

DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROMPTS

1. **A DECISION:** A small decision that turned out to make a big impact in some area of your life. What led up to the decision? What made you choose the option you did? How has that decision made a big impact in your life?
2. **AN EPIPHANY:** A moment when you had an epiphany (a sudden understanding of something previously murky to you). What led up to the epiphany? What did you finally understand? How has that understanding influenced you?
3. **A FRUSTRATION:** A time in your life that you felt really frustrated about something (a relationship, an activity, etc.). What led up to that frustration? How did the frustration impact you and those around you? How did you resolve it?
4. A time when things in your life were not going so well and you felt really scared.
5. A time in your life when things worked out much differently than you expected.
6. A moment in time when you knew you would never be the same again.
7. A choice you made in the past that set you on the path to who you are now
8. A moment in your past you wish you had the chance to do over, in light of what you know now
9. A lesson you learned the hard way
10. A moment when you felt different from everyone around you
11. A turning point moment when your beliefs about some aspect of your identity started to change
12. **OBJECT:** An object in your living space that has personal significance to you. Why is the object significant? What does it reveal about who you are and the story of your life thus far?
13. **OBSTACLE:** An obstacle you've overcome on your path towards a goal. What led up to the obstacle? How did it interfere with your goal? How did you overcome the obstacle?
14. **FIRSTS:** A first love, first day on a job, first time trying something really difficult, the first time you read a favorite book, heard a favorite song, saw a favorite movie, etc. What did you feel going into your "first," and did the experience meet your expectations? What did you learn from the experience?
15. **PERMISSION TO CREATE FREELY:** Tell a story about a time when you were given permission to express yourself through your own creativity. Bring us to the moment of awareness that you felt supported to fully explore your creative voice.
16. **MAKING LEMONADE:** Write a story about a creative process gone wrong: a meal, a hobby or craft project, a community campaign, an event or production. Try to take us to the moment of realization that things didn't quite turn out as planned.

17. **DARKNESS BEFORE THE LIGHT:** Every one of us has a moment before the big change – a low before the high, a setback before an accomplishment, a loneliness before the connection, a bad day at work before the perfect vacation. Thinking back on one of the developmental shifts in your life, share a story about a moment of darkness before the light.
18. **DECISIVE MOMENTS:** In our lives, there are moments, decisive moments, when the direction of our lives was pointed in a given direction, and because of the events of this moment, we are going in another direction. Poet Robert Frost shared this concept simply as The Road Not Taken. The date of a major achievement, the time there was a particularly bad setback, meeting a special person, the birth of a child, the end of a relationship, the death of a loved one are all examples of these fork-in-the-road experiences. Right now, at this second, write about a decisive moment in your life.
19. **INNER CHILD:** There are images we take from childhood, snapshots of ourselves as a fully formed character. Sometimes, even at the smallest age, we knew we were destined to be ourselves. Share a story of the child you were, and where that child still resides in who you have become
20. **BODIES:** We all have stories about the surprises of our bodies, tests where our body has somehow survived...times when our bodies disappointed. Endurance, frailty, strength, limits, beauty, shame – these are all words we associate with stories we tell about our bodies. Share a moment when your body taught you a lesson.
21. **SCARS:** All of us have scars – small ones from the scrapes along the road, large ones from the major bumps and spills. Some we can wear as badges of survival, some are not visible and are beneath our skin, beneath the surface, but have left their mark all the same. Share a story about a scar.
22. **TURNING POINTS WITH FICTION:** The Fictive in literature, poetry, film, and theater are stories that present a reality that could have been, and a truth that is often more clarifying than the real events. We are often changed by the fictional stories we have experienced. Tell a story about the moment a fictional narrative – book, movie, theater, etc. – changed you.
23. **(RE)DISCOVERY:** In our lives, we see moments where our old stories inform our new ones; a childhood fascination with snails, our love of baseball heroes, or our getting lost in academia in college become the way we come back to nature with our children, become the way we make sense of our need for heroes, become our renewed appreciation of the joy of discovery through hard messy learning. Tell a story about re-discovering an earlier enthusiasm. It could be a old favorite subject or topic, a childhood hobby, a place of adventure.
24. **EMOTIONAL UPHEAVAL:** Choose a time in your life of emotional upheaval and change. Write about an event at that time that reflected the inverse of the feelings of loss, confusion, or despair; where you observed something, heard something, read something, or

did something that provided a glimpse of contrasting light against the darkness. Take us into this moment of possibility.

25. **HEEDING THE UNEXPECTED CALL:** We all have moments when we have been called from our ordinary existence to wander into the lower world and explore the depths. Share a story of your call, where it took you, and what you learned.
26. **RETURN FROM THE UNDERWORLD:** Implicit in the return from the underworld is a sense of self that is capable of new insight. Sometimes that is a sense of understanding that which was not possible before. Share a story of a moment when you brought the boon of forgiveness back to share with someone in the world.

USING IMAGES TO PROMPT CREATIVE REFLECTION

Some people are more creative in a visual mode, so **another way is to find an image that moves, inspires, disturbs, or affects you, and build a story around the image.** For example, if you found images of the following (perhaps on the Flickr Creative Commons collection), you might brainstorm emotions associated with the image:

Sunrise- a time to re-energize, start over...

Road – a theme of travel, movement, going somewhere

Traffic accident – devastation, loss of hope, travesty

Elderly person – someone special in your life

Once you've found a photo that you like, brainstorm answers to this list of questions:

- What's happening right now in this image? What happened 10 minutes before the picture was taken? What might happen next?
- What do you know about the people in the picture? If there aren't people there, where might they be?
- Create a list of adjectives to describe what you'd see, feel, smell, touch, or taste if you were IN the picture.