Teaching with Humanities
Objectives

1) Understand the role that medical humanities play in deepening learning.
2) Explore the possible combinations of medical humanities offerings and core medical topics.
3) Plan your approach for using “pairings” of medical humanities with core learning topics.
What “forms” do you think of when you think of Medical Humanities

- Audio - Podcast, Ted talk, Music/singing
- Visual - paintings, drawings, film, movie clips, photos
- Reading – essays, short stories, novels, poetry, haiku, 55-word story, graphic novels
- Writing - essays, short stories, novels, poetry, haiku, 55-word story, 6-word story, journaling
- Story-telling – having a student/family talk about their experience with a disease, Med Moth
- Performance/Performative - music, dance, theater, installation, patient as guest speaker
- Social Sciences – history, philosophy, culinary arts
- Other – mask making, embodiment, kinesthetics
When, Where, How, Why?

• Pre-session – set stage
• Beginning – prompt early discussion
• During – make a point
• Final statement – punctuation mark
• Post session – go home and think more about it
Why your doctor should care about social justice

1,314,926 views  |  Mary Bassett  •  TEDMED 2015

In Zimbabwe in the 1980s, Mary Bassett witnessed the AIDS epidemic firsthand, and she helped set up a clinic to treat and educate local people about the deadly virus. But looking back, she regrets not sounding the alarm for the real problem: the structural inequities embedded in the world’s political and economic organizations, inequities that make marginalized people more vulnerable. These same structural problems exist in the United States today, and as New York City’s Health Co...
Using a photo to start conversation

TOPIC: Hospice Care – Broaching the topic of Hospice with a family

• Take a look at this photo
• What do you see?
• What do you think is going on?
• What is your experience?
  • Professionally
  • Personally
• How did you feel?
• Turning this into a plan
there are whole blackouts
in some of the years i have lived
my therapist says our minds erase trauma
to help us move on
but every experience i’ve had
is memorized in my flesh
even if my mind forgets
my body remembers
my body is the map of my life
my body wears what it’s been through
my body signals the alarms when
it thinks danger is coming
and suddenly
the hungry little demons from my past
come raging out of my flesh
screaming
*don’t you forget us*
*don’t you ever try to*
*leave us behind again*

- rupi kaur
• Having Learners Explore the Art in our City

What does it say about Worcester?
Challenge Learners to take Photos – of the city – of anything – “Noticing”

Lisa Gussak, MD
We are getting old
She said, holding tight. Be our
Doctor ‘til we die

Haiku from Laos Clinic
Krista Farey - UMass Dec 2015

Listening to people. Learning new perspectives
Larissa Andrade – STFM PRiMER. 2022;6:8

Table 1
How to Write a 55-word Story

1. Think of a compelling story based on your experience (as clinician, patient, other?).
2. Write down everything you can think of.
3. Don’t edit, just write (phrases, words, key chunks of memory).
4. Put it away (optional and can be done at any time between #2 and finishing).
5. Read over your writing and begin to clarify the idea or storyline that you want to convey.
7. Share your work with others for reactions and feedback.
8. Keep editing until you get to 55 words. Use your word counter, and also double check manually.
   a. Title doesn’t contribute to word count but shouldn’t be more than seven words.
   b. Contractions count as single words.
   c. Eliminating articles (the, a, an) can help with word count.
9. If you cannot cut enough words, you probably have material that either would lend itself to a longer essay or become multiple 55-word stories.
10. Given the brevity, formatting can make a big difference. Experiment with line length, indentations, hanging indents, and other use of white space.
Use a prompt

• Write about a recent clinical encounter (this week)
Examples of Humanities Scholarly Work

Presentations

• Hatem D, Hansen M, Wada-Gill B, Silk H. The Humanities Lab - Promoting projects in the Humanities in a Learning Community and Medical School. Learning Communities Institute Annual Meeting (Virtual) Oct 2021


Publications


• Silk H. The Care of Strangers. Family Medicine. 2022;54(3):234-5. (Book Review)
Where to Read/Experience Medical Humanities or Publish


*Ars Medica: A Journal of Medicine, the Arts, and Humanities* – Canadian. Content includes narratives from patients and health care workers, medical history, fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and visual art. [www.ars-medica.ca/](http://www.ars-medica.ca/)

*Bellevue Literary Review* -- fiction, nonfiction, and poetry that touch upon relationships to the human body, illness, health and healing [www.blreview.org/](http://www.blreview.org/)

*Blood and Thunder*, University of Oregon Health Sciences Center: Prose, Visual Arts, and Poetry -- [http://www.ouhsc.edu/bloodandthunder/](http://www.ouhsc.edu/bloodandthunder/)

*British Medical Journal*: “Personal Views” -- [www.bmj.com](http://www.bmj.com)

*CMAJ – Canadian Medical Association Journal*: Humanities – Encounters, Poetry -- [http://www.emaj.ca/site/home/humanities.xhtml](http://www.emaj.ca/site/home/humanities.xhtml)

*Consultant*: “Doctors" Stories: Tales from the Trenches” [www consulted360.com](http://www.consultant360.com)

*Dermarnings*: with a broadly defined dermatology slant -- [www.dermarnings.com](http://www.dermarnings.com)

*Evening Paper* – The Journal of the Center for Narrative Practice. Submit fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, and studio art (photography, painting, drawing, or any other visual media) that explores human experience -- [www.eveningpaper.com](http://www.eveningpaper.com)
Write; Review!

- **Send us your writing** to be considered for publication at Families, System and Health in the Sharing Our Stories section

- **Sign up to be a Reviewer** for Sharing Our Stories – email me
  
  - Hugh.silk@umassmemorial.org