










Storytelling

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What is storytelling

Storytelling is a **communication technique** that consists of telling a story to attract the attention of a specific audience, stimulating a specific desire.

Telling stories through storytelling has a **strong emotional effect** which conditions the target group much more than other techniques, thanks to its ability to transfer ideas and points of view in a direct and engaging way



A good story...



can teach and humanize



gives inspiration and eagerness



gives us feelings



helps us improve



What is digital storytelling

*“The art of **telling stories with a variety of digital multimedia**, such as images, audio, and video. Just about all digital stories bring together some mixture of digital graphics, text, recorded audio narration, video and music to present information on a specific topic.”*

(Robin, Bernard. (2011). The educational uses of digital storytelling. Proceedings of Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference 2006)



The main digital storytelling tools are:



Digital and visual tools such as: Digital camera, PowerPoint presentations, Movie Maker



Sound and audio features



Photography



Slideshow presentation notes



Basics and principles of digital storytelling

Basic elements of a narrative are:

The theme.

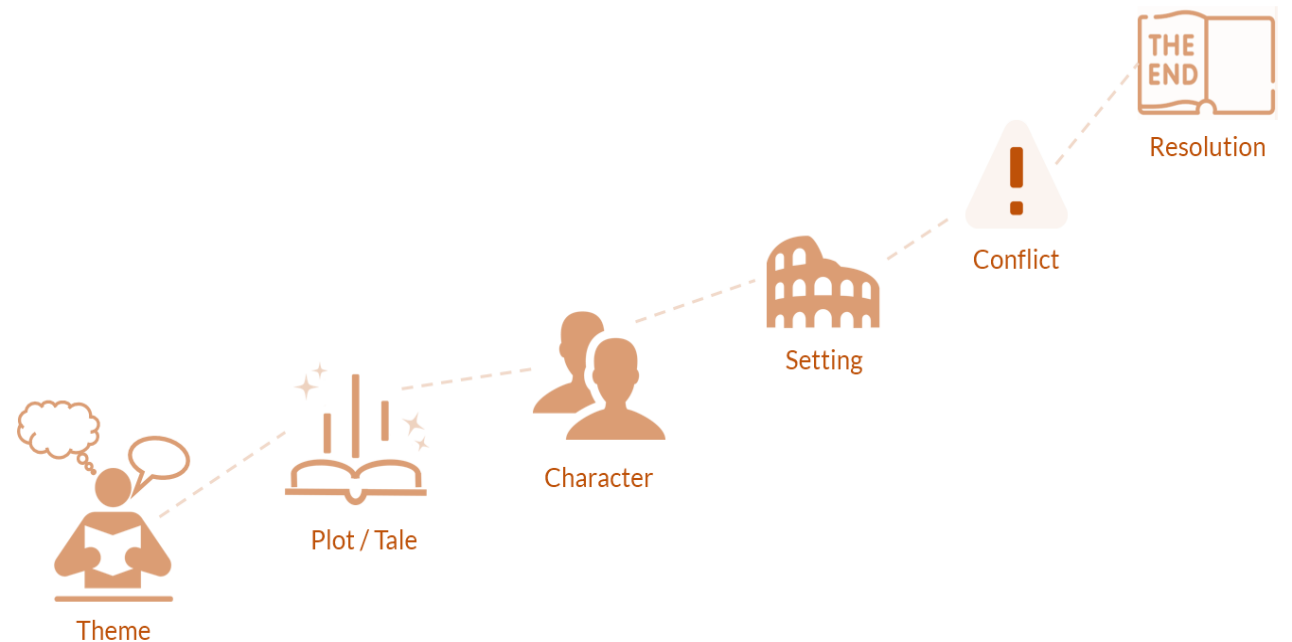
It represents the premise and the ultimate message the narrative is trying to express.

The plot or tale.

It represents the events as they unfold in sequence.

The Characters.

The people who inhabit the story and move it forward. More complex stories have different characters, as we will see, but usually it is the main character who creates the connection between the audience and the story





Basics and principles of digital storytelling

The setting

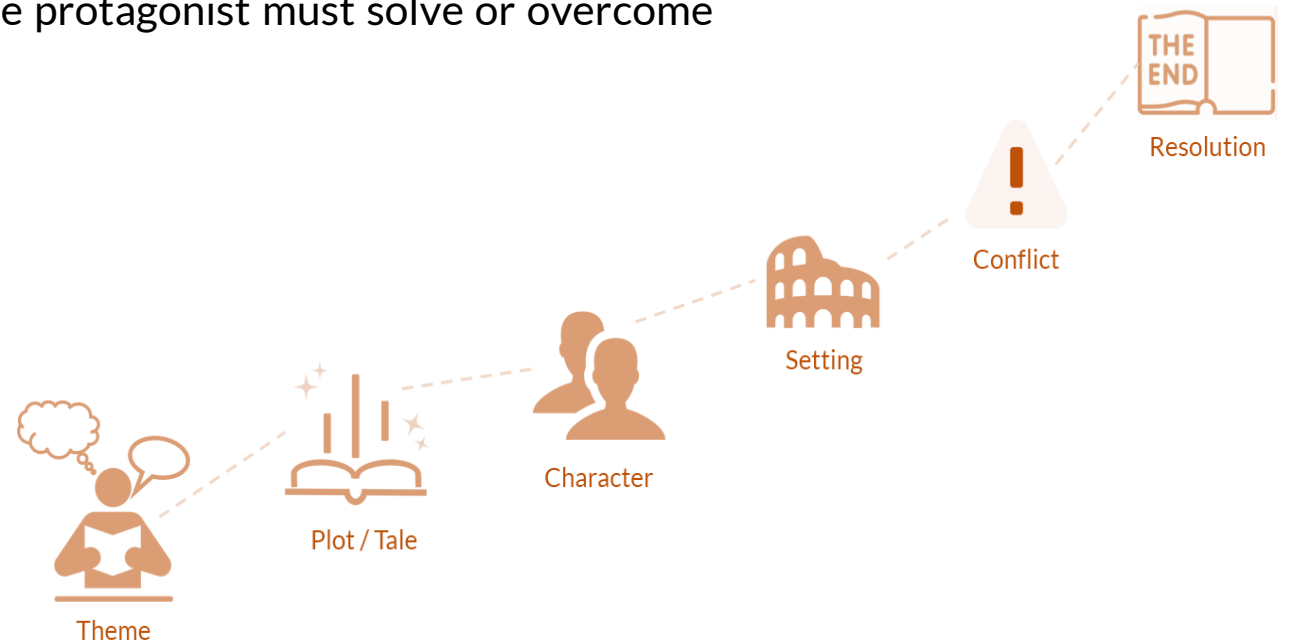
This refers to the time and spatial dimensions of the story

The conflict

This element, which also constitutes a phase of the narrative, embodies the primary problem or obstacle that unfolds in the plot that the protagonist must solve or overcome by the end of the story.

The resolution

That is how and why the main character overcomes the challenges he/she faces in the conflict stage. It is a key part of the story, in which the audience learns its lesson.





Basics and principles of digital storytelling

Point of you

the perspective from which a story is told, which can be:

- ✓ in the first person ("I" or "we"),
- ✓ in the third person ("he" or "she") and, less frequently,
- ✓ in the second person, when the narrator uses "you" and the reader becomes the protagonist





Basics and principles of digital storytelling

The theme.

The theme, which can be either explicit or implicit, is the central idea of the story and guides the whole creative process.

In this sense, it should be defined in **the first phase of creative production**, that is when formulating the idea of the story. At this stage it is essential to ask yourself some questions and, in particular, ask yourself the reasons for writing a certain story, its perimeters and its ultimate goal.



Theme



Basics and principles of digital storytelling

The plot or tale.

this term is often wrongly considered a synonym of story.

A STORY, in fact, is a set of events described according to a logical and chronological succession (which is the content of the story)

A TALE (or PLOT) is the form of speech with which a certain story is represented.



Plot / Tale

This example, based on The Odyssey, can better explain the difference between the two.

This is the Odyssey story:

1. Ulysses thinks of the horse's deception and Troy is set on fire
2. Ulysses escapes with his companions and wanders into the Mediterranean
3. Ulysses arrives in the island of the Phaeacians and is greeted by King Alcinous
4. During the banquet Ulysses tells Alcinous about his previous adventures
5. Ulysses takes the sea route and reaches Ithaca
6. Ulysses defeats the suitors and embraces Penelope



In the Odyssey plot the sequence of events could be:

1. Ulysses arrives in the island of the Phaeacians and is greeted by King Alcinous (3)
2. During the banquet he tells Alcinous about his previous adventures (4)
3. Ulysses thinks of the horse's deception and Troy is set on fire (1)
4. Ulysses escapes with his companions and wanders into the Mediterranean (2)
5. Ulysses takes the sea route and reaches Ithaca (5)
6. Ulysses defeats the suitors and embraces Penelope (6)



Basics and principles of digital storytelling

The Characters.

The first activity when outlining the plot is character definition, also known as **character design or character profiling**.

One of the main aspects of the characters, and in particular of the protagonist, is their evolution, also known as **the arc of transformation of the character**, or rather its passage from an initial to a final situation in which there is a substantial change of one or more of his/her characteristics, determined by the succession of events and obstacles to overcome in the story.



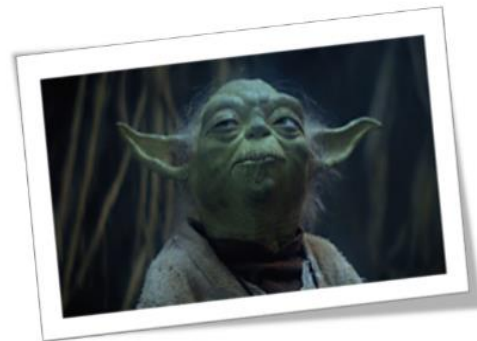
Character

A very useful scheme for character design is the one described in [Vogler's Journey of the Hero](#), which includes seven archetypes.



HERO

- ✓ *He is the one who makes the journey*
- ✓ *It has a weak point*
- ✓ *He must confront change*



MENTOR

- ✓ ***Guide** who helps and instructs the hero*
- ✓ *Usually associated with a **parental figure***
- ✓ *Often a metaphor for the **voice of God**, the **common conscience** and **values of society***



GUARDIAN OF THE THRESHOLD

- ✓ *The one who tests the hero*
- ✓ *Apparently he is an enemy, but he refers to the consciousness of the Hero and his **internal demons***
- ✓ *Hero must conquer his **pass***



SHAPESHIFTER

- ✓ *Plant **doubt and suspicion** (friends become enemies and vice versa)*
- ✓ *Close relationship with **soul and thought** (female unconscious in man and vice versa)*
- ✓ *He **catalyses the change** and is functional to modify the psychology of the Hero*



HERALD

- ✓ *It represents **the beginning** of the adventure and the arrival of change*
- ✓ *It can be a **triggering event** or an object*
- ✓ ***Awakens** motivation*



SHADOW

- ✓ *It reflects **negative and unexpressed tendencies**, puts the hero in difficulty or threatens him concretely, often exploiting his psychoses and fears*
- ✓ ***Meeting-clash** with the Hero*



TRICKSTER

- ✓ *He is the easy-going and ironic traveling companion*
- ✓ *It is the **comic shoulder** that creates setbacks and stimulates changes*



Basics and principles of digital storytelling

The setting

It refers to four dimensions:



Timeframe



Duration



Location



Level of conflict



Setting



The three acts structure

Every story is defined by:



a beginning, which triggers the action through the motivation of the characters and, in general, through the explanation of the protagonist's desire, which can be conscious or subconscious and that pushes him/her to take certain actions



a development that enriches events and takes the story forward, and



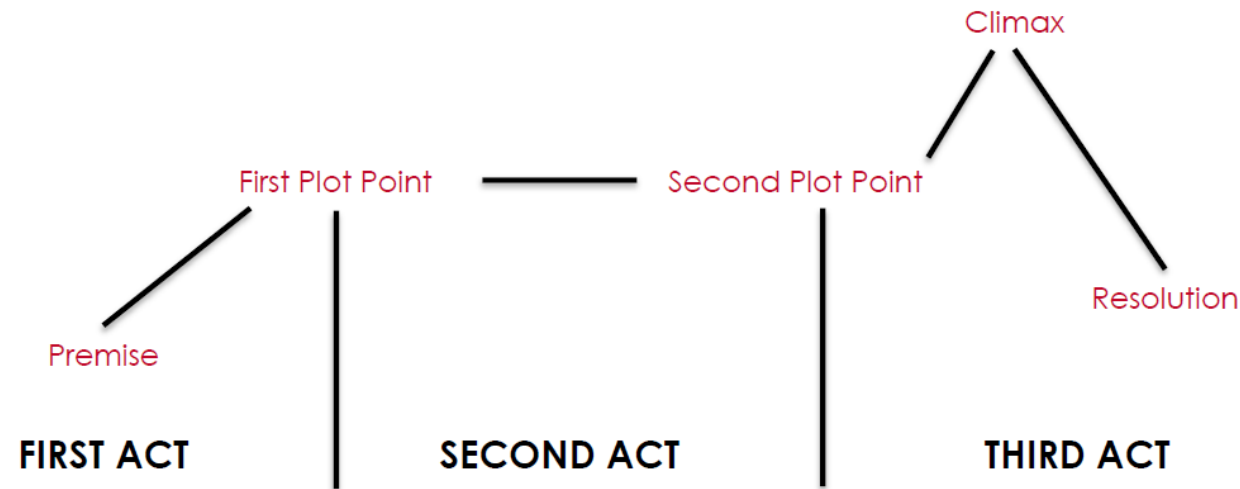
an end, where the objectives of the protagonist must reach a positive, negative or open solution.



The three acts structure

The condition in which **the story begins must always be different from that in which it ends** and, therefore, determines a narrative evolution exemplified by the change of the protagonist or main characters.

This is a schematization, known as a three-act structure, which was formalized by **Aristotle**, with reference to Greek tragedy, and which has become an essential reference point for the construction of all types of stories.





The three acts structure

First act

or incipit, **the environments and characters are presented**, the readers/spectators begin to empathize with them and begin to see the element of interior, exterior or relationship conflict, which will guide the development of events.

In this phase the ordinary or normal world is defined, that is the physical and mental condition in which the protagonist lives in peace, and which will be shocked by a **"triggering accident"** that places him/her before a choice and at the beginning of the journey towards the extraordinary or unknown world, in which he/she will explore the unknown and his/her conflict





The three acts structure

Second act

the **conflicts that generate new events** are developed and scrutinised, the explicit or implicit reasons that created the conflicts are clarified and other characters enter the story. New situations or secondary stories (sub-plots) intertwine around the main story, exacerbating the narrative tension, causing new and stronger conflicts which, in turn, throw the protagonist into the most tense phase of the story, the one in which the protagonist will find himself/herself facing the central test and in which he/she will seem to hit a low.

At the end of this act, we reach the climax of the story, i.e. the moment of maximum tension, the emotional and dramatic climax, which will coincide with the second turning point, a moment that clarifies the outcome of the story resulting from the initial conflict





The three acts structure

Third act

the ending, **the epilogue of the story, where all conflicts tend to resolve themselves**, in a positive or negative way. More precisely, the so-called classic plot, characterized by external conflicts against which the protagonist struggles, ends with a closed ending, that is, all the questions posed by the story are answered and all the emotions are satisfied.

The so-called miniplot, on the other hand, in which the battles that the protagonist fights with his/her own conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions are generally emphasized, often leaves the ending partially open, solving most of the questions, but leaving some unsolved. In general, the ending unfolds in some narrative moments that lead the protagonist to return to the ordinary world.





Script techniques

The 5W technique

The first, which is also widely used in the editing of newspaper articles, consists of **asking five fundamental questions**.

On the basis of these questions it is, in fact, possible to outline who the protagonist is, where he/she acts, what he/she does, when and why he/she does it.





Script techniques

The 3C technique

It allows you to define the theme of the story through three main questions: who is our Character, which Conflict does he/she face, which Conclusion does the story have?

The Characters give a human face to your story. The Conflict evokes feelings and emotions and the Change thrills the audience.

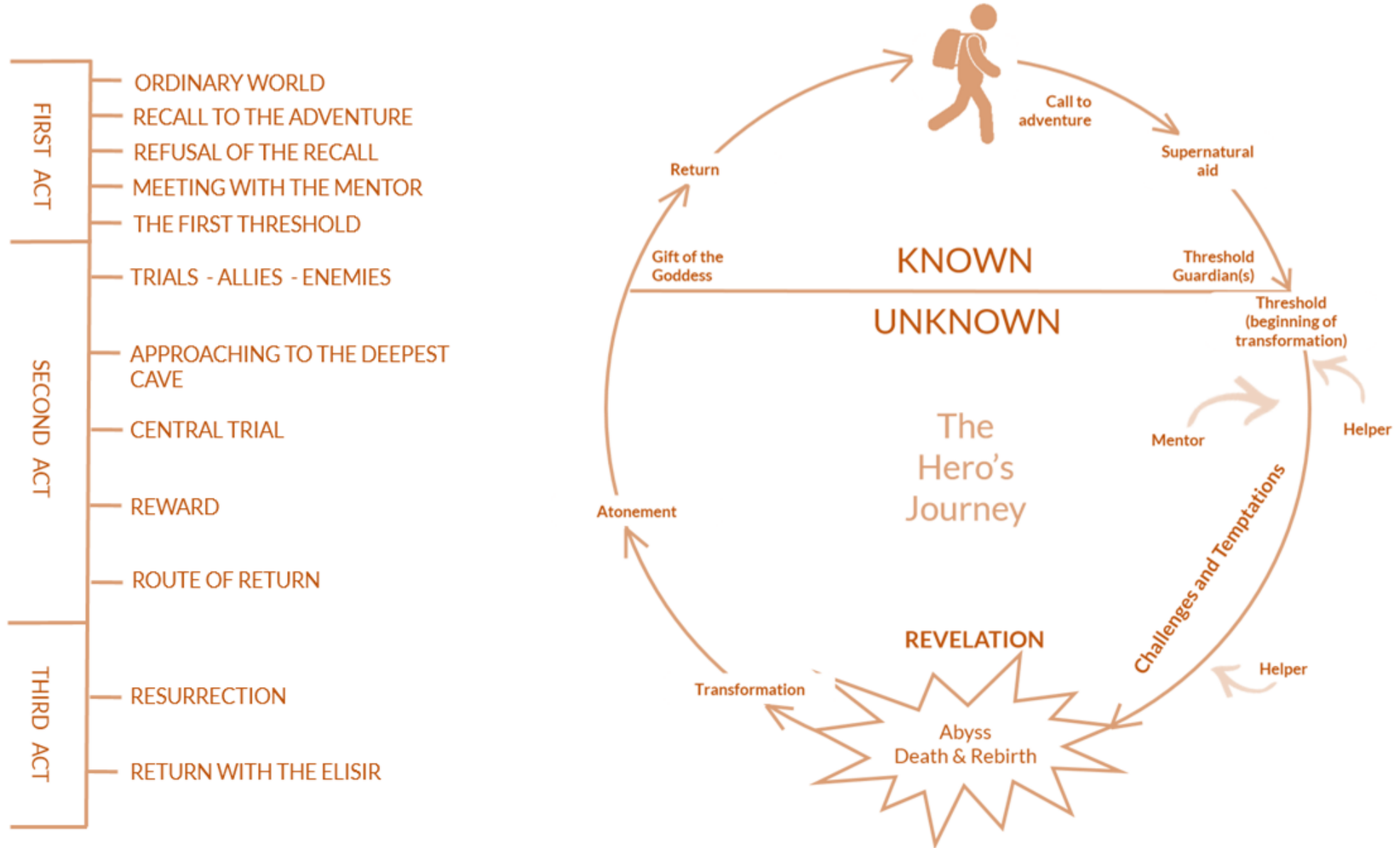




Script techniques

Starting from the three-act structure, **one of the most used models to guide the author to define the development of the story is Vogler's hero's journey.**

It is a model that we can normally find in the narrative structure of most films, but also of books, video games and stories in general, that include 12 stages.





Script techniques

Once the idea of the story has been developed, it is necessary to transpose it into a narrative act, which entails the drafting of a series of documents:



the script



the treatment



the programme and the story, in the case of a literary work, or the screenplay, in the case of an audio-visual work or video game.



the story, in the case of a literary work, or the screenplay, in the case of an audio-visual work or video game.

In addition to these documents, in the pre-production phase, it may be useful to use **visual tools** and, in particular, the **storyboard**.

n. of shots in tens	Duration in sec/frames	Possible descriptive title of the shot	Data	Version
			Instructions on dialogues and sound	
			Instructions on the type of cinematographic shooting, direction notes, photography, special effects, other notes	



The digital storytelling process: check list and tips

So, to recap ... the **digital storytelling process you must follow** to write your story is:

Step 1: Come up with an idea and write a proposal

Step 2: Research/explore/Learn

Step 3: Write Script

Step 4: Storyboard/ Plan

Step 5: Gather/ Create images, audio and video

Step 6: Put it all together

Step 7: Share

Step 8: Feedback and Reflect



The digital storytelling process: check list and tips

To develop a successful story, you should consider this kind of **checklist** with reminders and questions to answer during the narrative creation process.



Your Story **Character**: You have to choose on or two main characters to focus on your story



The **Circumstances**: Where is the main character and what is going on? What do the characters want to do and what is their attitude towards the world?



The **Conflict**: What are the dilemmas? What is the incident that makes the story develop in a certain way? (e.g. unexpected)



The **Result/The Resolution**: What is the final result? How do the conflicts or the circumstances end? What is the message you would like to pass through?



The digital storytelling process: check list and tips

Questions you need to keep in mind:



1. Your story does flow?
2. Your character is authentic and original ?
3. Is the resolution satisfying for the audience?
4. Is the message clear?



The digital storytelling process: check list and tips

Some tips for a successful story



Evoked emotion and dramatic tension

Focusing on emotions is more important than dates and other “boring” data



Be sure to know your audience

It's vital you draw a picture of your audience by using vivid sensory language. Thus you will immerse your audience to the world you are creating.



Show your audience the message

Demonstrate a core message through your story... Show them- don't tell them



Be Simple and Relatable

Be careful and focus only on important information. Do not get stuck in the weeds and edit out the irrelevant details.



Be clear and concise

Focus only on what the audience need to know avoiding the danger of getting lost in dates, years and don't go off topic



The digital storytelling process: check list and tips

Some tips for a successful story



Be credible

People can easily tell when you are being truthful or if you are exaggerating... If part of your story is not credible, they may disregard the entire message



Do not bomb the listener/viewer with unnecessary details and useless information



Be cautious and develop a character that is unique and can be relatable to people. Do not hide behind “we”. Individuality is uniqueness.



Use strong language so you can create vivid images in people’s minds.



Include real and existing problems, situations, barriers and conflicts so the audience can be truly engaged.



“Seeing is Believing”: Humans are first VISUAL and secondly VERBAL...



The uses of digital storytelling: Culture and tourism

Even the ideas of **stories aiming to promote and valorise the cultural heritage** or tourist destinations make it crucial, first of all, to **clearly define what the message is** that you want to get to the user.

Starting from that, you will then need to ensure that the characters, the settings, the behaviours, the actions, the keywords found and considered fundamental and the other elements of the story are in line with what is intended to be disseminated, avoiding creating content captions that risk limiting user engagement.





The uses of digital storytelling: Culture and tourism

Key aspects

-  Potential tourists are busy
-  Our environment is noisy
-  Our world is visual

In a world where “print is dead” the demand of travellers remains really high since people want to see more and more about what attractions they should see, where they can eat, what they can buy etc. Past guides tried to be everything to everyone but storytelling is the tool to make the difference. **Stories improve the visitor’s experience and increase word of mouth recommendations.** They engage through different **social media and networks** and they also boost repeated visitation.



The uses of digital storytelling: Culture and tourism

Places have stories to tell...
So ... Use the stories to make the visitor's
experience unforgettable...



Use internet



Use multimedia



Be authentic and vivid



Share your story