



ONCE UPON A TIME: STORYTELLING FOR 3MT

Monday, 3:45-5:00 PM March 19, 2018

Sponsored by the Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning

Presented by Paul Blaschko and Chris Clark

Key takeaway: *Stories are powerful tools.*

Goal: *you will be able to identify several principles of great storytelling and apply them to 3MT.*

Agenda

- Intro
- Elements of a great story
 - Beginnings - activity
 - Middles - activity
 - Endings - activity
- Finding the right genre / conventions
- More principles of great storytelling
- Connections with 3MT
- Activity and conclusion

Follow-up resources – <http://tinyurl.com/h8w8afr>

ELEMENTS OF STORIES

1. **Beginning** - introduces the **HERO** (protagonist) and a problem / challenge / need
 - Incorporate a **HOOK** (see the next page)
 - Antagonist / enemy / other side
2. **Middle** - the hero works to solve the problem, meet the challenge, satisfy the need
 - Conflict / confrontation / obstacle
 - Climax / turning point / moment of discovery
3. **End** - the hero resolves the central issue (or doesn't)
 - Call to action - what the listener can (or should) do now

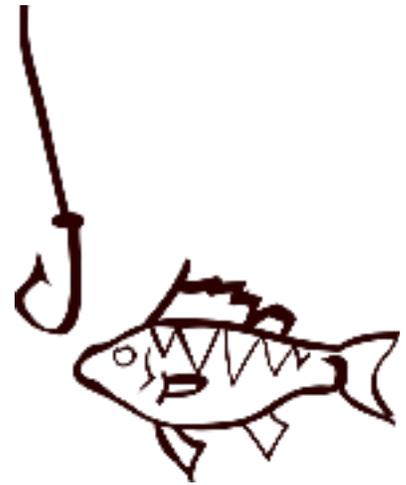
FUNCTIONS OF STORIES

- **Illustration** - provide an outright example
- **Metaphor** - explain something indirectly
- **Deconstruction** - take apart in order to understand (e.g., case-based learning)
- **Touchstone** - provide a reference point to which something can be compared
- **Provocation** - motivate discussion or debate

THE HOOK

A hook is designed to grab attention. The idea is to

1. Entice interest in an film, product, story, or creative work and
2. Keep people reading, listening, or watching so that they
3. Buy into what you're selling (figuratively or literally).



Here are some examples from the movies:

- A man is about to commit suicide when an angel shows him what his town would be like if he had never lived. (It's a Wonderful Life)
- A lawyer suddenly loses his ability to lie. (Liar Liar)
- Jamaicans start an Olympic bobsled team where there is no snow. (Cool Runnings)
- There's a bomb on a crowded city bus. If it slows below 50, the bomb goes off. (Speed)

8 GREAT HOOKS

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| STORY |  | Usually a personal story that relates to the subject at hand. It humanizes the speaker and gives them credibility on a subject. |
| VIDEO/GRAPHIC |  | Pictures can be worth a thousand words and grab your audience at the same time. They are useful to carry through the theme of your talk. |
| BELIEF STATEMENT |  | A pithy statement that captures your views on the topic, and entices the audience to come along on the journey with you. |
| INTRIGUING STRUCTURE |  | Laying out the highs and lows (and the path between) of your story upfront, can create a sense of drama. |
| HUMOR |  | Difficult to pull off, in the right hands it's a mixture of a provocative statement and a surprise, wrapped together and delivered well. |
| RHETORICAL QUESTION |  | A way to get the audience thinking and bring them into your presentation easily. "What's your vision...?" |
| PROVOCATIVE STATEMENT |  | The edgier kissing cousin to the belief statement, it's a stimulating point of view that opens up the presentation. |
| SHOCK/SURPRISE |  | Get your audience on the edge of their seats (in a good way) and hearts thumping, with a shock or surprise (particularly a fact). |

From "Set Your Hook" by Gavin McMahon <http://pt.slideshare.net/powerfulpoint>



WAYS TO END A STORY

Resolution — tie up the loose ends neatly, sort out the conflicts
vs.

No resolution — make the audience imagine their own ending or set up a sequel

- Twist provide a surprise or new info, make “facts” turn out to be false
- Epiphany at the darkest moment, have someone/thing serve as inspiration
- Return have the main character go back to their old ways
- Question get people talking and thinking about possible answers
- Climax end at the key moment and don’t explain what happens next
- Implied hold back information and leave multiple explanations possible
- Call to action appeal to the audience to do something specific
- Moral explain the story’s lesson about good behavior
- Epilogue tell what happens long after the climax / resolution

From “[How to Write Satisfying Story Endings](#)” by William Victor:

1. Show (or suggest) the result of the story's conflict
2. Effective endings come from the main character's actions
3. Use elements from the story's beginning and middle
4. Make the reader feel something

One popular piece of advice is to end your story sooner rather than later; don’t let it drag on.

TELLING GREAT STORIES WITH DATA

1. Think of Your Analysis as a Story—Use a Story Structure

- Find the story first: explore the data
- Determine what you want people to do as a result
- Write out the “story board” for your audience

2. Be Authentic... Your Story Will Flow

- Make it personal, make it emotional
- Start with metaphor or anecdote
- Develop with data: authenticity is rooted in facts and facts are rooted in data
- Supplement hard data with qualitative data

3. Be Visual—Think of Yourself as a Film Editor

- Use pictures, graphs, charts when possible
- Design your graphs and charts for instant readability but allow for layers of meaning as the graph is studied

4. Make It Easy for Your Audience and You

- Telling a story should be simple and direct. Recall and action will be that much stronger
- Stick to 2-3 key issues and how they relate to your audience
- No hoop jumping

5. Invite and Direct Discussion

- Focus on highlighting what the audience needs
- Highlight key facts that relate to the story—the current state, rate of change, a key number. How does this link to story’s trend?
- Extend the story parameters into questions
- Invite them to continue the discussion via group discussion, blogs, intranets, newsgroups

Source: a white paper by Elissa Fink and Susan Moore, Tableau Software at tinyurl.com/ztb2ayg



WHAT REALLY MAKES A GOOD STORY?

STORYTELLING has become one of the most popular techniques of marketing communication. *It's a very effective way to engage audiences, convey information and influence people without using overt persuasion.* This graphic shows the characteristics of great stories, as found by academic researchers and professional writers.

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