



# Data Storytelling

Through Participatory Media:

A Step-by-Step Guide  
For Public Health  
Practitioners

**NACCHO**<sup>SM</sup>  
National Association of County & City Health Officials

 **CREATIVE  
NARRATIONS**  
EXPRESS. CONNECT. TRANSFORM.

 **SEVEN DIRECTIONS**  
A CENTER FOR INDIGENOUS PUBLIC HEALTH

# About Seven Directions & Creative Narrations Teams



## Seven Directions: A Center for Indigenous Public Health

[Seven Directions](#), established in 2016, is one of three national public health institutes to solely focus on Indigenous community health and wellness. In 2018, the institute became part of the University of Washington, Department of Psychiatry, Center for the Study of Health and Risk Behavior. We work within an Indigenous-centered approach to public health practice and apply it with Native nations and Indigenous community organizations for health systems strengthening efforts.



### Christina E. Oré, MPH, DrPH:

Christina was born and raised in Arizona. Her paternal family Andean from Huancavelica, Peru. She is an Associate Director for Indigenous systems alignment and data stewardship. From an Indigenous data sovereignty lens, stories and creative expression are data that practitioners are responsible to steward through practice for community health and well-being.



### Darwyn C. Largo, MPH:

Darwyn is a member of the Navajo Nation, born and raised in Crownpoint, New Mexico. He is a graduate of Haskell Indian Nations University, a Tribal College and University. Darwyn's experiences growing up on an American Indian reservation and attending an inter-tribal college enticed him to pursue a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Arizona, Zuckerman College of Public Health, where he graduated from in 2022.



## Creative Narrations

When [Creative Narrations](#) was founded in 2001, it was built upon our experiences as adult educators, community organizers, public health advocates and researchers. Our approach to storytelling is as a democratic act for social change. We believe that citizens publicly telling their stories with intention, and in their own voices, is a form of civic participation. Stories are central to building power and affecting change. Stories are tools within communities: to reflect, to measure change, and to engage residents in civic action. Stories are prompts for discussion and dialogue across communities – a way to connect disparate groups and build deeper understanding.



### Jennifer Nowicki Clark, MA:

Jen is the Director of Creative Narrations with over 20 years of expertise in digital storytelling and civic engagement for community-based initiatives. She graduated from Boston College with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and the University of Arizona with master's degree in Linguistics, where she focused on creative and participatory methods of language acquisition.



### Laura Porifrio, MA:

Laura is a lifelong Arizonan whose roots in the Sonoran Desert include two degrees from the University of Arizona: a bachelor's in Anthropology and a master's in Language, Reading & Culture. Her trainer role in digital storytelling with Creative Narrations is a natural extension of her career in adult education that focused on leadership development, building collective power and amplifying voices that need to be heard. She is also a trainer and research facilitator for [Elevation Educational Consulting Group](#).



### **Josh Schachter, MA:**

Josh is an educator, visual storyteller and social ecologist and founder of the nonprofit [Community Share](#). For 25+ years he has facilitated community-based media projects with youth, adults and nonprofit organizations in places ranging from New Delhi to Nigeria. As a [photographer](#), he has collaborated with organizations throughout the U.S. and globe to document issues from urban revitalization to food security. He earned his master's degree in environmental management from the Yale School of the Environment, where he explored the role of youth-produced media in supporting personal and community transformation.



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A Chicana born in East L.A., Antoinette is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Washington's School of Public Health, [Department of Health Systems and Population Health](#), as well as the Director of the [Northwest Public Health and Primary Care Leadership Institute](#). Since 1997, she has worked as a public health practitioner in clinical, government, and community-based settings, with expertise serving Spanish-speaking populations, locally and globally.

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# Purpose

This guide is intended for use by local public health departments and their partners in all functions of public health practice: assessment, assurance, and program/policy development. Participatory approaches to multimedia making such as digital stories and photovoice are a process that increases the validity of data and information being used to accomplish these functions because they center community engagement and voice. The validity of the data and information for program design and policy development, in turn increases its effectiveness and impact on public health.

The communities most impacted by health disparities and inequities have the knowledge and experience to identify contributing factors, both risk and protective, and social determinants of health impacting their community. Effective programs and policies that result from collaborations with community members to create stories and images of their truths and realities contribute to strengthening local public health systems.



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# Participatory Storytelling: Introduction

## Background

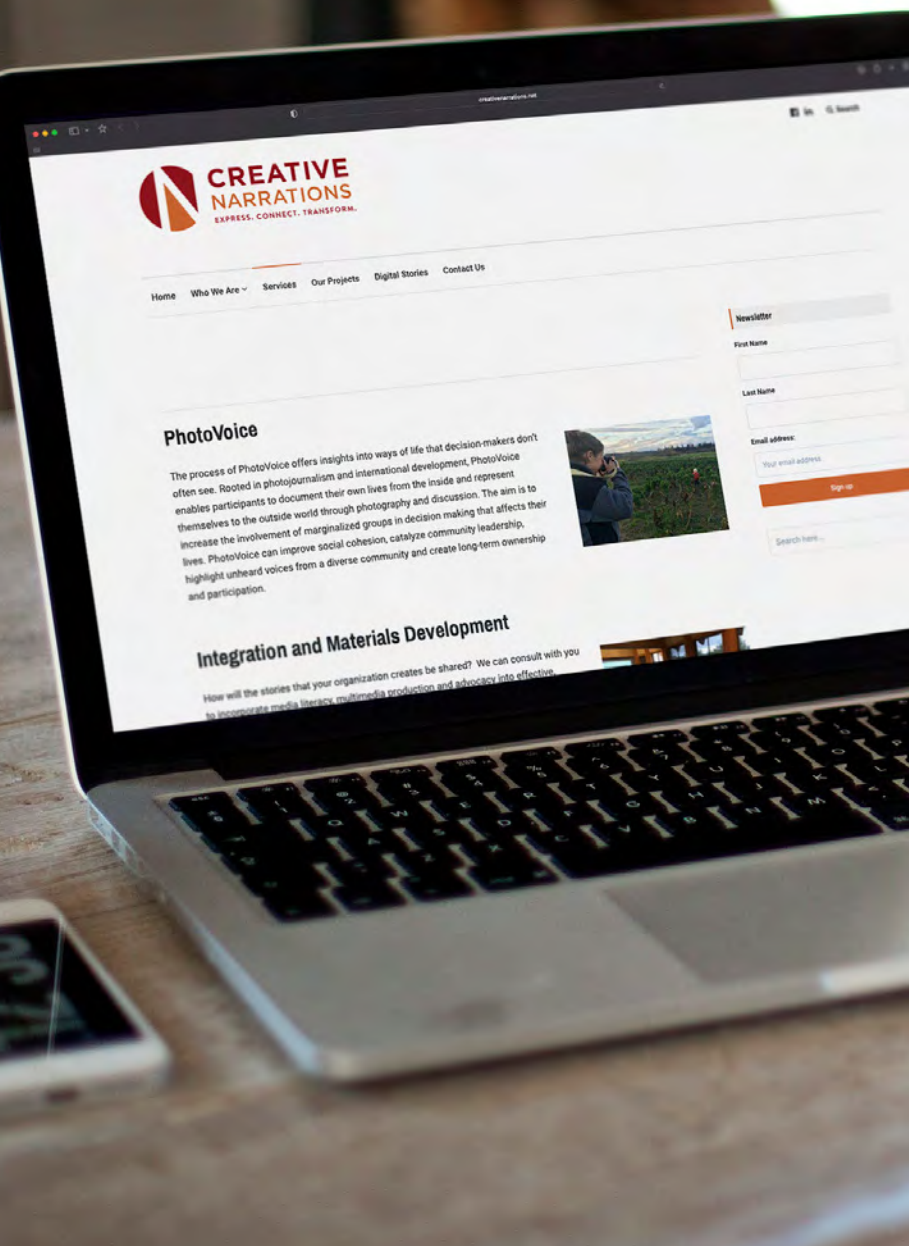
In 2023, Seven Directions and Creative Narrations collaborated to facilitate a training series on participatory multimedia narrative approaches and methods. The virtual training series was provided to local health department grantees funded by the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO). Thirty-three city and county health departments were funded under the *Address COVID-19 Health Disparities Among Populations at High Risk and Underserved, Including Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations and Rural Communities* initiative, a CDC cooperative agreement.

Local health departments were funded under this initiative to increase their capacity and capability to address COVID-19 related health disparities. Grantee programs were shifting from emergency response to long-term sustained programming for health equity. The interactive participatory multimedia training series provided grantees with evidence-based methods to choose from and apply to their public health practice.

## Local Health Departments: Stories, Data, Health Equity

The COVID-19 pandemic, and its disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable individuals, families, and communities in the U.S., shined a spotlight on the structural and programmatic gaps across local public health departments to address social determinants of health (Huston & Porter, 2023; Orr et al., 2023). Local health departments were first responders with the information and resources available, despite being chronically under-funded (Alford et al., 2021; Huston & Porter, 2023). Increased allocation of funding and resources to strengthen the





U.S. public health system is an opportunity to address the structural and programmatic gaps in promoting and protecting the health of the most vulnerable populations in the U.S. and advancing health equity (Orr et al., 2023). Digital storytelling and photovoice are important participatory multimedia methods available to public health practitioners and researchers to work towards health equity, in collaboration with communities, and by amplifying their voices (Augsberger et al., 2022; Catalani & Minkler, 2010; D'Angelo & Her, 2019; Fiddian-Green et al., 2023). Digital storytelling is a method that is used to center first-person narratives for interventions addressing the political and social determinants of health. Studies have shown the influence of this method on health behavior change, health literacy, and community norms at multiple levels (Lohr et al., 2022). Photovoice is a participatory method that has been used in public health practice for decades. Findings from photovoice projects demonstrated how this method has shifted individual factors to the influences of environment on substance misuse, unsheltered relatives, and food insecurity (D'Angelo & Her, 2019; Inwood et al., 2023; Mackelprang et al., 2024).

The impact of digital storytelling and photovoice methods is attributed to use of participatory approaches and principles by public health researchers and practitioners (Chavez et al., 2004; Ozer et al., 2020; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2020). These principles characterize the collaboration between practitioners/researchers and community partners. They are principles of co-creation, bi-directional knowledge exchanges, power balance, and putting findings from the collaboration into action (Wallerstein et al., 2020). In this context, participatory approaches ensure findings are put into meaningful public health practice (i.e., assessment, assurance, program, and policy development) toward health equity (Wallerstein et al., 2021).

# Step-by-Step Guide

## Guide Overview

This step-by-step guide is designed for use in community-based and community-driven digital storytelling workshops and photovoice projects. The intended users of this guide are public health practitioners and community members who will facilitate and participate in creating multimedia stories for use in public health practice.

This guide provides detailed recommendations and tools to engage a participatory multimedia narrative approach, facilitate a digital story workshop, and implement a photovoice project (Creative Narrations, 2000; SDCN, 2023; Schachter, J. 2023). If possible, we highly recommend that anyone considering facilitating one of these workshops first experiences it firsthand by participating in a training to create their own digital story or photovoice project before helping others do so.

Table 1 below provides descriptions of key elements of both storytelling processes. The digital storytelling process results in concise narratives in video format, while photovoice results in photos for display. Both methods ask participants to reflect on lived experience and how it may reflect a shared experience within their community. They both may be applied for program and policy development in public health.

**Table 1. Digital storytelling & Photovoice Overview**

Form	Purposes	Time	Group #	Product	Equipment & Space
Digital Storytelling	Reflection, Healing, Change, Evaluation, Advocacy	20-24 hrs	8-12 people	2-4 min mini-movie, shared online and in public screenings	Computers, Quiet Room, Internet, Mics & Headphones, Projector / Speakers, Video editing software
Photovoice	Asset Mapping Identify Issues Policy Advocacy	Varies At least 4-5 2hr sessions	No specific limit	Photos, captions & policy recs shared digitally or exhibit	Camera, Projector

## **Delivery Format**

It is important to underscore that the guide materials are intended to be adapted to specific community contexts. These materials are traditionally used in a three-day workshop format. However, the content has intentionally been formatted into units, which may be expanded or taught in multiple shorter sessions or one-on-one.

The content shared in this guide is presented in four sections 1) participatory multimedia approach, 2) digital story workshop, 3) photovoice projects, and 4) additional resources. Each section provides a description of the methods, samples, worksheets, and other activities for multimedia data storytelling.

# **Participatory Multimedia Approach**

The people that live in a community are uniquely positioned to tell the stories of that community. Participatory multimedia narratives are a reflective process in which community members participate in a group to create their own personal and community stories using their own media. A participatory multimedia approach when applied to digital stories and photovoice projects ensures they are community-based, and community-driven.

## **Ethical and Cultural Consideration**

“Story distribution strategies must be rooted first and foremost in the needs of, and designed to benefit, storytellers and their local communities, rather than primarily serving the agendas of distant viewers or funders.” - Ethical Practice (StoryCenter, n.d.)

Working with a participatory approach, whether in public health or other fields, means centering community voices, needs, and goals in the multimedia narrative being created. Community members are knowledge experts on the issues and invited to share their stories publicly. Therefore, ethical and cultural considerations guide everyone involved in participatory multimedia narrative work from planning to distribution and promotion.

## THERE ARE SIX PRINCIPLES FOR ETHICAL STORYWORK PRACTICE SHARED IN THIS SECTION (STORYCENTER, N.D.).

- 1 Center on Storyteller Wellbeing:** ensure storytellers' wellness and safety, practicing cultural humility, and have strategies in place to connect storytellers to licensed clinicians should their services be needed.
- 2 Ongoing Consent from Storytellers:** ensuring storytellers have knowledge and support to make informed decisions on their participation, content, and use of their work; this is a process that is ongoing.
- 3 Multiple connotations of knowledge production and ownership:** Facilitators guide decision making on what is shared and kept private within stories. Storytellers and facilitators maintain confidentiality and privacy of materials shared within workshops but not publicly.
- 4 Local relevance:** Work with local partners and workshop volunteers to ensure the story making process is appropriate and relevant to the community (i.e., language, technology).
- 5 Continuous ethical engagement:** ongoing dialogue among storytellers, staff members, partner organizations, and funders about how to implement an ethically responsible project is foundational to this process.
- 6 Community/ Storyteller driven distribution:** Storytellers must be provided copies of their stories in a format they can access before they are distributed or displayed in any setting.

### Cultural Considerations

Cultural considerations are embedded within the ethical practice principles described above. All workshop participants will bring their worldview, perspectives, and knowledge that are influenced by their cultural background and experience. The storytellers are representing themselves and their communities. It is the responsibility of everyone to create culturally safe spaces for creating the stories either through digital stories or photovoice. Cultural humility guides this process. To come from a culturally humble place requires continuous self-reflection and self-critique (i.e., identifying implicit bias), learning from each other, and maintaining relationships through trust and communication (Ferdinand, 2021). For facilitators, this translates to planning the workshop with community partners, following protocols and cultural norms. For example, opening with prayer or speech by respected leaders, providing food or inviting people to bring food, and ensuring relevance of the storywork to the community being served by the organizations (e.g., local health department, community clinic, or education services).

This section sets the foundation for facilitating a participatory multimedia project that is following ethical and cultural practices. The following are tips for facilitators, benefits, and examples of where participatory multimedia projects are applied.



# Participatory Multimedia Project Facilitator

The following are considerations for facilitators at each phase of a participatory multimedia project to guide and ensure ethical and cultural considerations are practiced (Schachter, 2023). The lists below contain advice and tips for facilitators during the planning, implementation and evaluation phases of a project.

## Plan

- Be committed to plan, implement, and evaluate collaboratively with the community to ensure community ownership and long-term sustainability of the project.
- Explore how the project might support and dovetail with existing community efforts to address the issue. Work with them to integrate your project into theirs.
- Respectfully consider what challenges may exist that could prevent community participation: transportation, childcare, work, school schedules.
- Approach relationship building holistically, with all your senses. Use humor, humility, and laughter. Identify your assumptions and address them during the planning process.
- Build a trusted relationship early on with someone in the community who can navigate and communicate different worlds, particularly with cross-cultural projects.
- Be aware and sensitive to the traditions and cultural practices of the community and how they may intersect with the project and the content of the stories/photos.
- Develop the project budget with consideration to whether participants might need to be compensated for their time, expertise, travel costs, childcare, etc. Consider the community's current and past relationship with media, visual documentation, and technology.
- Make sure technology tools/resources are accessible and affordable. Have a clear plan about what tools will stay in the community after the facilitator leaves.

## Implement

- Trust the process. Honor the community's knowledge.
- Create a safe place for storytelling. Consider who is telling the stories, and who has yet to be heard.
- Be flexible! Stay open to adapting your facilitation and/or teaching style to the sociocultural context of the community.
- Local health departments are able to host events and meetings that honor community knowledge and lived experience.
- Be sure community participants are defining the direction of the project's content and process. Pressing stories may need to be told, but the community decides.
- Let Form (photography / digital storytelling / photovoice / oral history) follow Function (goals of the project). Consider the goals, budget, audiences, distribution plan, technology, and organizational capacity of the community.
- Develop a clear agreement with the storytellers/photographers and the community about how and where the stories/photos can be shared.
- If one of the goals is to take action based on the community stories, remember it requires a great deal of planning and time to translate concerns expressed in stories into concrete community action projects and social change. Avoid creating unrealistic expectations.
- If a goal is to reach new audiences, consider creative strategies to reach people outside your "choir".
- Celebrate the stories/photos in the community! Local music and food are natural conveners.

## Evaluate

- Create opportunities for reflection and evaluation throughout the process.
- Work closely with the community to define what success will look like and how you will know when you get there.
- Ensure that the measures of success are rooted in the goals of the community and are meaningful to the participants.
- Be open to different perspectives from the community about acknowledging and interpreting success that differ from yours as the facilitator.
- Celebrate small successes and be open to new directions and unexpected results.
- With the considerations shared above, the benefits of using a participatory multimedia approach can also be incorporated into the project planning.

# Benefits of Participatory Multimedia

Table 2 below shared the benefits of a participatory multimedia narrative approach stem from the co-creation of stories or photos in this context and are representative of the people and shared issues of concern in the community. The approach values local knowledge and active listening and engagement can create a healing experience among participants. Facilitating workshops or projects from a participatory approach increases access to knowledge and skills and contributes to capacity building within an agency or organization and among community members.

**Table 2. Benefits of participatory multimedia narratives**

Area	Description
Representation	Individuals portray themselves and their community on their own terms
Local Knowledge	Reveals and honors local perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom
Capacity Building	Building skills in creativity, storytelling, media production, and socioemotional engagement contributes to capacity building within host agency or organization
Collective Healing	Active listening and creative expression by facilitators and participants can support individual and collective healing
Equity and Access	Increasing access to skills in multimedia production and sharing diverse lived experiences and perspectives in topic areas of concerns contributes to addressing inequities

*Source: SDCN, 2023*

# Participatory Multimedia Applications

Within a participatory multimedia narrative approach, community members play an active role in creating content that can be applied in many ways. The products of participatory multimedia, including digital stories or photovoice content, can be used to highlight key issues in the community and center the voices being served by respective health and health related entities, organizations and departments. Participatory multimedia is both process -- learning, building community, acquiring skills, celebrating growth -- and product -- the story, the movie, the photo/voice. The voices and images promote dialogue and awareness around issues in the community, from the perspectives of those most impacted by those issues.

The list below describes various applications for use of this approach. Participatory multimedia approach to narratives for digital storytelling and photovoice can and has been used for all public health functions (i.e., assessments, assurance, program and policy development). Tribal health departments have engaged community advisory board members in digital storytelling and developed community health assessments using creative expression for data collection. In adult education, digital stories have been shared at new student orientations, teacher training and in-services, institutional and public events and celebrations, and meetings with policy-makers.

## Participatory Multimedia Applications:

- Capacity Building
- Public Relations
- Celebration
- Advocacy and Awareness Raising
- Recruitment and Outreach
- Asset and Needs Mapping
- Evaluation
- Stakeholder Dialogue
- Team Building
- Fundraising
- Healing and Community (empathy)
- Planning and Vision



The next section provides a step-by-step guide for developing and implementing digital story workshops.

# Digital Story Workshop

A digital story workshop is an experiential learning experience that allows media novices to produce short movies (2-3 minute) by blending their own voices, still photography and video clips about their real-life experience with issues that affect them. Digital storytelling emphasizes first person voice, group process, and participatory production (StoryCenter, n.d.).

The Four Steps are 1) Prepare, 2) Produce, 3) Publish, and 4) Promote. Figure 1, below, outlines Creative Narrations Four-Step guide. The Four-Step guide contains content, activities, and worksheets needed to host a digital storytelling workshop at your agency or organization.

Figure 1. Four Steps of a Digital Story Workshop

## Step 1

### ***PREPARE: Story Development***

- Building Blocks
- Narrative Structure
- Draft Script
- Story Circle and Feedback
- Script Revision
- Consider Multimedia and Imagery
- Storyboarding

## Step 2

### ***PRODUCE: Multimedia Gathering and Editing***

- Record Voice/Narration
- Select and Gather images
- Digital imagery and video manipulation
- Importing all media into video editing software
- Introduction to Video Editing (Rough cut)
- Fine tuning: (Final cut)

## Step 3

### ***PUBLISH: Exporting and Sharing***

- Discuss and collect media consent forms
- Export your project
- Screen workshop cohort stories

## Step 4

### ***PROMOTE: Distributing and Taking Action***

- Consider media platforms
- Using your story for change
- Public screening
- Case studies
- Making stories for change: equity work

Before embarking on the digital story workshop with community partners, the following provides details to follow for workshop planning and strategies for success. Workshop planning consists in confirming the workshop timeline, preparing materials and equipment list. Materials include pre-workshop outline, workshop agenda, tracking accomplishments chart.

## Workshop Planning

Bring facilitators and host organizations (e.g., local health department, community clinic) together to identify training goals.

### Training Goals

Meet with your community partners and organizational leadership to outline the purpose and goals of the digital story workshop. Be prepared to spend time thinking and planning ahead of time. What are your expected outcomes?

Think of your goals in terms of both process and product.

- Team building
- Crafting stories
- Building technology skills
- Connecting with other organizations
- Having digital stories to show for fundraising, outreach, etc.

***A word on the ethics of digital storytelling and community building.*** It's important to be clear both organizationally and to your participant what the end goal of the project is. Where will these stories be shown? How will they be used? What control will participants have over reproduction and distribution?



After discussion, complete the following prompts:

## Worksheet 1. Training Goals

**After discussion, complete the following prompts:**

Our goal statement is:

Our key leaders in this effort are:

Our community resources are:

Our primary audience for our stories is:

Once goals are established the next steps in planning are completing logistics. These include establishing a timeline, community participation considerations, equipment list, and preparing workshop materials, such as outlines, agendas, and tracking sheets. Samples of these items are provided below:

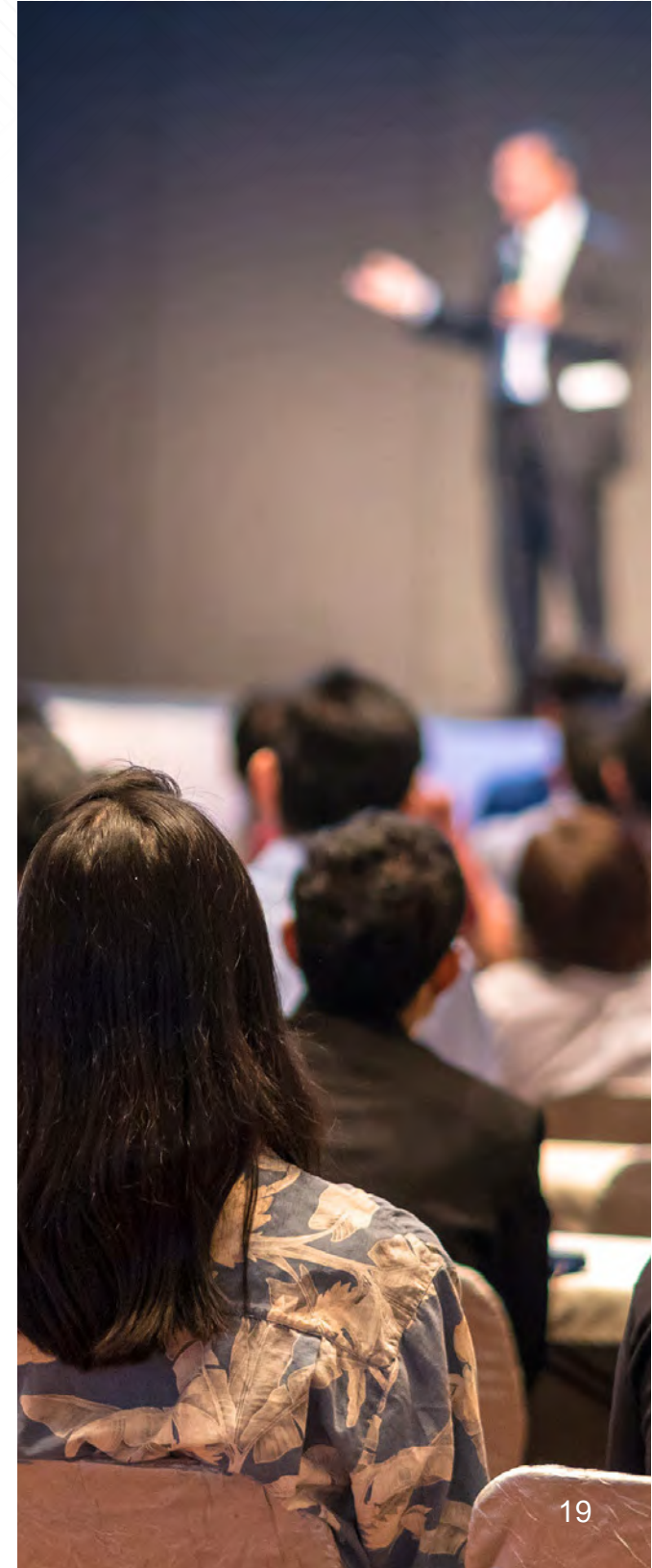
## Timeline

- One to two months before workshop
  - Secure and visit the facility/space
  - Begin recruiting participants
- Two to three weeks before workshop
  - Update training curriculum
  - Confirm participant list
  - Send out preparation materials to participants
  - Recruit volunteers
  - Arrange hospitality
- A week before workshop
  - Confirm with participants
  - Visit facility again, last minute technology/logistics check
  - Prepare curriculum handouts/packets for participants

## Community Participant Considerations

These are considerations for preparing the workshop and inviting community participation.

- Learn as much about the participants as you can beforehand.
  - Who are they? What's important to them?
  - Are they native English speakers? In what language will they create stories? Be prepared to allow more time for bilingual workshops.
  - Do they know each other? Get along? Work together?
  - What level of technology skills do they have? Are they artists? Poets?
- Familiarize yourself with the lab and computers ahead of time.
- Make sure food is taken care of. Hungry people are bad storytellers and listeners.
- Recruit a few volunteers from the participants' community who are prepared to be story coaches or help with errand running, at least one for each day.





## Equipment List

It is possible to conduct digital storytelling workshops using a broad range of equipment. While every group may have access to different software and hardware, the following is the minimum required to conduct a workshop. If you are working with a smaller group or on a one-on-one basis, you will be able to adapt this list accordingly.

### Hardware

- 8-12 computers with good internet connection
- One-two USB condenser microphones
- Projector
- Speakers for training computer (high quality, external)
- Good pair of over the ear headphones for facilitator

### Software

- Video Editing Software: iMovie, WeVideo, Vegas Movie Studio or equivalent
- Google Chrome installed on computers if using WeVideo

### Networking

- Websites needed for the workshop are unblocked

### Other

- Headphones and mouse for each participant

- Headphone splitters (so two people can listen together)
- Pens, papers, markers, flipcharts, masking tape, stickies
- Snacks, coffee, and water
- Tissues

### Space Requirements

- One large computer lab or room to spread out with laptops.
- Ideally a space large enough for 1.5 – 2 times the number of participants
- 1-2 small, quiet rooms for voiceover recording
- One room large enough to host a story circle (many computer labs don't allow for this) and ideally for lunch/snack breaks
- If this room isn't available for the whole workshop, priority times are the first morning for the story circle and the last afternoon for the screening

# Sample Workshop Series Agenda

This is an agenda that guides workshop facilitators and attendees through the digital story making and telling process.

## **Orientation: Introduction to Digital Storytelling ~ 1-2 hrs.**

- Icebreaker/Community building
- Why Story/ Digital Story as a Community Building Tool
- Sample digital stories
- Introduction to Story Development
- Debrief/Evaluation

## **Story Development ~ 3-4 hrs.**

- Introductions and welcome/framing and Icebreaker
- Story Circle
- Individual Work time (Revising scripts)
- Debrief/Evaluation

## **Script and Visuals ~ 3-4 hrs.**

- Check-In/Icebreaker/Community building
- Making it a Multimedia Experience: Why and How
- Individual Work Time: Finalizing scripts, storyboarding
- Debrief/Evaluation

## **Gather Media ~ 3-4 hrs.**

- Check-In/Icebreaker/Community building
- Digital audio tutorial and/or image tutorial (optional)
- Individual work time: Preparing images and recording voice
- Debrief/Evaluation

## **Basic Edit ~ 3-4 hrs.**

- Check-In/Icebreaker/Community building
- Individual work time: Preparing images and recording voice
- Multimedia Editing Tutorial Part 1 – The Basic Edit
- Debrief/Evaluation

## **Final Edit ~ 3-4 hrs.**

- Check-In/Icebreaker/Community building
- Individual work time: Rough cut video editing
- Multimedia Editing Tutorial Part 2 – The Final Cut
- Individual work time: Adding transitions and effects to final cut
- Debrief/Evaluation

## **Sharing and Feedback ~ 3-4 hrs.**

- Check-In/Icebreaker
- Individual work time: Final touches before exporting
- Screening, Debrief and Discussion, How to Use stories
- Final Feedback and Evaluation

## Participant Outline: Sample Pre-Workshop Communication

It is useful to let participants know how to prepare for digital storytelling. This is a sample outline of what to give them before the workshop:

- Welcome
- Introduction to digital stories / multimedia narratives
- Examples of digital stories / multimedia narratives
- How to prepare for participating
- Write down ideas from a prompt to generate ideas for a story
- Gather tools for making a digital story (laptop, Chrome, Internet, etc.)
- Gather content for a digital story (story outline, photos, music, etc.)
- Agenda - Days, Times, Topics, Assignments

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## Tracking Chart & Group Dynamics

*Be Aware of the Ups and Downs*

The process of creating a digital story has its ups and downs. The mood swings and implementation peaks and valleys are common in a collective cohort of storytellers in a multimedia production workshop. It's helpful to let folks know that they can anticipate starting off excited, feeling overwhelmed at some point, then coming full force into the home stretch as their digital story really takes shape. This is a lot of work!

Preparing and using a tracking chart is useful for noting accomplishments through the digital story making process. While it is another logistic step, it is a valuable way to support the socio-emotional experience of creating a digital story and positive group dynamics.

Creating a check-list chart, see Table 3, on poster paper to collectively track participants accomplishment can be helpful. Each time a participant successfully finishes a step in the process, they get to mark it down and feel a sense of gratifying accomplishment. This is also helpful for facilitators, so they know who might need some help.

**Table 3. Steps 1 - 4 digital story completions by participant, grid**

	Step 1 Prepare		Step 2 Gather Media		Step 3 and 4 Produce & Publish		
	Script	Story-board	Voice Recorded	Images Collected	Rough Cut	Final Cut	Movie Saved
Participant Name							
Participant Name							
Participant Name							
Participant Name							

# Digital Storytelling & The 4 Steps of the Process

A digital storytelling workshop starts with an orientation and proceeds through the four steps, outlined in Figure 1, page 16, and detailed workshop agenda above. Each step is written for the facilitator and team. Within each step described below is a description of the goals, materials, and instructions for the activities. It is designed to prepare workshop participants for each subsequent step towards completing and sharing their digital story. At the launch of the workshop, facilitators start with an orientation that includes introduction and background to digital storytelling.

## Orientation

### Introduction to Digital Storytelling

#### Goals:

- To create an atmosphere for learning.
- To introduce participants to digital storytelling
- To develop understanding of materials that contribute to strong digital stories.



The orientation, opening of the workshop, provides facilitators an opportunity to place digital storytelling within the context of the training goals identified prior to launching the workshop. The orientation specifically provides an opportunity for workshop participants to start creating their digital stories with shared definitions and understandings of how stories and digital stories can contribute to health and well-being in their community. The background section contains content for facilitators to develop their presentations and materials to reach the goals of the orientation session.

## Background

For digital storytelling the beginning point is a reflection on the power of stories to build community and contribute to community healing, health and wellness. The following are content, and activities titled *Why story? Why use stories to build community? Why digital stories?*

## Why Story?

**Goal:** To reflect on the power of stories.

### Story Quotes

As participants walk in the room, have them select one of a series of quotes that are either on the wall or the table. During introductions, each person reads their quote aloud and describes why they chose it.

### Sharing Stories & Shared Stories

Each participant takes a moment to think of a story they will share with the group. They will only have a few minutes to tell their story. Choose a topic that is relevant to the group's needs and interests. Examples include "My first memory", "A birthday story", "A story of a place in my neighborhood" "My most embarrassing moment". While you may wish to choose a theme more related to your organizational goals, it is helpful to begin the session with a topic that is easy and fun to present. After sharing the stories, discuss!

Possible discussion questions and points:

- What happens as you begin to tell your own story? How did you feel?
- How did you decide which story to tell?
- What happens as you begin to listen to others' stories?
- How do you currently use stories in your work? Formally or informally?

When we connect to other people's stories, we think of a similar story that we have experienced. We see what we have in common, and also how we may be different.

The following is a sample agenda designed to reach the goals of the session. Depending on the number of days scheduled to conduct the workshop, plan to create an agenda for each one that includes all activities for steps 1 - 4.

**Sample Orientation Agenda and Activities** - Identify a leader(s) who will lead each activity.

#### Introductions and icebreakers

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Icebreaker activity
- Purpose of workshop

#### Background - Why story?

- Choose one topic for participants to share a brief story orally.
- Discuss and debrief storytelling process
- Why digital stories?
- Show a sample digital story

- Present background of the digital storytelling movement
- Why digital storytelling for public health?
- How have other community efforts used the story?
- Your organization's workshop goals

#### Story Development

- The Elements of Storytelling
- Story Structure

#### Closing

- Review schedule
- How to prepare for the next time



## Why Use Stories for Community Building?

**Goal:** To reflect on the power of stories created in community.

Throughout history, story has been used to teach, to entertain, to express, to advocate, and to organize. It is through the sharing of stories that communities build their identities, pass on traditions, and construct meaning. Community building efforts use stories to remember the past, to understand the present, and to imagine the future.

**Stories can surface knowledge and leadership:** In the context of low-income communities and communities of color, stories are often the primary resource that individuals bring to their work. Community workers may not have financial or technical resources, but they do have a wealth of experiences, wisdom, and beliefs. Through telling our stories we learn their value. Through telling our stories we learn to see ourselves as actors with a role to play in our communities.

**Stories build community:** Both internally and externally, stories can connect individuals to others who share their experiences and generate the ability of individuals and organizations to act. One goal of community building is to become part of someone else's story, to have their story become part of you. It is through the act of sharing out that we realize that our stories are interconnected with others.

**Stories create conditions for change:** Relationships built through story enable individuals to think differently about themselves and about their capacity to act both individually and collectively. We tell stories as evidence of our work to galvanize energy, to raise funds, and to educate. As Paul Loeb writes in *The Soul of a Citizen*, "The more that we tell and retell stories of our commitments, the more we can strengthen our hope."

Ultimately, stories are democratic. Storytelling fosters participation, dialogue, and voice— essential tools for social change organizations to articulate and communicate their work.



# Why digital stories?

## Goals:

- To explore the role that media plays in storytelling.
- To review the history and background of the digital storytelling movement.

Show a digital story to the group

Ask participants: What did you notice about this medium?

## Background on Digital Storytelling

How it began- Center for Digital Storytelling (Now StoryCenter) began in the early 1990's. It was an outgrowth of Next Exit, pioneered by Dana Atchley who partnered with Joe Lambert. They recognized that a shift in technology provides us with opportunities to create powerful pieces with sophisticated tools (StoryCenter, n.d.)

Why it began – The methodology is grounded in popular education and people's theater, community documentary work. It's not just telling a nice story but validating the perspective that each of us brings. Ultimately, technology is just a means to tell the story.



## Digital Stories and Media Literacy

- Understand the shift from being a “consumer” of media to a “producer” of media.
- Identify this organization's purpose for digital storytelling.

Digital storytelling is grounded in a national and international movement started by people who believe that we don't have enough opportunities to tell our own stories and that certain groups' stories are deliberately left out from mainstream media. Over the past few decades, while tools to create media have become more and more accessible, media consolidation has grown, meaning that fewer companies own television, internet sites, newspapers, radio, etc.

Possible discussion questions/activities:

Participants can cut out images from magazines and sort them into two piles representing:

- What stories are told about your community?
- What stories would you like to talk about and share about your community?



Across the world, community-building involves digital storytelling for:

### **Reflection**

Due to the pace and intensity of work in the Local Health Department, there are few opportunities for built-in reflection, documentation, and evaluation. Digital Storytelling provides organizations with both the opportunity and permission to be reflective—simultaneously serving as a tool for organizational and staff development, teambuilding, celebration, and learning. Program staff and participants have a chance to step back, communicate their vision visually, and articulate a clear and coherent storyline about their work. They discover, craft, and refine their stories of successes and challenges.

### **Seeing Through Another Lens**

Through the process of creating digital storytelling—seeing through the lens of the camera, editing their own voices, and creating symbolic representations, participants come to understand themselves and their communities differently. The multi in multi-media allows participants and organizations to recognize multiple expressions, layers, and values that guide their work. Digital storytelling also provides groups traditionally disengaged from technology with a meaningful context to gain critical technical skills.

### **Teaching Multimedia through a Meaningful Context**

As the digital divide (the lack of access in disadvantaged communities to technology skills and resources) continues, we are faced with a challenge: How can we provide access and use of technology in meaningful ways? Digital stories provide organizations with the means to teach valuable and essential technical skills while supporting self-expression and communication.

### **New Products**

While the process itself can serve as a critical tool for evaluation and reflection, digital storytelling also provides community-building efforts with products they can use for outreach, organizing, fundraising, and documentation.

Following an orientation to digital storytelling, facilitators will take workshop participants through the four steps to create their digital story.

# Step 1 Prepare: Story Development and Planning

The first step for digital storytelling is creating a story. The story development components of the workshop include elements of effective digital stories (i.e., building blocks), narrative structure, prompts for storytelling, story circle, script feedback and storyboarding. The materials shared in this section are intended for use in creation of learning materials and demonstrations during the workshop. Refer to Appendices A and B for public health story prompts and digital story examples.

## The Building Blocks

### The Elements of Effective Digital Storytelling<sup>1</sup>

**Point** - This is your chance to convey a message from you and only you. Why are you telling this story? You only have a few minutes here, so your message needs to be clear. Is there something you want your audience to feel, think, and do differently after seeing your story?

**Voice** – Our voice is like our fingerprint. It's ours and makes us unique. Use your own language, your own rhythms. Let your voice carry the story. That's what makes it special. We write the story to practice and record it, but, in the end, digital storytelling is an oral form. Don't worry about spelling or grammar here, write the way you speak.

**Emotion** - Remember, stories work best when they come from the heart and not just from the head. How do you feel about the story that you're telling? How can you express that feeling through pacing, word choice, sound, or images? Emotions are a key way for your audience to feel invested in and connected to your story.

**Change** - All stories are ultimately about change. Without tension, without problems, without contrast, there is no change. How did you or your community address a need or desire? We can't understand the impact of a successful project or action unless we understand what things were like before. What changed in your story? Why?

**Details** - It's the small details that make stories universal. As you are writing, think about your senses, bring us to the moment, what did you smell, hear, taste. Try to include direct dialogue. All those details make your story come alive.

1. adapted Lambert, J. (2013).

## Narrative Structure:

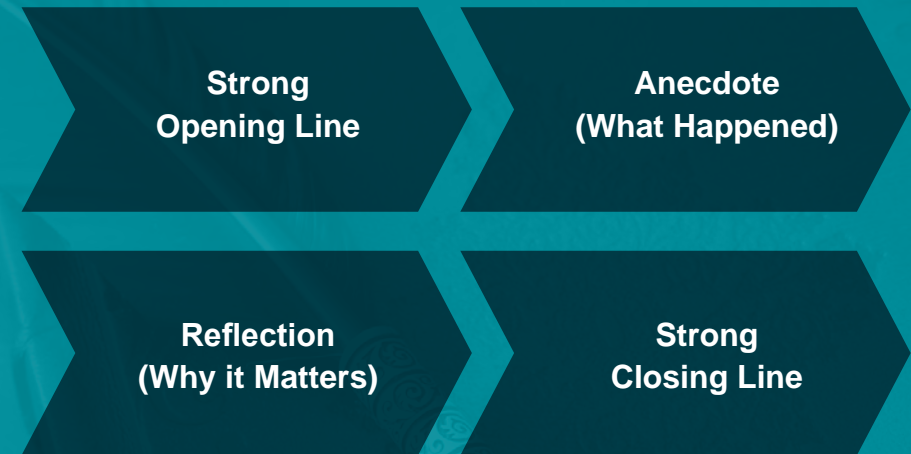
There are so many ways to structure a story. Many of these ways may reflect cultural values or practices. We will refer to just a couple of examples in Figure 2, below, and in the appendix. The important thing is that the story takes us on an intentional journey. A story is not just a straight line that takes you from Point A to Point B.

Think of a story as an arc, with a beginning, middle, and end. It moves along with a life of its own. Most stories are driven by a question that is very important to the author. The process of telling a story is a response to that question.

- In the beginning, your job is to set up the story, to give the viewer a sense of what your story is about and why it's important. You might pose a question or present a problem that will be explored throughout the story. Many stories begin, "I used to..." We know that this story will reveal what is different now.
- The middle is where your story unfolds. You might give some background, discuss your struggle with this problem or question, and convey why you think it is important.
- In the end, your story does not need to resolve the problem or answer the question. You can leave the viewers asking themselves about this issue. You do, however, want to somehow connect the story with how you set it up in the beginning. However, don't feel compelled to wrap things up neatly.

Figure 2. Narrative sequence example - Story Flow

### A Simple Story Structure



Source: SDCN, 2023. Source: Glass, I. (n.d.)

### The Foundation: Anecdote plus Reflection

All stories are essentially composed of two basic elements: an anecdote, an example or grounding experience, and a reflection on that anecdote, why it matters.

We've found that starting with these two elements to be very effective for participants. Some have their message and just need to figure out the most effective way to illustrate it. Others have a great story and need to summarize why it matters.

## Getting Started - Choosing a Story

Most of us cannot just sit down and quickly write a story. We need a little help, a bit of guidance with where to start. The following are activities that can be used to prompt initial drafts, or revise sections of stories.

- **Sentence Starter/Prompts:** These can be anything, “I am...” or “I come from...”. Have them write the first few words and continue for five minutes.
- **Looping:** Choose one sentence from the above exercise and write that on the top of a clean sheet of paper. Then write for another five minutes using that sentence as a starting point. This can go on indefinitely!
- **3x5 card:** Give each participant a 3x5 card and ask them to write their whole story on it. This forces people to figure out what's important.
- **Objects:** Bring a thing that is important to you. Talk about it first, then write about it.
- **Visual prompts:** The instructor brings in a pile of assorted visuals. Each participant must choose one and discuss why they chose it. What does it make you think of? What's in the photo? What's NOT in the photo? Alternatively, participants can bring their own photo and tell what happened before, during, and after the photo.
- **Visual maps:** Each participant draws a map of his/her community, life, neighborhood, school, etc. They jot down notes/sketches based on a memory for each location.
- **Timeline:** Each participant draws a timeline of his/her life. Put three high points and three low points (above and below line) For a year, for your whole life, etc.
- **Your life in a minute:** Participants have exactly one minute to tell their life story! This forces prioritization and condensing big ideas into short explanations.



Once the workshop participants have identified and spent time creating or developing their story, convene them into a circle to share for reflections and feedback. The following story circle and giving feedback materials are designed to facilitate a safe, generative space for sharing and further developing each person's story and script. Please refer to Appendix C story development worksheets for story planning and coaching prompts.

## Sample Script <sup>2</sup>

### “A call for action!”

By Liz Rabago

I was at El Rio for an annual heart checkup, and they told me I had to take time to grieve for the different losses I’ve had. I knew my divorce was well planned, losing my job was out of my control, the death of my nephew impacted me, even though I loved him, we were not close.

My brother was a different story, but I was dealing with that loss in a different way. He was a construction worker and died from COVID. I kept going on and on with different reasons why I did not have any grieving to do. The questionnaire was just a formality. I wasn’t dealing with depression or anxiety. I was in denial and was deciding to continue living my life as usual.

Then, I had a radical awakening. I want my grieving process to be purposeful. I want to honor my brother’s death with action. I want to help others in vulnerable situations to have the resources to make different decisions.

My brother was divorced and split custody of his three girls. My mom helped with childcare. I wanted him to quit his job and take care of himself. He reminded me he was the main provider for his girls and my mother’s income.

I wonder . . . what would have happened if my brother had been financially stable? Would he still be with us?

Some of my family members were more vulnerable to the pandemic than others. Some of us could stay home and others weren’t fortunate enough to do so. They had different choices to make. Money plays a big role in our decisions. Some of us are the main and only supporters of our families. If we don’t have an “emergency fund” we are more vulnerable when making decisions.

Our community is vulnerable. People under the federal poverty line were having challenges before COVID-19. The pandemic brought it even more to the surface.

I wonder . . . what it would be like to have an empowered community and strive to be financially independent. This is the time to get serious, Tucson! About reducing the poverty rate! I’m part of an initiative to reduce poverty in Pima County. Join me!

***Keep in mind: Scripts are typically most effective around 300 words to 350 tops!***

2. sample story from Stories for Change <https://storiesforchange.net/>

# The Story Circle

## Goals:

- To build community within the workshop through story.
- To develop listening skills.
- To learn how to give and receive feedback through story development.

*“In re-gathering for the group script review, our approach is to mix the designation of who should be asked to share their script or story ideas with encouraging volunteers...When each participant has the floor, as facilitators, we make sure we engage them with our own eye contact, as well as bring the other participants into the group process by drawing their eyes (and ears) into the conversation.”*

~ Joe Lambert (Lambert, J., 2013)

After a brief introduction, everyone reads a draft of their script and gets feedback. We typically allocate about ten minutes per story. Please refer to Figure 3, below, for suggested ground rules and guidelines.



## **Figure 3. Guidelines for leading story feedback activity** Ground Rules/Guidelines

**Respect** - The story circle is a sacred event. How often do we have a chance to sit and really listen to each other’s stories? Please turn off cell phones, refrain from reworking your own story while others are speaking and give each storyteller your full attention.

**Confidentiality** – What’s said in the circle stays in the circle.

**Step up, Step back** – As facilitators we encourage participants to be aware of how much feedback they’re giving, to participate if they’ve been quiet, and to step back if they’ve been chatty.

**No disclaimers!** – Participants often preface their story with, “I think this is boring but...” “I wish I had more time to prepare but...” Not allowed.

**Jazzy Hands** – If you agree with something somebody has said, just wave your hands in the air. This provides some levity and avoids people repeating the same comment in their own words.

**If this were my story** – Ultimately, the decisions about which way to guide the story rest in the hands of each storyteller. One effective way we’ve found to give feedback is to frame your comments with, “If this were my story...”

*Source: Creative Narrations, 2000.*



## Giving Feedback

Many new trainers are intimidated by the idea of helping people craft their story. Remember, there is no wrong or right way to tell a story. Your job as a facilitator is to support the storyteller to craft their script into something that feels right to them in communicating their message. We typically work in three stages of feedback. Please refer to Appendix C story development worksheets for story coaching prompts.

### Script revision

Digital storytelling trainers and participants work in a community to ensure the story being developed is the right one for the teller and the audience they want to reach. It requires asking the right questions and careful listening. Here are some tips on providing feedback.

# Tips for Providing Feedback

## 1 Clarify the Message

People often start with two or three stories, and our job is to help them figure out which one they want to tell during this workshop. Active listening can be useful, reflecting to people the different storylines you hear. These questions can help your storyteller reflect...

- What is this story about? What is the gist in one sentence?
- Why are you choosing to tell this story now?
- Who do you want to share this story with? How will that affect the way that you tell it? What is your desired tone?
- Is this the first time you've shared this story? How does it feel to say it aloud?
- What do you think is the most important part of your story?
- It sounds like...is this right? Is this what you wanted to say?
- How did this experience change you?
- Your voice/body language was expressive when you said...
- Where are YOU in this story?

## 2 How does it flow?

- Is a question answered? Is there a moment of change? When and How?
- What's one moment that you could begin the story from? Take us there.
- Is there a powerful line somewhere in the middle that would make a good first line, last line or title?
- Are there parts that are not vital to your message? Maybe those can be saved for another story.

## 3 Polishing the script

The last part to focus on is the specifics of wording, transitions, etc. Have the participant read the story aloud. They will recognize which parts flow well or which parts sound awkward. You might even want to type as they speak or ask them to jot down what they say immediately after they say it. Remember that what's important here is that it sounds good, not that it's spelled correctly!

- What images do you have in mind for your story? What could you show without telling with words?
- Where can you cut words that are repeated unnecessarily? Where can you use repetition to add a poetic element or emphasis?
- What might work as a metaphor in this story? (oral or visual)

While most digital story scripts are written ahead of time, it is not required. They can tell you their story, or practice recording it orally and listening to it, or lay out their images first, to help guide them through the storytelling process.

**Tip:** Have participants “score” their story by marking up a double-spaced script for emphasis, laughter, pause, etc. and remind folks not to worry about perfect grammar or spelling.

## Thinking Multimedia-ly

**Goal:** To learn and practice telling a story with imagery and consideration for representation.

**Questions:** What images represent our community(ies)? Are we painting a picture of our communities' strengths or challenges? How are we painting a different picture from mainstream media?

### Two Group Activities:

- **Insider - Outsider**  
Participants brainstorm (or cut out from magazines) a list of images that outsiders see or think of about their community. Participants then brainstorm a list of images that they believe more accurately represents their community.
- **Fact or Fiction**  
Instructor selects a series of images of their community to show participants. One wall is marked fact, another is marked fiction. After each image, participants walk up and stand at the wall that represents their stance on the image. Discuss after each image and present the option of mixed messages.



While participants brainstorm and/or cut images from magazines, revisit types of images and ways they may be used for effect in a multimedia story.

### Types of Imagery:

- **Representational Imagery** - An image that directly represents what you are talking about. For example, if you say, “I wake up at six every day to take my children to school”, a representational image might be a clock that says “six o’clock” or a school bus.
- **Symbolic imagery** - A symbolic image is an image that represents the mood or thought behind what you are saying. In the above example, a symbolic image might be a flower opening up, a yawn, etc.
- **Visual metaphors** - A visual metaphor is a symbolic image, you can use it repeatedly to emphasize a point or to introduce sections of your story.

### How can we use visuals and images for context?

- Reinforce meaning or add different meanings
- Special effects, motion, titles, etc.

## Storyboarding

**Goal:** To understand what a storyboard is and create one.

### What is a storyboard?

A storyboard is simply a way of planning out the audio and visual components of your digital story. It can be done using a more traditional “blank storyboard” included in this packet, creating your own version, or simply jotting down notes of which photos to use next to your script. Another way to storyboard is to take all the photographs you plan on using and physically put them in order of the story, you can then figure out what you want to say as it relates to each photo. Please refer to Appendix D for the traditional storyboard template. Storyboards can also be drawn, created in PowerPoint or other software, or simply created using two columns in a word processing program, one with text and the other for the corresponding image. Table 4 is an example of storyboarding and connecting audio with images.

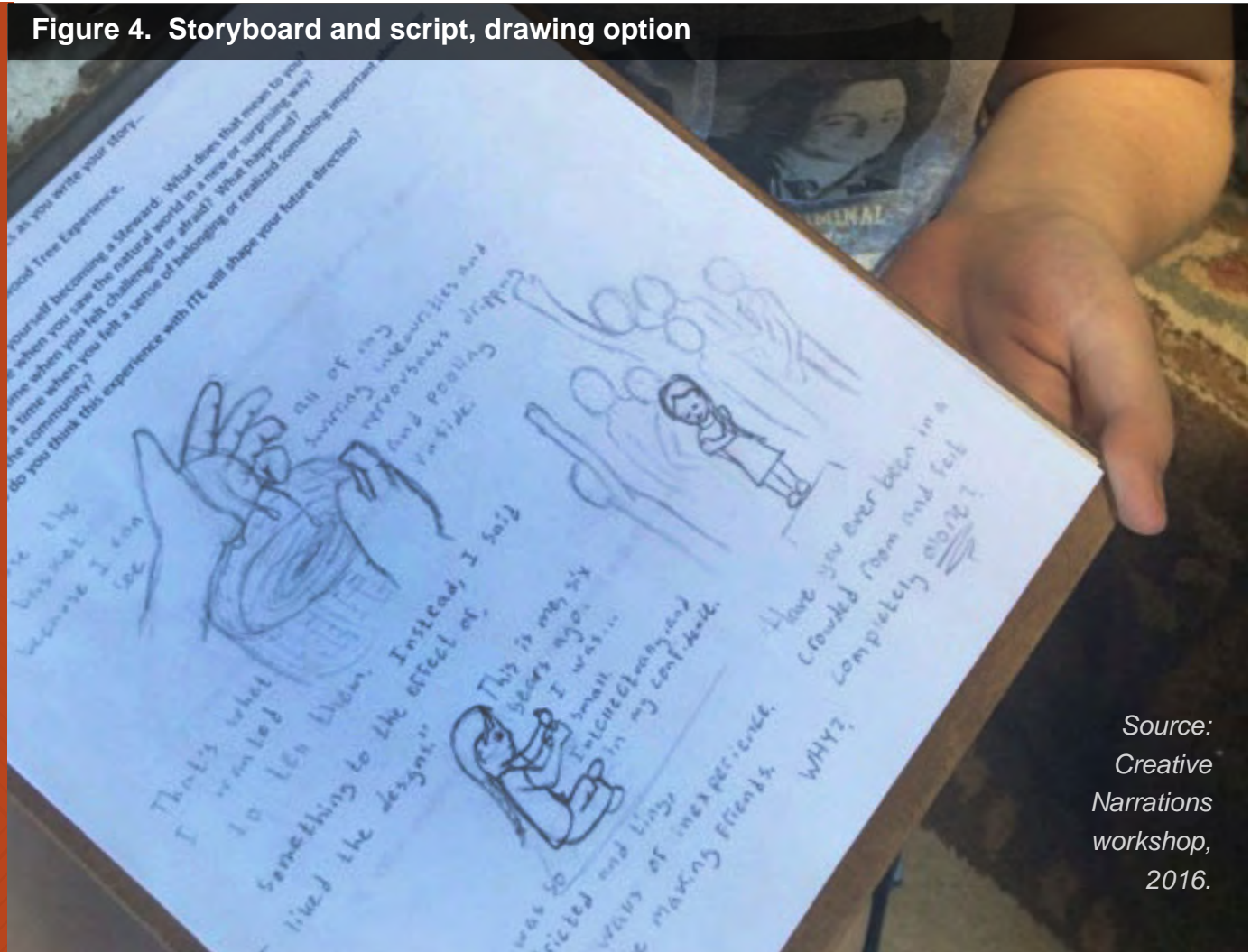


**Table 4. Lining Up Audio and Images, sample**

Audio	Image
I stopped and stared, it was peach colored, huge, and it was coming my way.	Peach, zooming in on the pit.
I could smell her perfume, Dior, like the entryway at the department store.	Slowed down video clip of perfume spraying.

**Figure 4. Storyboard and script, drawing option**

While this guide discusses script development before storyboarding, these can be presented in either order or simultaneously. Some people work better by thinking through their story with images, while others prefer to figure out what they are going to say first, then find images to represent their voice. Regardless of the order—the following are a few activities to convey the importance of storyboarding. Remember: Be Creative First, Technical Later!



Source:  
Creative  
Narrations  
workshop,  
2016.

### **Reconstruct a storyboard**

- Watch a digital story all the way through. Then, using poster paper and markers, construct a storyboard of the first 30 seconds. You can do this with commercials, movies, etc. It's a good way to get people thinking about all the different elements of video, and the planning that goes into the work.

### **Posterboard and stickies**

- Participants can use one color for audio and another for video. This allows people to experiment with different structures.

### **Group storyboarding**

- Break up the group into small groups and give each group the same paragraph to storyboard. This can be from a made up or actual script. Give each group 10 minutes to brainstorm all the different images they could use. Bring everyone back together to share and compare their ideas.

### **Symbolic vs. representational imagery**

- Discuss the difference between using images that are abstract as opposed to directly representing the audio. Your audio and video can reinforce each other if you want to emphasize a certain point, but they can also add complexity and subtlety to your story. This is often achieved by bringing together images that convey the emotion of what you are saying or images that contrast with what you are saying. Demonstrate some examples. Try the group storyboarding WITHOUT using representational images.

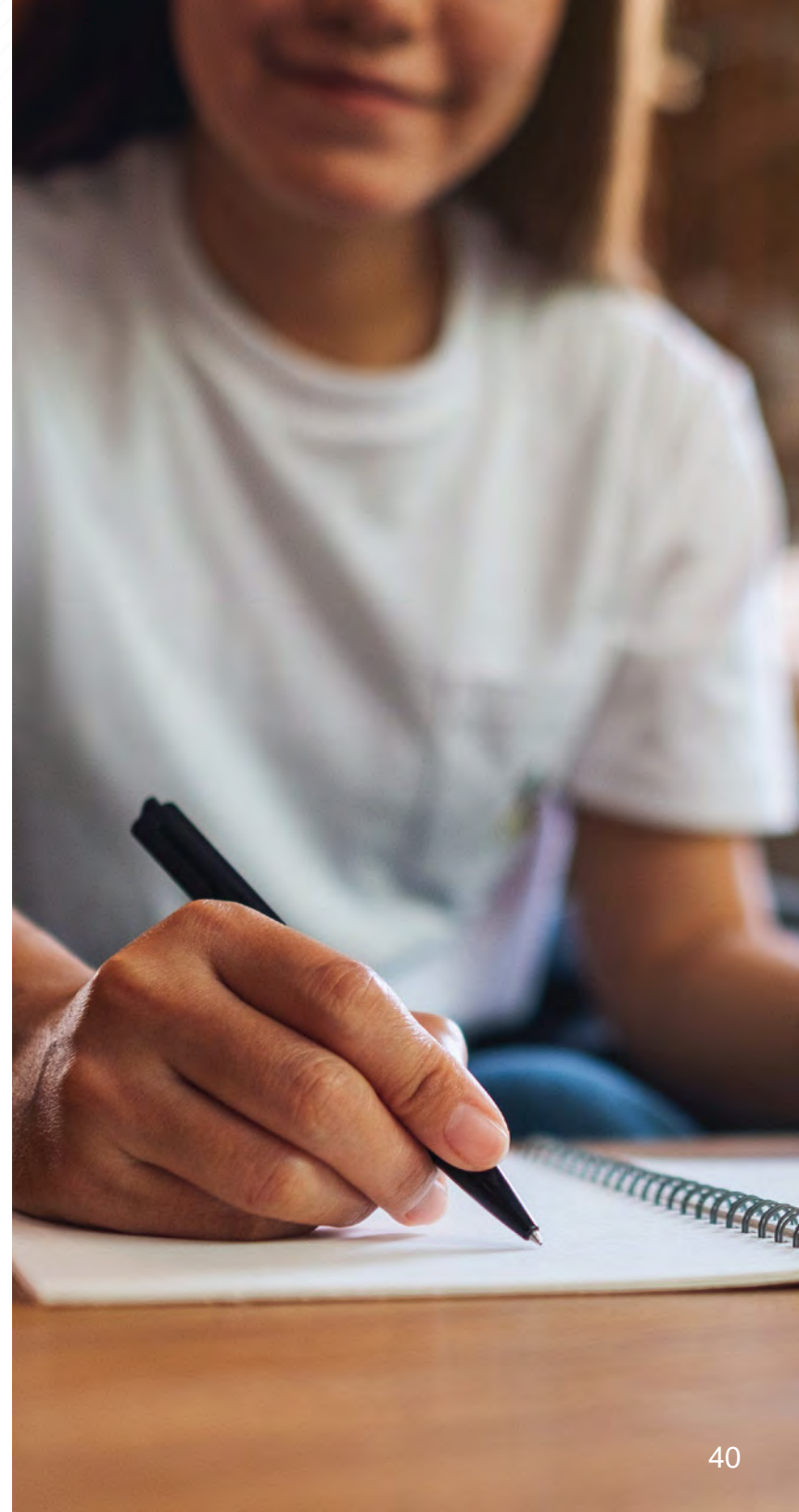
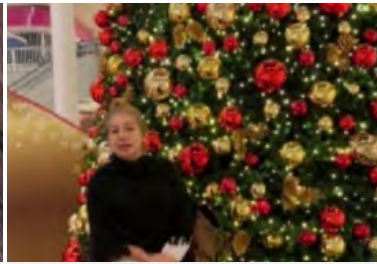


Figure 5, below, provides an example of a storyboard. Each square contains visual images aligned with the story lines. The number of squares is dependent on the digital story creators' vision for how the story is shared through imagery and script.



In December 2019, mom arrived from Colombia to spend the next 90 days with us...



We had a great time doing Christmas decorations, Christmas was my mom's favorite time of the year.



Two weeks later, very early on Christmas morning, my mom knocked on my door...



What? How? Why? We just spoke with Grandma a few hours ago!



My reaction was to comfort my mom, she had just lost her mom.



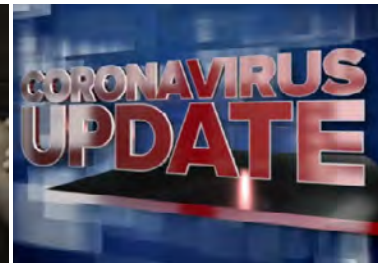
she was 2,918 miles away from home...



I think I immediately turned her into my little girl, she cried on my lap...



but this time was different, for the first time in my life I was her safe place!



Time flies and grief is hard! Covid is a pandemic now...



I'm panicked.



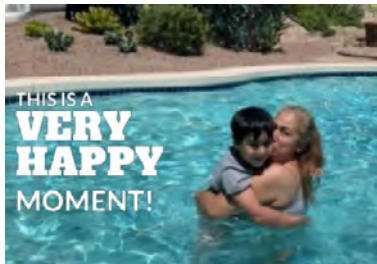
Is almost time for mom to get back home... I don't want her to leave...

Like a miracle, a week before her departure, Covid hit hard! Airports in Colombia shut down!...

I know thousands of people are dying every day around the world...

I know people need to travel but I'm just happy my mom had to stay here!...

In 2020, I saw my mom having a great time, especially sharing with my son, playing ...



wait...what? Is she playing...

What a happy moment!

Mom ended up staying 347 days with us...

playing like we couldn't when I was little, because she was a single mom, working multiple jobs, tired...

Thanks for playing in the pool with my son, mom!

## Step 2 Produce: Multimedia Gathering and Editing

The second step for digital storytelling is multimedia gathering and editing. All the media that participants have gathered for their digital story needs to be uploaded/imported into a video editing software program. The materials shared in this section are intended for use in creation of learning materials and demonstrations during the workshop.

### Audio Recording

**Goal:** To learn the role of voice in carrying a story and the technical aspects of recording voice digitally.

**Review the process of recording voice.**

Recording voice requires a private place with minimal background noise. Each participant will, on a one-on-one basis, go into the “recording studio” and record their voiceover.



## Tips for recording voice:

- Practice! Read your script through a few times. Mark it up if you like to indicate pauses, emotions, etc.
- Double space the script and don't have paragraphs go across page break.
- Watch out for paper rustling. If you must turn pages, stop reading, rustle all you want, stop rustling, and then start reading again.
- Pauses are easier to cut out than to add. Feel free to take long breaks and breaths between paragraphs, or, occasionally, between sentences.
- If you mess up, just start over from the beginning of the sentence.
- Keep close to the microphone and make sure you don't move back and forth during recording. Speak directly into the microphone and sit up tall! You may need to put the microphone on a phonebook or adjust it so it's at the level of the storyteller's mouth. Try taping the story on a music stand or monitor so the storyteller doesn't have to look down.
- Be aware of background noise. Turn off fluorescent lights, phones, A/C, fans, etc. Try to find a place away from street noise, etc. You'll hear the difference.
- It's ok to record in pieces. Record a few sentences at a time. If you do it this way, save the first as, "a. first few words" Save the second as "b. the next part" etc., so each file name begins with includes the first few words of the first sentence.
- Help get the person into their story. Sometimes people are intimidated by the microphone, and/or just want to get it done. Encourage them to remember what the story is about, imagine that they are speaking directly to the intended audience, etc.
- Bring in other voices. Laughter, singing, a child's cough... all of these can add a great deal to stories.



### Other Audio Notes

Voiceover Recording options include Audacity (free download, audio editing software,) recording directly into video editing software, or using an external audio recorder.



## Image Collection

- Encourage people to use images from their own lives – Our own family photo albums have a personal flavor that the internet can never replicate. Old faded photos, contemporary photos, etc. Remind people ahead of time to bring them in and enjoy sharing them!
- Think beyond photos – Letters, ticket stubs, candy wrappers, report cards, drivers' licenses, envelopes, the possibilities are endless.
- Bring in other image sources – Depending on the group, you might want to bring in magazines, art, or photography books, etc. related to their stories. People will borrow these from each other, and they can come in very handy! Keep copyright in mind.
- For the internet – watch out for small images! Images should be a minimum of 1000 x 1000. Make sure that people aren't downloading the thumbnails of the images instead of the full-size image.
- Use the same image more than once – Since people haven't gotten into editing yet while they are collecting their images, remind them that they can use different parts of the same image at different points in the story, or can zoom in or out/pan the image. They can also take the same image and use effects to create other images (i.e., make someone appear or disappear from a photo, change the name on a letter, date on a calendar, etc.)
- Have art materials around – Make sure to have makers, pencils, crayons, and paper around in case people are inspired to draw. Drawings add a lot to stories, and they don't have to be fancy!
- Use your smart phones or digital cameras, even during the workshop – Some of the best photos come at the last minute. Grab your phone, take some photos, see what works!



# Image Editing

**Goal:** To learn the Basics of digital image editing.

## Manipulating (altering) images:

Recording voice requires a private place with minimal background noise. Each participant will, on a one-on-one basis, go into the “recording studio” and record their voiceover.

There are many ways to change how our images look. You could use separate software (like photoshop) to do this, but most video editing software, including WeVideo, will have a simple tool to add image filters or adjust colors directly in your project to:

- Enhance your photo to make it look more natural. For example, if you took a picture of your garden, and you remember the sky being lighter and bluer than appears in the photo, you can alter it to look like you remember it.
- Alter reality! Make it look less natural, less like it was when you saw it. For example, if the sky is as you remember it, but you want it to convey a sad feeling to make a point, you can make the image black and white, or blurry.

## Basics of digital image manipulation

- Pixels/Resolution- A pixel is a dot on your computer screen. The more the pixels, the higher the resolution, the fewer the pixels, the lower the resolution. A higher resolution means a clearer image.
- Image Size – The size and shape of your digital image.
- Cropping – Selecting a piece of your photo to use.
- Adjustments
- Brightness – The overall lightness or darkness of your photo.
- Contrast – The difference between lights and darks in your photo.
- If you are using a more sophisticated image manipulation software, you have greater control over your image.



# Introduction to Video Editing: The Rough Cut

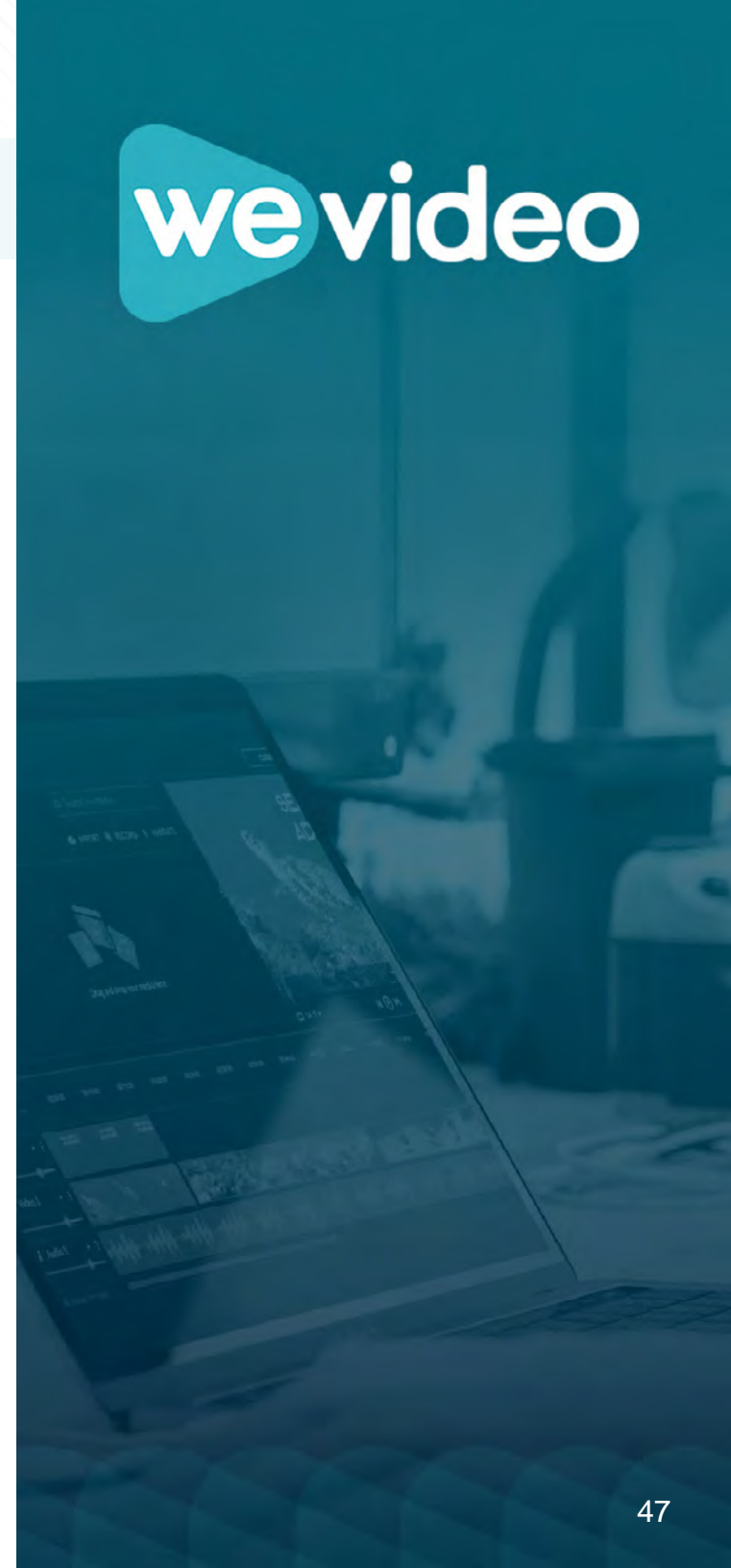
**Goal:** To learn the basics of multimedia editing and lining up visuals with the voice recording.

## The Basic Edit:

Participants will learn to create a basic edit, aligning their voice recording with their images. One cloud-based video editing software often used for digital storytelling is WeVideo. There are helpful tutorials on the [WeVideo](https://www.wavevideo.com/) website.

## Terms to be familiar with:

- **Rough Cut:** Creating the sequence of your audio and video. This involves lining up your images with the corresponding voiceover, but does not include any special effects.
- **Project:** A project is simply the way that multimedia editing allows you to organize and sequence your media. It is the list of instructions that you give the program to create the movie.
- **Track:** A track is a space for you to manipulate audio or video across time. You will be able to manipulate each track separately.
- **Clip:** A piece of video, audio, or a still image.
- **Frame:** Video clips are a series of still frames. There are 29.97 frames per second.
- **Timeline:** The timeline is where you actually do most of your editing. It lets you sequence your clips according to time.
- **Monitor:** The monitor is essentially your television, where you will watch your video as you edit.
- **Bin:** The bin is a storage area where you put the materials you will be working with when you edit.
- **Playhead:** The playhead lets you see the point in time you are working with in your timeline.





## Music

A soundtrack isn't necessary, but it can enhance the pacing, context and feel of your story. Often video editing software includes copyright free music to use in your projects. If you don't find what you need there, explore these other options:

- From the Internet- You can download mp3's from the internet and import them directly into multimedia editing software. It is also possible to download other audio files such as speeches, sound from other sources, etc. Make sure you have permission to use any music that you are downloading. One online resource is <http://www.freesound.org/>
- Live music or sound effects – Find a friend, bring along a guitar, or record directly into your computer as you did with your voiceover. Record sounds in the environment that add to your setting of your story: traffic, birds, or the sounds from a sports event. Be creative! There's nothing like your own customized music.

### **Copyright and Permission and Issues:**

*Please remember that when choosing images and music for your digital story, you should avoid copyrighted materials. If you do use other people's work, you should include them in your final credits and try to obtain permission.*



## Fine Tuning: The Final Cut

**Goal:** To learn how to fill in gaps, use music, titles, transitions, and other effects.

Select specific effects to illustrate. Participants try one of each during the tutorial, and then proceed to complete their stories.

- Title: Text on a screen.
- Transition: What happens between two clips. For example, a fade from one clip to another is a transition called a “cross dissolve”.
- Pan/Animation: An image pan or animation essentially creates the effect of your eye zooming in, out, or across a photo. Think of Ken Burns.
- Credit slide: At the end, acknowledging image/music/video references.
- Envelopes: Many programs include a line across the audio and video tracks that allow you to add points to adjust the volume (audio) or opacity (video) of the track.

# Step 3 Publish: Exporting and Sharing

The third step for digital storytelling is exporting and sharing the digital story. Materials shared in this section are intended for use in creation of PowerPoints and delivery during the workshop. Be sure to discuss permissions and storyteller rights before collecting media consent forms, as needed, refer to Appendix E for a sample release form.

## Exporting your project

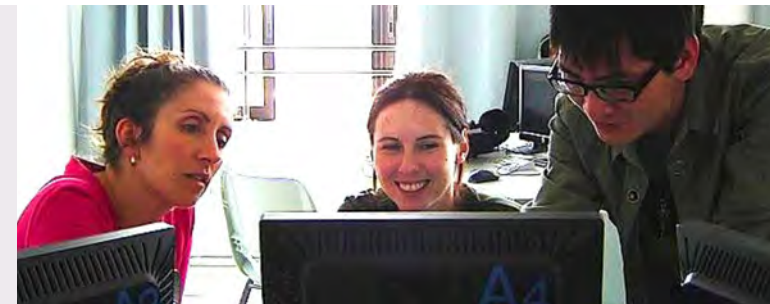
Exporting is when we take all the different pieces of our story - our voice, images, etc. - and combine it into one thing. After it is exported it becomes one video file as opposed to many pieces and can no longer be edited. You can, however, save your project files and all your media if you want to continue editing or create another version.

## Screening Workshop Stories

The finale of the digital storytelling cohort training series is the screening of all the movies together, in community. Participants are always thrilled to see both their own and others' final products. This is not a public screening, yet. This is a culmination of the workshop and a way for everyone in the class to preview their stories "on the big screen" and appreciate their hard work.

### Tips

- Begin telling people they need to finish at least half an hour before the absolute latest that they can finish.
- Send participants out of the room to take a break while you export and transfer final stories. When you are ready, invite them back in.



Showing people's finished stories for the first time can be a very moving event. Participants have worked so hard on their stories, and most likely feel that they aren't finished yet. It's important to take a bit of time beforehand to acknowledge both above points. It's also critical to test the equipment and make sure the final versions of all stories are saved onto the training computer to make sure that nobody's story gets left behind.

**Screening:** One at a time, each story is projected on a big screen with good speakers/sound. Each participant can say anything they like before the story is shown. Typically, we hold comments until after we've seen all the stories, at which point we open it up for discussion.

#### **Possible Discussion Questions**

- What did you expect? What was surprising?
- How do you feel about storytelling now?
- Who will you show your stories to now?

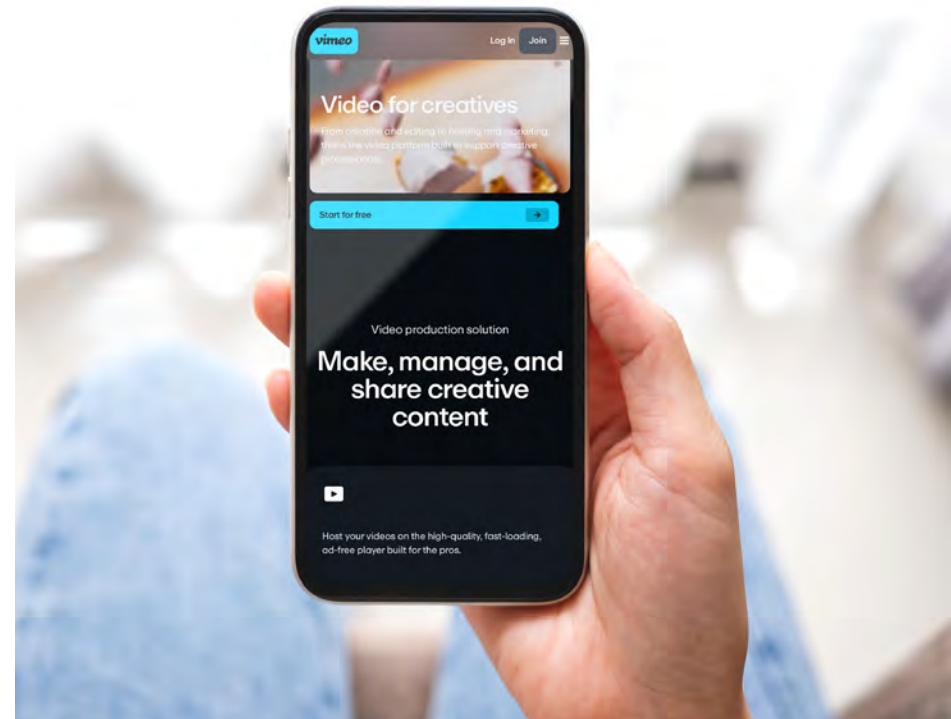


# Step 4 Promote: Distributing and Taking Action

The fourth step for digital storytelling is about planning how to distribute the digital stories created during the workshop publicly to promote change or action. The materials shared in this section are intended for use in creation of PowerPoints and delivery during the workshop. Want your story to reach people online? Here are a few places to publish your story.

## Online Media Platforms

- We all know [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) can attract millions of viewers. Just warn your participants that its licensing agreement gives Google/YouTube the right to use your video for promotional purposes, to re-edit your video, and other privileges, including placing ads on your video if you use anything copyrighted.
- [Vimeo.com](https://www.vimeo.com) is more geared towards independent media producers. It lets you keep videos private, so only people you invite can see them, but you are required to sign a licensing agreement like YouTube.
- Posting directly to platforms like Facebook, Instagram or Twitter means your piece can easily be shared and “liked” by your networks, but again, make sure to be aware of licensing agreements, which frequently change.



## Local Media

Partnering with local TV/radio, newspapers, and magazines can help promote screenings and raise awareness about important issues. What level of wider media exposure are you looking for with this campaign? Are there local TV, Radio or Print media partners you could work with? Please note any concerns to be aware of in terms of the presentation of the issue in the mass media and make sure you have all permissions/consents.

## Using Your Story for Change

After finishing the stories, there are a few activities you can do with participants to get them thinking about how they intend to use their story as a tool for change.

Consider the following as you decide how to use stories in the digital storytelling movement:

- Within communities - stories to preserve, document and heal. Often these stories are used to promote change at the individual level, also known as behavioral change.
- Among communities - stories for organizing, empathy, fundraising, within and among communities to organize and build coalitions.
- Outside communities - stories for advocacy can be aimed at an external audience. These stories can be used to influence decision-makers and funders to make policy, systems, and environmental changes.

Consider the following as you work on a “distribution plan:

- How will the story be viewed? Alone? With a presenter? In a group?
- Where can you share your story, possible venues? Who is the intended audience?
- What themes/issues are raised?
- Who will be potential allies in getting your story to your intended audiences online? Can they share links? Blog about the digital storytelling cohort? Promote the stories in some way?
- Who can you invite to a community forum or screening?

Consider the following when extending the learning and social change:

- What are different goals you have for showing these stories?
- Which stories might best support which goals?
- Will it be useful to develop accompanying materials such as background information, pre written postcards, or letters to representatives? If so, what information would they contain?
- Consider making a facilitator’s guide with questions to consider before and after watching the stories?
- What are possible action items to follow storytelling and sharing?
- If your story addresses a specific topic, what additional information that represents current efforts to address the problem can you bring?



### **Problem Posing: Possible framework to use for discussion**

Stories are a good prompt for discussion. One tool of participatory practice includes allowing generative themes to develop among a group of learners or community members. The facilitator uses a “code” to prompt discussion, analysis, and action (Freire, 1978). A “code” can be a picture, a story, a song, a video, anything that brings up issues related to the group. In this case, the code is the story.

**Activity** - Group watches story. Facilitator leads the group through discussion with the following questions:

- What is happening here?
- How can we relate to this?
- Why is it happening?
- What can we do about it?

Facilitator takes notes as group brainstorms and analyzes potential actions they could take.



## **Sharing stories with decision-makers**

Stories can help the leaders and other people in power capture the deeper meanings of an issue – not just the logical argument. The meaning of the issue taps into our emotion and imagination and makes us care enough to work for change. Below are some key strategies to reach the hearts and minds of decision makers.

- The story is at the heart of it. Research shows that stories beat data. We will remember an interesting story while the numbers slip away. Start your meeting with a powerful digital or spoken story to draw in your audience to the topic, or use a story as the “clincher,” which brings together the data into a human shape.
- Less is more: Heaping on more stories, more statistics, and more requests of the decision maker will not necessarily help the decision maker understand more or commit more readily to help make a change. Choose the most powerful digital story, the most telling statistic or two related to the story, and let these sink in during the presentation while resisting the urge to pile on more information.
- Have a clear “ask”: What would you like these decision makers to do in response to your presentation? Ask them for a meaningful, manageable commitment.

## Sample agenda for a relational/community meeting with a decision maker.

### Introductions

- Rounds
- State the purpose of the meeting, the time available
- Go over the agenda

### Explore Community Issue with Digital Story or Stories

- Presentation of key stories (be ready with data/statistics that relate to the story as needed)
- Presentation of the policy issue you'd like to see change. Connect the issue to the story you have shown. Example: "The experience of X in this story really illustrates why we'd like to see this policy change in our community..."

### Reactions/Reflections

- Offer the opportunity for the decision maker to respond and ask questions. Example: "How do you see this issue affecting our community?"

### Commitment building questions

- Pose the questions that will encourage follow up, such as meeting again; give time for a response
- Ask more probing questions if you feel the responses were vague or evasive

### Summary and Next Steps

- Recap the main points of the meeting, highlighting the need for change
- Summarize the next steps with this person
- Thank the decision maker for joining you, and take a photo!

### Debriefing (after the decision maker has departed)

- What worked well in this meeting?
- What could we have done differently?
- What did we learn from this decision-maker?
- What are our next steps?



# Public Screening

## Worksheet 2. Public Screening Work Plan

**Create a work plan for screening stories- when, where, equipment needed, etc.**

Target audience: Who do you want to reach?

Goals: Why are you showing the stories to this group?

Location to view story: Where is the room? Is there a space to show stories?

Packaging/ Support materials: What curriculum materials, leaflets, and information do you need?

## Worksheet 2. Public Screening Work Plan

**Create a work plan for screening stories- when, where, equipment needed, etc.**

Technical Format: What technical constraints might they have? What is the best medium to show them stories in?

Follow-up: How will you follow-up with this group?

Feedback: How will you receive feedback on stories?

It's important to document how, where, and why you are using these stories. This is both for your own learning process and to include in funding proposals.

## Case Studies

The following case studies are shared during the digital story workshop by facilitators. These are examples of how digital stories can be used across a wide range of fields and purposes. The shared components of the digital stories are that they are individual and personal stories with messages that may be shared broadly among community members. Therefore, they may be shared collectively for community assessment, mapping, program development and policy making.

### *Mapping Our Voices for Equality (King County, WA)* *Digital Stories for Policy, Systems, & Environmental Changes*

MOVE was a grassroots community engagement strategy. The purpose was to empower communities to leverage digital stories and face-to-face organizing to influence policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change. MOVE's vision was for communities disproportionately impacted by policy decisions to have the capacity to produce, disseminate, and utilize culturally and linguistically relevant digital stories to increase equity (<https://www.facebook.com/MappingVoices/>).

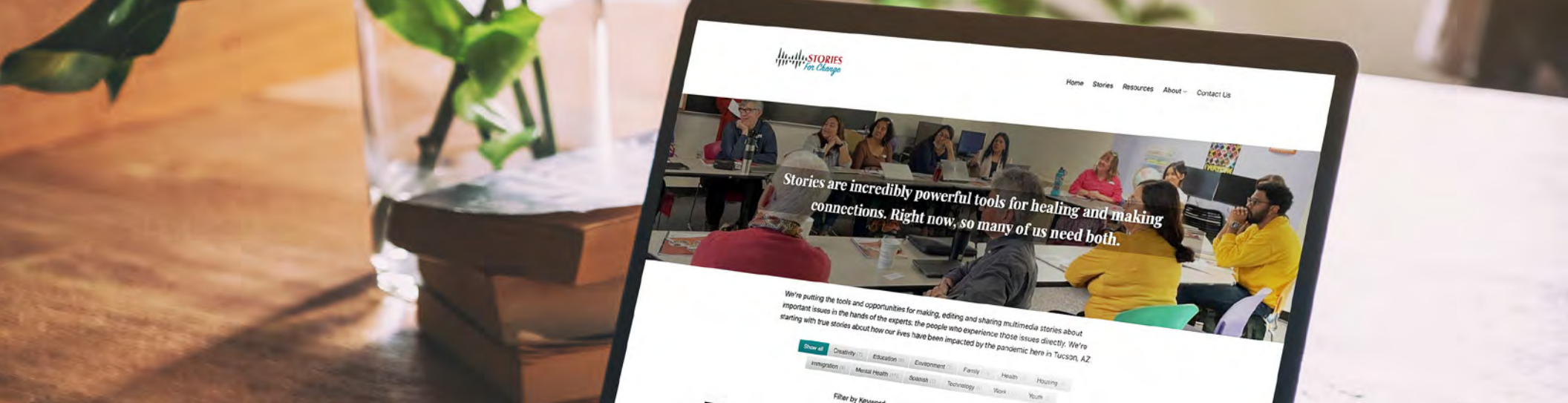
MOVE digital story facilitators worked with community residents to create stories that could be used to influence PSE changes by challenging storytellers to:

- Identify an issue in their community and tell a story that illustrates WHY there's a need for change.
- Tell a story that illustrates the RESULT or IMPACT of a PSE change.

For example, in Paulina's story, *You are What You Eat*, she explains the impact of living in a food desert on her family, and why there needs to be an environmental change. This story was shown at a community forum at a local elementary school and led to the decision of a local business owner (StockBox) to open a store offering fresh produce in the neighborhood. The story also influenced policy change. After seeing the story and meeting with local decision-makers, local parents and teachers worked together to improve school nutrition policy. You can watch Paulina's story at:

<https://vimeo.com/560509142>





Another example of a digital story being created to effect PSE change is Isabelle's story, Nubes de Humo (Clouds of Smoke). Numerous individuals have created stories demonstrating how they quit smoking; community health workers have found these stories effective tools to influence behavior change in others trying to quit. Isabelle's story, however, explores the need for a policy change to reduce secondhand smoke. She created this story to influence the City to improve its no-smoking policy at bus-stops. To view Isabelle's story, please visit <https://vimeo.com/560507825>

### ***Stories for Change - Creative Narrations ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funded project in Tucson AZ***

<https://storiesforchange.net/>

2020 brought the unexpected – COVID-19 – into our lives, and with it, changes and challenges we never imagined possible. None of us have been untouched by the pandemic; all of us have stories about our experiences. Stories for Change, a project of Creative Narrations, offered community members a chance to tell these stories in a multimedia, digital format with the support of facilitators. As participants reflected on their own and each other's stories, they built valuable digital literacy skills that will help them navigate the changing mediascape.

Stories for Change works to address the urgent need for more digital literacy resources, tools and creative training opportunities to help vulnerable populations bridge the digital gap that currently exists and has been magnified by the pandemic. Participants worked in classes to create their own multimedia, 3-minute first person digital stories about their personal experiences of the pandemic. They chose, told, recorded and edited their stories themselves. Discussion questions and classroom activities for further action were developed to accompany each story. It was a shared, interactive endeavor with opportunities to learn from and about each other. They learned that their stories matter not only to themselves, but to their wider communities.

## ***Digital Storytelling in Adult Education***

### ***Pima Community College Adult Education (PCAE), Tucson AZ***

When the state of Arizona threatened to cut all adult education programs, PCAE's Civics program sprang into action. Adult learners and educators learned to advocate for themselves and successfully restored funding at 100 percent. They created their first digital stories to document this victory, and to use as a training tool for civic engagement. PCAE has led many statewide trainings for other educators, student ambassadors and are national leaders in the field, and continues to be a supportive resource for digital storytelling among adult learners as they move forward in their college and career goals.

Adult Education Stories - [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrF\\_eQ5H6UAPtt9TqSQIUoA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrF_eQ5H6UAPtt9TqSQIUoA)

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## **Making Stories for Change: Equity Work**

Some storytellers may have a very clear vision of how they can craft and use their individual story to influence Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) changes. Others may need support. The following are tips we've found effective in helping storytellers broaden their vision around their story.

- **Be transparent about workshop goals.** Often people struggle with which story to tell. If they are participating in a workshop designed to influence a particular PSE change, make sure they understand what the story will be used for from the beginning. That can help storytellers narrow down and select a story that is the best fit for the workshop goals. Make sure that it's a story the storyteller feels comfortable telling publicly, as these stories will be shown broadly.
- **Use the model of Anecdote and Reflections, Figure 2.** While working on their scripts, help storytellers reflect on the message of their story to articulate their policy, systems, and environmental goals.

**Example:** *One storyteller's anecdote was walking through the neighborhood one day and noticing the new billboards advertising flavored cigarettes. She wrote, "I want tobacco companies to stop targeting communities of color so my policy goal is to get my neighborhood council to ban these billboards."*



- Make equity explicit. Challenge storytellers to include how their race or class background influences their personal story. That way, their story moves beyond the individual level to provide a context for health disparities.
- Incorporate one or two powerful statistics. Often, providing a carefully chosen statistic can provide a larger context for an individual story. We recommend using statistics sparingly, and in text at the beginning or end of the story as they often get lost if they are in the narration.
- Call for action. Often storytellers end with their own personal triumph or change. By concluding the story with a broader call for change, the storyteller is positioning himself or herself in a wider context.

**Example:** *One storyteller originally ended his script by saying, “This is why I love my position as a community advocate so I can help others navigate barriers...” He later changed the ending to, “As a community advocate, I work to implement policies that support equal access to health care for all.”*

Digital storytelling has been used widely across many disciplines and fields. As noted in Table 1 digital story workshops can be time intensive and will produce individual stories that are impactful when shared as a group. Photovoice is a second important tool for participatory multimedia narrative work that can be completed in a short period of time but can be equally effective for reflecting group or community level data and messaging. The following section will provide information to guide organizations, agencies, and community partners in developing a photovoice project.

# Photovoice Projects

PhotoVoice is a methodology widely used across many fields (e.g., education, health, social services) for research and practice (Gabrielsson & Asaba, 2022). This is a method of data collection and analysis through photography. Individuals take photos of topics or issues of importance to them and often of significance to their community(ies).

A photovoice project is adaptable to the timeline and project goals identified at the beginning by the organizations and community partners leading the project. Table 5 provides an overview of components to consider for project development.

**Table 5. Photovoice Overview**

Form	Purposes	Time	Group #	Product	Equipment & Space
Photovoice	Asset Mapping Identify Issues Policy Advocacy	Varies At least 4-5 2hr sessions	No specific limit	Photos, captions & policy recs shared digitally or exhibit	Camera Projector

The following contains information to guide facilitators in developing their photovoice project with community partners (SDCN, 2023; Schachter, J. 2023).

Figure 6 outlines the steps to include in a photovoice project. Facilitators are encouraged to refer to the participatory multimedia approach and digital story workshop sections of this guide and adapt timelines, agendas, and materials for use in step 1 and 2.

## Figure 6. Key components for photovoice projects

1. Select Issue(s) / Prompt(s)
2. Learn about Photography and Ethics
3. Take Photos of the Issue(s)
4. Discuss and Write about the Photos
5. Identify Common Themes in Photos
6. Share Photos and Writing with Community and Policymakers

## Selecting Issue(s)/Prompt(s)

Step one for photovoice is identifying the issues and prompts to guide participants.

Initial discussions to identify issues of importance to community members often start with reviewing statistics, prevalence, incidence, and trends over time on disease, health conditions, and social determinants of health for a community. A community group embarking on photovoice will consider the stories behind the numbers and lived realities of individuals, families, and communities.

These are examples to identify and explore issues for a project focused on public health:

- What are some things that contribute to your health and/or your community's health?
- What are some things that you'd like to change to improve your health and/or your community's health?



## Taking photos on a topic or issue

For step three, the following are tips and a brainstorming guide to orientate project participants to taking photos on the topic or issue.

### Tips

#### 1. Emotion

- Does the photo make you feel something? What does it make you feel?  
Why does it make you feel that way?

#### 2. Story & Theme

- Does the photograph tell a story and/or illustrate one of the prompts/themes you were addressing?

#### 3. Technical Issues & Composition

- Are there things in the background of the photo that are distracting?
- Is the photograph fuzzy or in sharp focus? Is the focus distracting?
- Is the photo too dark, too light or just-right?



## Worksheet 3. Photovoice Brainstorming

Name	Prompt
Themes	Images
1. What feelings do you want your photos to communicate to others?	4. What places would you photograph?
2. What people might you photograph? What would you want to show about them?	5. What actions/interactions or events could you photograph?
3. What things or objects could you photograph?	6. What details might you want to include in your photos?

# Examples of Photovoice and Community Arts Projects

Center for Performance & Civic Practice

<https://www.thecpcp.org/>

Wheat Paste Murals project, Tucson AZ

<https://tucsonmurals.blogspot.com/2012/01/youth-farm-project-covers-main-library.html>

[Photovoice wheatpasting project youtube video](#)

DACAmented Voices In Healthcare Photography Exhibit

<https://publichealth.arizona.edu/student-showcase/dacamented>



CENTER FOR PERFORMANCE AND CIVIC PRACTICE IS A NATIONAL RESOURCE FOR  
ARTISTS AND COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER FOR

**arts-based,  
community-led  
transformation**

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We are a national team of artists who believe that with the right approach, the same tools and capacities that artists use to make art can be utilized to transform systems and improve the impacts of government and community-driven efforts and programs.

# Conclusion

Applying participatory multimedia narrative approaches such as digital storytelling and photovoice within local health department systems strengthening efforts increases community engagement, collaboration, and validity of information being generated for application in public health practice. This is an important approach and tool for development programs and policies that address social determinants such as access to care, health systems infrastructure, environmental contaminants, access to education, food security, and social connectedness.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted this need and funding allocations are increasing local health department's ability to respond. Communities served by local health departments have the knowledge and lived experience to provide public health practitioners with the information needed across public health functions (i.e., assessment, assurance, and program/policy development). Digital stories and photovoice methods can provide quality quantitative and qualitative data. This guide provides step by step content and instructions for developing workshops. We encourage public health practitioners interested in health equity research and evaluation to consider integrating participatory multimedia narrative work into their proposals.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A. Story Prompts for Data Storytelling in Public Health

During the Data Storytelling training, we brainstormed public health issues around public health, thinking of both strengths and barriers in the community, presented in the figures below. From there, we created the prompts for the participants.

What are some assets in Public Health right now? (one word responses)

61 responses



What do you think is one of the most important issues in Public Health right now? (one word responses)

92 responses



Sometimes it helps to have a specific question to begin a story from. You may have questions that are specific to the goals of your organization, or you may want to keep the topic open. Images and articles work just as well to get the ideas flowing.

- A health event that taught you a lesson
- A time when you were healed
- A time when you experienced prejudice or stereotyping
- The best health advice you ever received
- A time when you helped somebody else
- A time when you were scared or felt misunderstood
- Your goals for the future, or hopes for your family or children
- Something special about your community

## Appendix B. Public Health Digital Stories

### Perspectives on Health:

Barb: Living a Good Life (indigenous perspective on health and wellness) <https://vimeo.com/447591902>

Epicenter: Kyla's Story (epidemiology and tribal/public health) <https://vimeo.com/235082643>

Bobby: A Good Start (diabetes and exercise) <https://vimeo.com/162864010>

Jee: I am Alright, My Son (language barriers) <https://vimeo.com/76605493>

### Food justice/security:

Daryl: My Food Justice story (urban farmer's market) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paPqBslydHM>

Lupe: Food Sovereignty and Healing <https://vimeo.com/822877825>

### Aging:

Roxane: My mother, myself (dementia and covid) <https://vimeo.com/787043099>

Kara: Limbo (family history, health anxiety) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAed1Spstnl>

### Youth

Adon: A Promise to Us <https://vimeo.com/743551852>

Crystal: Shake Up Our Community (youth, health, recreation) <https://vimeo.com/235079252>

### Cancer

Nancy: Snowflakes (cancer) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qD453V5adM>

Kathy: Understanding Breast Changes <https://vimeo.com/233943125>

### Environment:

Syndi: Breathe (air quality) <https://vimeo.com/132124926>

Maya: What the Water Gave me (cancer) <https://vimeo.com/154645884>

### Mental Health

Pilar: Growing up (covid and anxiety) <https://vimeo.com/778531835>

Shaylin: Keep going (trauma recovery and mental health) <https://vimeo.com/829582667>

### Addiction:

Renee: Where is the Help We Need? (treatment, voting) <https://vimeo.com/180662861>

Maureen's Story (tobacco) <https://vimeo.com/132899881>

## Appendix C. Story Development Worksheets

### Worksheet: Story Planning

The key to a good digital story is your script. As final pieces will be approximately two minutes, scripts should be about one page, double-spaced (300-350 words). The following steps may help as you're shaping your stories.

Step 1: We can think of stories as being made of two parts: a Point (message) and an Anecdote (an example to illustrate your message).

Think about yours:

Point –

Anecdote –

Step 2: Plan how to tell your story (a few sentences for each “C”):

1. **C**apture attention – This is your “hook”- Grab your audience with a question or a moment in time. Set up your problem here. It can happen quickly (1-2 sentences).
2. **C**ontext – Here is where you want to help your audience understand the context in which this problem has evolved. Give us a little bit of the background.
3. **C**onflict – Develop the problem or moment of tension here, what happened, what was the struggle? What needed to change? Was there a moment that stood out?
4. **C**limax / resolution - How was the conflict/issue resolved or not resolved? Why does it matter?
5. **C**onclusion - Call to the audience for action or further reflection. What changes would you like to see?

## Worksheet: Story Coaching Prompts

As a listener, there are some questions you can ask to help a storyteller reflect on his or her story.

### 1. Clarify the Message:

- Why are you choosing to tell this story now?
- What is your desired tone?
- Have you shared this story before? How does it feel to share it?
- It sounds like...is this right? Is this what you wanted to say?
- How did this experience change you?
- Your voice/body language was really expressive when you said...
- What is this story about? What is the gist in one sentence?
- Where are YOU in this story?

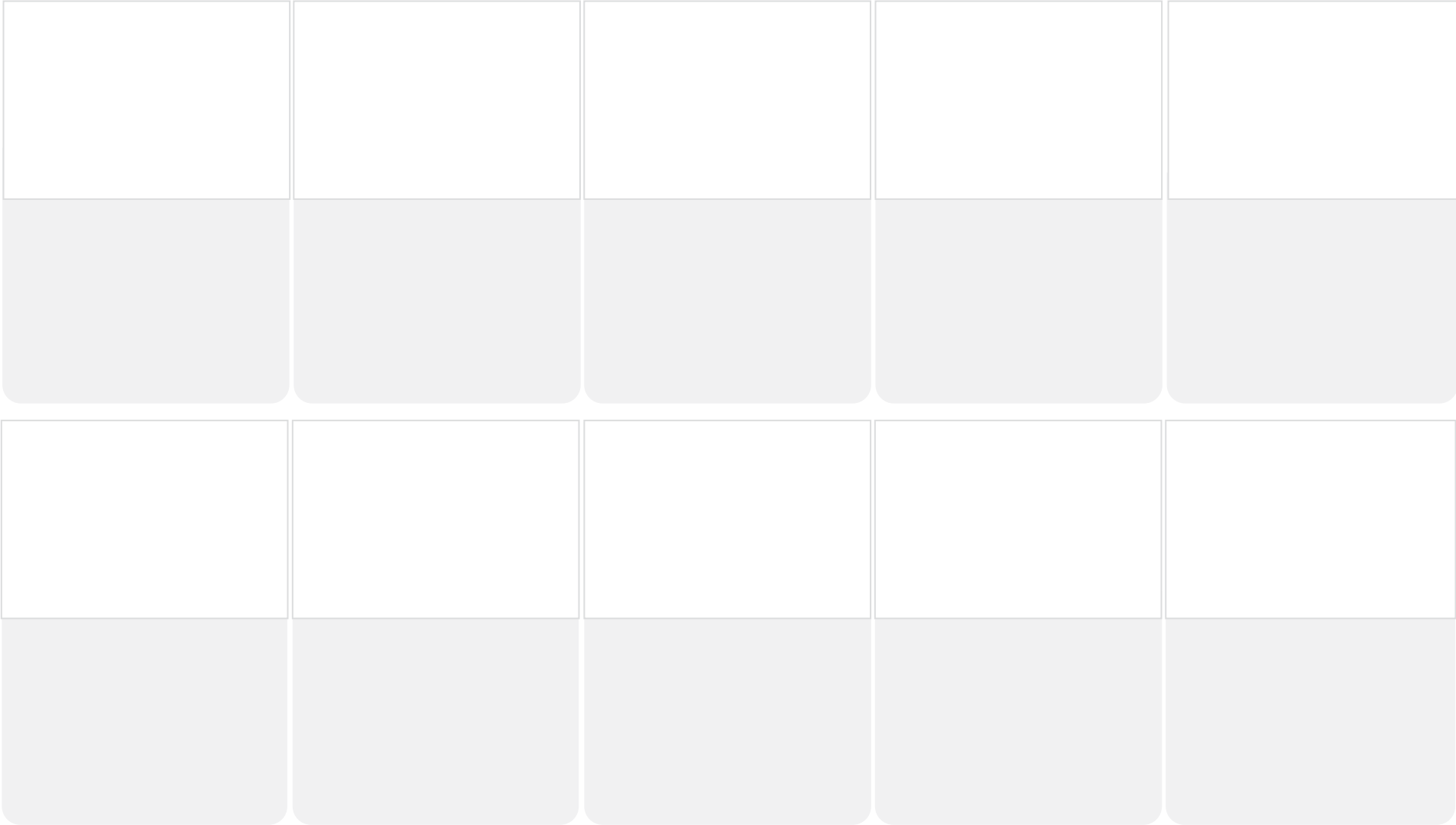
### 2. Work on the Structure/Flow:

- Is a question answered? Is there a moment of change? When and How?
- How is the beginning and end?
- Is there a powerful line somewhere to use as the first line or last line?
- What's one specific moment that illustrates -----? Take us there.
- Which parts are not vital to your message? Save for another story?
- Break your story down into shorter sentences. (better out loud)

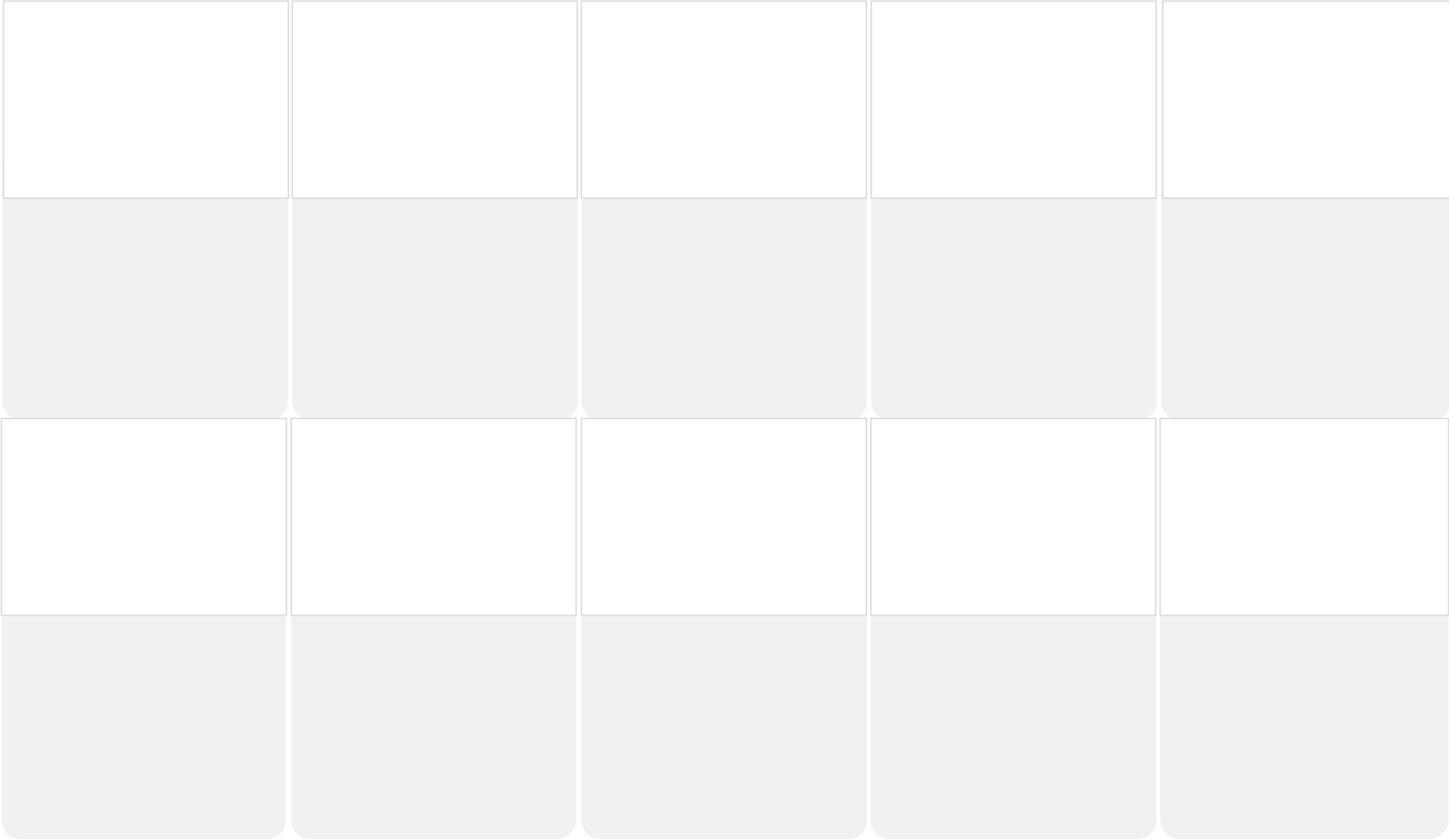
### 3. Fine Tuning:

- Where can you cut things that are repeated unnecessarily or that can be implied? (You don't have to say "I was so frustrated" ... we get it from the context and the tone of your voice.)
- Where can you use repetition to add a poetic element or emphasis?
- What might work as a metaphor in this story?

# Appendix D. Storyboard Template



# Storyboard Template Continued



## Appendix E. Release Form Sample

It's important that producers have control over how and where their stories are used. Make sure to get written permission, and modify release as needed (you can include options for stories being shown in workshops, online, etc.) If you don't have your own organization media release form, adapt this basic example:

I, the undersigned, \_\_\_\_\_, grant \_\_\_\_ (your organization) \_\_\_\_\_ permission to use my image, voice, and all or part of my final digital story project for any and all promotional, educational, and outreach purposes.

I understand that copies of my stories may be shown or given to \_\_\_\_ (your organization) \_\_\_\_\_ affiliates interested in the use of multimedia for education and community building.

I also understand that my story may be placed on the \_\_\_\_\_ website.

I know that I have the right to voluntarily enter into this agreement.

I release \_\_\_\_\_ from any privacy, defamation, or other claims I may have out of use of this story.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Story Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date