

## NUFS Workshop 2015

*Newsletter No. 9***Workshop in January****<Part 1 >****Date:** January 9, 2016, 10:30-14:30**Venue:** NSC College, Building Minami, Room A-31**Presenter:** Curtis Kelly (Kansai University)**Title:** “The Neuroscience of Storytelling”**Abstract:** Why our Brains like Stories

Stories, the original Wikipedia, are the oldest tool of teaching, and still the most potent. For most of human existence, we have used stories to share information and educate our offspring about the wiles of the world. It is no wonder our brains have evolved to process stories so much more effectively than other formats of delivery. In fact, stories do more than information transfer. They cause a parallel activation of the insula that results in brain linking. The presenter will provide the neuroscience behind stories, methods for using them, and some powerful stories for you to experiment with.

**The number of participants: 25****1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?**

- Storytelling with pictures – students draw pictures themselves and they allow them plenty of time to do so, not one-time activity. I sometimes adapt story telling in my lessons. But it’s usually running out of time, so I didn’t allow students to do their own research and retell the story. I’ve missed the most important point to develop their language cognitively.
- I’d like to have students make a story about happy memory with pictures and tell the story to their partners then in a group of four and at last make a presentation in a class.
- I’ve decided to use story telling in the last/first five minutes in my class. And I’m going to make kami-shibai about my story for my elementary kids.
- When you showed us the commercial video of Google, I was impressed by it and can answer some of questions at the end of the morning session. I think this kind of exercise is worth of using in class so that they can acquire some knowledge by using it not by memorizing the words.

**2. What you learned from today’s workshop**

- Digitales are an easy way to get students of all levels involved and feeling successful.
- I learned how to make story telling successful: using gesture, short-breaking, dialogue, changing the tone of voice and repetition. I realized we can retain the word by listening to the story, making story and doing presentation.
- Starting from telling stories, students take more steps to digitales. I usually don’t recognize how

the brain works in learning/teaching, but from now on, I can improve my teaching style considering how the nerve system works.

- I'm so impressed with digitale the girl who used to be called 'the worst English student'. I thought about several students who are not good at English but would be interested in making stories in English like her. I would like to try!
- People remember the longest with stories. I would like to use this in my classes. Human beings like stories. Students will enjoy listening to each other's stories.

### 3. Questions and Answers

*Q (1): I'd like to know how to have students make Digitales. What kinds of software are necessary? What instruction do you give to students beforehand?*

I suggest using a computer classroom. I'll attach detailed instructions below for doing Digitales in 2-3 45-minute classes with high school students

*Q (2): Please tell us ways to assess and ways to help students improve their storytelling skills as well as their activities.*

Grading depends on the type of students, school, etc., so hard for me to answer. But I give quizzes on stories I use in my business classes, and evaluate memorization and delivery for stories they tell. Improving their storytelling skills is not that hard. Here is a quick guide I wrote for teachers:



#### <Storytelling techniques>

Telling a story is not the same as explaining or reading, and requires the techniques good speakers use in presentations. In general, listening is a lot harder than reading, so reduce the cognitive load as much as possible. Here are some ways to do so:

- 1) Use spoken, not written English. Written English sentences use far more complex wording you must keep the totality of in working memory in order to process meaning: like this very sentence. It is easy to understand if you read it, but a lot harder if someone reads it to you. Spoken English is simple. Spoken English repeats. Sometimes it's a sentence. Sometimes a phrase. Easy. Clear. Like this. So do not read or recite a written text. Change it to speaking.
- 2) Adapt the level to fit the audience. For lower level learners, I stop every few paragraphs and give a short summary (not full translation) in L1. This way, I know they will be on line for the next part. Sometimes I give the entire story again in L1 after I finish. It also helps afterwards to point out, or let them decipher, the moral message of the story.
- 3) Help the audience visualize the action. Use sensory words, voice change, and gestures to dramatize the delivery. This allows the audience to spend their mental resources focusing on the message rather than the language. For example, if your story includes an interaction between an adult and a child, use dialog – meaning direct quotes instead of indirect quotes.

Change your voice a little for each character (making them different from the narrator's voice), and as you speak their lines, face a little to the right for one character and to the left for the other, as if they are talking to each other. For narration, face forward.

- 4) Use drama. Voice changes, phrasing, and long pauses –and I mean loooooong –before key points builds the suspense. Voice change means changing your speed, volume, pitch, and tone every few sentences so that the audience does not lose focus. Our brains are built to focus on change, not continuity. It might seem paradoxical, but for the most powerful part of the story, a low, slow, quiet voice usually works better than a loud, powerful one.

*Q (3): Could you tell me the sick child and his father's story? I didn't understand the ending very well.*

You can watch that video on Youtube, here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHeqQAKHh3M>

I agree that it was a little fast. Basically, the little boy has brain cancer so he will not live long. The father plays with him and is amazed at how cheerful the boy is, even though he is going to die.

Then the father thinks that he himself does not have a long time left to live either. We are all dying.



## <Part 2>

**Date:** January 9, 2016, 14:30-17:00

**Venue:** NSC College

**Advisors:** Kazuyoshi Sato, Nancy Mutoh, Duane Kindt (NUFS), Robert Croker (Nanzan University),

**Abstract:** Monthly report on action research

**The number of participants:** 8



## **Workshop in February (Scheduled)**

**Date:** February 13, 2016, 10:30-14:30 (Workshop), 14:30-17:00 (Action Research session)

**Venue:** NSC College, Building Minami, Room A31 (1-9-6 Shinsakae, Naka-ku, Nagoya)

<http://www.nufs.ac.jp/cms/cms-files/20150218-113526-1680.pdf>

**Presenter:** Junko Yamanaka (Chukyo University/ Aichi Gakuin University)

**Title:** "Helping Students Become Fluent, Joyful and Confident Readers"

Please send an email to Chihaya ([chiha143@nufs.ac.jp](mailto:chiha143@nufs.ac.jp)) to attend this workshop.

<Appendix>

## Doing Digitales (in a computer room) - Curtis Kelly

### **Class One – 45 min**

1. Explain PowerPoint Story with examples. (7 min)
2. Show how to do Powerpoint (10 min)
3. Give Assignment (3 min)
4. Start writing it.; Finish by next class (25 min)

Note: 25 minutes is not enough time to write a story, so they either have to finish outside of this class when the lab is open, or at home. If neither is possible, you can either add another class or use the first 15-20 minutes of the next class to finish.

### **Class Two – 45 min**

1. Finish stories.
2. Explain 1-2 simple storytelling techniques (7 min)
3. Practice with partner. (3 min)
4. Two rounds of moving around room to see others; (15 min each)
5. Give feedback to presenters (5-10 min)

Longer explanation:

### **Class 1 (45 min, but if you have 90, great).**

Ask them if they like stories and show them “*Love at First Sight*” Rex Tanimoto’s digitale.

Then students they are going to make a story like that too, and share it. Tell them that a Digitale is a PowerPoint file with pages, maybe one sentence per page and a picture.

At this point, I usually show another, like “*Colorful Bears.*” pointing out that it was made by a high school student. For lower level student’s I might do Saki Nio’s *A Little Superman*, because it uses such simple English.

Then I give them a super simple PowerPoint lesson, with these steps that we do together:

- 1) Log in to the computer. Open PowerPoint.
- 2) In PowerPoint, everyone chooses “New.” A page opens. In the Title text box, type “My story” and in the Body text box, their name. (Tell them they can change the title later.) When done,

have them save the file as “XXX’s Story” or something, to make sure it is saved.

- 3) Have them choose “New Page” for the first page of their story. In Nara, I told them I was going to make a story about a deer named Jim. I’d tell them to type ‘Hi, my name is Jim.’” Or just watch as I did it.
- 4) Then I’d say that I want a picture of a deer. There are three ways I could get one: a) a cell phone photo, b) drawing something and scanning or photoing it, or c) the easy way, getting a picture from the Net. I’m going to get mine from the Internet. I’d have them open their browsers (Explorer?) and type “deer” in the Google search box. When the results come up, have them choose “Images.” Scroll through those images and click on a deer, and get it to your PowerPoint page (depending on your set up, that can mean dragging it to the desktop first and then the PPT page, doing a copy and paste, or even dragging it directly to the page.
- 5) I’d then show them how to change the size of the image, make sure it is behind the text, and how to position the text. And Voila! That’s it. Finally, I’ll do ”Play" and read them my two pages. I might do “SAVE” again now or not.

The only other thing to do is assign the story. You can set any parameters, such as “In Nagoya” or not. Have them delete the deer picture and start working on their own stories, which they are going to tell each other. Tell them to work on text first as much as possible and allow for some gestation time. I’ve also passed out worksheets to help (below), but for most, these were just “jama.” I don’t think they are necessary.

At the end of the class (or sooner), tell them to “Save.” You might also explain how to get their PPT files home or bring/mail in graphics/photos from home.

## **Class 2 (or 3?)**

Give them time to add final touches, and then have them read their story to a partner. Have them count off as 1, 2, 1, 2. Then in session 1, the TWOs stand up and walk around, while the ONEs stay by their computers. Each TWO pairs up with a ONE and hears the story. When finished, they go to another ONE, listen to that story, and so on. In session two, they reverse. Whether you want them to do free flow or rotate one by one is up to you. Free flow is the easiest.

At the end, do some kind of follow-up, like asking for the best stories to show to everyone.

Easy!

# *Nara Digitales: Great stories in Interesting Places*

Choose a place you'd like to introduce. Make a PowerPoint story that happens at that place.

Here are some ideas:



*The Happy Ghost of Asuka*

*Deer Love Story in Nara*

*Mystery at Yokozuna Ramen*

*Koen*

## **Instructions:**

1. Choose a place	
2. Decide what kind of story	
3. Think of a story. Write groups sentences for each slide.  (you can use another paper or here)	
4. Write a title for your story	
5. Put it in Powerpoint	a) Write the sentences first, in text boxes b) add pictures, photos or animations c) test your story

# *Nara Digitales Festival: Tell your stories*

## **Instructions:**

1. Tell your partner your story to practice.
2. Group 1: Sit at your computer, tell your stories.  
Group 2: Move around the room and listen to stories. Like this:
3. Now switch roles.
4. After you finish, write notes to each person about their story. Here are some examples:

Dear Kenji,  
That ghost story in  
Asuka was so funny. I  
liked it a lot.  
Eri

Dear Yumi,  
That story was fun to hear. I have  
never been to Yokozuma Ramen, but  
now I want to go.  
Is that mystery story true? I hope you  
keep writing stories. Show me. And  
I hope someday you write a book.  
Kana