

The Massage Educator

issue 2, 2014

\$60,510

The amount the Boston Marathon runners for the 2014 Team Massage Therapy Foundation raised as of May 1.

abmp.us/BostonMTF2014



Created by Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals • [philosophy for instructors](#)

STORYTELLING AS A TEACHING STRATEGY

Trade places with your students for a moment and think back to a time when you were sitting in the classroom. As learners, we often struggle to remember facts or statistics, but I bet you can still remember the stories your instructor told to illustrate a point, right? Storytelling is a proven teaching method that enhances a student's understanding, engagement, and retention by giving facts both meaning and context.

Successful storytelling in a classroom setting is more than sharing a quick tale off the top of your head, though; it takes planning and structure to maximize the benefits for students.

WHAT IS A STORY?

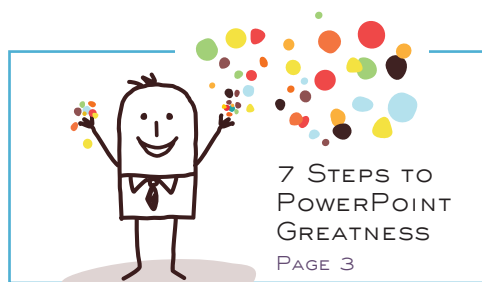
For educational purposes, a story is a narrative structure that has a beginning, middle, and end. It has characters, introduces a problem or conflict, and offers a resolution. Its purpose is to bring information to life, put it in a realistic context, and allow students to

personalize content to increase retention. For example, if you're covering cramp resolution, telling a story about how a client started cramping on your table and what you did to help them will be much more memorable than simply discussing each step of the process.

WHY IS STORYTELLING SO POWERFUL?

Storytelling is an incredible educational tool for many reasons.

- Stories can bring abstract principles to life by giving them relatable form.
- Stories engage a learner's thinking, emotions, and mental imagery.
- Student attention increases as they become engaged and invested in the outcome. This is especially true as massage and bodywork students begin picturing themselves as the practitioner in the scenario. The information becomes relevant because it starts to become personal.
- A story may provide a nonthreatening way for students to overcome their fear of a concept they may initially find intimidating.
- Information retention increases because students often find it easier to remember the flow of information and context presented in a story, rather than a list of facts and definitions.

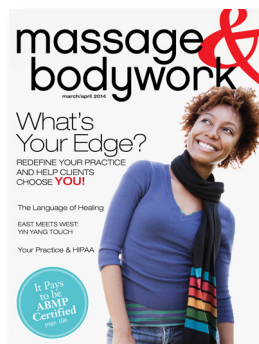


M&B: Your New Teaching Assistant

Bringing industry periodicals, like *Massage & Bodywork* magazine, into your classroom introduces students to the wider scope of the profession and potential career paths, and offers current insights from industry leaders.

Try this:

- Hand out copies in class for students to flip through and choose an article that interests them.
- Do the same with digital editions outside of class.
- Have students share a quick summary of the article they read.
- Assign specific articles that relate to your course and topic.
- Have students find an ad for a CE course they want to take.



Explore archived digital editions of *Massage & Bodywork*:

www.massageandbodyworkdigital.com/

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HOW SHOULD I STRUCTURE A STORY?

A powerful narrative has structure and is more than just a quickly shared anecdote. The key to successful storytelling is to plan your story like you would any other aspect of your lesson; construct it ahead of time.

BEGINNING

To begin, introduce the setting, individuals involved, and problem to be solved. Help students create a mental picture by giving information about the people. Instead of saying simply “my client,” include a few details that will allow students to connect to that person but not break any confidentiality; “my female client who’s an avid runner and mother of three.” Clearly introduce the problem that you’re using to teach the learning objective. Simplify; don’t give any extraneous information that may take students off track.

MIDDLE

Use the middle of your story to increase student involvement and critical thinking by asking them to share their predictions of what caused the problem and how you handled it, or ask questions like “What would you have done next?”

END

Finally, convey a clear resolution to the problem which teaches the content your story is personalizing. Facilitate a discussion about other choices that would have solved the problem, or what students should never do in that situation.

**“Tell me a fact and I’ll learn.
Tell me the truth and I’ll
believe. But tell me a story and
it will live in my heart forever.”**

—Native American Proverb

FACT OR FICTION?

True stories from your own experience and practice are more relatable for students who aspire to do what you do, but fictional stories can stimulate students’ imagination. If you’re crafting a scenario, involve students in the creation of the characters, setting, and problem to increase investment in the story and its outcome.

TURN THE TABLES

Create opportunities to put learners in the role of storyteller. Encourage students to share stories from their clinic or internship experiences and work through problems together or have them share relevant stories that draw on their past knowledge and experience.

By using the power of structured storytelling, you can bridge the gap between information and comprehension and inspire more engaged learners. 🍏

INSPIRATIONAL VIDEOS FOR EDUCATORS



• 50 Inspiring TED Talks for Educators

TED is a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks. This list from the Te@chthought website highlights 50 talks of particular interest for educators. View the talks on the TED app or on www.TED.com.

<http://teachthought.com/learning/50-inspiring-ted-talks-teachers-challenge-eduspective/>

• National YoungArts Foundation MasterClass Series

Educators will be inspired as they watch masters in their field mentor young students and share their passion, experience, and knowledge. Read more about the HBO series and access a link to their YouTube page to watch all Season One episodes.

www.youngarts.org/youngarts-masterclass

7 STEPS

to POWERPOINT GREATNESS

Increased technology in the classroom gives instructors the opportunity to create PowerPoint presentations to accompany their lectures. Do you see it more as a dreaded task than an opportunity? Follow these simple steps to create presentations like a pro.

LESS IS MORE 02

Slides should enhance what you're saying, not be a word-for-word recap of your content. Keep students focused on you rather than reading what's on the screen. Create a balance between white space, images, and words. If you can convey your point with just a few key words, do it. Same goes for colors: there are no extra points for the largest number of colors used on a slide. Choose wisely and aim to accent, not overwhelm.

THIS PICTURE IS WORTH... 04

Images, charts, and graphics powerfully illustrate your point while keeping the attention where it should be; on you and what you're saying. Human faces looking at the audience, animals, and simple graphs resonate most with visual learners. Match your image to your message, though; a picture of a basket of puppies is adorable, but if it doesn't match your lecture about the piriformis, it's a miss. And, it goes without saying, use images legally and with copyright in mind.

GET A BIRDS-EYE VIEW 06

Use the slide-sorter view—where you're able to see all of your slides on one page in smaller images—or print your presentation with multiple slides on a page to get an overview of the flow and cohesiveness of your presentation. It's often easier to tweak the flow of information when you can see the bigger picture.



01 WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Write your outline or script for your presentation before you start making your slides. Too often, people see those blank slides and feel compelled to fill them before they know what they want to say and the order in which they want to say it. The result is a disorganized pile of slides that you have to go back and redo later. Plan first; design second.

03 CAN YOU SEE WHAT I'M SAYING?

If you want students to be able to read the carefully selected words you add to each slide, choose your fonts selectively. It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of all the fun font choices and use one that has all sorts of personality, but unfortunately, they're often illegible from the back of the room. Sans-serif fonts (a font without the projecting feet at the ends of the characters), like Arial or Helvetica, are usually easier to read on big screens. Use a large font size, 28-point size or greater, to keep students from having to pull out their binoculars.

05 LESS IS STILL MORE

Too much of a good thing is usually just too much—with potato chips and PowerPoint effects. Be selective with the animations you use on each slide; not every bullet point has to fly in or bounce onto the screen. Same goes for transitions between slides; they should be used sparingly to emphasize a point or major shift in content. Overdoing it diminishes their impact and may eventually turn annoying and distracting.

07 KNOW WHEN TO SAY NO

Not all lectures benefit from a PowerPoint presentation. Don't feel obligated to create a presentation just because there's a projector in the classroom. Pick and choose your PowerPoint opportunities wisely and remember that it all comes back to you sharing information with your students the most effective way possible, based on the content. Sometimes what's best is good old-fashioned slide-free interaction.



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instructors on the front lines

"Building Communication Skills in Massage Students"

Communication skills affect every aspect of a therapist's ability to initiate, manage, and maintain a healthy therapeutic relationship with clients, yet many massage students struggle with the basic interpersonal communication required to work effectively with peers and instructors. Massage educators find they need to teach students these abilities, but don't know where to start. Join ABMP at one of our interactive Instructors on the Front Lines Workshops to gain an in-depth understanding of communication styles, patterns, and skills, and refresh your own communication skills, too! Attendees will return to their programs with methods and tools to teach students how to communicate effectively.

Upcoming Dates

June 2014

6: Omaha, NE
20: Chicago, IL

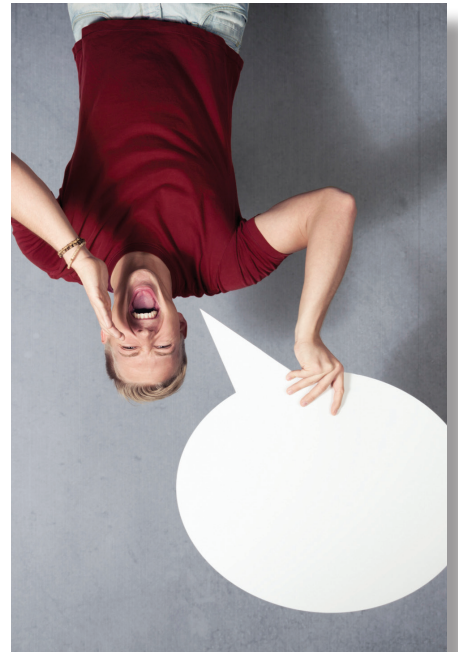
July 2014

11: Seattle, WA
25: Philadelphia, PA

August 2014

1: Columbus, OH (*new topic*)
22: Salt Lake City, UT

*For more information, including all upcoming 2014 dates and registration, visit www.abmp.com/instructors_on_the_front_lines. ✖



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