

{ SURVEY *of* NARRATIVE & STORYTELLING + ZINES .

Narrative and storytelling are important aspects of the Design Process. *Design is Storytelling* by Ellen Lupton, discusses the importance of Storytelling in design. Ellen discusses paths and how designers can help construct these places. "Places are created by the Path that people wonder through them" -Tim Ingold

Watch the following video.

Ellen Lupton & Paula Scher On Design

<https://youtu.be/B70lgJpc3w8>

Designers use storytelling to get insight into users, build empathy and reach them emotionally. Designers create personas to represent target users and add conflict to stories that reflect their user journeys and problems. Crafting stories, designers can better understand what users want from a solution.

The renowned philosopher Aristotle wrote extensively on storytelling. His formula is a checklist for what your stories should contain. ___ Plot – What are users trying to achieve/overcome? ___ Character – Who are the users: not just demographically, but what insights do you need to understand what they (and their needs) are truly like? ___ Theme – How can you establish a trustworthy presence to them and still set yourself apart from competitors? How will you reflect the overall obstacles users must overcome? ___ Dialogue/ Diction – What will your design say to users and how? Does a formal/informal tone match their expectations? How much text is appropriate? ___ Melody – How will the overall design pattern appear pleasant and predictable to users, moving them emotionally? ___ Décor – How will you present everything so the graphics match the setting the users can sense? Would a classic design or stylized, niche layout meet their expectations? ___ Spectacle – How can you make your design outstanding so users will remember it?



___ a. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER. Respond to the questions below.

- ___ 1. ___What is Narrative?

- ___ 2. ___What is Storytelling?

- ___ 3. ___What is the Basic Plot Structure?

- ___ 4. ___What is the 3 Act Plot Structure?

- ___ 5. ___What are different types of Narrative Structures? What is a Fractured Narrative? What is a Nonlinear Narrative?

- ___ 6. ___What are Narrative Techniques? Define the following: Hero's Journey, The Gaze, Narrative Arc, Fore-shadowing, Flashback, Point of View, First-person Narrative, Backstory, Metaphor, Personification, Hyperbole, Imagery, Alliteration, Red Herring, and Plot Twist.

- ___ 7. ___What are Archetypes?

- ___ 8. ___Why are Narrative, Storytelling, Archetypes, and other literary devices and techniques important for Graphic Designers to understand? [How do designers use storytelling?]

- ___ 9. ___What is a Storyboard? How can you use this in your design process?

- ___ 10. ___How are Action, Emotion, and Sensation connected to Storytelling?

__b. BELOW the SURFACE. Respond to the questions below.

- _1.** __If someone asked you “what is your story?”, what would you say?

- _2.** __What is your favorite narrative or movie that has great significance to you? List why.

- _3.** __What are different types of narratives?

- _4.** __What is the visual shape of your story if you had to visualize it?

- _5.** __List the three archetypes that relate to “your story” [your life].

- _6.** __What are three knowledge domains you are interested in? [my examples: Swimming, Space, Science]

- _7.** __What are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? How are these needs connected to Storytelling?

__C. ZINE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER. Respond to the questions below.

Zines are natural additions to the design process. Zines offer a form of non-traditional narrative building. Zines have served as a significant medium of communication in various subcultures. They usually draw inspiration from a philosophy that disregards the traditional conventions of professional design usually proposing an alternative confident and self-aware contribution. A zine, short for magazine, is a small-circulation or self-published work of texts and images, that are usually reproduced via photocopier. They are the product of either a single person or a small group, and are popularly photocopied into physical prints for circulation. Written in a variety of formats from desktop-published text to comics, collages and stories, zines cover broad topics including fanfiction, politics, poetry, art & design, ephemera, personal journals, social theory, intersectional feminism, single-topic obsession, or content far outside the mainstream enough to be prohibitive of inclusion in more traditional media.

- _1.** What is a Zine?

- _2.** What is a One Page Zine?

- _3.** How can a zine be used to communicate visually through narrative?

- _4.** What types of topics can you communicate through a Zine?

- _5.** Are Zines typically Self-produced?



How to Reach Users through Stories

You can use storytelling in your design process to present your user research results in an engaging way and create empathy with your target users. This will help you steer the design process and keep it user-centric. Here's what you can do:

Define your target users with personas – to envision users' likely experiences and gain empathic insights. Personas are based on user research but tell a story about your insights. An example persona might be "Rick", a 47-year-old manager struggling with his work–family-life balance. He even works on his train commutes. Feeling drained, he wants better control of his life.

Create a plot, with conflict – to make the personas heroes and envision how they can overcome specific problems using your design. Make this a mapped-out journey or storyboard with each persona's aim/s clearly defined. E.g.:

Rick discovers your (yet-to-be-designed) time-management app online. He downloads it and completes your questionnaire about work commitments, family, outings, etc.

He starts using your app, letting it collect data from his phone and fitness tracker about time on various tasks/activities, stress levels, alertness, etc.

After a week, your app charts his tasks and activities, including sleep, heart-rate data, etc.

Tapping a phone tab, Rick sees time-management suggestions on how to become more productive, well-rested, etc.

He has the option to continue or suspend monitoring (e.g., if on holiday/vacation).

Give your design the supporting role – show it improving your persona's/user's life and how easy it is to use. For example, consider how many steps Rick needs to use your app and if voice-controlled devices at home might influence its suggestions.

Work with the setting –When and where users use your design is vital for building empathy. For Rick, it's the home, train and workplace. But what about (e.g.) busy professionals working from home?

Tailor the look/feel – Your design's appearance is vital regardless of its functional benefits, so design the most appropriate (e.g.) layout, colors, typography. For example, Rick prioritizes an at-a-glance,

easy-to-use design, but soothing colors would complement larger fonts, etc.

Always Consider

The What – The user problem/s you define: E.g., They work too much overtime because of...? Budgeting problems at home?

The Who – The users themselves, envisioned through personas. This includes people who play influential roles in the main user's/persona's story. You can identify them using customer journey maps.

The How – Your story arc, with a beginning, middle and end. From introducing the player/s at the beginning, you build towards their biggest problems (which many factors can affect) and finish with the happy ending your design delivers.

Your story narratives are "magic mirrors"—proving fine-tuned empathy and connection with users' values—where users discover how to make their own happy endings.

Ultimately, your design should predict your target users' actions at every level possible. Testing will help confirm how successful it is.

Learn More about Storytelling
Take our course featuring storytelling: <https://www.interaction-design.org/courses/interaction-design-for-usability>

Here's an in-depth, example-rich treatise on storytelling: <https://rosenfeldmedia.com/books/storytelling-for-user-experience/>

Discover storytelling's importance for apps: <https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2013/03/art-of-storytelling-around-app/>

Read UX designer and product strategist Sarah Doody's account of storytelling's value: <http://www.drewlepp.com/blog/four-storytelling-techniques-for-user-experience-designers/>

Find helpful insights about visual storytelling: <https://www.justinmind.com/blog/guide-to-visual-storytelling-for-ux/>

Source: <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/storytelling>