HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE 

[Template last updated November 2024](https://pavilion.dinfos.edu/Template/Article/2110516/storytelling-preparation-worksheet/)

Fill in the bracket areas with the appropriate information. Instructions and tips are provided in gray boxes to help guide you. **Remove any bracket symbols and gray boxes when finished.**

Storytelling Preparation Worksheet

[Date]

# Type of story

[Check one.]

☐ Human interest feature ☐ Personality feature ☐ Event feature

# Story topic

[Write a brief description of what your story is about.]

**Primary subject:** [Identify the primary subject.]

**Location:** [Identify the primary subject’s location.]

**Contact information:** [Identify point of contact for the primary subject.]

**Secondary subject:** [Identify the secondary subject, if applicable.]

**Location:** [Identify the secondary subject’s location.]

**Contact information:** [Identify the point of contact for the secondary subject.]

# Research

[Record your research and source materials here. Consider the basic facts: Who is involved or affected? What is the source of the opportunity or problem? Why is the opportunity or problem relevant to the command? Why is the opportunity or problem relevant to your audience?]

# Pre-interview/story development

[Identify the basic facts (who, what, when, where, why and how) about the story. Conduct a series of face-to-face discussions, phone calls, exchange of emails, etc. to help you determine your focus and angle. Talk to a subject matter expert as necessary.]

**1. What happened, is happening or will happen?**

A1: [Summarize response(s) to question one.]

**2. Where did it happen, where is it happening or where will it happen?**

A2: [Summarize response(s) to question two.]

**3. Who is involved or who will be involved?**

A3: [Summarize response(s) to question three.]

**4. Why did it happen or why will it happen?**

A4: [Summarize response(s) to question four.]

**5. When did it happen or when will it happen?**

A5: [Summarize response(s) to question five.]

**6. How did it happen or how will it happen?**

A6: [Summarize response(s) to question six.]

# Story focus and angle

[With your pre-interview complete, identify your story focus and angle. Consider multiple narrative angles and what appeals the most to your audience. Narrow down these angles to a single focus.]

# Audience

[Identify your audience. Consider how you will shape your story with them in mind.]

# Mood/tone

[Describe the mood or tone of your story, and how you will establish or elevate that.]

# Story approval

[Obtain appropriate approval for your story.]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[First approval authority]:** [Name, title and role] | **Approval date:** [mm/dd/yyyy] |
| **[Second approval authority]:** [Name, title and role] | **Approval date:** [mm/dd/yyyy] |
| **[Third approval authority]:** [Name, title and role] | **Approval date:** [mm/dd/yyyy] |

# On-camera interview questions

[Once your story is approved, establish the questions to ask in your on-camera interview. Write pointed questions that will result in the sound bites you will need to create the story YOU want to tell.]

**Question 1:** [Insert question one.]

**Follow-up 1:** [Insert a follow-up to question one.]

**Question 2:** [Insert question two.]

**Follow-up 2:** [Insert a follow-up to question two.]

**Question 3:** [Insert question three.]

**Follow-up 3:** [Insert a follow-up to question three.]

**Question 4:** [Insert question four.]

**Follow-up 4:** [Insert a follow-up to question four.]

**Question 5:** [Insert question five.]

**Follow-up 5:** [Insert a follow-up to question five.]

**Question 6:** [Insert question six.]

**Follow-up 6:** [Insert a follow-up to question six.]

**Question 7:** [Insert question seven.]

**Follow-up 7:** [Insert a follow-up to question seven.]

**Question 8:** [Insert question eight.]

**Follow-up 8:** [Insert a follow-up to question eight.]

# Production plan

**Location:** [Insert where you will shoot the story.]

**Complimentary elements:** [Identify elements at this location that complement your story and focus.]

**Challenges and solutions:** [Identify any of the challenges this location presents and how you will overcome it/them.]

## Opening shot

[After you’ve visited the site, describe the opening shot. Consider how the opening shot is an important first step in conveying the story's main ideas, themes, character arcs and perspectives.]

## Closing shot

[After you’ve visited the site, describe the closing shot/sequence. Consider how the closing shot will stick in the minds of your audience.]

## Environmental portraits

[Describe three concepts for your story/subject’s environmental portraits. Remember that environmental portraits illuminate a subject’s life and surroundings, and often take in a situation that they live or work in (i.e., a place that says something about who they are).]

**Concept 1:**

**Concept 2:**

**Concept 3:**

## Sequences

[Describe the sequence of the story. Consider how sequences establish the foundation of video storytelling. Sequences compress time in a video story. Without this compression, what you’re left with are long video clips that visually bore viewers to death. Proper sequencing gives the video editor a better way to pace a story by using a variety of wide, medium and tight shots. This helps move the viewer through a story efficiently.]

**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

## Detail shots

[Create a list of cut-ins and cut-a-ways.]

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## Audio

[Make a list of the ambient sounds and detail sounds you can record and incorporate into your multimedia piece. Remember that great audio relays facts while adding detail, texture and realism.]

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