



## The Accidental Educator's Guide to Instructional Design for Adults: Storytelling

Teaching is not your primary job, yet you find that teaching has become an integral aspect of getting your job done. Perhaps you are a lawyer, police officer, health care worker or other professional working with survivors of violence. You have limited time to share information to your peers in a way that it will create change. But how? Tell a story.



Cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner suggests we are **22x** more likely to remember a fact when it has been wrapped in a story. Why?



Stories organize abstract material into a meaningful structure. *Remember how you learned the names of the planets as a child? Stories act like mnemonic devices.*



Stories trigger emotions and transport us. *Our brains are more likely to easily recall stimulus that is attached to emotions. They allow us to suspend disbelief and put ourselves in the shoes of others.*



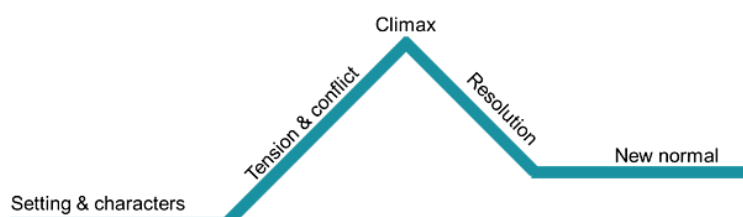
Stories challenge us and our misconceptions. *Dan Johnson in Basic and Applied Social Psychology found that reading fiction significantly increased empathy towards others.*



Stories are familiar and accessible. *Humans have been telling stories for thousands of years, sharing them orally even before the invention of writing.*



### Classic Narrative Arc



"The best stories start by establishing the setting and introducing tension through conflict. The turning point, when the tension is at its highest is the climax, and what follows is the resolution of the conflict, establishing a new normal for the characters."--Briar Goldberg



Keep it short and powerful. Follow it with a connecting activity, i.e., an active exercise that allows the learner to apply the learning through analysis, discussion or reflection.

