

APPENDIX C

Here is a section of my syllabus from my course Introduction to Production. The class met once a week for three hours. I devoted the first three class sessions (not counting the first day of class) to the digital storytelling assignment but that's not a requirement. You can do 30 minutes per class or per week, depending on your class organization and class meeting time.

MODULE 1

Overview - Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling is a short form of [digital media](#) production that allows everyday people to share aspects of their life story. The media used may include the digital equivalent of [film techniques](#) (full-motion video with sound), stills, audio only, or any of the other forms of non-physical media (material that exists only as electronic files, as opposed to actual paintings or photographs on paper, sounds stored on tape or disc, movies stored on film) which individuals can use to tell a story or present an idea.

I integrated digital storytelling into our class because you are all storytellers - that's what filmmaking is about. Everyone has a story, many stories. Working with writing, images and sound is one of the most satisfying ways to express yourself. The advent of easy to learn and free technology allows anyone to learn how to tell their story.

For class on Wednesday August 31, bring in a first draft in reply to the prompt below. Follow these guidelines. We will work on the stories during class time, but do arrive with your story in hand so you can jump in.

What do you want to say?

Who do you want to say it to?

Why now?

The story is in the "why" – why are you telling this story. We are travelling with characters into moments in time. Daniel Weinshenker of Storycenter borrows an aphorism from John Gardner when he facilitates storytelling workshops. All stories, they both agree, can really be boiled down to one of two types:

- 1) "A stranger came to town..." or
- 2) "We went on a vacation."

In other words, change came to you or you went towards change. These stories, in essence, fall into the widely used archetype of the symbolic journey, the journey of self-understanding.

Remember the Four Cs:

- **Connect** - 1-2 sentences that grab your audience, get them engaged with what you are about to tell.
- **Context** - 4 sentences of background – who are you, why this story, how does it fit into your life?
- **Change** - 2-4 sentences, insight, moment that made things move.
- **Conclusion** - 1-2 sentences - closing lines and/or picture that wrap it up.

12-18 sentences, approximately 4 paragraphs

Bring a picture that will be part of your story for an in-class exercise. We will set the pictures out and all look at them and write down what we see in your picture.

PROMPT – *What story do you want to tell? What do you think it means?*

A story about someone important – character, memorial

A story about an event in your life – adventure, accomplishment

A story about a place in your life

A story about what you do

Recovery stories

Love stories

Discovery stories

MODULE 2

Why this story? Why now?

For our next class, please bring your written narration and 20 or so photos or visual images (moving images are okay, too.)

In our next class, Lindsay and I will be checking your written work and we will also be recording everyone's narration. If you would like one of us to review your written narration before class, just email us. You can send it to either of us, it doesn't have to be the one who led your group.

Bring your laptop if you have one. Or we can set you up in the lab next door so you can start working on selecting photos and putting together your piece with the narration.

We will also give a tutorial on using WeVideo, the free cloud-based editing software, to those who would like to use it.

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7 Steps of Digital Storytelling

The following is adapted from Lambert's Digital Storytelling Cookbook (2010) with some direct quotes where appropriate.

SEVEN STEPS

Step 1: Owing Your Insights

We want to help storytellers find and clarify what their stories are about. We often start with the question: "What's the story you want to tell?"

Step 2: Owing Your Emotions

To help storytellers identify the emotions in their story, we ask a series of questions regarding their process: "As you shared your story, or story idea, what emotions did you experience?"

Step 3: Finding The Moment

We want to help them tell their story as a story by identifying a single moment that they can use to illustrate their insight. Is there more than one possible moment to choose from? If so, do they convey different meanings? Which most accurately conveys the meaning in your story? Can you describe the moment in detail?"

Step 4: Seeing Your Story

Because we help storytellers share their stories in the form of a digital story, we also want to look at how the use of visuals and sound bring things to life for the audience. "What images come to mind when recalling the moment of change in the story? What images come to mind for other parts of the story?"

Step 5: Hearing Your Story

The recorded voice of the storyteller telling their story is what makes what we call a "digital story" a digital story—not a music video or narrated slideshow. "Beyond the recorded voiceover, would the story and the scenes within it be enhanced by the use of additional layers of sound? Would the use of ambient sound or music highlight the turning point in your story?"

Step 6: Assembling Your Story

At this point in the process you have found and clarified what your story is about and how it sits with you today. You have also established the overall tone you want to convey. "How are you structuring the story? And, within that structure, how are the layers of visual and audio narratives working together?"

Step 7: Sharing Your Story

Therefore, it is important to take time now to revisit the context in which the story was initially described in order to determine the relevant information to include when the story is being shared. To help storytellers do this, we ask: "Is audience? What was your purpose in creating the story?"

"Modern digital editors offer a plethora of special effects and transitions. It can be tempting to replicate the visual onslaught of music videos on MTV. We have found that the effective digital story uses only a few images, a few words, and even fewer special effects to clearly and powerfully communicate intended meaning."

Bull, G. & Kajder, S

RESOURCES/WORKS CITED

Sample stories; <http://www.storycenter.org/stories/> (

Bull, G. & Kajder, S. (2004). Digital storytelling in the language arts classroom. Learning & Leading with Technology, 32 (4), 46-49

http://paws.wcu.edu/ncluke/digital_literacy/sevenelementsdigitalstory.htm#2010

Check out this link for background on the digital storytelling movement: <https://youtu.be/2hcf1WwVJPc>

MODULE 3

We used this session for final editing time. Students really appreciated having time allotted for this, since their lives are so busy, it's hard for them to find sustained time to focus on their digital story.

We screened the stories at the start of the fourth class session, since they are short and it doesn't take a long time. You do want to have time for feedback on each story as you go.

You could do this during the third session and tell them to edit their films outside the class.

Daniel Weinschenker of Storycenter made these recommendations for wrapping up the digital storytelling process. It can be awkward; you've spent a lot of time sharing intimate information and feelings, it can be challenging to know how to bring it to closure.

"We've done "gratitude circles" - where everyone picks a name out of a hat and says a "real" gratitude for who that person was during the workshop.

We definitely almost always have time for the individual to talk about their process before their story is shown and also for group discussion after their story is shown.

And we almost always do a group picture too.

I also make sure to still be in a circle of sorts when we watch them (usually a U-shape) - never as a class facing forward. A few people in the circle need to turn their chairs forward, but they always come back to looking at each other after each story is shown. I think that makes a difference, too."