith 2014).

The session concludes with collective reflection: the group discusses how the interlaced materials embody the shared narrative and how the physical pattern represents individual contributions; the finished textile serves as

a mnemonic device and may be used subsequently as a score for movement, storytelling, or exhibition. This strategy embeds narrative in material form, supports sequential coordination and pattern recognition, and foregrounds craft as a site of co-authorship; it draws on craft and material-culture practices in which textiles carry communal memory and relational knowledge. The method also resonates with literature on making as social connection (Gauntlett 2011) and ritualized, emergent discourse (Turner 1969).

Relevance: Collaborative Tactile Weaving links material practice with collective narration and embodied memory. In educational or community contexts it creates multimodal connections between curricular content (local history, ecology, or science) and sensory learning: children might encode a river's ecosystem as colours and textures, or map a timeline of events into woven sequence. The method fosters empathy by making others' contributions physically legible and supports mixed-ability participation because the woven object is itself an accessible archive that blind participants can feel and use to retrieve and retell embedded stories.

Case-Smith et al. 2013 https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2013.005959
Gauntlett 2011 https://www.politybooks.com/bookdetail/?isbn=9780745650023
Malafouris 2019 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-018-9606-7
Turner 1969 https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315134666