

Total time

60  
minutes

Age group

8-14  
years



# WILD FUTURES FOR STORYTELLING

Lesson Plan



# STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this session, learners will:

- Understand how storytelling shapes beliefs, emotions and actions
- Explore a three part storytelling structure
- Create a storyboard for an environmental impact story

## IMPORTANT NOTE FOR EDUCATORS

- This lesson is designed to be used alongside the [Wild Futures Storytelling Session Recording](#).
- The recording guides students through Steps 1 to 5.
- If students have already watched the recording, you may move directly to Step 4 to complete the storyboard activity.
- Students can use [Open Planet's archive of footage](#) to include in their storyboard. Note: the footage is free to use but does require an email and password to access.

[ACCESS THE VIDEO LESSON HERE](#)

## CONTENTS

- Step 1: Why we tell stories (10 minutes)
- Step 2: Identifying your audience (10 minutes)
- Step 3: Storytelling example from Ocean with David Attenborough (10 minutes)
- Step 4: Creating your own storyboard (20 minutes)
- Step 5: Showcase & Summary (10 minutes)
- Appendix: Storyboard worksheet for students
- Optional Extension: Create your own mini mature film with footage from Open Planet

This lesson is in partnership with The NAT. The NAT exists to amplify awareness and accelerate action for Nature. You can find out more about The NAT [here](#).

This lesson is also in partnership with Open Planet. Open Planet is unlocking the power of storytelling by enabling everyone, everywhere, access to world-class, scientifically accurate footage of our changing planet. You can find out more about their work [here](#).

## STEP 1. WHY WE TELL STORIES (10 MINUTES)

Show a picture of a cave painting to the class. Ask if any of them know what this is? Humans have been telling each other stories since the beginning. Since the beginning of cavemen and women and through oral traditions passing down wisdom through generations. It's what our culture and society is built on and it's how we form our identity. If we want to change the world therefore, stories are a powerful way to do it.

Prompt: Can you think of a movie, series or book that changed your mind or how you think about something? Or perhaps a story that your family or parents have told you that is passed down through generations?

Students reflect on why certain stories stay with them.

Stories are important to inspire audiences everywhere to become planetary stewards: to imagine a future where we live in a way that supports life on our planet rather than destroys it. A future where we can all thrive.

## STEP 2. IDENTIFYING YOUR AUDIENCE (10 MINUTES)

Before starting a story, one of the key questions to ask yourself is who is your audience?

Is it your friends at school, your teachers, people in power in your country, people your age all over the world?

And then, what do you want them to feel, think and do differently as a result of seeing your film?

This will be your guiding star as you start to develop your story.

Students to spend time thinking about who their audience is and what they want them to:

- Feel
- Think
- Do differently

The general rule is to show, don't tell. Don't overwhelm your audience with facts. If you want to change someone's perception or understanding, you need to take them on a journey. We also want people to feel something, because when we connect with people's emotions, they are more likely to remember the story.

## STEP 3. WHY WE TELL STORIES (10 MINUTES)

Ask students if they have heard of Sir David Attenborough.

Explain that he is a leading natural historian and biologist who uses film to tell stories about our planet. He recently made a film with Open Planet called Ocean with David Attenborough.

Share with students that this film was created to coincide with the United Nations Ocean Conference, where the aim was to agree to protecting 30% of the Ocean by 2030.

Activity: Show a series of short clips to students. After each one, pause and invite students to share how the clip made them feel, what emotion or thought were they left with?

Clip 1 - Wonder (youtube video timestamp: 5:46)

After playing this clip ask students how they felt. Share answers as a class.

Share the word: Wonder - one of the challenges with the ocean is that most people don't get to go scuba diving, so people don't have a strong connection to the beauty under the surface. The job of the film was to show people that wondrous world - to bring it into their living rooms - and also to share exciting new scientific discoveries about life in the deep ocean and its importance for our survival.

Clip 2 - Jeopardy (youtube video timestamp: 7:47)

After playing this clip ask students how they felt. Share answers as a class.

Share the word: Jeopardy - the seriousness of what we stand to lose. The senseless destruction that we don't see. We don't blame one group of people as this would have been adding to our already divided society. And we don't end the film there as that would most likely lead to people feeling hopeless.

## STEP 3. CONTINUED

Clip 3 - Action (youtube video timestamp: 9:02)

After playing this clip ask students how they felt. Share answers as a class. Share the word: Action - the possibility of recovery.

Share with students the three stages: Wonder, Jeopardy, Action

Ask students - why might a story involve these three stages? What do you think Open Planet was trying to make the audience feel when they watched these three clips? Why do you think it starts with Wonder, then Jeopardy, then Action - what would happen if we changed this order around? Why might we end with sharing stories of action and hope?

In doing this, the audience is shown the brilliant work that's already happening so it feels achievable and a win-win for everyone. It's not naive optimism, it's practical solutions. If it works here, it can work everywhere, but only if we all work hard and protect the ocean.

## STEP 4. CREATING YOUR OWN STORYBOARD (20 MINUTES)

(Teacher Note: students who have already watched the recording begin here)

You have explored how stories use wonder, jeopardy and action.

As a quick recap here is what these stages are trying to show to their audience:

- Wonder: Show something amazing so people feel curious and excited about it.
- Jeopardy: Show the danger and what we might lose so people understand feel why it needs protecting.
- Action: Show what people can do to help so everyone feels they can make a difference.

Now it is your turn to design your own impact story. Think about a story you want to tell. Often telling a story that is personal to you or something you know about, makes a powerful story. What is an environmental story you would like to tell?

Students create a three-frame storyboard for a short environmental story.

Prompts for the Activity: Brainstorming

- Audience: Who is this story for?
- Message: What do you want your audience to think, feel, say or do?

## STEP 4. CONTINUED

Prompts for the Activity: Storyboard

- Wonder: What beauty, possibility or connection do you want to show?
- Jeopardy: What challenge or threat does your audience need to understand?
- Action: What solution or hopeful step can be shown?

Materials needed: paper, pens, optional 3 frame template (worksheet on page 7 of the lesson plan)

## STEP 5. SHOWCASE & SUMMARY (10 MINUTES)

Invite volunteers to share their storyboard. Have the students discuss what inspired them with their own storyboards and what stands out to them in their classmates' storyboards.

Suggested final question: What is the change you hope your story could spark in someone who watches it?

Summary: Today you explored how stories can shape understanding, shift emotions and inspire action. Every story you create has the potential to open someone's eyes to something new. Whether your film is watched by one person or many, your voice can make a difference. Your ideas matter, and the stories you tell can help build a future where both people and the planet can thrive.

## LESSON PLAN EXTENSION

Your class can use Open Planet's free open library to source footage to help make your students' storyboards come to life.

About Open Planet:

Open Planet is an online library of footage about our changing planet, covering a wide range of environmental issues, impacts and solutions from across the world. The library allows everyone, everywhere, to be able to tell stories that will raise awareness of the major challenges and solutions, and can help inspire action.

Open Planet works with filmmakers, scientists and other experts to make sure our library includes high quality footage and reflects diverse stories from many different countries.

For the student user guide check [this link](#)

We encourage you to share your students' films with us via email: [lesson@project-everyone.org](mailto:lesson@project-everyone.org)

## STORYBOARD FOR NATURE!

### Brainstorming

- Audience: Who is this story for?
- Message: What do you want your audience to think, feel, say or do?

WONDER: WHAT BEAUTY,  
POSSIBILITY OR  
CONNECTION DO YOU  
WANT TO SHOW?

JEOPARDY: WHAT  
CHALLENGE OR THREAT  
DOES YOUR AUDIENCE  
NEED TO UNDERSTAND?

ACTION: WHAT SOLUTION  
OR HOPEFUL STEP CAN BE  
SHOWN?



# CERTIFICATE

## OF PARTICIPATION

AWARDED TO

For participating in Wild Futures for Storytelling and learning how to protect nature through storytelling.

WILD FUTURES FOR STORYTELLING

