

My life story

 30 minutes+  8+

 Inclusive mobility

The focus of this exercise is the development of both character and narrative in devising work for performance. Students will need to have done some preparatory work on use of tableau/still image.

- As an introduction, discuss with the students a photograph that means a lot to them (either one they have bought in or one they can recall from memory). They should think about why the photo is meaningful e.g. a family holiday, a beloved pet, a birthday etc.
- In groups of four or five, students think of a character — this could be real or imagined but should be someone who has lived an interesting life.
- Students should decide on six key moments of the character's life in chronological order e.g. getting told off in school, their first day in a new job, winning an award etc.
- These moments will be brought to life as photographs in the character's photo album using tableau/still image.
- One student is nominated to play the character who will narrate their life story to the audience focusing on those six key moments or memories of their life.
- The rest of the group will become the photographs of the memories, using the drama form of still image. So, as the character narrates, the rest of the group act out the still images or photos of that key moment or memory. Thus, performing a living photo album for the audience.
- In showing back the work, the audience focuses on the character's life and the way the photographs created the narrative.
- This exercise can be easily adapted to work with the development of characters in off —text work, in the rehearsal room.