



STORIES OF THE FALLEN

*Helping families and friends preserve the stories
of loved ones lost in service to our nation*

A **STORIES**^{of} **SERVICE** Project
of the Digital Clubhouse Network

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Introduction

This workbook will help you carry out the Story Shaping part of our **Digital Storytelling** process, in which you will produce a short video that captures and shares your memories of your lost loved one.

Our workshop team will walk you through these lessons, exercises and project tasks, which will help you write a short Script for your Digital Story and organize the photos and other visuals you will use to illustrate this Script.

By the end of Story Shaping, you will be ready for the **Production** part of our Digital Storytelling process, in which your Producer will help you use a computer to assemble the various components of your Digital Story.

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Introduction to Digital Storytelling

What is a Digital Story?

A Digital Story is a video produced on a computer that consists of a narrative, illustrated with images, music, sound effects, and other *audio* or *visuals*.

The Digital Stories you will be producing will also have the following characteristics:

- be true stories
- be about 5 minutes long
- be told by in the first person (“I, me, we”) with you as the Storyteller/Storytellers
- capture a “defining moment” in your life (the loss of a loved one in uniform)
- share your memories, thoughts and emotions

How do you create a great Digital Story?

A great Digital Story, like a great building, starts with a strong foundation. The foundation for your Digital Story will be a strong **Script** that includes the following:

Main character - Who the story is about (your lost loved one)

Context/situation - Background information that leads to the Defining Moment (the circumstances of your loved one’s service - unit, job/MOS, reasons for joining, experiences in uniform, etc.)

Defining Moment - A specific event that had a lasting impact on your life (the loss of your loved one)

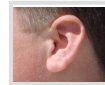
Impact/afterwards- How your life changed as a result of this Defining Moment

Message or Reflection - A final thought that you want to pass on to others

Illustrating a Digital Story

Once you have a strong **Script** for your story, you will use **audio** and **visuals** to bring it to life on screen:

Audio



Voiceover - recording of the Storyteller reading the Script

Sound effects - booms, bangs, etc.

Music - your story’s “soundtrack”

Visuals



Images - personal photos, photos from other sources, maps, documents

Titles - on-screen text

Visual effects - zooms, pans, special effects

Video - full-motion video clips

Audio and visuals help bring the Storyteller’s words to life: For example, music conveys the Storyteller’s emotions; images help us imagine places or things described in the story.

However, make sure your Story is based on a strong Script!

The Digital Storytelling Process

You will complete these steps to create your Digital Story. Throughout this process you will be assisted by our workshop team, including your assigned **Youth Producer**.

Story Shaping

Remembering / Research

Recall thoughts and memories about your loved one, conduct background research; gather photos and memorabilia

Concept

Decide the approach you will take to telling your story (a narrative, a letter, etc.) as well as any particular theme that your Story will focus on.

Script

Write a short narrative that you will read. This **Script** is the foundation of your Digital Story.

Storyboard

Plan how you will illustrate your **Script** with images, and other visuals and audio. The **Storyboard** is a plan for producing your Digital Story.

Production

Audio

Record the **Voiceover** (your voice, reading the **Script**) and select music and sound effects.

Visuals

Review your images and other visual files.

Editing

Your Youth Producer will use video editing software to assemble your Digital Story, under your guidance.

Presentation

Archive your files and prepare your Digital Story to be shown to the public

Remembering / Research

You have already completed much of the Remembering / Research step in the Digital Storytelling process.

Refer to the pages on *“Preparing to Write a Script”* and *“Gathering Photos and Memorabilia”* in the **Pre-Orientation Workbook**.

Concept

Before you start writing your Script, you should decide the following:

- What form will your Script take? A story? A letter to your loved one? Some other form?
- Is there a specific memory or subject that will serve as a unifying theme for your Script?
- Are there any particular people, events or ideas that you feel that you *must* include in your Script?

Once you have decided on a Concept, try to summarize it in a couple of sentences. This will help you focus your Script and maximize the time you have the audience’s attention – which will help you share the true essence of your loved one’s life and your memories and feelings.

Studying a Script

Before starting your own Script, it is helpful to study one or more Scripts written by previous Storytellers.

When you review these Scripts, look for:

- Who is/are the narrator(s)?
- Who is the main Character/subject?
- What details do you learn about the main Character's life?
- What details do you learn about the main Character's service?
- What do you learn about how the main Character was lost in service?
- What details do you learn about how the loss of the main Character affected the Storyteller and his/her family?
- What thoughts/feelings does the Script share?

In addition, look for these structural or literary characteristics:

- What approach does the Storyteller use? (narrative story, letter, etc.)
- How does the Script begin?
- How does the Script end?
- Does the Script use flashbacks, or other non-sequential narrative techniques?
- Does the Script use foreshadowing (hinting at future events)?
- What other literary/narrative techniques does the Script use?

Writing your Script

Your goal is to write a 400 – 750 word Script that conveys who your loved one was, his/her service to our country, and how his/her loss impacted your life.

Scripting approaches

Try one of the following approaches to writing your Script:

- Write a letter to your loved one
- Write a letter to someone else (a real person or an imaginary reader) describing your loved one
- Organize your thoughts and memories into a timeline, then link the events together with transition sentences
- Just start writing! (But have an end goal in mind...)

Remember – you are writing a story, not an essay. Write in your own “voice” – as if you are talking to someone on the phone, or in the same room.

Script content

Whatever approach you take, be sure to include details – specific events and memories – that illustrate:

- Birth, childhood, teenage years, adulthood
- For spouses – how you met, your wedding, etc.
- Hobbies, sports, things they loved
- Family gatherings
- Their time in the service
- The news of their loss, and its impact on your life/lives
- Your life/lives today

It might seem like a challenge to condense a lifetime of memories into a short script, but the result will be an elegant, heartfelt testimonial that will show your audience who your loved one was, that will stand as a tribute to his or her service and sacrifice.

Brainstorming images for your Script

Once you have completed a first draft of your Script, you should start thinking about exactly which images you will use to illustrate your script.

Using images

Look over your Script, and think about how you can use images to...

- ...illustrate sentences/ words/ ideas stated in your Script
- ...show things or ideas that are not necessarily stated in your Script, but that help complement the story
- ...update your Script. For instance, a certain photograph may remind you of a particular event that you didn't include in the first draft of your Script. Go back and revise your Script to include this memory!

Image sources

When you are thinking of images, you can draw from the following sources

- The images that you have gathered and brought to this work session, including photos, artwork, documents, etc.
- Other images that you may have at home, or that you know you can obtain from other sources.
- Third party/ archival images. For instance, if your loved one was a helicopter pilot, but you do not have any photos of him/her at the controls, you can use an Army photo of the appropriate helicopter.

Pacing

You should also start thinking about the **pacing** of your Script (how many images you use to illustrate each sentence).

- In most cases, you will use one image per sentence or phrase.
- In some cases, you may wish to use more than two, three or more images for a particular sentence or phrase. This is often used to create a "montage" effect, or to indicate more "action" in the Script
- In other cases, you may wish to use a single image for more than one sentence or phrase. This technique can be used to draw the audience's attention to a specific image, or to place special emphasis on the words being spoken (without new images to look at, viewers will listen even more closely). This "slowing down" of images can have a very dramatic effect on your Digital Story.

Sit down with your Youth Producer and review your Script. Create a pool of images that you think you might include in your Script. Your Youth Producer will help you organize these images.

Storyboarding

The Storyboard is a valuable tool for organizing exactly how you will illustrate your Script. Once you have completed your final Script, you will use our Storyboard format to outline exactly which image will illustrate each part of your Script.

The following example (from a WWII project) illustrates how to use our Storyboard format.

Review your Final Script for image ideas

1. If you have already recorded the **Voiceover**, update your **Final Script** with any changes you made during the recording session.
2. Based on your Image brainstorming, circle or highlight words and phrases that could be illustrated with images, such as:

My name is Augustine John DiFiore. I grew up in Yonkers, New York, in a family of eight children. Times were very tough. After graduating high school, I worked in a factory that made wire for the Army's Signal Corps.

Review your Final Script for image ideas

Next, use a pen or pencil to mark where you will divide your **Final Script** into segments. You will illustrate each segment with an image, so each segment should contain at least one image idea (refer to the tips on the previous page about **pacing**)

My name is Augustine John DiFiore. I grew up in Yonkers, New York, in a family of eight children. Times were very tough. After graduating high school, I worked in a factory that made wire for the Army's Signal Corps.

Assemble Your Storyboard

You will build your *Storyboard* by matching up images to each segment of your *Script*.

- Transfer your **Script** into the **Storyboard** worksheet
 - Open your *Final Script* file and the *Storyboard* worksheet file.
 - Cut and paste each segment of the *Final Script* into the *Storyboard* worksheet, in the row labeled: **Script**. Use your marked-up *Final Script* as a guide.
 - You can also simply write each segment into the appropriate box on a hard copy version of the **Storyboard**.

1 →

Image or other Visual				
Filename				
Credit				
Visual Effects				
Comments - Vis				
Script Voiceover	My name is Augustine John Difiore.	I grew up in Yonkers, New York, in a family of eight children	Times were very tough.	After graduating high school, I worked in a factory that made wire for the Army Signal Corps.
Additional Audio				
Comments - Aud				

- For each **Script** segment, enter *at least* one idea for an image to illustrate this segment, in the **Image** row.

2 →

Image or other Visual	<i>Recent pic of John</i>	<i>Pic of John as a boy, or family pic, or pic of Yonkers</i>	<i>Pic of John working, historical pic of Great Depression</i>	<i>Pic high school age John, or pic of signal wire</i>
Filename				
Credit				
Visual Effects				
Comments - Vis				
Script Voiceover	My name is Augustine John Difiore.	I grew up in Yonkers, New York, in a family of eight children	Times were very tough.	After graduating high school, I worked in a factory that made wire for the Army Signal Corps.
Additional Audio				
Comments - Aud				

3. In the row: **Filename** enter the names of image files you have already saved.
 a) In the **Image** row, delete any unused image ideas.

Image or other Visual	<i>Recent pic of John</i>	<i>Pic of John as a boy</i>	<i>historical pic of Great Depression</i>	<i>Pic of signal wire</i>
	Filename	<i>john-w-family.jpg</i>	<i>john-school-photo.jpg</i>	<i>na-unemployed.jpg</i>
	Credit			
	Visual Effects			
Comments - Vis				
Script Voiceover	My name is Augustine John DiFiore.	I grew up in Yonkers, New York, in a family of eight children	Times were very tough.	After graduating high school, I worked in a factory that made wire for the Army Signal Corps.
	Additional Audio			
	Comments - Aud			

4. In the row, **Credit** enter the source or copyright owner of the image. In most cases, this will be your name, or your family's name. In some cases, it might be a third party (DOD, Army, USMC, etc.)

Image or other Visual	<i>Recent pic of John</i>	<i>Pic of John as a boy</i>	<i>historical pic of Great Depression</i>	<i>Pic of signal wire</i>
	Filename	<i>john-w-family.jpg</i>	<i>john-school-photo.jpg</i>	<i>na-unemployed.jpg</i>
	Credit	<i>John DiFiore</i>	<i>John DiFiore</i>	<i>National Archives</i>
	Visual Effects			
Comments - Vis				
Script Voiceover	My name is Augustine John DiFiore.	I grew up in Yonkers, New York, in a family of eight children	Times were very tough.	After graduating high school, I worked in a factory that made wire for the Army Signal Corps.
	Additional Audio			
	Comments - Aud			

Once you have completed your Storyboard, your Youth Producer will have a clear outline for exactly how to assemble the components of your Digital Story!