

The Digital Storytelling Handbook

**Jordan Schugar, Chris Penny,
Hannah Glatt, Autumn Hudson,
Tu Le, Sarah Mangano,
Victoria McQuiston**



A Member of The Pennsylvania Alliance for Design of Open Textbooks



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License \(CC BY-NC 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) as a part of PA-ADOPT, except where otherwise noted. All images, videos, and other media is authored by one of the authors or contributors and is licensed under the books licensing, unless otherwise noted.

The contents of this eTextbook were developed under a grant from the [Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, \(FIPSE\)](https://www.fipse.org/), U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

The [Verdana](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/fonts/verdana/) (© 2006 Microsoft Corporation) and [Courier New](https://www.monotype.com/courier-new) (© 2006 The Monotype Corporation) fonts have been used throughout this book, which is permitted by their licenses:

License: You may use this font as permitted by the EULA for the product in which this font is included to display and print content. You may only (i) embed this font in content as permitted by the embedding restrictions included in this font; and (ii) temporarily download this font to a printer or other output device to help print content.

Embedding: Editable embedding. This font may be embedded in documents and temporarily loaded on the remote system. Documents containing this font may be editable (Apple Inc. (2021). *Font Book* (Version 10.0 (404)) [App].).

About PA-ADOPT

The Pennsylvania Alliance for Design of Open Textbooks (PA-ADOPT) is made up of four participating institutions from Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) that are all regional and primarily undergraduate institutions, situated in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The PA-ADOPT project addresses gaps in the open eTextbook marketplace, improve student learning, and mitigate rising student costs. PA-ADOPT was made possible by the US Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Program.

About OER

Open Educational Resources (OER) are instructional, learning and research materials, digital or non, that open-source and in the public domain or that are licensed so that users have free and perpetual permission to engage in the following activities:

- Retain: the right to make, own, and control copies of the content
- Reuse: the right to use the content in a wide range of ways
- Revise: the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself
- Remix: the right to combine the original or revised content with other open content to create something new
- Redistribute: the right to share copies of the original content, revisions, and remixes with others.

About the Authors

Jordan Schugar



Jordan Schugar

At West Chester University, Professor Jordan Schugar teaches courses in the College of Arts and Humanities, namely in the English and Digital Humanities programs. His research interests include digital storytelling, digital literacy, eTexts, first-year writing, and equitable course designs. Dr. Schugar has participated in a variety of campus-wide high-impact, equity-focused initiatives including the Moon Shot for Equity, the Pennsylvania Alliance for Design of Open Textbooks (PA-ADOPT), and the Gishwati Primate Project.

Chris Penny



Chris Penny

Dr. Chris Penny is an Educational Technology Professor in the College of Education and Social Work at the West Chester University of Pennsylvania. In 2011 he won the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award for his excellence in the classroom. In 2007 he became an Apple Distinguished Educator, and Google Certified Teacher in 2009. His efforts in teaching and research have the focus of technology integration in K-20 education. He has published a book titled *Technology Leadership in Teacher Education: Integrated Solutions and Experiences*. Has published articles on reading on electronic devices, eMentoring, 24/7 laptop access for teacher candidates, and digital portfolios.

Hannah Glatt

Hannah Glatt is the Learning Experience and eTextbook Designer in the Teaching and Learning Center at West Chester University and the Instructional Designer for PA-ADOPT. She focuses on open education, technology integration, and instructional material development, supporting faculty in creating digital course materials and eTextbooks. With a background in Instructional Technology and Historic Preservation, her goal is to bring educational concepts into the public sphere, whether physically, virtually, or digitally.

Student Authors

Autumn Hudson, Tu Le, Sarah Mangano, Victoria McQuiston

In Spring 2024, graduate students Autumn, Tu, Sarah, and Victoria were enrolled in Dr. Penny's EDT 530: Digital Media Production and Storytelling class. The course explores strategies for using digital media and storytelling in educational contexts with this eTextbook collaboration embodying the course's emphasis on real-world practice and application.

Table of Contents

About PA-ADOPT	iii
About OER	iv
About the Authors	v
Jordan Schugar	v
Chris Penny	vi
Hannah Glatt	vii
Student Authors	vii
Autumn Hudson, Tu Le, Sarah Mangano, Victoria McQuiston	vii
Table of Contents	viii
Before the Beginning	1
Setting The Stage	3
Using What You Have	6
Process of Digital Storytelling	7
Tools: What is already out there?	10
Pause and Consider: Think about what is yet to come?	12
Why use Digital Storytelling?	13
Building Cultural Competence with Storytelling	14
Diversity in Storytelling	16
Equity in Storytelling	17
Inclusion in Storytelling	20
Strategies for Digital Stories	21
Video Interviews	22
Why is video interviewing an important part of Digital Storytelling?	22

Introduction	22
How to Capture Your Audience With Your Subject	23
The Importance of Setting	23
Listening Shots	25
Interview Etiquette	26
What To Know	26
Example Video	28
Putting it Altogether	29
Example Interview Video	29
Main Takeaways with Interviews	30
Storytelling Using Emotion	31
Introduction	31
How to Use Emotion Without Words	32
Why Emotion is Important to The Audience in Storytelling	33
The Door Scene Example Video	35
Taking a Deeper Look	36
Smith and Lazarus - Cognitive Theory of Emotion	37
Emotion Is Your Biggest Tool	38
Storytelling Through Visual Aids (Photography and Videography)	39
What is the Role of Visual Aids?	39
Introduction	39
Photography	40
Angles	42
Editing	44
Videography	47
Angles	47
Editing	48

Body	49
Short Films	51
Introduction	51
Why Short Films?	53
Six Word, Six Shots Video Story	54
Introduction	54
Unique Camera Angles	55
Basic Camera Shots	56
Other Production Requirements	58
Conclusion	59
Documentary	60
Introduction	60
Planning	61
Filming	63
Editing	65
Conclusion	66
Color's Impact on Digital Storytelling	67
Why is color an important part of Digital Storytelling?	67
Color and Emotion	68
Color and Mood	69
Color and Branding	70
Conclusion	71
Appendix	73
“What do You Want Students to do with Technology?”	73
“Not about us without us: building equity through storytelling” Transcript	75

Before the Beginning

How do you take an idea, an event, a moment — and make someone else care about it? The answer is story. How do share that story widely, repeatedly, easily? Digitally. Nancy Duarte is a well-known expert in presentation design and storytelling. She is the the author of several books, including "Slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations", "Resonate: Present Visual Stories that Transform Audiences", and "Illuminate: Ignite Change Through Speeches, Stories, Ceremonies, and Symbols". Her work emphasizes the power of visual storytelling, and she is recognized for her contributions to the field of presentation design and communication. Duarte talks about digital storytelling being like a box of chocolates; the experience is both the sweet, chocolatey inside contents but also the presentation of the box itself. In sum, the whole is greater than the parts whether that's a box of chocolate, a chainlink, a class of students, or even the words in a book. Stories also exemplify the strength of diversity, because to experience them builds cultural capacity through empathy and compassion. We learn from others when we learn about ourselves.

WHAT DO YOU WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH TECHNOLOGY? v.3

WRONG ANSWERS

- ADD TO FLIPGRIDS
- START BLOGS
- POST TO SEESAW
- LEARN TO CODE
- PRODUCE GREEN SCREEN VIDEOS
- CREATE GOOGLE DOCS, SLIDES AND DRAWINGS
- BUILD DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS
- MASTER PHOTOSHOP

RIGHT ANSWERS

- RAISE AWARENESS
- JOIN CONVERSATIONS
- FIND ANSWERS - TO THEIR QUESTIONS.
- DISCOVER NEW QUESTIONS WORTH ANSWERING
- IMAGINE NEW POSSIBILITIES
- DRIVE CHANGE
- TAKE ACTION
- MAKE A DIFFERENCE

TECHNOLOGY IS A TOOL, NOT A LEARNING OUTCOME.

#TRUDATCHAT

BY: @PLUGUSIN, @RERDMANN, @PCAGGIA
@RUSSGORENED AND @MCTOWNSLEY

"What do You Want Students to do with Technology" revised by Bill Ferriter (@plugusin) is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 2.0 (CC BY-NC 2.0). (Technology Image Accessible Version)

Setting The Stage

Welcome to the world of digital storytelling—where individuals create their own experiential narratives using digital tools. While there are many definitions, for our purposes we will work from the following definition that “digital stories are short multimodal presentations that combine a variety of communicative elements within a narrative structure. Media may include any combination of the following: text, images, video, audio, social media elements (like tweets), or interactive elements (maps).” Before you explore digital storytelling it is important to understand that the essence of all stories is the story itself; an ancient tried-and-true tested way of teaching and learning.

At its core, storytelling, and the very study of the humanities themselves is a narrative structure focused on experience. And experience is about emotion. Since as long as people have been literate they have been telling stories that carry the wisdom of different cultures, the reflections of the collective experience, and also the echoes of individual lives. From the stories swapped around ancient campfires to the intricate hunting stories

painted onto rocks to to the silver screens and Meta headsets, humans have been bound together by the power of story and the individual who can weave that tale into something memorable, educative, and experiential.

Storytelling is more than the mere arrangement of words into a clear beginning, middle, and end; instead, it is the arrangement and juxtaposition of those words to each other through complex syntactic structures that transforms the experience of others into something memorable for another. They are like artifacts of experience, boundless and limitless and unique to individuals but also similar and transcendent. Stories connect all of us.

As we navigate the realms of pixels and data, storytelling finds new avenues of expression, evolving into what we now know as digital storytelling. Narrative is woven not only with words but also with images that paint vivid landscapes, sounds that evoke emotions, and interactive elements that invite engagement.

In this book we will explore the tools and techniques of digital storytelling, and the impact that this modern form of narrative expression has on our interconnected world. As we explore storytelling, may you discover the boundless possibilities that await within the digital narrative landscape.

Using What You Have

Digital storytelling is more than just learning a set of rote tools — operating a DSLR camera; learning Photoshop, or iMovie or Adobe Premiere; or even utilizing the rule of thirds in your digital compositions — it's about engaging individuals in conversations, creating dialogue, raising awareness, and taking action. It's a process. A way of thinking about humanity from different perspectives. It is stories of life and death — sometimes in the same frame. But inevitably it's about what you have with you; what tools you're already proficient in and leveraging those strengths for the sake of creativity.

These tools are ways for storytellers to ask and answer their own questions with what is accessible to them at the time.



Process of Digital Storytelling

The process for digital storytelling is recursive in nature and follows other methodologies rhetoric, composition, and creativity, such as Kellogg's Cognitive Components of the Writing Process (1999). Similarly this process includes moving from an idea through and beyond peer review.



1. **KYHOI ("Knock Your Head Off Idea") or Proposal:** What is the essence of your idea? Where is the tension? Where is the humanity? What's the purpose or significance you as the storyteller are trying to convey? You have an idea that is unique to you and your experience.
2. **Read, Research, Experience:** The benefit to digital storytelling is that the majority of it is done outside of the confines of a classroom. To be a good storyteller also means to be a good critical thinker. Understand the people involved, the context, the story. Know that your story is singular to your experience as a individual. Engage with others, explore your community, learn about others experience.
3. **Plan, Storyboard, Write, Script:** Writing a good story is hard work; it's a recursive process that is not exact but instead is messy and chaotic. Having a good plan will help you when the going gets rough. Understand how the different parts might intersect within your story and how people, spaces, and places are represented. Know where you want your story to begin and end. It's ok to change the structure too; at least you have a starting place.

4. **Collect Media, Curate Content:** Have a plan to store your content in an easily accessible place whether that's a folder on your laptop, an app on your phone, or an external hard drive. Include all sorts of media like photos and videos, art, hyperlinks, scripts, etc.
5. **Create and Edit:** There are tons of great tools and programs. Find a software and a platform you're comfortable with. Use your smartphone at first because it's always with you and you won't need some of the advanced features from a desktop or laptop computer. It's important to find a convenient and accessible way to edit your content.
6. **Share, Feedback, Reflect:** Stories are meant for others to consume. Get feedback at various phases of your project — not just at the end. An effective, influential, story will always be developed through the feedback of others.

Tools: What Is Already Out There?

If you're reading this, you have all you need to be successful as a digital storyteller as one of the key components is have tools that are accessible to you — most likely, at its simplest form, is a smartphone or smart, multi-touch device like tablet PC/iPad. Consider beginning simply with just a one-photo story, then add a caption, another photo, some title slides and some audio. The idea with mobile technologies is that stories can be created, edited and shared in just a few short minutes.



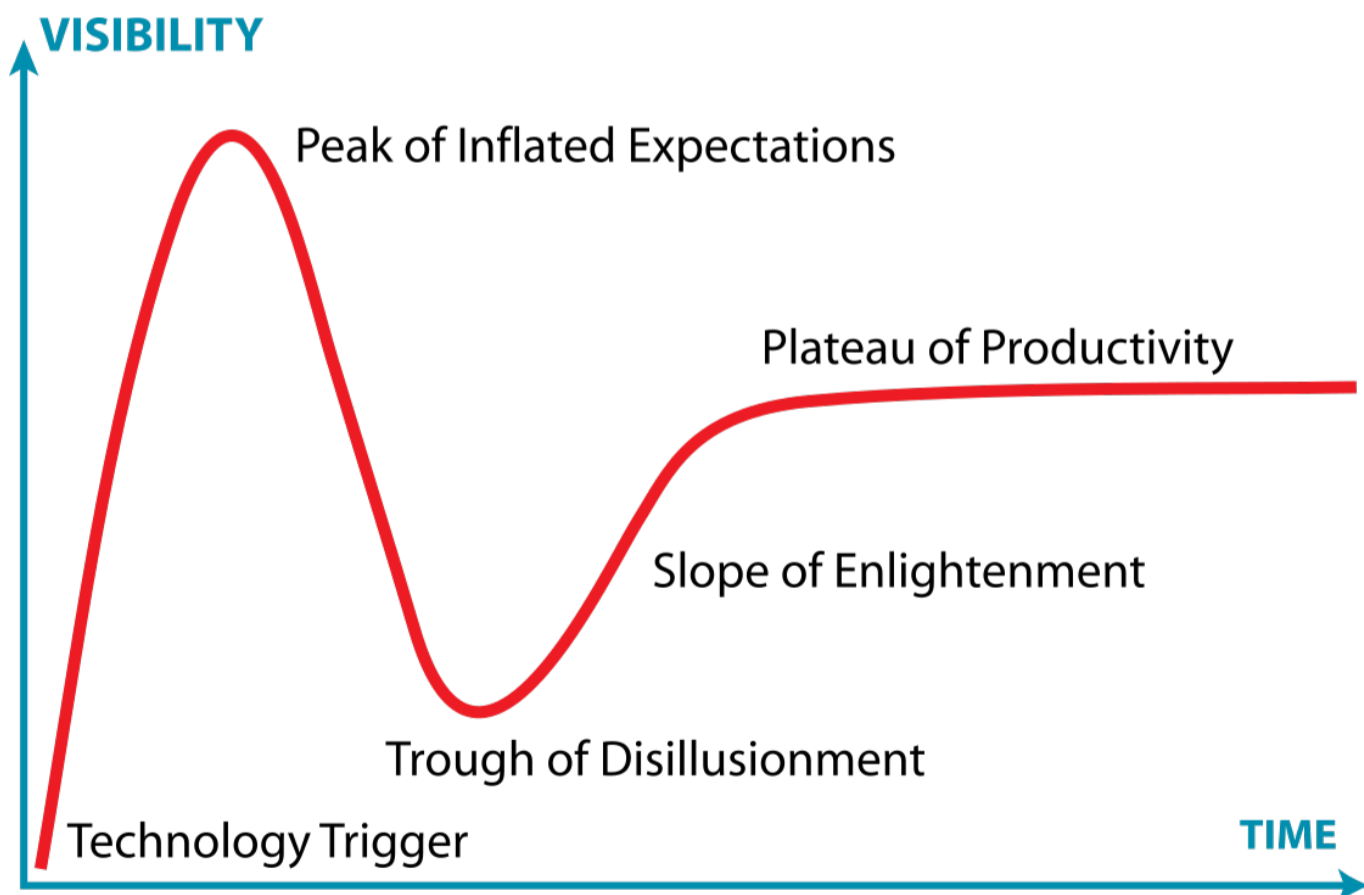
The idea is that it's relatively easy to move from a still photograph to a series of photos to a short film to something else entirely. But consider that there is no one monolithic approach and no singular voice.



Photo by Pietro Jeng from Pexels.

Pause and Consider: Think About What Is Yet To Come?

Throughout time immemorial, new tools and technologies facilitate different ways of experiences stories. Think about the proliferation of books after Gutenberg; color televisions, 360-degree cameras, virtual reality headsets, and even the Sphere in Las Vegas, an immersive wrap-around venue. The Gartner Hype Cycle (see below) is one way to think about how new technologies are adopted, and inevitably incorporated into our storytelling lexicon.



Gartner Research's Hype Cycle Diagram by Jeremykemp at English Wikipedia is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 (CC BY-SA 3.0) (Interpreting the Cycle Article-Accessible).

Why Use Digital Storytelling?

These stories inherently celebrate diversity of the individuals telling the story; their perspective, culture, and lens from which they view the world. Your worldview and your view of others world view is what makes us all unique.



Building Cultural Competence With Storytelling

Baked into the very essence of digital storytelling is the idea that others will experience your story and the subsequently be able to see or identify with your depiction of humanity. In some ways, the community of storytellers can build empathy for each other through this casual form of “peer review”; the opportunity for others to see your work and in turn respond or react in some way or manner. In fact, throughout the many facets of



the digital storytelling process help us to see and celebrate the diversity of people and culture. Yet the stories with the greatest resonance; those that might have the greatest impact and reach (if that's the goal with your story) is those stories that address or highlight issues of equity, access, and inclusivity as they relate to us as individual humans.

Diversity in Storytelling

Specifically, Addy et al (2021) state that “Diversity is to recognize how learners differ with regard to their social identities, demographics, perspectives, prior experiences, attitudes, knowledge, skills, and other attributes.” Digital stories move us away from telling towards the showing;



what better way showcase these differences than a digital story? Each perspective is unique; but collectively digital story projects highlight the strengths and benefits of diversity; they show us what matters to other people and how they might view the world and ways we might be able to learn from each other. Digital stories help us to see different perspectives that might catalyze our everyday creative thinking and subsequently decentralize empathy to create more equitable spaces.

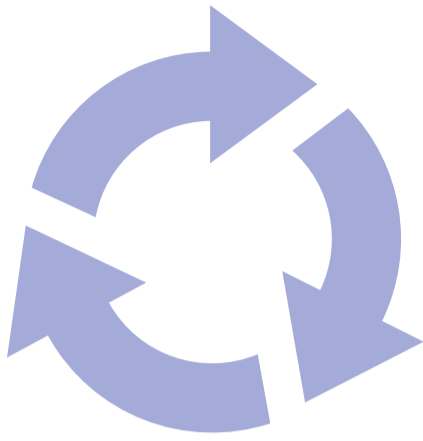
Equity in Storytelling

**Not about us without us: building equity through storytelling
with Nausheena Hussain**



[Watch Nausheena Hussain storytelling on YouTube \(Read Video Transcript\)](#)

Equity, then is defined as customizing tools and resources to meet the unique needs of that particular storyteller. It differs from the idea of equality, which is that tools and resources are evenly distributed to everyone regardless. Students with documented learning disabilities who request and are given extra time on quizzes and exams exemplifies this notion of equity. "Equity acknowledges the differences between learners, their diversity, and the types of learning environments that help diverse students



succeed” while “equality in teaching and learning suggests that all students should have identical learning experiences regardless of their differences” (Addy et al, 2021). Equality then is making all students do the same assignment the same way without accounting for those important and meaningful differences. What would you rather? Assignments rooted in equity or equality?

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The danger of a single story | TED



[Watch Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie on YouTube \(Closed Captioned\)](#)

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has a great perspective on this. She advocates for diverse narratives that challenge single stories, which can perpetuate stereotypes and limit understanding. Adichie believes that by sharing multiple, nuanced stories from various perspectives, especially those traditionally marginalized, we can foster empathy, broaden worldviews, and promote social justice. Her approach underscores the importance of inclusivity in storytelling as a means to achieve equity and representation in society.

Inclusion in Storytelling

Addy et al (2021) define inclusion as “creating a welcoming environment and intentionally not excluding any learners.” But in reality, that might be easier said (or written) than put into practice. Inevitably, inclusion and inclusive practices create spaces where people not only belong but feel like they should matter too. Digital storytellers naturally highlight parts of life that are important to their worldview. Sharing what matters helps their audience to see the significance and intersection of ideas and perspectives.



Strategies For Digital Stories

What follows is a little bit of a choose-your-own-adventure as you move from the what to the how. In keeping with the spirit of this open-access project, the chapters are student written but not necessarily exhaustive of the multiple approaches to digital storytelling. Feel free to mine through them for your own ideas and ways to create your own digital stories.



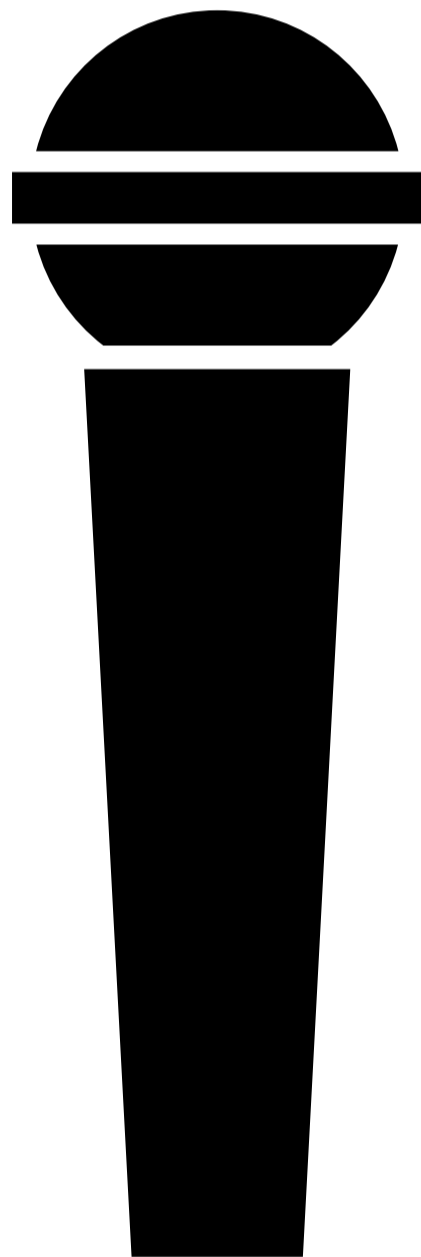
This is an example of rule of thirds. A composition guideline that places your subject in the left or right third of an image, leaving the other two thirds more open.

Video Interviews

By Sarah Mangano

Why Is Video Interviewing an Important Part of Digital Storytelling?

Introduction



Interviewing pulls a subject-matter expert into your digital story in a fascinating, intimate, and dynamic way. Sometimes, instead of learning from a book, it is more beneficial to learn and analyze a subject or topic through a question and answer format. Though inevitably any really good interview will also look like as friendly as two old friends catching up on a park bench.

In this chapter, you will learn the ins and outs of digital storytelling through interviewing: how to set up your shots; and what to look for when scouting for an interview location.

How To Capture Your Audience With Your Subject

The Importance of Setting

Angles, Lighting, and Listening Shots

Locating an appropriate SETTING to frame the background of your subject-matter expert is the first step to a great interview shoot. Find a location that corresponds with the interview topic to keep it engaging. For example, when interviewing a teacher in their classroom, make the background of their library or student desks or an area showcasing the students' work, if applicable. Once you set up your background, mark your shot by maintaining a good distance. This would generally be about 3 to 4 feet in distance from the camera to interviewee.

When planning the different ANGLES for your interview, ensure you get a view from the interviewee side, interviewer side and a wide shot of the interview itself. This range allows for a better variety of angles when editing and enables all sides of the interview to be caught for storytelling purposes.

Next is to make sure you have good LIGHTING.

Inconsistencies with the lighting can dramatically affect how an interview looks. If the picture is too dark or bright, for instance, the viewer won't be able to see the interviewee's face, potentially limiting the impact of pathos (or emotion) on the story. When planning how to light the interview, avoid putting your subject in front of a large window which will drown out their face or darken the background so as to increase impact.

Another factor to keep in mind is to avoid crowded and overly noisy areas where volume and audio is hard to capture clearly. In an effort record the highest quality audio possible, bring correct equipment if needed, which might include a small portable microphone, a pair of headphones or other appropriate recording equipment.

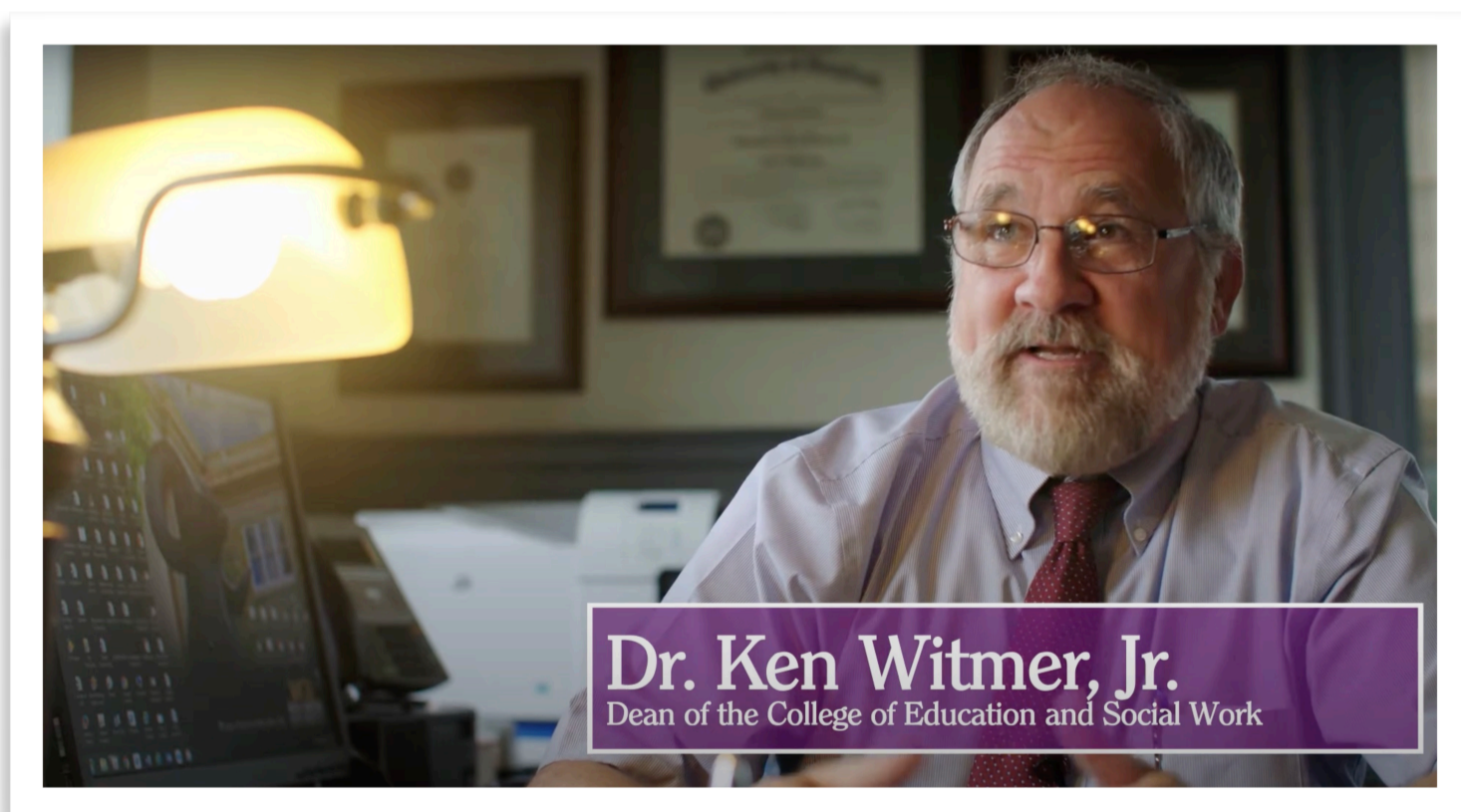
Listening Shots

Listening shots are filming a few seconds of either the interviewer or the subject listening, nodding and interacting with the questions being asked or answered like a B-roll. Make sure to get listening shots, so when editing you can cut back to the interviewer if there's a run on sentence and you need to edit. By incorporating these types of shots into your story, you can avoid showing a break in the conversation as these sorts of clips are also good to use to show that the interviewer is listening intently and engaged in the conversation. Listening shots help with fluidity throughout the interview.

Interview Etiquette

What To Know

Before interviewing your subject, write out your questions and give them to your subject ahead of time. Allowing them to plan their responses also leaves more time for potential conversations stemming from those initial questions. Adding a lower third at the beginning of an interview is something to consider. Have your interviewee spell their first and last name, too, and include that information in the lower third of the frame when first introducing your subject into the video. You can also add a title, position or other relevant information where appropriate here too. It might look like this:



Additionally, have a sense of the the type or style of the interview you want to conduct; if it is formal, make it look and feel professional — don't leave too much room for side or off-hand conversation and keep it on track. If it is more of a casual interview, choose a conversational style (instead of rote question and answer) and allow for informal questions to arise from your subject's answers; let them talk without cutting them off and prepare some extra prompts that might help guide your interviewees answer. Don't be afraid to ask the hard questions either.

Keep in mind, too, that it is always helpful to shoot more footage than what you might need in your final, finished story. For example, if you need a 5-minute interview, get at least 25-40 minutes of solid conversation so there is ample footage to pull from to include in your final cut.

Lastly, when interviewing your subject, maintain good eye contact with them. Try to not make the camera a part of your interview instead, act like it's not there to avoid looking directly at the camera. This can be considered breaking the Fourth Wall, where the subject acknowledges or speaks to the "audience."

Example Video

In this video, you will see visually how to set up your angles, scope your setting and apply what we have learned in this chapter so far:

How to Film an Interview



[Watch "How to Film an Interview" on YouTube \(Closed Captioned\)](#)

Putting It Altogether

Example Interview Video

In this example, you will see firsthand how an actual interview is conducted by applying the various methods you learned about in this chapter.

Interview with Jack Ventriglia



[Watch "Interview with Jack Ventriglia" on YouTube \(Closed Captioned\)](#)

Main Takeaways With Interviews

Wrapping up this chapter, there are three main points you should consider when shooting your interview. First, pick a setting that matches your interview topic. If the interview pertains to a sporting event, make the setting the arena or the field or a locker room. Secondly, ensure the lighting is good by avoiding any large windows or dark spaces. This will make the lighting consistent and the subject clearly visible throughout the entire interview. Lastly, learn your questions and have an idea of the direction you want the interview to go. Do not be afraid to go off script if you feel there is pertinent information and understanding is there. Interviews can be a great way to get a story and tell it in a way that is visual. Plan ahead with good questions, be creative, have fun getting those stories!

Storytelling Using Emotion

By Sarah Mangano

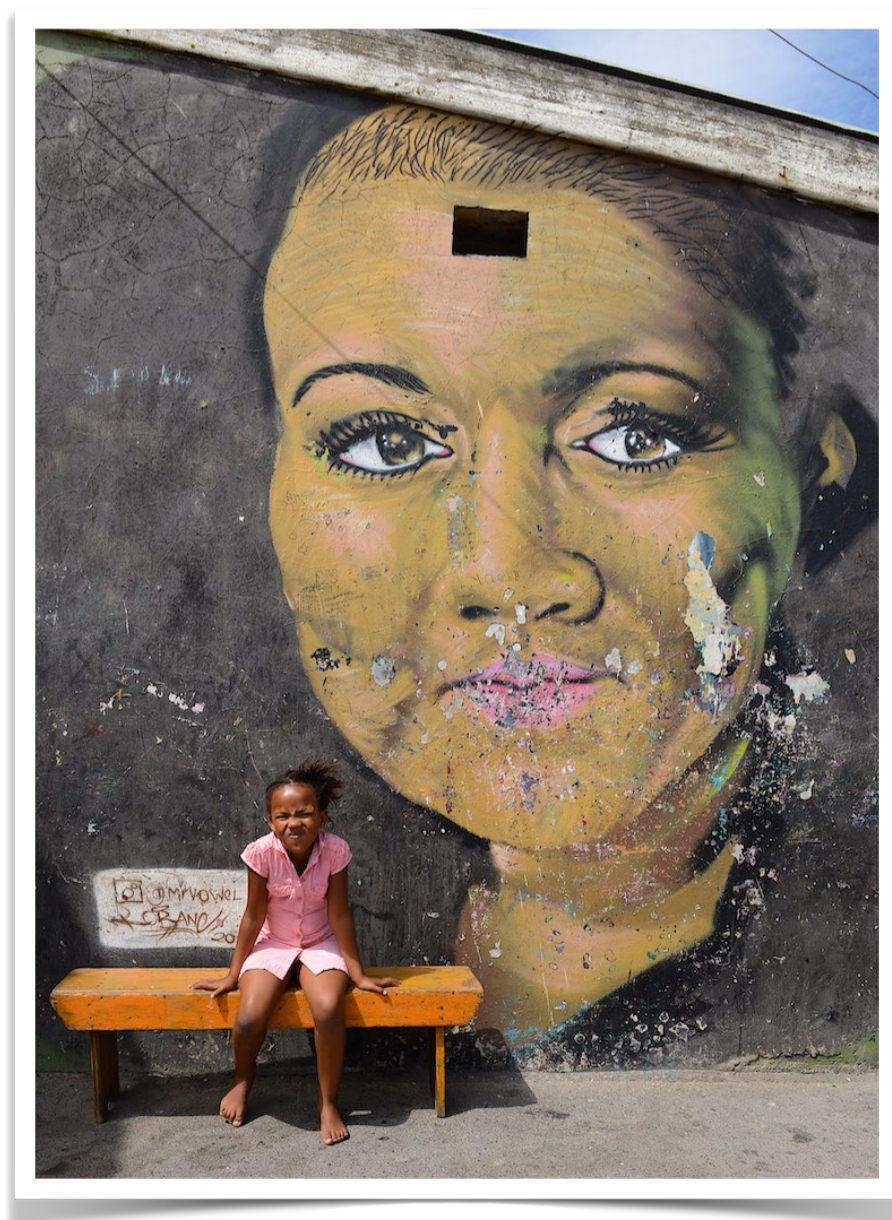
Introduction

Emotion, or pathos, is a very important part of digital storytelling because it allows the audience to experience the story without using words or text. In this chapter, you will learn how to incorporate emotional queues into your digital stories by learning various different methods and approaches that leverage an audiences' emotions, in a good way.



How To Use Emotion Without Words

It is important to understand how utilizing objects, emotion, pathos, and facial expressions can affect the storyline and allow the audience to interpret how they are supposed to feel. Pathos has an imaginative impact in storytelling; it allows the audience to interpret, follow along, imagine and even create their own ending if needed, such as a call to action.



Why Emotion Is Important to the Audience in Storytelling

Emotion is important to storytelling because it enables the storyteller to sway the audience's reactions; to guide them to feel one way or another — sadness, for instance, or humor. Emotion is important to storytelling because it enables the writer, often through their main character, to sway their audience's reactions. This can be for the writer's benefit, or this can mean that the writer is allowing the audience to choose the emotion and interpretation they feel.

A storyteller can employ emotion by choosing a certain environment or adding music, clothing and even color to the story. For example, The Door Scene, an activity introduced in [the American Film Institute Educators Handbook](#), is a great example of how to portray emotion to sway the audience's emotions. If a storyteller wants to portray the emotions of being scared and confused, they can film a scene that is dark and focuses on the main character's face to convey that the character is becoming visibly more and more suspicious of something not being right; the audience cannot see the threat, but with the contextual clues of the main character's growing distress,

the audience can see that something is wrong. In other words, the audience can feel the growing suspense.

Once the character gets safely behind the door, the audience witnesses the relief that the character expresses, and in return the audience also feels the relief of a weight being lifted. This example illustrates clearly an effective nonverbal way to convey emotion in storytelling; there were no words used, just the depiction of the character's environment, i.e., their door and their accompanying emotions.

The Door Scene Example Video

This video shows how portraying emotion without using words helps the writer tell the story. It depicts the pathos of the main character's confusion and fear. It allows the audience to feel the emotions of fear and confusion.

The Door Scene



Watch the "Door Scene" on YouTube Shorts (suspenseful music is played throughout the entire video; no words are spoken)

Taking a Deeper Look

Can you think of a time when you watched a movie, TV show, or digital story that evoked a particularly strong emotional response? Think of some of the greatest films of your generation. If so, what methods helped to prompt those emotions?

While considering your own experience with emotions in storytelling, think about how you can apply this knowledge to your own digital storytelling creations. Think about modeling your approach after someone else's style you really admire and respect. This reflective opportunity might open you up to more ideas and allow you to think outside the box. Consider the emotions you want your audience to feel and start a road map for what objects, sounds, or methods will allow your audience to reach that conclusion.

Smith and Lazarus - Cognitive Theory of Emotion

The Smith and Lazarus Cognitive Theory of Emotion is an influential psychological model that explains emotions as a result of cognitive processes, particularly how individuals appraise or evaluate events and situations. According to this theory, emotions are not automatic responses to stimuli but are shaped by how we interpret and make sense of our experiences. The environment also plays a major role with emotions. Subsequently, these two factors — increased cognition and interpretation and manipulating the environment for the story — determine how an individual experiences your narrative.

Emotion Is Your Biggest Tool

In conclusion, there are many different ways to showcase emotion in storytelling to amplify the message. Emotion can be used as your main source of pathos or it can play a small but crucial part. Think about the setting for the story and the purpose for your story; what is it you want them to know or do after watching, listening, and experiencing your story. Know that emotion is not just something that is shown on a face but can easily be found in the setting, the colors, the mood, the people's behavior and the backgrounds you use.

Storytelling Through Visual Aids (Photography and Videography)

By Tu Le

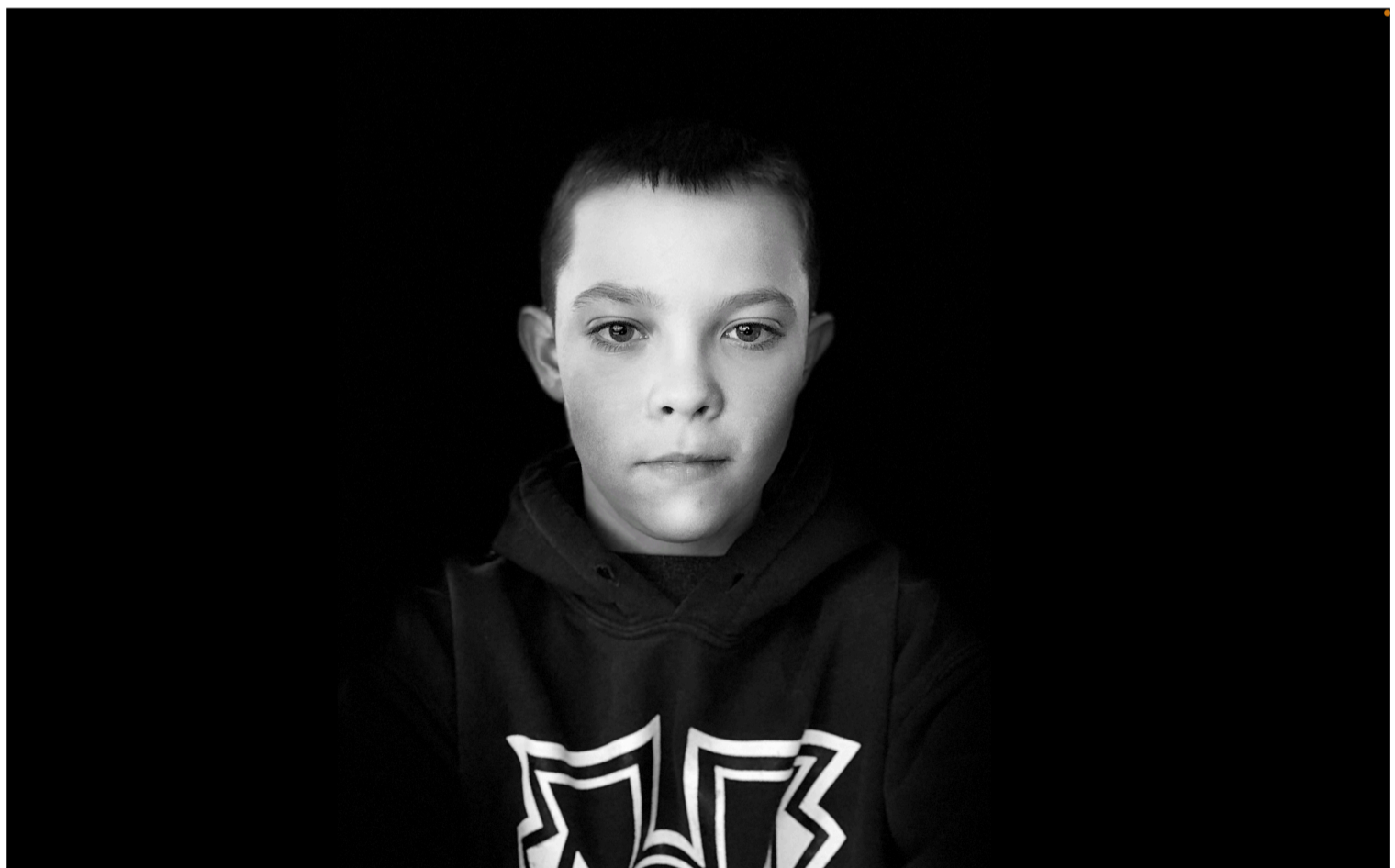
What Is the Role of Visual Aids?

Introduction

With the advent of digital photography, taking pictures with your smartphone or a fancy digital camera has never been easier or more accessible, and the ability to share and view them on various platforms has made photography an essential communication tool in today's world. The use of photography as a visual aid has become ubiquitous in many industries, such as journalism, advertising and education for showcasing the perspective of an individual.

Photography

Photography plays a crucial role in conveying stories, capturing moments, and presenting news to the public in a way that evokes empathy, shock, and joy for the subject matter. In advertising, photographs are used to promote products and services and are an effective tool for creating a lasting impression on the viewer. In education, photographs can be used as visual aids to enhance learning and comprehension in many different modalities. The visual impact of a single photograph can be significant, making it a valuable tool for communication, expression and activism.



This chapter will explore the role of photography as a visual aid and its various uses in different disciplines. We will examine the key elements that make a photograph visually compelling and effective in conveying a particular, deliberate message. We will look at the various techniques and styles used in photography to create visually striking images that leave a lasting impression on the viewer. Finally, we will discuss the challenges and ethical considerations that come with the use of photography as a visual aid in storytelling.



Angles

Angles are a crucial aspect of photography, as they can completely change the way an image is perceived by the viewer. The angle at which a photograph is taken can influence the mood, emotion, and overall impact of the image.



A low angle can make the subject appear larger and more dominant, while a high angle can make the subject appear smaller and more vulnerable. Angles can be used



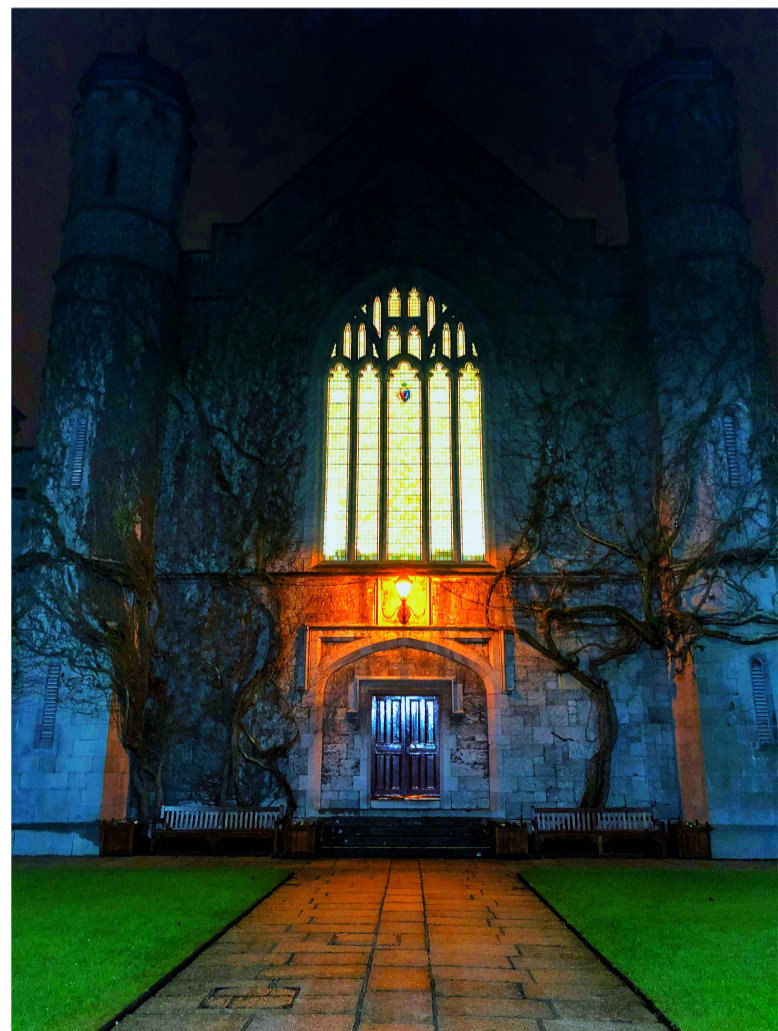
to create a sense of depth, leading the viewer's eye through the image and creating a more dynamic composition. Choosing the right angle can also help to eliminate distractions and focus the viewer's attention on the intended subject. Therefore, a photographer must consider the angle carefully to create a visually compelling and impactful image.

Editing

Photography as a part of the visual medium continues to change the way an image is perceived by the viewer. An effort to enhance that perception is through a post-production, editing process.



Editing transforms images into new works of art. The photographer chooses either simple forms of edits, such as adding filters, or an advanced route, which can enhance, emphasize or create something entirely new in a creative sense. Moreover, editing is important in photography because it allows the photographer a second chance to look at the image they initially created in a new context. Post-production editing also seeks to remediate the imperfections that may not have been caught when the image was first captured. Editing software has allowed photographers to adjust saturation, exposure, contrast and many other settings to appeal to the human



eye. The many kinds of software offered for photography and image enhancement has also allowed for an aesthetic or atmosphere to be created so that the user can create a storyline emotion in an image, or set the mood for their work.

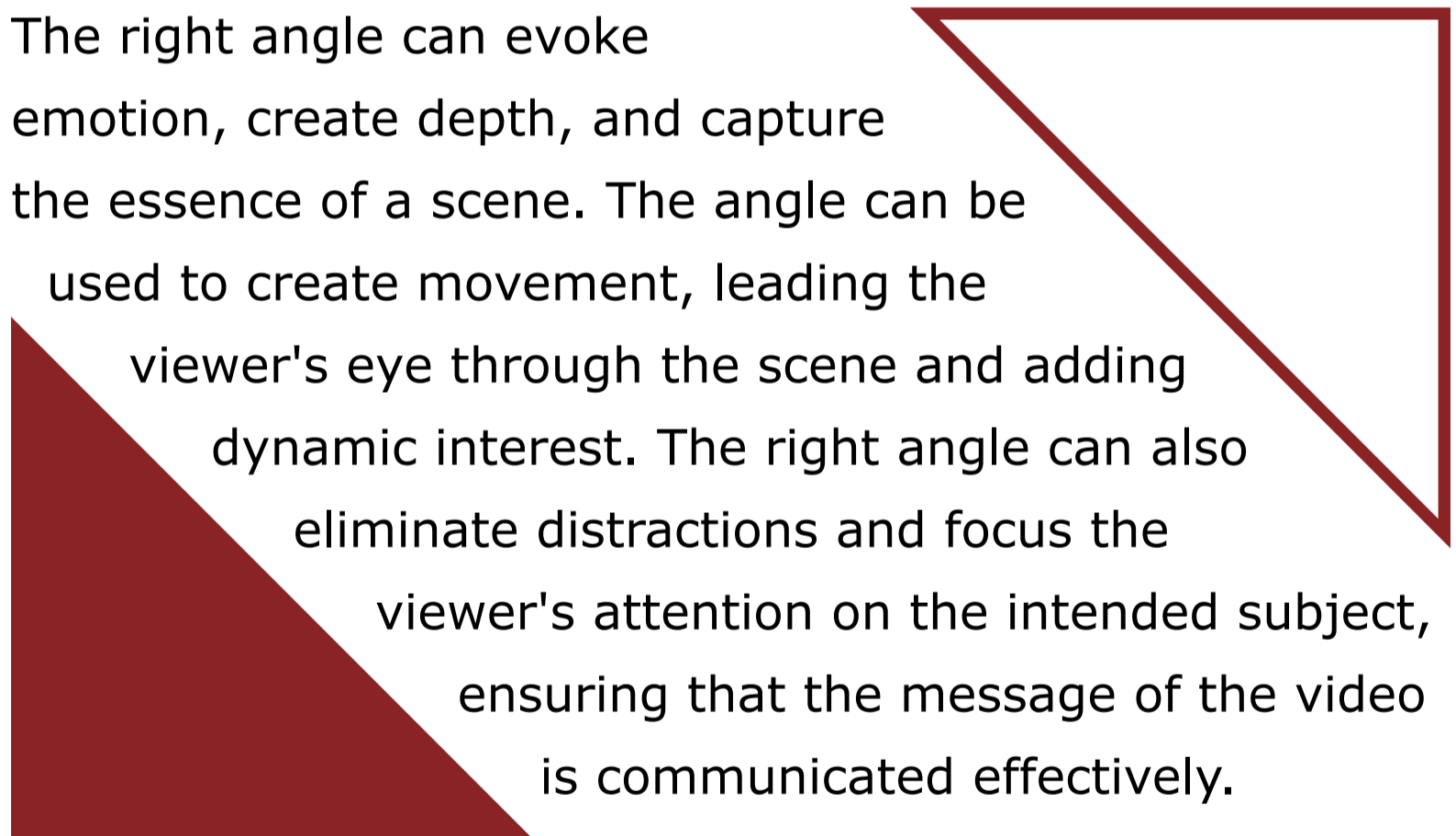
The reaction of the viewer, plays a crucial role in forming the narrative that they want to display in their work, especially when creating a series of images. In photojournalism and documentary work, images will tell the story. Prime examples are works in National Geographic where landscapes or animals tell the story based on the photographs. Your digital story can have a similar impact if planned accordingly.

Videography

Angles

Similarly, angles are just as important in videography as they are in photography. The angle at which a video is shot can convey a variety of emotions and can influence how the viewer perceives the subject. Different angles can be used to create depth and establish a sense of space and tension within the scene.

The right angle can evoke emotion, create depth, and capture the essence of a scene. The angle can be used to create movement, leading the viewer's eye through the scene and adding dynamic interest. The right angle can also eliminate distractions and focus the viewer's attention on the intended subject, ensuring that the message of the video is communicated effectively.



Therefore, a videographer must be intentional in their choice of angles, as it can significantly impact the final product and help to convey the intended message.

Editing

Just like photography, videography also holds high importance in creating visually stunning content through editing. Capturing content is one thing, but shaping it into a visual tapestry that also includes a narrative structure is another step in the process.

In the editing process for video, it is important to focus on the narrative and the conciseness of the story to make sure it has a linear and logical order (logos) and is understandable for all audiences. Taking into consideration adjustment to color, sound, pace and overall tone of the video can not only enhance the viewers' experience but can also turn raw, uncut footage into something significant. In video editing, unnecessary footage can be cut out to make the story flow better. Sound effects and music can be overlapped to create more of a visual and aural appeal for the viewers. And adding transitions, like cross dissolves and wipes, can allow for a more aesthetic appearance throughout the video.

Body

Together, photography and videography are powerful tools that a professional or even a novice can use in storytelling. The ability to capture still and moving moments allows the user to create their own narrative or, when used effectively, a way to engage the viewers in learning about people and purpose and culture and craft.



In photography, the first raw, unedited photos are nothing less than any image that any device can capture. But when put into editing software or applications, the composition and framing of an image becomes important. Cropping and cutting out unnecessary details improves

how the eyes focus on the main idea in the image. In addition, filters allow for lighting, color and contrast to play a role. Users can tweak these filters in their editing process to create their own moods or emotion and, by extension, produce depth in their storytelling for the viewers to interpret.



The common strategy in editing lighting is to use black and white to display a throwback and nostalgic feeling, use warm colors to reminisce about the summer- and springtime, or use a blue hue in the photos to feel a sense of a winter wonderland. The list continues based on the narrative that the user wants to portray.

Short Films

By Tu Le

Introduction

“The Disappearing Pencil” by Erica Belovich



[Watch “The Disappearing Pencil” on YouTube \(Closed Captioned\)](#)

Erica Belovich’s short film, utilizes various lighting techniques, camera angles and audio inputs to shape the narrative and overall impact of the story. For added effect, the lighting set the tone of how the rest of the visual narrative was to continue, as well as when and how the shots were taking place.

The lighting used was intentional as it conveyed certain moods or atmosphere occurring in the scene. The importance of lighting helps to advance the storyline through dramatic inputs by keeping the viewers in suspense about what might occur next.

The angles that the camera used in the film contributed to the storytelling as well. Movements and the emotions of concern and confusion were captured from several angles to display a sense of distress. The many angles showed the disarray that was occurring throughout the short film and guided the viewer's attention to details about not only the object but also the individual in the shot.

The sound used in the short film was crucial as it displayed audible thoughts about the emotions that were occurring throughout the short film. It amplified the narrative that was being created and created not only a visual but also an aural appeal. The combination of all these factors created an enhanced narrative through the short film that kept the viewers attention.

Why Short Films?

The use of short films encourages the digital storyteller to convey a complex idea or notion in a limited amount of time. Concise films can utilize a variety of storytelling techniques but should leverage all sorts of sensory inputs like sounds and images.

Short films can also be part of a larger project and can be published in smaller, serialized versions like a portfolio. Students also like the idea of a shorter project. However, with limited time each element of the story will need even more purpose and focus.

Six Word, Six Shots Video Story

By Autumn Hudson

Introduction

The purpose of the six shot story is to create a narrative with a minimal amount of shots — just six. The video harnesses a visual component that allows the opportunity to create something outside of a normal 30-second or less video. The video focuses less on post-editing techniques and instead focuses more on the process of filming by highlighting various camera angles throughout the segment. Video can be used in a variety of ways to persuade, evoke emotion, introduce a topic or individual, have a call to action, and so forth.

Unique Camera Angles

This project will allow you as the filmmaker to explore and expand your knowledge of camera angles. It is challenging to find the words that correlate with what shots, identify when is it better to use a wide angle versus an extreme close up and explore what type of dramatized effect does what and adds to the piece. Every shot taken for the video should be different and unique — six shots of six using six different angles. Using a variety of perspectives and depths will add the interesting flare to the project that highlights six separate pieces tied together through different pieces of media. Add textual elements like words in your shot to tie them to the visual and evoke emotion from the “phrase” you are using.

Basic Camera Shots

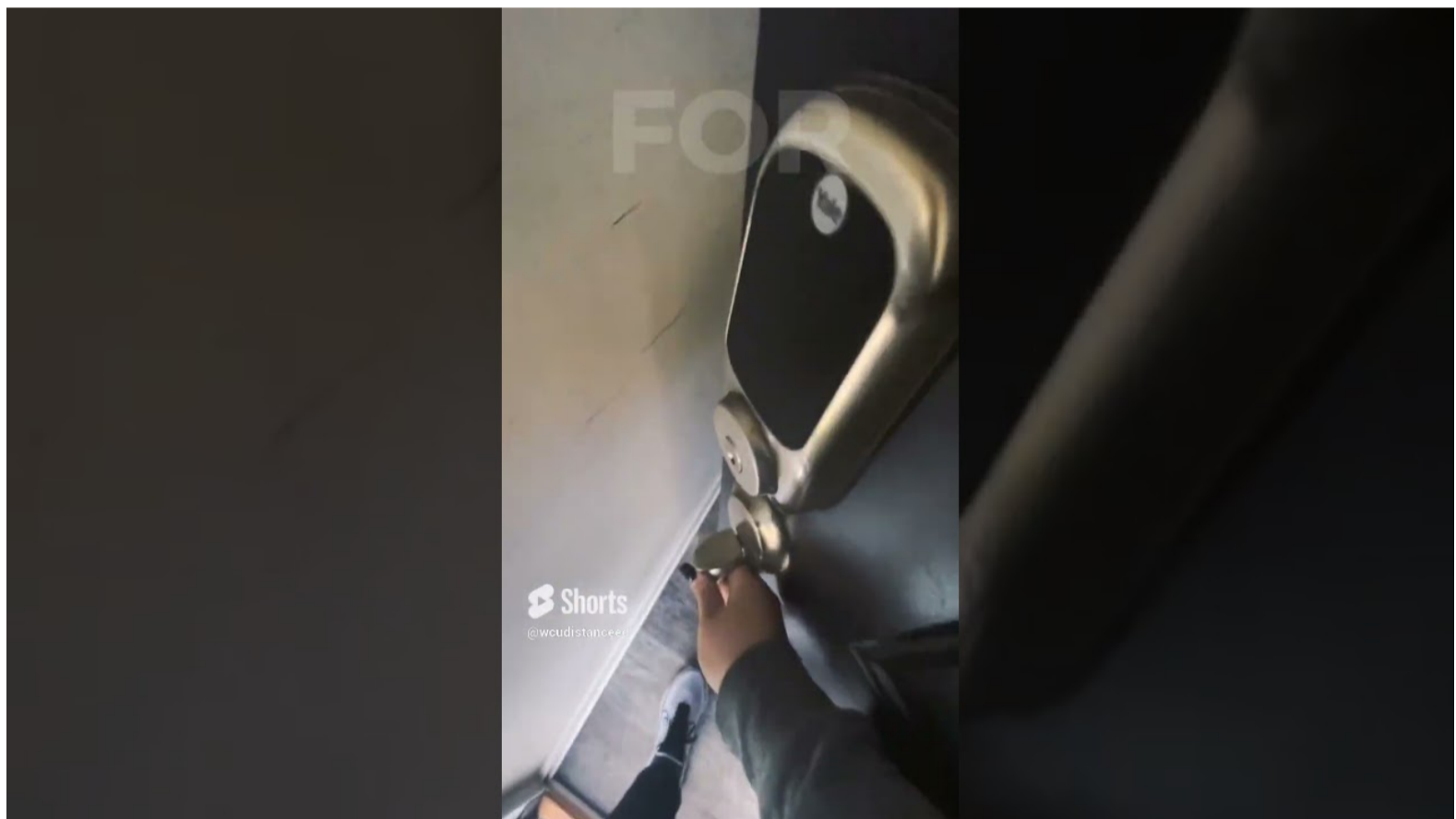
Camera Shots and Angles



An example of different types of shots and angles.

**For more information check out
[Don Goble's Six-Shot Story](#)**

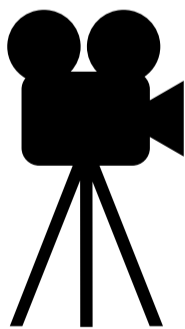
Six Words, Six Short Story



[Watch "Six Word, Six Short" on YouTube](#) (music is played throughout along with [lyrics](#) that are heard)

Other Production Requirements

The best part about this Six-Word Six-Shot project is that it can be filmed on a cell phone or a fancy DSLR and the quality of shots will be measured by the creativity in your content. This project can be compiled in any variety of software platforms (iMovie, Clips, Adobe) and devices. Feel free to add words in the shot or they can be edited in at the beginning or end of the project like a title card. The project should have some audio component to it too like royalty-free music, a voice over, or an original musical piece. Regardless of the choice, the video should contain audio and graphemic components too. This is a contributing factor to the production and should be considered when creating a storyboard.



Conclusion

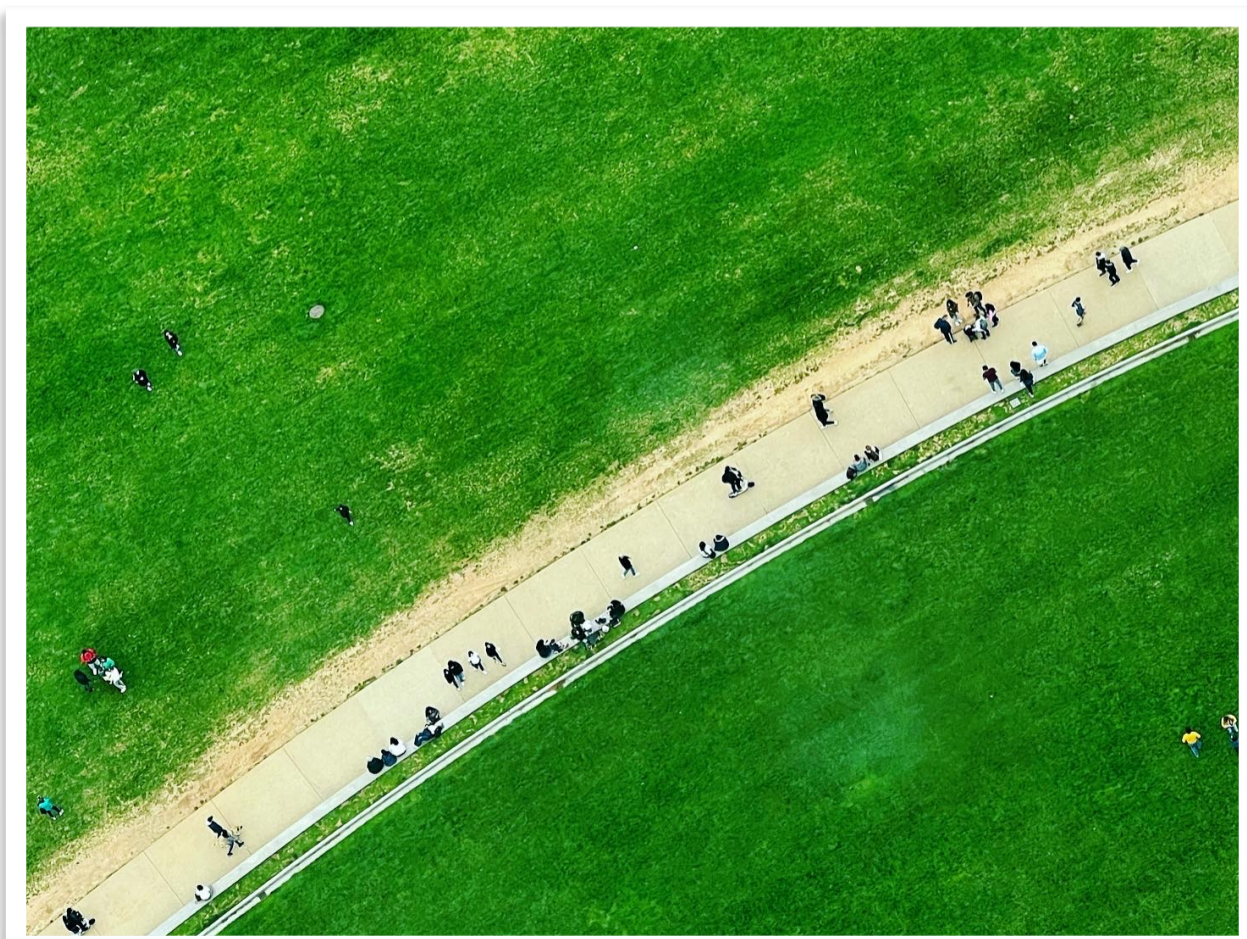
Walking away from this project the storyteller will have new ways to think about camera angles and the differing perspectives associated with each unique shot. Thinking about a storyboard should also strengthen your ability to write and execute this piece. This pre-planning phase is essential to the project and will provide you with a new skill moving forward in your filmmaking journey.

Documentary

By Autumn Hudson

Introduction

The purpose of a documentary is to portray real people in their actual settings to convey a variety of messages. This could be to inform or teach your audience about a specific event or topic, share an inspiring story, raise awareness or simply share knowledge through the lens of a particular person or event. In this section we will learn how to properly plan, film and edit a documentary styled assignment.



Documentary Example



[Watch the Documentary Example on YouTube \(Closed Captioned\)](#)

Planning

When planning a documentary, storytellers first should identify the “who” and “what” of the film. Deciding who or what focus will allow the documentary to properly continue through the planning process. Once it has been decided who will be interviewed, find a location that highlights them in their real life setting. This place could be their office, home or other location that is relevant to their story and that they frequent often.

While planning, create open-ended questions to guide the conversation. Typically, when interviewing an expert on the topic, gather as much information as possible beforehand to get a clear picture of the subject matter and what perspective they will represent. Frame questions more as conversational rather than a structured interview format so as to avoid the feeling of interrogation. While interviewing, always listen and respond based on the content your interviewee provides.



Filming

When filming, ensure that the area is well lit or provide supplemental lighting options. Additionally, place the subject in the middle ground of the frame and about 10 feet away from the lens with the background in the distance at a variable and appropriate distance.

Use the focal or face detection feature on the camera to set the subject as the focal area as this should cause the background to become slightly blurred and bringing more attention to your subject.



To boost the engagement throughout the final product, experiment with using multiple shots or multiple cameras. This approach provides a variety of unique perspectives throughout the film. Also, experiment with using different locations and including B-roll.

Additionally, use external microphones or use the microphone from the device. It is not required to use multiple cameras, but it is beneficial to add depth and perspective documentary.

Editing

The workflow of editing should revert back to pre-planning sessions but may not follow exactly. Edits can be made in any editing software. Go through the raw interview and find any parts that have awkward pauses or mistakes; comments that are not relevant to the overall storyline; dry portions that the interviewer is asking questions; or moments of stuttering or stumbling that could be distracting. Be sure to add any titles or lower thirds to enhance the audience's ability to identify the title of your documentary as well as the interviewee(s) speaking in the film. Add transitions to enhance a smooth flow for your film.



Utilize B-roll and multi-camera angles to help with the flow of the interview and support the statement being made. For example, if a soccer coach is being interviewed and he mentions the practice layout that has led to his team's success, perhaps overlay the B-roll that includes the team running drills. This approach adds details and visuals to the content being discussed in the interview. If there is extra B-roll that does not have relevant audio, be

sure to mute the clip. If the B-roll does include relevant audio, for example the soccer coach leading the team in a motivational speech, consider inserting it into the interview rather than an overlay. Be careful adding too many layers of audio or it will detract from the message of the person being interviewed.

Conclusion

You will learn how to plan, film and edit a documentary style film over time and through practice. You will be able to create this piece with basic or advanced gear based on their personal preference. The end goal here is to create an engaging piece that follows a documentary structure. If you follow all of the steps, you will have the look and feel of a professional documentary.



Color's Impact on Digital Storytelling

By Victoria McQuiston

Why Is Color an Important Part of Digital Storytelling?



The impact of color on a digital story cannot be overstated. While the details of what colors are used and featured within a story can easily be overlooked, the effects they can have on viewers are huge. Color can elicit so many different emotions; it can set the mood or tone of a story frame by frame; it can amplify a brand's meaning. Color is a simple yet powerful tool in creating digital stories.

Color and Emotion

In digital storytelling, color can have a significant impact on the emotions that a digital story elicits from its audience. For example,

- Warm colors like red, orange, and yellow can convey excitement, enthusiasm, and passion.
- Cool colors like blue, green, and purple can evoke feelings of calmness, relaxation, and tranquility.
- Neutral colors like black, white, and gray can be used to create a sense of mystery, elegance, and sophistication.

Colors and Emotions

Colors	Emotions
RED (warm)	Love, passion, anger, excitement
ORANGE (warm)	Enthusiasm, energy, happiness
YELLOW (warm)	Happiness, cheerfulness, joy
GREEN (cool)	Hopefulness, calmness, nature, abundance
BLUE (cool)	Relaxation, calmness, tranquility, sadness
PURPLE (cool)	Creativity, nobility, romance

Color and Mood

In digital storytelling, color can also be used to set the thematic mood of a story. For example,

- A story set in a dark and eerie forest can use dark greens and grays to create a sense of foreboding and danger.
- A story set on a sunny beach can use bright yellows and blues to create a feeling of warmth and relaxation



Color and Branding

Color can also be used to establish and reinforce branding in digital storytelling. The use of consistent colors for branding throughout a digital story can help to reinforce a brand or person's identity and make it more memorable to the audience.



"Linear RGB color wheel" by 8-leaf cover is in the Public Domain (CC0) via Wikimedia Commons

- Colors can be used to represent a brand's personality, values and identity
- In branding, red is used to represent passion, energy, and excitement. Subsequently, blue is typically associated with trust, reliability, and stability.

Conclusion

As we conclude this exploration of digital storytelling, we return to the essence of what makes a story powerful. From the ancient campfires to modern digital platforms, storytelling has always been about sharing ideas, moments, and experiences in ways that connect us all. As Nancy Duarte reminds us, the power of a story lies not just in the content but in how it is presented—a concept that holds true whether we're talking about a box of chocolates, a chainlink, or the stories we tell.

Throughout this journey, we've delved into the tools and techniques that allow us to craft digital narratives. We've seen how stories, now more than ever, are multimodal experiences that combine text, images, sounds, and interactive elements to engage and evoke emotions. These digital stories are more than just modern tales; they are artifacts of experience that transcend time and culture, building empathy and understanding through their diversity.

Inevitably digital stories teach us — the audience, the viewer, the community — something about ourselves and the collective human experience. Making stories is a

recursive practice wherein we learn and teach by doing — it's the ultimate praxis. The best way to learn something is to teach others and through the writing of this eTextbook may different voices have been included in the process. Feel free to add your own chapter or idea to the eBook so that it continues to represent the voices of students in the curation and creation of digital stories. Everyone is a storyteller; and everyone has the tools.

Take these ideas and...

Think | Apply | Share

Appendix

“What Do You Want Students To Do With Technology?”

WRONG ANSWERS	RIGHT ANSWERS
Add to Flipgrids	Raise Awareness
Start Blogs	Join Conversations
Post to SeeSaw	Find Answers - To Their Questions
Learn to Code	Discover New Questions Worth Answering
Produce Green Screen Videos	Imagine New Possibilities
Create Googles Docs, Slides, and Drawings	Drive Change
Build Digital Portfolios	Take Action
Master Photoshop	Make a Difference

What do You Want Students to do with Technology? v.3

Technology is a tool, not a learning outcome.

#trudatchat

By: @PLUGUSIN, @RERDMANN, @PCAGGIA
@RUSSGORENED and @MCTOWNSLEY

Return to "Setting the Stage"

“Not About Us Without Us: Building Equity Through Storytelling” Transcript

[Music]

So, I have figured out the answer to the quintessential question: what is the purpose of my life? For me, I'm here to smash the patriarchy, eliminate misogyny, and dismantle racism.

[Applause & Cheering]

And then I realized I have three loads of laundry to do, I haven't purchased groceries in a while, and I think there's some homework that needs to get done. But honestly, I do a lot of different talks around this topic, and one of the topics I really enjoy talking about is about Muslim women and the contributions we have to society.

Not too long ago, I was at my computer, and I needed to get images of Muslim women to put into my PowerPoint presentation. So, I went to my trusty little Google search engine, and I typed in "Muslim women." And here's one of the images that popped up. Now, I don't have a problem with this image per se; my problem is really

around the context, around the stories around these images. You see, I have a lot of family and friends who dress this way, and they have made a profound decision on how they want to express their faith. My problem is that it's a very sort of monolithic image of who Muslim women are. It doesn't represent people who look like me and dress like me, or women that actually don't observe the hijab or the headscarf.

So, I found this really problematic, and the further I looked into it, I realized that the problem is that there is such a negative stereotype around these images. A lot of people feel that when they see this type of image, a lot of negative stereotypes come forth. We're always seen in this context of being stigmatized, marginalized, and oppressed. It's always dehumanizing to see that we're the subject of crimes, and instead of being curious about who we are, people feel really threatened by who we are. And so, we need to change this perception.

What I came to realize was, somebody else is always telling our story. And in order for us to change this negative stereotype, we need to start telling our stories ourselves, because these stories cannot be about us without us. So, some friends of mine and I, we got

together and we launched a storytelling project called "Muslim Shero's of Minnesota." The storytelling project showcases women right here in Minnesota who are doing amazing work—changemakers and trailblazers.

One of the best things about these stories is that finally, Google has some images that I can use that reflect my community. So, I'm gonna share with you three stories that we've been telling. Meet my friend Amina. Now, Amina saw these stories, and she was really inspired by what she was learning, and she saw herself within these stories. And so, Amina decided she wanted to get more involved. And so, when the call came, she decided to become an election judge. Now, can you imagine Amina sitting at your polling place, looking the way she does with her pretty floral hijab? And when there's so much conversation right now about who is American, she's the one who's registering you or checking you in and asking those questions.

And then, Amina didn't just stop there. She started to learn about boards and commissions in her city, and she decided, "Hey, I'm gonna step up, and I'm gonna serve in my community." So, she went out to be a commissioner for the Public Safety Commission. Again, can you imagine

Amina at a table full of people who don't look like her and, most likely, of a dominant culture? But she is there again, in her beautiful scarf, representing and giving voice to a marginalized community.

When you talk to Amina, and you ask her about how it's going, she will tell you how she's lived in her city all her life, but finally, she feels like it's really hers and that it feels like home. She has moved from feeling welcomed to being included and feeling like she belongs. Now, meet these wonderful, wonderful students. These are the girls from Hopkins Middle School and High School. They attended a leadership conference that we hosted earlier this year. Here, they're taking a picture with Ibtihaj Muhammad. Ibtihaj is the very first Muslim hijab-wearing woman to serve on the United States Olympic team, and she's a bronze medalist, so really an amazing shero.

Now, usually, our conference targets and invites women who are already out in the workforce and adults. But these girls' teacher, Angela Wilcox, reached out to me and asked, "Would it be appropriate to bring this group of students?" I said, "Absolutely, the more the merrier!" The girls had a wonderful time. They were able to see women that looked like them—changemakers, people that they

could really aspire to be. And after the conference, Angela emailed me back, saying the girls were so inspired that they feel that they can be and live lives that they never had dreamt of.

Now, what the girls are doing are really true young leaders in our community. They went back and gave a presentation to their school board members about our conference and also started a storytelling project about their histories. They are talking to their elders in their community and telling the story of what Somalia used to be before the civil war. And here's a way for these girls to really lead in their community and tell their story themselves, all while honoring the elders of their community.

Now, I want you to meet my friend Sally. [Music] Bloom is an organization that I started two years ago to try to get Muslim sisters back out into nature because, unfortunately, a lot of us don't get outside enough. And what better place than a setting like this to connect with God? You know, I was born and raised here in the States, and so I was raised camping and canoeing and being outside. Whereas, a lot of other people, they didn't really have that connection with nature growing up. I was

constantly taking out my friends like, "Let's go canoeing. Let's go do this. Let's go do that." A lot of girls were like, "Oh, how do you go horseback riding with your dress on?" So, we were trying to figure out a way to do it. And then when we figured it out for just like three people, I was like, "This is a way, so we should do it for like 32 people." And Bloom was born.

We started taking out bigger groups of girls. Like, today we're gonna go canoeing. I never really seek out the leadership role, but sometimes it seeks me out. And so, for me, I'm organizing, I'm really outgoing, I love the outdoors, and I have this huge network of people. It's kind of like it just makes sense that I do this. I truly, truly believe that God has created each one of us with very, very, very unique characteristics and strengths. And we need to figure out what makes us "us" and then take those things and figure out how we can best serve our community as a whole, and, you know, in that, serve our God.

[Music]

The first time I watched that video, I was convinced that the closed captioning would not keep up with Sally. So,

Sally is the executive director of Bloom Adventures, which is an organization that likes to take women out and be one with nature. When her video first debuted, she started to get inundated with phone calls and emails and text messages about how she could come to other communities and start chapters around Bloom. And what's amazing about Sally is that she can't say no, but she knows she can't be all over the nation starting these chapters. So, she created a document, sort of guidelines and a how-to on starting a Bloom Adventure chapter in other communities.

So, Sally doesn't say no, but instead, she empowers other women to go out and do it for themselves. And when you watch her, I hope that you started to see the images of the St. Croix, of canoeing, of being outdoors, and you started to forget that you can't see Sally's face—that you hear her voice and realize that it sounds just like yours. I hope that, instead of having those really threatening stereotypes pop up into your conscious, instead you feel curiosity, and you feel a connection with her. You see, we're all human, and we all love to know about one another. We crave that human connection. We empathize.

We want to be able to lift each other up and continue telling these stories.

Now, I've been telling these stories for a while, and I invite you to share yours as well as tell these stories going forward. Now, when I Google "Muslim women," if I scroll down just a little bit, I can find myself.

Thank you.

[Applause & Music]

Return to "[Equity in Storytelling](#)"