



Foundations of Storytelling

WORKBOOK

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Course Overview and Goals

The Foundations of Storytelling workshop is a course in 3 Acts where you will learn and engage with 11 different Listening and Storytelling Rules of Thumb:

Act I: Excavating Module 1	Act 2: Listening Module 2	Act 3: Crafting Modules 3 & 4
Why Story, Why Now? Power of Storytelling	Identify Obstacles Deep Listening Release Obstacles Dedicated Time & Space	Say "What Happened" Story Arcs Beginnings Emotional Turning Point Finding Your Ending

Our goals for the course are to:

- Craft and develop your story for a particular audience and purpose
- Connect with your audience on a more personal, relatable level
- Integrate storytelling into your communications for ongoing success
- Learn how to be a better listener and how that makes you a better storyteller



Introduction:

Story of Your Name

Write a short story about your name - who gave it to you, what does it mean? This exercise is about flexing your creative storytelling juices so don't worry if this isn't the story you are most proud of. Remember that this is your name so you can't get the story wrong. Only you have a story about your name.



Module 1:

Why Story, Why Now?

Why Story, Why Now? For You

“

We tell ourselves
stories in order
to live ”

- JOAN DIDION

“

There is no agony
greater than
bearing an untold
story inside of
you ”

- MAYA ANGELOU



Module 2:

Storytelling Begins With Listening

Reflections on Listening

1. Think of a time when you were not listened to.
What was the impact on you?

2. Think of a time when you did not listen to someone else.
What do you think the impact was on that person?



Deep Listening

Write down what you noticed during the listening meditation and what obstacles might have gotten in the way of your ability to listen.

[illegible]

Obstacles to Listening

5 Types of Obstacles	Obstacle Triggers
External	What occurs in the outside world - noise, temperature, smell, etc.
Physical	What occurs in your body - pain, sickness, hunger, etc.
Internal	What occurs in your mind - thoughts, memories, emotions
Psychological	Opinions, beliefs, interpretations, judgements of yourself, and others
Relational	Hierarchical relationships and power dynamics between you and others

Homework: List Your Obstacles to Listening



Categories of Obstacles to Listening	Examples	My Obstacles are...	Ways to Release Obstacles
External	There 's a construction crew outside with a jackhammer		
Physical	I'm so hungry I can't listen		
Internal	I'm so angry at John for stealing my idea		
Psychological	My boss is so intimidating. I don't think I'll ever be able to stand up for myself.		
Relational	My director of research always cuts off other people in my team		



Module 3:

Uncover Your Story

Do you have a story you want to tell?

If yes, write down in a few sentences what the main message of your story is and who you would like to tell your story to?

If no, please take some time to think about a moment in your life that you would like to craft as a story. If you are unsure, write down the top three moments. Now think about who you would like to tell it to. Who is your audience?

Say only "What Happened"

When telling your story, focus on sticking to the "What Happened" method, which is distinct from opinions, judgements, and interpretations.

Study the "What Happened" camera below and its five senses.

‘What Happened’ Camera



WHAT DID YOU HEAR?

Describe what you hear around you, the sounds, voices.



WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Describe what you see around you, the settings, colors, shapes.



WHAT DID YOU TASTE?

Did you taste anything? Describe foods, drinks, flavors.



WHAT DID YOU SMELL?

What are the odors around you?

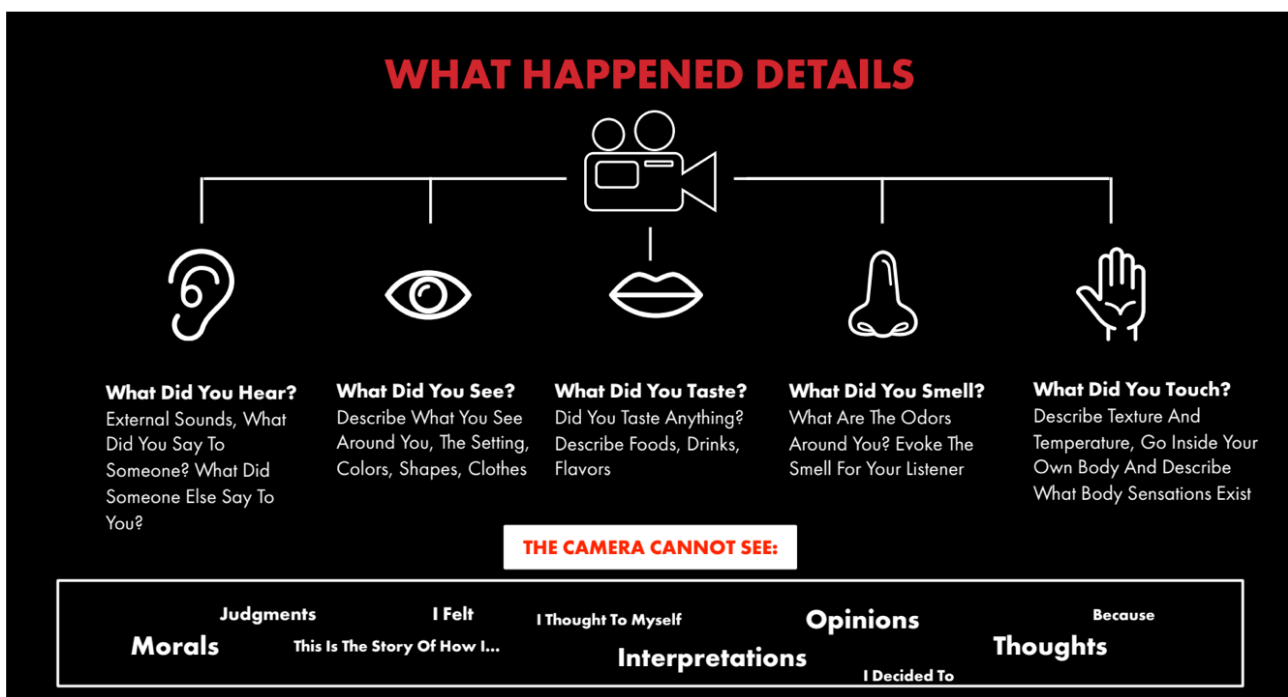


WHAT DID YOU TOUCH?

Describe texture and temperature, go inside your own body and describe what body sensations exist.

The NOT "What Happened" (and their definitions)

- > **Feelings:** an emotional state or reaction, happy sad, scared, joyful, tired, and etc.
- > **Interpretations:** the action of explaining the meaning of something
- > **Judgements:** the ability to make considered or come to sensible conclusions
- > **Opinions:** an idea or perspective not necessarily based on fact or knowledge, the beliefs or views of people
- > **Meanings:** what is meant by a word, idea, or action
- > **Rationalizations:** attempt to justify (an action or attitude) with logical reasoning
- > **Editorials:** express opinions rather than just report news
- > **Commentaries:** the expression of opinions or offering of explanations about an event or situation
- > **Internal Thoughts:** "I thought to myself" or "I said to myself"





"What Happened" Exercise

Some sentences below are in the “what happened” and others are not. Find the sentences that are not in the “what happened” and transform them using the “What Happened” camera.

1. I overheard her say the most horrible thing, it made me so angry.
2. It was cold outside, my body was shivering and my teeth were chattering.
3. I opened the window and screamed.
4. I thought there is no way I’m calling him.
5. I crossed the finish line sweating and crying.
6. I felt so alone.
7. I didn’t look into his eyes when I said “I think its over.”
8. I decided to get on the plane and find her.
9. My father came home in a new white Mercedes.
10. I remember the way my mother’s cooking smelled.
11. His explanation was long and boring.
12. I heard a dog barking across the street.
13. That day I learned that I could accomplish anything.
14. She said to me “I always knew you could accomplish anything.”
15. I said “it doesn’t matter to me anymore” because I was so done with it all.
16. I realized in that moment that it was never my fault.



Review: Storytelling Videos

Write down the moments which struck you the most in these stories.

Which moments connected or resonated with you the most?

[illegible]



Details, details, details!

Think of the times when you felt fear, happiness, and anger. What were some of the details that occurred while you were feeling them? Practice externalizing how you feel internally without using words of emotions.

	Details	Externalize it!
Fear		
Happiness		
Anger		



Exercise on Dialogue

1. List 3 things that you have spoken, that marked significant turning points in your life, e.g. "I am not going to medical school."

2. List 3 things that have been said to you, that marked significant turning points in your life, e.g. "I'm getting married."



Module 3 Homework:

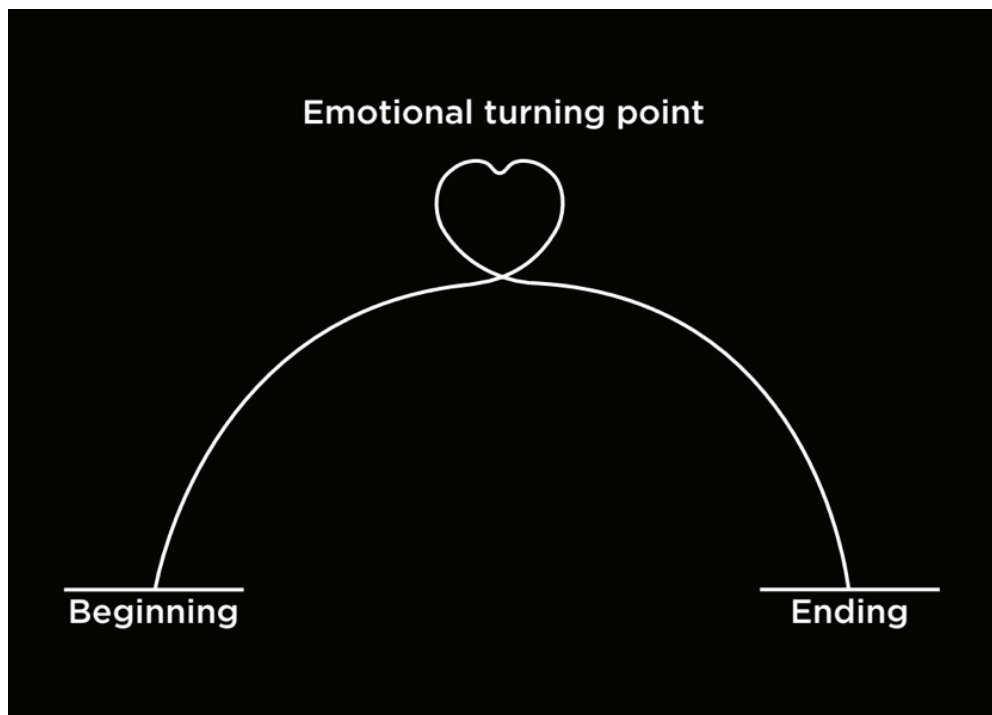
Go back to the main message of your story that you have written in the beginning of this module (page 10). Don't fret if you have changed the story you would like to tell; it is perfectly normal that your story evolves or if you want to focus on a different one. For the purposes of this exercise, pick a story you would like to work on and now think about the moments and events associated with your story.

Make a list of 3 incidents or events that you find significant or memorable.

Write these events down in the "What Happened" method, and try to stick to a few sentences. Uncovering your story comes with the practice of excavating your memory and experiences for details and incidents that help you build your story. These incidents could be part of the story you hoped to tell, but they could also not be.

Module 4:

Mapping Your Story



Emotional Turning Point

What is your emotional turning point in your story? Identify and write it down in the "What Happened" method.



Finding Your Ending

Write down your first line and last line of your story. Remember to write those down exactly as "What Happened."



First Line:

Last Line:



Congratulations!

You have completed the Foundations of Storytelling course and are officially part of Narativ's listening and storytelling family!

Please acknowledge yourself and give yourself a pat on your back. Remember that the process of excavating and crafting your story is an evolving one. Continue practicing and your story will become more and more refined and inspiring to you and others.

Review & Practice Platform

Now the next step is to put your story together, and practice it! We cannot emphasize enough how important practicing your story is. That is why we have created the Narativ storytelling practice platform for you to practice and record your story.

You have ____ weeks to use the review and practice platform, and we highly recommend you use it while the course is still fresh in your mind.

Submit Your Story:

You also have the chance to submit your story to us! We will select a few to be on Narativ's online story library which will be made public.

What have your story on Narativ's online story library? Think of it as being part of Narativ's alumni network. You will be able to direct individuals to the online story webpage where they can listen to your story, and learn more about the work you do.