YOUTH4NATURE

"HOW TO CRAFT AN *ARTISTIC* STORY" GUIDE

🌱Ground-Up Storycrafting Lab - Storytelling Programme

THE SUBSTANCE

1. What type of art will you employ for your story?

💡*Common art categories include literature, performing arts, music, visual/plastic arts and architecture. Examples of artistic stories include illustrations, comics, poetry, fable-like fiction tales, dance, film, photography and theatre.*

💡*As the story must be personal and original, the author/co-author(s) must create the art.*

2. What *local* climate, biodiversity or climate-nature issue do *you* want to depict?

❓ *What subtopics and themes got your attention? What does the wider scientific/knowledge-holder community have to say about its urgency and severity? What is its relationship with broader sustainability challenges?*

💡 *It helps to start wide and generic and then narrow it down and get specific step by step. Example: climate change => extreme weather events => flooding => damage to houses & land => displaced and climate-refugee rural communities => lack of financial and adaptive support for the affected => interactions between climate vulnerability and social inequality => elderly women and disabled most badly impacted.*

3. How does the issue make you feel?

💡*Describe the feelings and emotions you experience when thinking about the issue.*

❓ *How has it impacted **your personal life, everyday life, family, community, town/city/village?** What effect does it have on the lands or waters you live in?*

4. How and why do *you* want to communicate the issue through the chosen art form?

💡 *Think about the relationship between your personal history, the climate/biodiversity/climate-nature issue, and the desired art form. These are the things you want to bring together through this story, so it is good to understand their relationship in your eyes.*

THE ELEMENTS

1. CHARACTERS: Who is involved in the story, and in which capacity or role?

💡 *List the people who have contributed to/created the issue, are affected by the issue, are trying to solve the issue, and need to solve the issue.* ***Position yourself within one or more*** *of these groups. Don't be afraid to* ***be the main character.***

💡*Characters in the story can also be other living beings (i.e. flora, fauna, fungi), features of nature (e., rivers, wind, soil…) and even objects/items. This particularly applies to creative/surrealist stories and stories rooted in culture and local knowledge.*

2. SETTING: Where does the story take place?

💡 *Be concrete about the region, country, locality and community where the issue manifests (ideally a place you are familiar with). If the issue happens in different places, mention all, but focus on up to three specific locations. If the issue is global/general, consider how it develops in a familiar setting/location.*

💡 *Describe the place using your five senses, particularly sight and hearing.*

3. CONTEXT: What is the relationship between the issue and broader societal/global circumstances and factors?

💡 *It is vital to contextualise climate, biodiversity and climate-nature issues by considering broader social, economic, political, cultural and historical factors without necessarily delving too deeply into them.*

4. TIME: When/for how long does the story take place?

❓ *Is the issue short-term or long-term? Did it begin/happen long ago, or is it recent? Would it be fixed quickly, or would it require a long-term solution?*

THE DELIVERY

1. MEDIUM: Which format works best to communicate the story?

💡 *For digital storytelling, text, audio, video and image are the usual formats. For physical storytelling, spoken word, oral history, theatre, dancing, and painting can be recorded into digital files. It is also possible to combine formats for a single story.*

💡 *While the medium can affect how your story is received, the most important thing is that you are comfortable creating the story in said medium.*

2. ARTIST STATEMENT: How would you describe the artwork if someone asked for clarity/understanding?

💡 *Imagine you are an artist in an exhibition, and someone approaches you to ask about the message and inspiration behind your artwork. Or, think of a caption for the showcase. Try to give a brief response in under a minute / in ~50 words.*

3. TONE: Which styles and techniques will you use to deliver the story?

💡 *Think about how the textures, sounds, colours, visuals, movements, words and other elements depicted will convey the desired style and emotions/thoughts.*

❓*Which is the story's point of view, first or third person? Will it be nonfiction, fiction but based on true events, or surrealist with magical elements? Will it be creative, colourful, emotive, humourous, lively, serious, critical, inspirational, moral, full of sound, suspenseful…?*

4. AUDIENCE: For whom are you writing the story?

❓ *Is the story addressed to people with little to no knowledge or interest in climate/biodiversity / climate-nature issues (i.e. will need to be stripped to basics and be relatable)? Is the story addressed to people active or involved in this field? (i.e. can be more technical and focus on niche topics); Will the story need to be packaged in alternative formats for different audiences, considering things like language barriers, culture, age, and hearing and visual disabilities?*

💡 *Examples of audience: social media followers, community members, schools/universities, children, the general public, young activists, scientists / knowledge-holders, media outlets, local authorities, national governments, policymakers, businesses/corporations.*

THE PURPOSE

1. AIM: What do you hope sharing the story will achieve?

❓ *Why are you compelled to craft a story in the first place? What do you think it can achieve for you and the issue described?*

2. RELATIONSHIP TO SELF: Is your story personal and close to you?

❓ *Is the story about your experiences, about issues/solutions that have impacted you, or based on your observations and reflections of external occurrences? Your story must be personal and original.*

3. TAKEAWAY: After checking your story, what is the main thing you hope the audience will remember from it?

💡 *Describe the desired takeaway in just a sentence. Here the audience would be anyone who comes across the story.*

4. CALL TO ACTION: After checking your story, what is the main thing you hope the intended audience will do with it/because of it?

💡 *Describe it in just a sentence. Here, the intended audience is the actors you hope to mobilise, educate, inspire or influence.*