Storytelling Roadmap:

A Toolkit for Literacy Practitioners

RESULTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

CENTER FOR EDUCATION INNOVATIONS

PROJECT LITERACY

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Starting in 2018, literacy practitioners from around the world collaborated to identify common challenges, including the difficulty of effectively communicating about their programming and impact to external audiences. Over the next 11 months, a diverse cohort of literacy and communications professionals participated in discussions and consultations shaping a roadmap for organizations and individuals looking to amplify their message. This included Jake Adler (formerly of LitWorld), Clare Argar (National Literacy Trust), Sarah Balcazar (Reading Partners), **Josh Cleveland (Oneness-Family Montessori)**, Lydia Dunnett (Lessons for Life), Drew Esposito (Jumpstart), Hannah Flynn (Lessons for Life), **Selena Garrahan (Worldreader)**, Rebecca Gordon (Feed the Minds), **Fabiana Harrington (Feed the Minds)**, Paige Heimark (LitWorld), Tosin Jegede (1Child 1Book), Kellie Magnus (Fight for Peace), Simeon Martey (Child Dream Foundation), Margaret Nankinga (Luganda Lusoga Lugwere Vehicular Cross-border Language Commission), Sara Perkins (Pearson Project Literacy), **Grace Strong (Harvard Libraries)**, **Emma Taylor (Book Aid International)**, **Anne Tengler (Independent Consultant)**, Michael Todd (Reading Partners), Anjan Vij (Indus Action), **Ted Wagnon (Wagnon Strategies, LLC)**, **Louise Wilson (Power 2)**, and **Phylisa Wisdom (Literacy Trust)**. The Storytelling Roadmap was truly a collaborative effort and we are especially grateful to the individuals who drafted significant sections of the Roadmap (noted above in bold).

In the summer of 2019, five literacy organizations piloted the Storytelling Roadmap and provided valuable feedback aimed at increasing its relevance and utility. This included Dominic Shakava Ambani of Family Support and Rescue Organization (FASRO) in Kenya, Rana Dajani, Mahmoud Khamis, Laila Mushahwar, and Suha Al-Jurf of We Love Reading in Jordan, Paloma Mariz of Reading Partners in the United States, Simeon Martey of Child Dream Foundation in Ghana, and Uma Nnenna of ReadABook Nigeria (RABNI) in Nigeria. In the fall of 2019, working group members used this feedback to guide revisions and add content to the Storytelling Roadmap, leading to this current version.

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Storytelling Roadmap: Introduction

Storytelling. It's perhaps the most compelling tool we have available to share our missions, earn support, and raise awareness of the powerful work we do as advocates of literacy. When storytelling is done well, movements are created, mountains are scaled, and, in our case, humans are engaged and empowered to help eradicate illiteracy across the globe. And it acts as a great equalizer— even the smallest, most remote nonprofit or NGO can tell great stories in the service of their mission, regardless of size, scope, or budget.

When members of the Project Literacy Community of Practice identified the most pressing challenges they and their organizations faced, effectively communicating about their work was high among the list. Organizations of all sizes, but especially national (as opposed to international) and local organizations, struggled to tell the story of their programming and its impact to funders and other potential partners who might help them increase their reach and impact. This Storytelling Roadmap is an effort to address that challenge.

WHAT IS STORYTELLING?

The National Storytelling Network defines Storytelling as "the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination."

Welcome to the Storytelling Roadmap: A Toolkit for Literacy Partners.

This roadmap was created by the Project Literacy Communications Working Group. Over 18 months, across 14 timezones, and with 24 literacy organizations represented, this tenacious group of literacy experts and communications professionals at literacy organizations came together virtually to first discuss and deconstruct great storytelling, and then reassemble it into a format that will serve experienced storytelling pros and non-communications professionals alike.

Since the beginning of time, stories have been the fuel that ignites human activity. They're the lens through which we perceive, digest, and order our worlds. A story well told takes its listeners somewhere—perhaps to a deeper understanding of an issue, or a greater level of empathy for its characters, or a concrete form of action on behalf of its protagonists. **When we, as literacy practitioners, activate the people in our organizations to help find and tell the great stories of the people and communities we touch, our missions are amplified even more.**

This Roadmap aims to support literacy practitioners understand what to look for in their work, how to capture stories, and where and when to share them – in essence, through this Roadmap we aim to give you and your team storytelling superpowers that will help move the needle on literacy advocacy around the world. However, our reach is broader than that, and the guidance included will support practitioners in any field.

> ***"…through this Roadmap we aim to give you and your team storytelling superpowers that will help move the needle on literacy advocacy around the world."***

Yes, great storytelling is teachable. It's a skill that anyone in your organization can learn and master. This roadmap will help you and your team on that journey. Whether your stories come from the field, senior leadership, your donors, or all of the above, you and your colleagues can learn to identify, construct and produce compelling stories. Finally, this Roadmap will help you to amplify the voices of those we work for and alongside, enhancing their ability to tell their own story in the process. Each "stop" on the roadmap is packed with practical information, tips, and creative prompts to help you become a master storyteller, and even better, a teacher, to help others in your network become powerful storytellers too.

The roadmap also provides guidance for safely and respectfully collecting stories by learning the basics of consent, and ethical use of imagery. The roadmap also looks at ways to plan for, collect and organize your organization's stories, as well as effectively share stories by choosing the best platforms to make sure they are heard.

With this roadmap, we hope to create a story-sharing movement! We'd love you to share your stories with the hashtag **#CompellingTelling** and tag **@CEInnovations** so that we can see, celebrate, and share your stories across the entire global literacy spectrum.

Ready to join us on this literacy storytelling journey?

ROADMAP STOP 1:

Why Storytelling is Important

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Through storytelling, we attach faces and names to the problems we seek to solve**
- **We create an opportunity for connection, engagement, and action when we share a great story with someone who can help**

As literacy practitioners, we know that we must make the case for our work.

With so much competition for attention and resources in the nonprofit space, we must have clear and compelling answers to the critical questions potential partners and stakeholders will ask:

Why does literacy matter?

Why does our organization exist?

Why should people offer their time and resources to help us advance the cause of universal literacy?

Plain and simple: we need to tell stories in order to advance our literacy causes.

A powerful tool, great storytelling should underpin all of our fundraising and outreach efforts. Stories have been shown to lead to:

- *Increased website traffic*
- *Increased engagement on social media channels*
- *People sharing the story with their followers, friends, and family*
- *Increased press and news media coverage*
- *Increased funding and resources to keep doing our work*

But too often, we try to tell stories using only facts and figures. "Literacy matters because a child born to a mother who can read is 50% more likely to survive past the age of five." True! Yet responses like this can feel incomplete, even cold, rather than compelling one to take action. They focus more on "functional" language, highlighting the broad impact of literacy work but neglecting the more emotion-driven details. They don't capture the full context – how our efforts impact the daily lives of our partners and beneficiaries. Data are necessary, useful, and increasingly sought after by funders and researchers, but they are mere snapshots in a much larger picture —and it is in painting a rich and vibrant picture that those human stories find their most complete expression.

Great storytelling engages people at an emotional level.

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 1: Why storytelling is important

Use this worksheet to reflect on how storytelling can aid your organization.

1. What is the mission of your organization?

2. How has your organization used stories to amplify your work in the past?

   a. What has worked well?

   b. What hasn't worked well?

3. Storytelling is always important to share and amplify your work! However, sometimes a little more direction helps. **What are your goals over the next 6 months and how could storytelling help to address them?** (e.g. funding and outreach, donor reporting, volunteer recruitment, etc.)

   Goal:

   Brainstorm: How could storytelling help achieve this goal?:

   Goal:

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ROADMAP STOP 2:

Communicating with Key Audiences

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Define your audience and what is important to them**
- **Meet them where they are: Frame your story to establish connection**
- **Communicate with purpose: Create a call to action**

Great storytelling is strategic — it should support your organizational goals. And if like most nonprofits you have limited resources or staffing, it's important to determine what your top priorities are and to tell stories that will advance them. In Stop 1 you identified your organizational goals and brainstormed how storytelling can help you achieve those goals. Here, we share how further defining your audience and message will help you reach those goals.

Who is your target audience and what are their needs?

Great storytellers know their audiences and what will motivate them to act. Most literacy organizations will need to appeal to a variety of audiences, including donors, foundations, government policymakers, and community members and influencers. It's essential to know each audience, its interests and values, and what its members are capable of doing to support your program. Armed with this information, you can define your message and tailor stories for specific audiences.

TIPS: DEMONSTRATE THE SCOPE OF YOUR WORK

In addition to personal and emotional stories, organizations also recognize the need to demonstrate their overall value. The following tips can help you demonstrate the direct and indirect impact of your work:

- **Balance emotional elements with information about your quantifiable impact, such as literacy rates, books distributed, teachers trained, and other transformative effects.**
- **Consider how to demonstrate the potential for scale, or how to embed within, partner with, or improve on existing government services.**
- **Demonstrate how your organization is complementary to others in the sector, e.g. highlight your unique value, but also how when considered as a package of services that others offer, there is a greater benefit.**
- **Highlight the downstream impact of your services, e.g. improved literacy can result in obtaining a job at the market or increased wages, allowing additional children to enroll in school, increasing a child's ability to succeed in school by a factor of X.**

For instance, retired professionals or university students could be good volunteers and you would approach them differently to get their attention. Similarly, when thinking of "donors" there may be multiple types, such as first-time donors, major donors, or lapsed donors. Each audience will be interested and respond to different story elements based on:

> *Their familiarity or understanding of the issue;*

> *Their familiarity with your organization and its work;*

> *Whether they are directly or indirectly affected by the issue or problem at hand;*

> *Which projects they are most interested in;*

> *Which facts, data, or emotionally evocative anecdotes will be most compelling to your audience.*

Once you've defined your goal, you can do a simple analysis of your audience, by asking the following questions:

> *Who is your audience?*

> *What does this audience care about?*

> *What kinds of stories might be appealing?*

> *What action must they take?*

At first the differences may seem subtle, and your organization may not be ready to segment each audience category today. But it's important to recognize the value of a deep understanding of what makes each audience tick, because it will help you prioritize the story elements that will resonate most deeply with each of them. Almost every story can be reshaped to be compelling for different audiences. Even if it's an aspirational goal for now, the examples below will help you think about distinct audiences, what they might care about most, and how to best connect your stories to their interests to inspire action.

Convert interest to action by including a Call to Action

Now that you have an idea of what will interest your reader, how can they become part of the story more directly? How can your story inspire their support, attention, or action? A strong call to action unites the reader with the mission and invites their participation in new stories yet to come.

There are 3 rules to designing an effective call to action, it needs to be:

- *Concrete and specific; it cannot be abstract*
- *Needs to be meaningful, people need be clear on how their action is going to make a difference on the issue; it cannot just be a meaningless task*
- *Needs to be something they know how to do and can do; it cannot be outside of what is possible for them*

Here are some common communications goals and their audiences, with some story suggestions.

EXAMPLE 1: TARGETING INDIVIDUAL DONORS

What's your #1 goal?

- *Increase funding for your program*

Who is your audience?

- *Foundations and Individual donors*

What does this audience care about?

- *That they feel a connection to the problem and/or its solution*
- *That YOU have a solution to this problem they care about*
- *That their contribution will make a difference they can feel connected to/proud of and that their money is being used in an efficient way to get results*

What kinds of stories might be appealing?

- *Stories that show how an individual has benefitted from your program can be powerful. "Mary struggled to read in primary school, but after receiving coaching through Program X, she's a top student. Mary is applying to university and hopes to become a doctor. This is a dream come true for her parents who never completed high school."*
- *Show that the individual is one of many who have benefitted from your program "And Mary is one of many who are benefitting from our program — 2,500 students are on a similar track."*
- *Show that donors' money will be used well/efficiently and what their donation will support. Consider focusing on the outcome and breaking down the value of a donation into a cost that they can relate to. For example, "Our goal is to provide each child (or person) with at least 3 books and X hours of literacy coaching. We can do this for $X per person per month."*

What action must they take?

- *Donate money, e.g. "$500 will provide books for an entire classroom."*
- *Host a fundraiser, e.g. "Share stories like this one with like-minded friends at a low-key house party in your home."*

EXAMPLE 2: RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

What's your #1 goal?

> *Recruit volunteers to help you run/expand your program*

Who is your audience?

> *Prospective Volunteers: Community members who have extra time and an interest in literacy.*

What does this audience care about?

> *Most people volunteer because they want to give back to their community and it makes them feel good to do so, or because they are trying to build their CV and get a new experience.*

What kinds of stories might be appealing?

> *A story about a volunteer, their concerns before they started volunteering, how their concerns melted away, and how they saw progress and impact, could be very powerful for recruiting other volunteers.*

> *A story from the beneficiaries' point of view, about the impact the volunteer had on their life.*

What action must they take?

> *Volunteer their time, e.g. "Sign up to attend our volunteer training program on X date"*

EXAMPLE 3: INCREASING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

What's your #1 goal?

> *Increased parental engagement*

Who is your audience?

> *Parents*

What does this audience care about?

> *Almost universally, parents want their children to be more successful than they are. To convince parents that a behavior is a worthwhile use of their time talk about the value for the child. Whether parents speak a different language, lack their own literacy skills, or must overcome cultural norms or family needs, tying their child's happiness and success to your goal will likely spark a connection for them.*

What kinds of stories might be appealing?

> *A story about a parent who read to their child and saw big improvements in their child's schoolwork could be powerful for this audience. Ideally, the story should be about someone who went on to do something impressive professionally — it doesn't even have to be a story from your program. It could be a story about someone influential in your community and how their parents read to them and emphasized schoolwork and how that made a difference in their lives. And include some statistics about how this investment of time translates into impact— By spending 15 minutes each day reading with your child, you will prepare your child to do X.*

What action must they take?

> *Read to their children, e.g. "Pledge to read 5 books a week to your child."*

EXAMPLE 4: SUPPORTING A POLICY

What's your #1 goal?

> *Get a policy enacted*

Who is your audience?

> *Policymakers (Determine the specific policymaker(s) you need to target.)*

What does this audience care about?

> *Policymakers are typically concerned about the things their voters are concerned about. They also care about having positive brand.*

What kinds of stories might be appealing?

> *This is a special case, where getting local journalists to tell a story about a problem (low literacy and its link to poverty in a particular district) may be the most powerful way to use stories. You can also enlist community members to contact policymakers to share stories about a problem in the community.*

> *The most compelling story for a government audience will be how a community was changed in the long-term as a result of your initiative. The change might be improved school attendance, jobs creation or public health outcomes.*

What action must they take?

> *Draft or support a policy; e.g. "Support Resolution 345 at the next vote!"*

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 2: Communicating with Key Audiences

Use this worksheet to reflect on the how you can structure your stories according to your target goals and audiences.

1. **What's your #1 goal?** Reflecting back to Stop 1, what is the primary goal you want to achieve through storytelling? What are the key messages you need to convey?

2. **Who is your audience?** Who has control over what you need? Consider donors, foundations, government policymakers, and community members and influencers. Briefly describe their familiarity with your organization and the issues you tackle.

3. **What does this audience care about?** What motivates or concerns them?

4. **What kinds of stories might be appealing?** What can you say about your work and its results that will align with their interests? What story will motivate them to support you?

5. **What action must they take? Write your call to action here. Ensure you're your call to action is specific, meaningful, and realistic.** Do they need to endorse your policy proposals? Sign up to volunteer or donate money? Like your page on Facebook? Attend a rally?

ROADMAP STOP 3:

Identifying Great Stories

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Great stories are everywhere, and they share common qualities**
- **Relatability, imagery, voice and movement will help your bring your story to life**
- **Check that there is a strong narrative arc to your story**

Everyone has a story to tell.

Each day brings new twists and turns on the road to achieving universal literacy and everyone has a role to play, and a story to tell. It is your job to find the stories that demonstrate the value of your work based on your organization's goals and target audiences. Do you want to highlight the value of your teacher trainings? Consider telling a story of what teachers now do differently or better as a result of that training. Look for stories that create a strong, clear connection between the reader and your project goals. That connection is what will drive action for the reader.

By asking yourself some key questions focused on identifying people to build a narrative around, you can find the most compelling stories:

> *Whose life has been particularly transformed by your work?*

> *Who is experiencing or making change in their community?*

> *Who is finding ways to succeed despite significant or unexpected challenges?*

> *Who is helping to advance your mission in a critical way?*

> *Who is most excited about the project?*

TIP: LISTEN OUT FOR GREAT STORIES

Proactively seeking stories is important – but it's just as important to listen out for them. Given the unscripted nature of literacy work, it is often in the unexpected stories—the changes brought about by some unforeseen combination of factors in a given community—that our work can find its most compelling expression and, by extension, its most powerful justification.

For example, you might plan to tell a story from a student who attends your program, but by listening to the grandparent who accompanies them, you may realize that they have also benefitted. Telling the story from the grandparent's perspective might resonate with others in the community who live in multi-generational households, highlight the inter-generational benefits of literacy programming, and serve to broaden the impact of your work.

TIP: HONOR THE SUBJECT'S VOICE

Maintaining a clear focus on the people in your story will remind you to honor their voices in a way that is authentic and not exploitative. Make sure you and/or your storytelling team consider and discuss:

- **What stories resonate with their experience? How would they react to the story you've crafted?**
- **Whose voice provides the most authentic version?**

For example, some stories might best be told from the perspective of the individuals who are seeking to build awareness about local challenges. However, if an organization has multiple field offices or implementation sites, the central coordinating office, not the specific individuals on the ground, might be best placed to share stories with donors about the overall impact of their programming. Similarly, the coordinating office can help ensure that there is some consistency (type, formatting, branding, etc.) in the stories emerging from field offices or local partners.

What are the common elements of a great story?

One of the reasons that anyone can learn to identify and tell a story is that great stories share many of the same qualities. If the stories you collect and share contain these elements, they can be crafted into great stories.

Relatability: Readers connect best to stories when there is some universal experience or theme with which they can identify. Build empathy and interest by finding those shared experiences and presenting them in a way that allows outsiders to see parts of themselves in the characters of your stories. Just as screenwriters and novelists do, we need to look for the universal in the particular. Here are a few themes to look out for:

> *Parent-child relationships*

> *Student-teacher relationships*

> *Love*

> *Struggle or conflict*

> *Perseverance*

> *Female empowerment*

> *Health*

> *Community beliefs or practices*

Imagery ("Show, don't tell"): Paint a rich picture by using sensory imagery to draw readers in – describe the look, feel, sound or other response.

> *How did the grandmother touch or hold the book?*

> *How did the teacher use language or pictures to illustrate a new concept?*

> *How did that mother-tongue storybook change the student's face, voice, or posture?*

Such techniques help readers form a more lifelike picture of events and connect with the heroes of your stories on a deeper level.

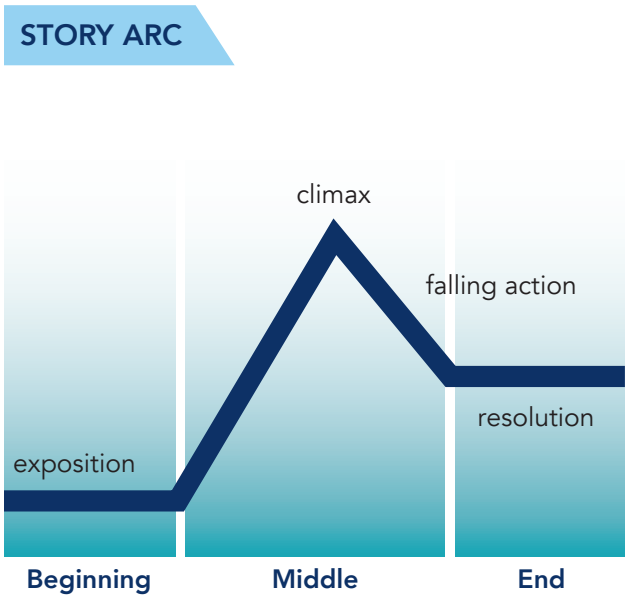
Voice: Whether you're training program implementers, or gathering the stories yourself, remember that the subject(s) of your story - the people you're talking about - have a stake in how they are portrayed. As part of your consent process you'll share what you want to do with their story. Remember too, that they should also hear why it's an important story to share.

For example, if you tell a father that his decision to send his daughters to school is an important story to share because not all girls are allowed to receive an education, what that father chooses to share, how he shares it will be better aligned with the with your goal. This is not scripting, but context — context that helps align key story elements with a powerful, personal message told through his eyes.

Movement: Good stories involve some kind of change. In telling your organization's story, you are fundamentally looking for stories that start in one state of being and transform into another. This is illustrated in what's known as the story arc.

- **Beginning:** *The beginning introduces us to the main characters and the setting in which the action will take place;*
- **Middle:** *the conflict, and the characters' attempts to overcome it, drives events forward, usually to some kind of climactic moment,*
- **End:** *after which comes a resolution—the outcome of the story.*

The story arc is important because a well-developed arc means the story will deliver more "show" than "tell." The story arc begins by establishing an environment and introducing the characters living in it (exposition). At first, audience members are observers but when the storytelling is effective, they start to visualize themselves as participants. They navigate the story environment alongside the characters (rising action), confront the same challenges (climax), and share in triumphs and failures (falling action). By the time the story reaches its final turning point (the resolution), the audience has taken ownership. It is their story now, and they want to help decide the outcome. Strong story arcs, with sensory imagery and relatable themes, transport us to the character's world and tap into wells of empathy, compassion, or even anger. And they deliver a message, or multiple messages, that have enormous potential to inform our worldviews, attitudes, and behaviors.



Think of your favorite book, movie, or play — or select almost any children's book, and you will see how that story follows the arc. Check the story - does it have these key elements?

- **Characters:** *Who is the story about?*
- **Obstacle/Challenge:** *What problem is in their way?*
- **Other roadblocks:** *Who or what else is affecting the action or preventing progress?*
- **Action:** *What do the characters do to overcome the problem on their way?*
- **Twist:** *Is there unexpected help, or unforeseen result of their action?*
- **Result:** *What is the outcome, impact, or lesson learned?*

Stories come in all shapes and sizes

Great stories come in all lengths and formats. Above, we have shared some of the common elements of a great story, but it is important to remember that you can package these elements several different ways, based on the audience you are engaging (Stop 2) and the dissemination channel you are using (Stop 4). Think about your favorite book, movie, or play again – how many different ways has that story been told?

EXAMPLE OF THE STORY ARC

Eliud comes from a small county called Vihiga in the East of Kenya. At the age of 13, Eliud (1) was falling behind in school (2).

BEGINNING
Challenge: Eliud is struggling in school

To help him, Kelvin, the local librarian, encouraged Eliud to start coming to the library where he could read on a Kindle e-reader. Initially, Kelvin received resistance from Eliud's family (3). Many parents in the community wouldn't allow their children to visit the library – they didn't see the value in reading and believed their children should be at home doing house chores.

But Eliud started to come to the library anyway (4). In fact, he started going every single day, even Sundays. He would go to Kelvin's house when Kelvin was still sleeping, ask for the keys to the library, and stay inside the library all day. Kelvin proudly claims that: "If you ask Eliud about any book on that Kindle he will tell you all about it – he has read all of the books!"

MIDDLE
Action: Eliud comes to the library and reads extensively

It paid off. Eliud scored 415 out of 500 on the national exams (5) – one of the top scores in the entire County, competing among thousands of other students. "I'm very happy to score these marks!," he said.

Eliud was interviewed on national TV and talked about his plans of becoming an aerospace engineer. And as parents across the community heard about this young boy who read his way to success, they started to understand the important influence that reading had on their children's success in school. Attendance at the library increased dramatically (6).

END
Resolution: Eliud scores high on his exam and interest in the library has increased

Does the story have a strong arc? Does it include:

- **Characters:** *Who is the story about?* (1)
- **Obstacle/Challenge:** *What problem is in their way?* (2)
- **Other roadblocks:** *Who or what else is affecting the action or preventing progress?* (3)
- **Action:** *What do they try first?* (4)
- **Twist:** *Is there an unexpected help, or unforeseen results of their actions?* (5)
- **Result:** *What's the outcome, impact, or lesson learned (6)*

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 3: Identifying Great Stories

Use this worksheet to reflect on the stories emerging from your work and how they are constructed.

1. **Who is most impacted by your work?** Whose story will help illustrate the messages you have identified?

2. **How is your character impacted by your work? What change do they experience as a result of your program?** Identify one story you could tell about your selected character and summarize it here.

3. **Does your story have a clear narrative arc?** Highlight the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution elements in your story.

4. **Reflect on this story, if you choose to develop it further, how can you make the story more relatable and what imagery can you use?** Whose voice will be most authentic and would they approve with the way you have presented their story?

ROADMAP STOP 4:

Identifying the Best Delivery Channels for Your Audience

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Choose format/channel according to your audience**
- **Customize your story for different social media channels**

How will your story be delivered to your audience?

How you tell a story can be as important as the message itself. It is important to know which media format(s) your audience prefers and to be prepared to take your story to the audience through those preferred formats. Organizations should make informed decisions about the delivery channel by analyzing how their goals and audiences align with their resources and timelines.

What are some common delivery channels?

There are many different channels through which to reach your audience:

Traditional media channels include:

- **Print publications** *(Newspapers, magazines, annual reports, 1-pagers, flyers, policy briefs, mailings)*
- **Radio**
- **Television**
- **Billboards / Signage**
- **Telephones**
- **Events** *(Fundraisers, community events, pitches)*

Digital marketing channels include:

- **Websites**
- **Blogs**
- **Podcasts**
- **Social media** *(Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp)*
- **Email**
- **Video**
- **Mobile**
- **Webinars**

There are pros and cons to each of these channels, along with resource implications (financial, technical, and human resource). It is also important to remember that you can tell the same story across multiple channels – repetition is important! GuideStar's blog has some helpful tips to ensuring your message is consistent across channels. Nonprofit Tech for Good and The Storytelling Nonprofit are also helpful resources.

TIP: EXTEND THE REACH OF YOUR MESSAGE THROUGH COLLABORATORS

Stories get amplified (and you increase your return on investment) when you invite collaborators or partners to help get the word out. Consider the following suggestions to help spread your message as broadly as possible:

- **Send contributors a thank you note with the final, professional version of the story and/or links to the published story**
- **Share a few examples of how to further share the stories on contributors' own social and other networks; provide sample social media messaging if appropriate**

Designing a social media approach

Social media is increasingly, or almost exclusively, the format chosen by many non-profits to amplify their work. Social media is accessible, affordable, and reaches millions of users daily. Despite its reach, organizations shouldn't hit "post" without tailoring their story to what platform users are looking for. Social media channels are great for directly engaging with your audience; however, you will have to regularly add new content and monitor these channels to maximize their value.

Consider the guidance in the following chart as you design your social media content and overall approach.

Social Media Channel	What is the user looking for?	What works	How that influences your storytelling on this channel	Examples of nonprofits using these channels well
Instagram	Instagram is primarily visual. People want to see real-life moments captured with beautiful images and videos.	> High quality images > Quotes > Real time moments	> Use high quality, authentic images of the person whose story you're sharing > Pull a quote from their story > Keep it short > Share a live update via 'stories' when you're collecting the story	@feedingamerica
Facebook	Facebook users want entertainment and value.	> Videos > Live videos > Stories > Blogs	> Here you can give more background and context to the story > Always share a picture or video along with a story > Share live video updates when you're collecting the story > Share a snippet of the story and link to a longer blog post	@charitywater
LinkedIn	Focused on business and job listings, this network is best for the business to business (B2B) market, or those in the business to commerce (B2C) market targeting an audience of professionals.	> Company news > Industry news > Professional content > Thought leadership pieces	> Create a blog post/ video around the story that includes informative facts or statistics about the issue you're addressing. Pull these statistics and link to the blog post/ video.	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Twitter	Twitter's audience is there to learn more about what's going on in the world right now and to connect with others.	> News > Blog posts > Facts > Live updates	> Create a blog post/ video around the story that includes informative facts or statistics about the issue you're addressing. Pull these statistics and link to the blog post/ video.	@ONECampaign
Pinterest	Pinterest's network is an audience of creatives – people are looking for aspiration or utility.	> Infographics > Step by step photo guides	> Use strong imagery and powerful stories that inspire	American Red Cross

Examples of using audience analysis to choose your channel

The examples below build on those presented in Stops 2 and 3 and demonstrate how an analysis of your goal and audience can inform your selection of a delivery channel.

EXAMPLE 1: TARGETING INDIVIDUAL DONORS

What's your #1 goal?

> *Increase funding for your program*

Who is your audience?

> *Foundations and Individual donors*

How does this audience prefer to receive information?

> *Utilize individual stories in funding requests. They often respond well to photos and quotes.*
> *Many consider a visit to your organization's website to "check you out" — it's a good idea to have a section labeled "impact."*
> *Videos can be a very effective tool for some donor audiences.*

Is there anyone who could deliver your story and make it more impactful (e.g., influencers)?

> *Direct quotes often work well here.*
> *A parent or teacher who has seen a transformation in a child, an adult who credits your program for recent job success, or even a child who discovered a new interest or passion are good examples.*
> *If you can access influencers, their credibility can "rub off" on you with their audiences, so ask them to share how they personally relate - "I was a kid who hated reading, but…" Or, "reading to my youngest child is such a special time together."*

Considering all of the above, which channels/formats are likely to be most effective in reaching the audience?

> *Websites or blog posts*
> *Email or direct appeals letter mailed to individual donors*
> *Presentation at a fundraising event or sponsor a community event*
> *Also consider that photography and video will be compelling*
> *Also consider a story database that can help you locate stories when developing grant applications*

EXAMPLE 2: RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

What's your #1 goal?

> *Recruit volunteers to help you run/expand your program*

Who is your audience?

> *Prospective Volunteers: Community members who have extra time and an interest in literacy.*

How does this audience prefer to receive information?

> *Retired professionals might access the newspaper, a community center, or the radio*

> *University students might respond more to word of mouth, i.e. teachers, billboards on campus, social media, or in-person events.*

Is there anyone who could deliver your story and make it more impactful (e.g., influencers)?

> *Volunteers often respond well to peers who tell them about the opportunity. How can you activate current volunteers to share their stories? Student volunteers may respond well to what their teachers tell them. How can you enlist teachers to be helpful?*

Considering all of the above, which channels/formats are likely to be most effective in reaching the audience?

> *Depends on who you are targeting, see section above on their preferred ways of receiving information.*

EXAMPLE 3: INCREASING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

What's your #1 goal?

> *Increased parental engagement*

Who is your audience?

> *Parents*

How does this audience prefer to receive information?

> *Parents with limited literacy skills may access stories shared verbally via an influencer in the community or on the radio.*

> *Parents with strong literacy skills may also access resources in the child's school, library, or community center. You might create a brochure for teachers or doctors to hand out.*

Is there anyone who could deliver your story and make it more impactful (e.g., influencers)?

> *This will depend on the cultural norms in your community, but parents may be more inclined to listen to a doctor, or an authority figure in the community.*

Considering all of the above, which channels/formats are likely to be most effective in reaching the audience?

> *Presentation at a community meeting or other in-person event*

> *Brochures*

> *Social media posts*

- *Radio programs or commercials*

EXAMPLE 4: SUPPORTING A POLICY

What's your #1 goal?

- *Get a policy enacted*

Who is your audience?

- *Policymakers (Determine the specific policymaker(s) you need to target.)*

How does this audience prefer to receive information?

- *Policymakers are extremely busy, and they are unlikely to come to your website, blog or social media channels for information.*
- *Prefer fact- and evidence-based information, supported by statistics*

Is there anyone who could deliver your story and make it more impactful (e.g., influencers)?

- *Activating community members (voters) to share their stories directly may be effective for targeting policymakers.*
- *Getting journalists to draw attention to an issue that can be improved by a policy change is also an effective approach.*

Considering all of the above, which channels/formats are likely to be most effective in reaching the audience?

- *Topical one-pager or a policy brief that you can give to them in a face-to-face meeting or send to their offices.*
- *Face-to-face meetings, including in-person testimonials*
- *In-person events*
- *Published articles or media coverage in the districts they serve. You can also pitch your story to a journalist by contacting them.*

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 4: Identifying the Best Delivery Channels for Your Audience

Use this worksheet to reflect on possible delivery channels and how your audience analysis informs your selections.

1. **What's your #1 goal?** Reflect on the goal(s) you outlined in earlier sections.

2. **Who is your audience and how do they receive information?** Reflect on the audiences you defined in the earlier sections and consider how they get their news, where they spend their time, and who they connect with.

3. **Is there anyone who could deliver your story and make it more impactful (e.g., influencers)?** If so, who?

4. **What channels/formats are likely to be most effective?** Consider traditional media channels, digital media channels, or a mix to achieve your goals.

5. **How can you adjust your story based on the selected channel/format?** If you are considering social media, consider how you can divide your content across the social media platforms or tell multiple aspects of the story on a single platform.

ROADMAP STOP 5:

Planning and Budgeting for Storytelling

KEY TAKEAWAY

- **Generate the most impact by planning and budgeting for storytelling early on**

Unfortunately, many nonprofit organizations dedicate little or no time and financial resources to telling their story! For-profit companies know that storytelling represents an important investment in an organization's growth and sustainability, re-investing up to 40 percent of their revenue into marketing, communications, and fundraising activities. In the nonprofit sector, it is more common to see between 5 and 15 percent of operating budgets allocated to marketing and storytelling activities. Whatever your organization can invest, it is important to develop a plan, budget accordingly, and commit to a sustained effort.

TIP: PLAN FOR THE LONG RUN

Stories get amplified (and you increase your return on investment) when you invite collaborators or partners to help get the word out. Consider the following suggestions to help spread your message as broadly as possible:

- **Send contributors a thank you note with the final, professional version of the story and/or links to the published story**
- **Share a few examples of how to further share the stories on contributors' own social and other networks; provide sample social media messaging if appropriate**

Core communications costs

Costs associated with storytelling can increase rapidly if you don't have a pre-determined strategy. Say you invest in professional photography but don't consider the cost to print materials – you may be forced to adjust course and deliver your message through e-mail rather than a direct appeal letter.

Time and staff resources are likely to be primary cost drivers as you embark on your storytelling missions; however, you should consider all of the steps, partners, and costs that could be involved in creating content. This will also help you think through the best delivery channels.

TIP: GET B-ROLL FOOTAGE

If you are investing in professional photography or videography, stretch your resources further by ensuring that you get a range of images. For example, your story might focus on a training, so you'll want some close-up shots of the students and instructors, but it is also important to get some photos or video of the broader context and setting. This material, also called "B-roll," can often be used for more than one story or campaign.

Common content creation costs include: Transportation to/from storytelling sites, licensing, product placement fees, copyediting, design, printing, subscription fees, translation services, text message fees, photography, videography, recording and audio equipment, editing, hosting, voiceover, staff and volunteer time, collateral (e.g. t-shirts, pencils, etc.), and so on.

However, there are several free or low-cost platforms that your organization can use to get started, particularly with digital marketing. These include: Canva (graphic design), HubSpot (customer relationship management – CRM), Buffer and HootSuite (social media), MailChimp (email marketing), WordPress (website/blogs), Vimeo, Wistia and YouTube (Video), Twilio (mobile), BuzzSprout (podcasts).

While each market is different, we put together a brief overview of common delivery channels and their relative costs here:

$		$$		$$$		$$$$	
Social Media Amateur photography Email	Mobile/SMS Telephone Websites Podcasts	Amateur Videography Policy Briefs Newspaper articles	Radio Flyers and Brochures Community events Magazines Mailings and direct appeals	Printed reports Branded collateral Billboards/ Signage Fundraisers Sponsorships	Professional Photography, Videography, and Sound Recording	Television Galas and large-scale events	

Adjust your strategy according to your timeline and intended impact

As your organization plans for storytelling, you will also need to consider your timeline and the impact you want to generate. You may conclude that you do not have the resources to accomplish your most important long-term goal, but you can make incremental progress on your second or third priority. This will position you to focus on the top priority in the future. Or, perhaps you will decide to make strong inroads with a specific audience, to resolve an immediate need.

You may be tempted to define your target audience as "everyone who follows us on social media," but a small investment is unlikely to be effective with a huge and diverse audience. The initial storytelling effort is likely to be more effective in reaching a smaller, specific audience. For example, you may focus on a handful of major donors, or 10 teachers and 100 families in a single community.

Build your knowledge base

Finally, this is a learning process. If possible, organizations and individuals can enhance their planning process by finding an external role model or mentor. This may be the lead storyteller at another nonprofit that is addressing the same or similar challenge in a different community. Or, you may reach out to another organization or for-profit company that has been successful in reaching your audience for another purpose. Ask these organizations and companies to share their storytelling experiences and insights. Alternatively, recruit an expert individual to advise you on a voluntary basis.

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REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 5: Planning and Budgeting for Storytelling

Use this worksheet to reflect on how your organization can plan for storytelling.

1. **What's your #1 goal?** Reflect on the goal(s) you outlined in earlier sections. Consider your timeline for this goal and if there are any intermediate steps that demonstrate you are on the pathway to achieving your larger goal.

2. **What resources do you have to dedicate to storytelling?** Consider financial, technical, and human capital resources.

3. **How do your available resources align with your goals and intended audiences?** Based on your available resources, do you need to adjust any of your storytelling or delivery channel plans? If so, how?

4. **How can your organization plan for storytelling in the longer-term?** What additional resources (financial, technical, or human capital) are needed to become the storytellers you want to be and achieve your primary goal? Are there other organizations or partners who can further support you?

ROADMAP STOP 6:

Obtaining Consent and Using Imagery

KEY TAKEAWAY

- **Consent is a choice**
- **Consent must be clear and understandable**
- **Who can provide consent varies by age, trait, and affiliation**
- **Ensure compliance with applicable customs, laws and regulations**
- **Imagery should be used to enhance stories, not exploit or misrepresent**

"We won't share without your permission."

First and foremost, consent is approval or permission that is voluntarily given for an action or a proposal. Obtaining consent from people to share stories that feature them is essential and they need to be informed of how you plan to showcase their story. They must also know that their participation is voluntary and you should also have clear next steps should a participant decline to give consent or opt-out.

Consent is particularly important since we, as literacy practitioners, often work with children and other vulnerable populations, who may be non-literate themselves and have a limited understanding of what it means to give consent. This requires us to be extremely intentional, culturally respectful, and language-appropriate in our requests for permission to share their stories.

WHAT IS CONSENT?

Consent is approval or permission that is voluntarily given for an action or a proposal.

(Source: Adapted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

Which methods of consent are appropriate in your case?

While written consent is the most common, consider alternatives, especially for low-literate populations. Are there other means available, such as using a fingerprint instead of a signature, or might other digital tools be used? These could include recording a short audio or video clip where you inform them of your intentions and the scope of the agreement, followed by the participant stating their name, that they understand this is voluntary, and that they agree to participate.

Will you have consent forms written in their native language? This is highly recommended. If not, can you use an interpreter or community member with the right skill level to communicate on your behalf? This person can also help guide provide guidance on the appropriate methods of gathering consent within a community. Develop a simple script that clearly explains how, where, and why you intend to share their story. Where possible, plan ahead to give participants time to consider the request and/or do not require that they sign immediately.

Define the purpose and scope of consent.

It's up to you and your organization to define what consent in this context means. The more specific you can be about your intentions, methods, and how the content will be used, the better.

> **Provide Examples:** *It's very helpful to be able to show an example of how you intend to share their story. Can you show them a similar video, printed story or social media post so they understand what they're signing up for? Rural or non-literate populations may have a harder time giving informed consent as there may be a limited understanding of the reach of the stories.*

> **State how personal information will be stored:** *Be clear about what personal information you will gather and store, and whether any of it is made available to anyone else. For example, you might wish to keep the name and contact information of your subject on file, but agree to keep that information confidential and safely stored for the duration of the consent period.*

> **Define who else has access to their stories/data:** *Are there third parties involved in gathering and producing the story? If so, consider where the data will be stored and if there are any agreements in place (e.g. freelance photographers, film production houses, or other media partners) within their contracts. If material can be used by third-parties (e.g. other contractors or organizations), this also needs to be clearly stated in the consent form.*

> **Provide your contact information:** *Be sure that you offer a way for consent-givers to see the final product and to get in touch with you. Send them the annual report, case study, or video that contains their story and include your contact information.*

Who can consent on another's behalf?

In some cases, schools, centers, or other entities have obtained "blanket permissions" from parents on behalf of their children for photos, stories, and other considerations that the institution consents to. It's always a great idea to fully understand what that policy covers, and whether your organization is comfortable with that level of permission.

You'll have to determine whether an individual is equipped to give their consent, and if not, consider who else might represent their interests and provide consent on their behalf. This might be a parent/guardian, or a headteacher or other community leader. Likewise, if you seek group permission, who is most appropriate to represent the group as a whole?

TIP: OBSERVE LOCAL NORMS

As the storyteller or photographer, it is your responsibility to be informed about the local culture, laws and other pertinent information. Comply with local traditions or restrictions when speaking to participants and taking photos of people, objects or places – even if you don't understand or agree with them. For example, you may need to ask for a male relative's permission before speaking with or taking picture of a woman.

Consult with field staff, trusted community members, or do research online prior to engagement.

Stay compliant with applicable laws.

Schools have their own privacy and permission policies, so be sure to check their policies. Clearly state your intention of the binding properties of the consent. Do you consider consent legally binding, or more informal? Are there age considerations? Spell out the appropriate guidelines, such as requiring parental consent for children under 18 years of age. Finally, find out whether are there local requirements such as filing permits for your video or documentation process.

Be faithful to your participants and story collectors.

Ensuring the accuracy of your story is also essential. Not every organization wishes to share final drafts with contributors prior to publishing, but it's always a good idea to double check that all facts, names, etc. are correct within the story. Attribution is also important - are you quoting accurately, and with permission? If it is your organization's policy, be sure to give the author credit for the story in form of a byline or other acknowledgement.

TIP: GUIDELINES FOR ENSURING CONSENT

1. Co-design and pilot test your consent forms to ensure you are using the most appropriate and practical methods, particularly for hard-to-reach populations. This includes the use of local language consent forms!
2. Carefully consider which data points you will be collecting and the purpose of each. Think carefully about which demographic, psychographic or other data points you will collect on each subject – be prepared to let them know why you are collecting this information and what you plan to do with this data
3. Ensure legal compliance with laws and regulations in each jurisdiction. Local or national laws or regulations governing privacy and consent may vary, and a single solution may not be appropriate to all locations.
4. If your organization works with local implementing partners or contractors,
   a. Make sure that the language grants consent to the local partner and you, the main organization, to use the story.
   b. Clearly define which party is responsible for collecting consent (it is good practice to include this language in their contracts).
   c. Clearly define the process of gathering consent, including: the tools that will be used to gather consent, where and when to return completed consent forms, and how to respectfully approach subjects and request consent
5. Reflect on your position in relation to people whose stories you are collecting and sharing. Ask yourself how you will be perceived based on your affiliation, race, citizenship, language, gender, socio-economic status, profession and other important factors, and how those might affect your interaction with participants and the way you treat their stories.
   a. Consider engaging someone from the community to help you gain participant trust and consent – not all communities are comfortable sharing their stories with outsiders.
6. Provide copies of consent forms. It's good practice to leave participants with a copy of what they have agreed to, and how to contact you should they change their minds.

Consent for Imagery

Imagery – including photography, videography, and audio recordings – can help to tell a story. However, always remember that images should be used to raise public awareness or to give voice to those photographed, not to exploit public sympathy, create controversy, or inspire shock. A single photograph or version of a story, without additional context, can present an incomplete, misleading, and overly simplistic narrative – a danger Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warns of in her TED talk, "The Danger of the Single Story."

When possible, it must be made clear to those who are being photographed that their photo could be used widely. Again, providing examples of media campaigns, organizational brochures, etc. will be helpful to convey how participants' likeness could be used. No promises should be made to subjects that they will receive copies or scans of their photos as you can't guarantee that their photo will be published or used.

Summary of Consent

Consent not needed	Verbal consent needed; written consent preferred	Written consent mandatory
> *Non-recognizable individuals in public (faces and all other identifying features are obscured).* > *Public figures in public (e.g. celebrities, government or Ministry officials at conferences/ events).* > *Crowds in public (e.g. an audience at outdoor concert).*	> *All individuals in all settings **when possible.*** > *Parents, guardians, or teachers of children.* > *Directors/Managers of educational, health, or other service programs.*	> *Recognizable individuals in any setting where **personal, private information** is exposed in the photo or documented in the corresponding caption, such as:* • *Literacy or educational status* • *Health status or behavior* • *Criminal behavior* > *Recognizable providers and clients in health or clinical settings.*

Source: Table and content adapted from https://www.photoshare.org/resources/development-photography-ethics

Sample Consent Forms and Resources

A simple online search will yield a selection of templates and resources for your organization to adapt. Here are a few that we have identified – these represent a range of options and some include helpful guidance for those collecting the consent, too.

> *Example of a* Parental Permission Slip *from* StoryCorps.

> *Example of a* Consent Form for a Participant-initiated Story *from* The Lullaby Trust

> *Example of a* Consent to Use Stories and Images - Policy and Guidelines *from* Care International

> *Example of an* Interview Consent Form *from* Carers Trust

> *Example of a* Client Story Consent Form *from* Avril Paice's Blog

> *Example of a* podcast *about ethical storytelling and consent when working with vulnerable populations from* NGO Storytelling.

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 6: Obtaining Consent and Using Imagery

Use this worksheet to reflect on how you plan to obtain consent and ensure that all imagery respects participants.

1. **Whose stories will you be collecting and how?**

2. **Are there any characteristics of this population that could affect how they are able to give consent? (e.g. children, low-literacy populations, etc.) How might you adjust your methods of obtaining consent?** (e.g. translate consent forms, use video consent forms, seek consent from a parent/guardian, etc.)

3. **How will their stories and images be used?** Describe how and where their story might be published. Who will have access to their story and personal data? Whom should they contact if they wish to withdraw consent?

4. **What imagery (photography, videography, etc.) do you anticipate using?**

5. **Ask yourself the following questions before selecting the final images:**
   - Do I have consent to use this image?
   - Could the image harm the person or people in it in any way?
   - Is the subject presented faithfully? Is the subject misrepresented in any way?
   - What story does the image tell? Does it risk perpetuating a "single story" about the place or people you are photographing?

ROADMAP STOP 7:

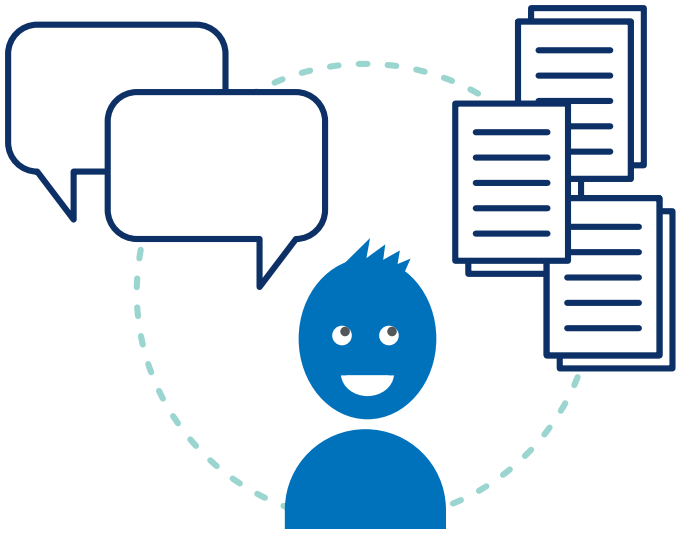
Creating an Accessible Storybank

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Gathering stories is half the battle, ensuring they get used appropriately is the other half**
- **Carefully consider who will be collecting stories, how they will be organized internally, and what tags will enable you to easily locate them in the future**

What is a storybank and why do we need one?

A storybank is a system for collecting, organizing, and sharing stories within your organization. Organizations tend to start looking for stories only when they are needed: for example, for a fundraiser, a newsletter, or a grant application. During this disarrayed search, good stories can be missed or put together haphazardly. To avoid this mess, organizations must develop some simple procedures for gathering and then accessing their stories.



TIP: TRY CROWDSOURCING STORIES

At times, the best stories will find you! Allow your stakeholders to share their perspective by setting up a submission form online, where people can submit their stories. It can be something as simple as a Google form embedded on the organization's website and social media pages.

Organizations may also conduct periodic surveys to try and identify stories or set up a referral system through which staff, partners, donors, or volunteers can suggest interesting stories.

Relatedly, keep an eye out for what is being said about your organization by tracking stories in newspapers, social media, podcasts and other media outlets. You may wish to follow-up with some of these active stakeholders!

Organizing and locating your stories

First, consider what standard information your organization wants to collect across its stories. This can be a basic template that is included at the top of any story collection sheets or interview protocols. Some general ideas of information to record include:

- *Contact details of the person collecting the story*
- *Date, time, location, and format (e.g. in-person, online, etc.) that the story was collected*
- *Contact details of the storyteller (or person being interviewed)*
- *Format and scope of consent*
- *Confidentiality and/or privacy requests*
- *Type of accompanying imagery, if any (e.g. photos, videos, or audio recordings)*
- *Brief description of the setting or context*

Also, the organization should provide guidance related to post-interview procedures. For example, some organizations may transcribe recordings, have the story collector summarize the participant's story, or go through some fact-checking procedure prior to publishing the content.

Second, story collectors should also have clear guidance on how to submit their stories. Consider tools that your organization already uses for document sharing and storing, e.g. Google drive, Dropbox, OneDrive, etc. Email or even WhatsApp may be handy tools for storytellers to submit or share their content with the communications team. Those involved in storytelling and communications should provide input when identifying the appropriate platforms, and also take into account budget and accessibility.

Following collection and submission, the next task is ensuring that you have a clear structure for organizing your stories and accessing them when needed. Many of the story features already discussed will help you to create this organizational system. For instance, what kind of story is it? Who is the story about? What kind of imagery or media do you have to tell the story? Each organization may choose to catalogue their stories in a different way, but the important thing is to create a shared tagging system within your organization.

An example storybank template is provided below with 8 basic categories (Author, Location, Story Character, Story Type, Summary, Issue Area, Imagery type, Story Outlets) and a link to the story material. To maintain organization, the categories, as well as the tags that should be applied within those categories, need to be jointly identified. This simple storybank could take the form of a table on a shared Google Sheet, accessible to all team members. Staff could then sort the table based on their need, for example, a story about staff and the organization history, and in doing so, identify content to include in the annual report.

EXAMPLE STORYBANK TEMPLATE

Author: *(Add contact details, if preferred)*	**Ex. Tyrone James** (tjones@ourorg.org)
Location	Johannesburg, South Africa
Story Character *(Beneficiaries, Staff; Donors; Volunteers; Community Advocates)*	Beneficiaries
Story Type *(e.g. Impact, Organization history; Needs; Vision; People; Mission*	Impact Story
Summary *(Less than 10 words)*	Program empowers grandmother who then teaches grandchild
Issue Area *(e.g. Adult Literacy, Youth Literacy, Intergenerational Effects of Literacy)*	Intergenerational Effects of Literacy
Imagery Type *(e.g. photo, video, or audio)*	Audio recording; Photo
Story Outlets *(Where the story has been published, the dates it was used)*	2016 Annual report; Twitter June 2018
Link to Material *(File path or hyperlink to where the story material is saved)*	Google Drive -> Impact Stories

This example storybank is basically an index. The organization would then need to create an aligned filing system, likely organized by one of the primary categories, to save the full story and associated content (photos, consents, etc.).

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Tools and Platforms for Storybanking

A small organization with a single operating location may only need to track their communications material in centrally saved or shared document (e.g. Google Sheets or Docs). A larger organization that has a central office in one location and multiple field offices may require a more advanced system, such as project management tools or even customer relationship management (CRM) software that can link and track stories with audiences and dissemination channels.

Consider what platform will best meet your need:

- *Centrally saved spreadsheets or documents (ex. Google Sheets or Google Docs) or set of folders (e.g. Google Drive, One Drive, Dropbox, etc.).*
- *Project management tools like Trello, Confluence, Asana, and Evernote with added functionality, custom tags, layouts, and collaboration features*
- *Customer relationship management (CRM) tools like Salesforce Storybank, HubSpot, Vtiger that are full-service and help you manage and disseminate your stories.*

Other materials and resources

- *HubSpot's blog entry on marketing and storybanking*
- *The Storytelling Nonprofit's blog entry on organizing your stories*
- *Working Narrative's article on storybanks*
- *Nonprofit Mar Community's article on developing a nonprofit story bank*

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Stop 7: Creating an Accessible Storybank

Use this worksheet to think through your organization's story collection and organization needs.

1. **How does your organization currently collect and organize stories?** What is and is not working about that system?

2. **What standard information might your organization want to collect across all of its stories?**

3. **How are stories submitted to the organization?** Who is submitting the stories and what are their needs? What tools could be used to submit stories?

4. **Who has access to the submitted stories and who is responsible for selecting the stories that will be used in the organization's communications efforts?** What are their needs?

5. **What categories, and associated tags, could be helpful in developing and organizing your story bank?**

The Journey Ahead

Congratulations! You have almost completed your storytelling journey. By now, you have learned to expertly and intentionally:

- *Select the kind of story you want to tell*
- *Create a compelling story arc*
- *Match your story to the right audience*
- *Select the best channels and platforms for sharing your story with that audience*
- *Secure the appropriate permissions and data needed*
- *Ensure that your storyteller's authentic voice(s) are represented*
- *Ensure that your story uses appropriate and ethical imagery*
- *Collect and organize your stories*
- *Share stories effectively and responsibly*

There's just one last stop on our storytelling Roadmap:

Share your stories with Project Literacy and literacy practitioners worldwide by using the hashtag **#CompellingTelling** and tagging **@CEInnovations**.

By sharing, you help other literacy advocates to understand the benefits of storytelling and attract more supporters to the cause.

Thank you for all the hard work you do to promote literacy and we'll look for you out on the road!

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PROJECT
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