

Storytelling for Impact: Helping Donors Understand The Value of Their Dollar











200 items purchased for \$250

200 items sold for \$8,000



\$51



\$25



\$30

STORY



A white ceramic mug is tipped over on its side, spilling a large quantity of white, three-dimensional wooden letters onto a dark, textured wooden surface. The letters are scattered across the frame, with the word "STORY" clearly legible in the lower-left foreground. Other letters, including "A", "B", "C", "D", "E", "F", "G", "H", "I", "J", "K", "L", "M", "N", "O", "P", "Q", "R", "S", "T", "U", "V", "W", "X", "Y", "Z", and various symbols like dollar signs and hash marks, are scattered in a disorganized pile towards the upper-right background. The lighting is soft, creating gentle shadows and highlighting the texture of the wood and the smooth surface of the letters.

“

The shortest distance between truth
and a human being is a story.

Anthony de Mello



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By the end of this session, you should be able to:

1. Articulate why stories are powerful
2. Find good stories within your organization
3. Identify what makes a good story
4. Share examples of great storytelling



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I'm Rachel Clemens

CMO @ Mighty Citizen

Branding + digital + marketing for
mission-driven organizations

Strength: Building relationships

Weakness: Queso



I'm Jarrett Way

Marketing Manager @ Mighty Citizen

Strength: Building connections
through stories

Weakness: Breakfast tacos



3 Unsolicited Opinions on Stories Told By Nonprofit Organizations



Opinion #1

Nonprofits don't tell enough stories.



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Of these 9 nonprofit organizations...

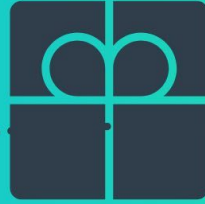
- 4 had stories front and center on their website
- 4 had **no** stories front and center on their website
- 1 had stories buried in their website

Opinion #2

Nonprofits too often substitute data and
claim-making for storytelling.



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REDUCING POVERTY

We're active in over 100 communities in Georgia alone.
And we serve over 4 million Georgians each year.

TOTAL 2017
INVESTMENT

INVESTMENT

22%

From poverty to
possibility

5 Reasons to GIVE BLOOD

1/3 of us will need a blood
transfusion in our lifetime.

3 lives can be saved with the amount
of blood donated in one sitting.

every 2 seconds someone in India
needs blood.

62 countries get sufficient blood
supplies from voluntary donations.

ACHIEVEMENTS FORECAST

SALES SUCCESS

ACHIEVEMENTS

WE INCREASED OUR 2016
REVENUE

✓ Lorem ipsum



✗ Lorem ipsum

World Without Water

Humanity's Existence Threatens Our Existence

Did you know...



1.4 BILLION
POUNDS OF
TRASH

enters the ocean each year.

0.4%

Earth's population does not have
to an adequate water source. That's
on people — or over
the size of the United States.

Up to 90%



How Much Rain Has Fallen in Texas?

35,000,000,000,000 GALLONS



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How Much Rain Has Fallen in Texas?

35,000,000,000,000 GALLONS



Enough to cover the
entire state of Texas in

8 inches
of water.



Enough to supply the entire
world's population with

10,000 days
of water if everyone drank
eight 8-ounce glasses a day.



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A middle-aged man with light brown hair, wearing a white dress shirt and a dark patterned tie, stands in a modern office. He has his arms crossed and a skeptical or questioning expression on his face. The background shows a long wooden conference table with black chairs, and large windows with horizontal blinds on the left side of the room.

Making a Claim

A photograph of two women laughing and talking outdoors. The woman on the right has dark curly hair and is wearing a black jacket over a blue top. The woman on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a blue jacket and a leopard print scarf. They are standing in front of a body of water and green trees. A blue banner with white text is in the bottom right corner.

Telling a Story

Opinion #3

When nonprofits *do* tell stories, the stories often seem to repeat themselves.



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Identify Good Stories in Your Organization



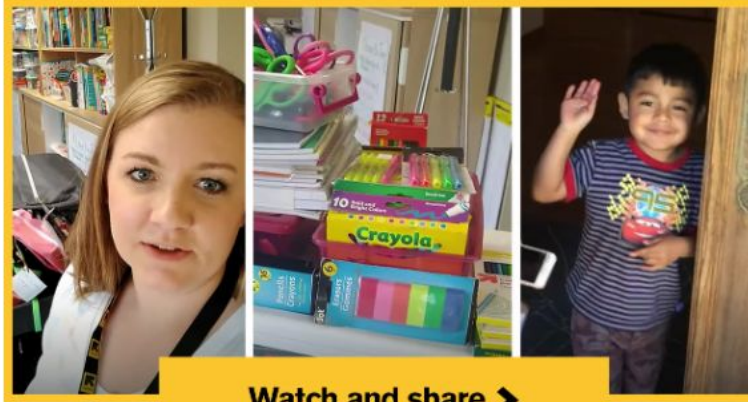
The Curse of Knowledge



Once you know something, it's **impossible** to imagine what it was like not to know it.

Rachel, I know you, a dedicated member of our Compass Collective, are right there with us, supporting refugees during this pandemic.

That's why I wanted to share this uplifting 1-minute video with you. I hope it will make you smile.



Watch and share ➤

Despite what is happening in the world today, and all that they've endured, the students in this video feel hopeful about the year ahead. We do too, Rachel, because we have you by our side helping to tackle the challenges refugee families are facing right now.



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Certain plots never fail.
Look for them.



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David v. Goliath



Odd Couples

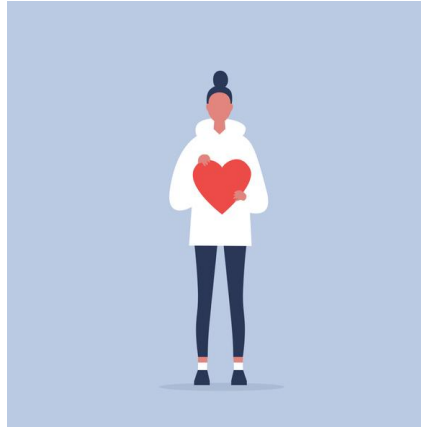


The MacGyver

Each week, ask your staff...



Whom did we turn away this week?



Who's your favorite client?



Who can't you get out of your mind?

Ethics in storytelling

- Make sure your hero has a say in the story and what is happening around their photo
- Consider your hero a contributor and editor to the story
- Include captions with your story
- Resources
 - Save the Children's [The People in the Pictures](#)
 - Dochas' [Code of Conduct on Images and Messages](#)



What Makes for a Good Story

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What Your Stories Need

1. A Hero
2. A Guide
3. Readability
4. Emotion

Not every story needs a villain.
But yours does.

It's usually apathy.



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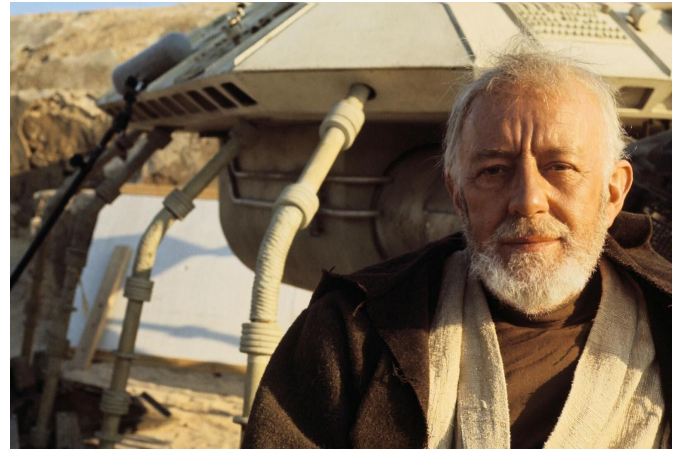


You are *never* the hero.
The hero is the person you serve.



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STAR WARS



Harry Potter



**The average American
adult reads at which
grade level?**

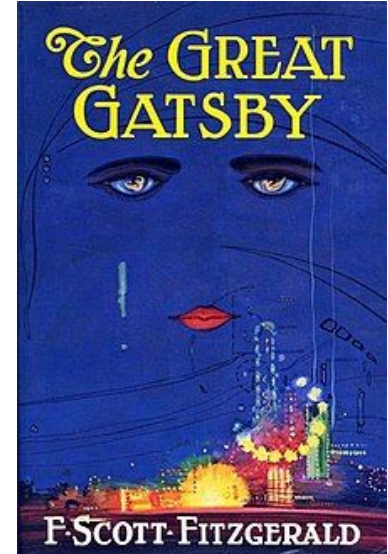
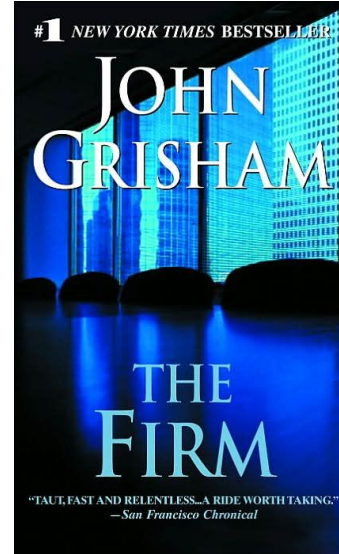


8th grade

50% of adults can't
comprehend a book
written at an 8th-grade
level



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Reduce the Readability Level of Your Story

1. Shorten your sentences.
2. Shorten the length of your words.
3. Add more paragraph breaks.
4. Add more textual interest:
 - Pull quotes
 - Relevant images
 - Lists



Glad



Sad



Mad



Afrad



About 440,000 Americans die each year from diseases related to smoking.
90% of them started as teen smokers.





Think. Don't smoke.



PHILIP MORRIS
INTERNATIONAL



-66%

+36%



Who's doing it well?

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You can provide life-saving clean water to the people who need it most. 100% of your contribution will fund water project costs in the field.

[DONATE NOW](#)

[SEE ALL STORIES](#)



LIKE



TWEET



+1

She's excited because she knows that what took 20 minutes this morning used to take hours. Two years ago, before her village received a borehole, Natalia would've still been standing in line at this hour—waiting to get dirty water from a hand-dug hole in the riverbed outside her village. And though she's always loved attending school, back then she could only go **after** collecting water. Often, that meant she'd only get to go to school twice each week.

But not anymore.

In 2012, her village received a drilled well right in the middle of their community—where all of the women can easily pump as much clean water as they need. And they can pump it quickly.

Now, Natalia doesn't wait in line. At 6:10 a.m., having already gathered water for her family, she's on the road to school. Every single day. No exceptions.



Mikael
@mikaelarthur - New York City



Sat in the front row of a movie
theater and now my neck is sore.
#FirstWorldProblems

**DONATE TO
HELP SOLVE REAL
PROBLEMS.**
WATERisLIFE
Clean Water • Hygiene • Transformation



Jonathan
@jonathand13 • Kansas City



My son got the wrong toy in his
happy meal. #FirstWorldProblems

**DONATE TO
HELP SOLVE REAL
PROBLEMS.**

WATER  LIFE.com

Clean Water. Hygiene. Transformation.

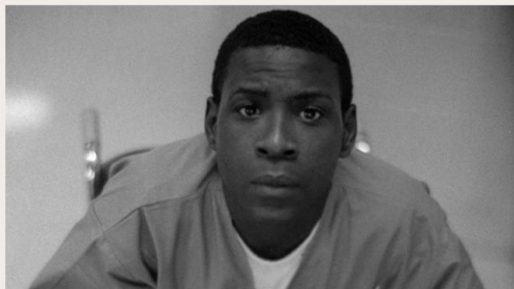
First World Problems Anthem



***I hate it when my house is so big,
I need two wireless routers.***

Joe Sullivan

Joe Sullivan was sentenced to die in a Florida prison for a nonhomicide offense when he was just 13 years old. He was released after serving 25 years.



Joe Sullivan is one of only two 13-year-olds in the country who were sentenced to life without parole for an offense that did not involve a killing. In 1989, Joe was a mentally disabled 13-year-old child living in a home where he was regularly subjected to physical and sexual abuse.

On the day of the crime, two older boys convinced Joe to participate in a burglary. The three boys entered an empty home and one older boy took some money and jewelry before the three left. That afternoon, the elderly homeowner was sexually assaulted in her home. She never saw her attacker.

One of the older boys, who may have been the true assailant, accused Joe of the sexual battery. Both older boys received short sentences in juvenile detention. Thirteen-year-old Joe Sullivan was charged and tried in adult court.

Joe was tried by a six-person jury in a one-day proceeding; opening statements began sometime after 9 a.m., and the jury returned its verdict at 4:55 p.m. During trial, the prosecutor and



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Joe was tried by a six-person jury in a one-day proceeding; opening statements began sometime after 9 a.m., and the jury returned its verdict at 4:55 p.m. During trial, the prosecutor and witnesses made repeated, unnecessary reference to the fact that Joe is African American and the victim is white; one witness repeatedly said the perpetrator of the assault was a "colored boy" or "a dark colored boy."

Biological evidence collected from the victim was not presented at trial and was destroyed before it could be subjected to DNA testing. Joe's appointed lawyer — who was later disbarred — did not object to a "voice identification" of Joe by the victim (who was blindfolded during the assault) that she had first rehearsed with the prosecutor before repeating it for the jury. Joe was convicted and sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole. Even though Joe was the youngest person in the country sentenced to die in prison for a non-homicide, his lawyer filed a brief on appeal saying there were no issues to challenge in his case.

Joe was sent to an adult prison when he was just 14, and he was repeatedly and brutally victimized by older inmates. He has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and uses a wheelchair.

EJI's Work

Lawyers from the Equal Justice Initiative challenged Joe's sentence in the Florida state courts as cruel and unusual punishment, but his petition was denied. The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in [Graham v. Florida](#) invalidating life imprisonment without parole sentences for juveniles convicted of non-homicides entitled Joe to a new sentence.

On December 1, 2017, after 25 years of incarceration, Joe Sullivan was released and admitted into EJI's re-entry program, which provides intensive assistance to people coming out of jail or prison who are especially vulnerable.





At the age of 13, Joe Sullivan was arrested and prosecuted as an adult. He was convicted and initially sentenced to die in prison.

After arriving at an adult prison in Florida, he was repeatedly subjected to sexual violence and assaults. By the age of 27, he began showing signs of multiple sclerosis that experts believe was in part induced by trauma and abuse he suffered in prison. Now 37, he is confined to a wheelchair. EJI recently won a reduced sentence for Joe and is now providing him with support services.



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Can we count on you to give the children the education they so desperately need, delivered with the highest standards of safety?

This is not a normal year, %Firstname%.

We have fewer children in our classrooms. Colored tape on the floor and tables indicates places where each child can play, safely distanced. Children and teachers wear masks.

And after each time a child plays with a toy, draws with an individual set of crayons or assembles a puzzle, teachers whisk it away to be sanitized before the next child can use it.

These are the rigorous demands of providing a safe environment for children during the pandemic. And it takes more resources than usual for cleaning supplies, gloves and towels.

But there is good news: YOU CAN HELP.

Credit: Rachel Muir





Humanity & Inclusion

Sponsored

Xiemna was putting her son to bed when, in an instant, she was left injured and childless. Xiemna is a prisoner of war.



Can you even imagine?

[Learn More](#)

This should never happen.



20

Like

Comment

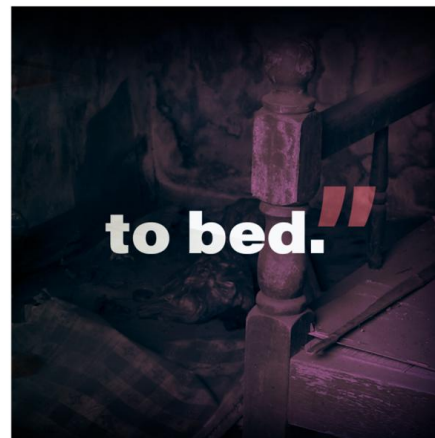
Share



There are many ways you can


Learn, support, give

62 Comments 311 Shares



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humanity_inclusion_us
Sponsored · Expand Story




**GET
50%
OFF!**


The worst moment of his life
(stepping on a landmine)
should mean a great deal to you.

Learn More

A staple for any WARDrobe. She happened to be standing in the wrong market stall at the wrong time... Horrified? So are we. Take a break from scrolling to help us end civilian casualties from the irresponsible use of explosive weapons.



**BLOW
OUT
SALE!**

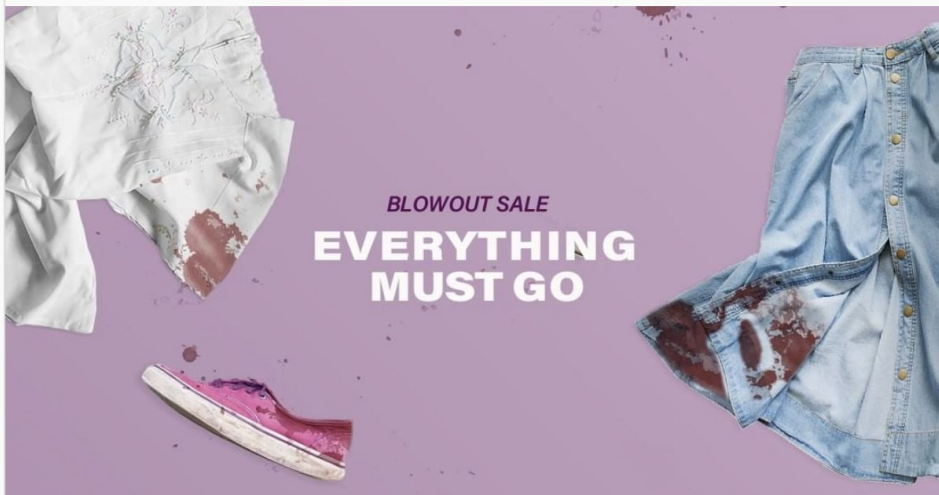


HI-US.ORG
NOT AFFILIATED WITH FACEBOOK

Horrified? So Are We.

Donations Prevent Detonations

Donate Now



humanity_inclusion_us • [Follow](#)

...



humanity_inclusion_us She didn't know she would step on a landmine when she picked out her outfit. Now, there's no taking the "war" out of her wardrobe.

4d



Be the first to like this

4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

[Post](#)



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I like this post. I've been online window shopping so much lately. Going to this site and seeing the way they presented important information in the same format as those fast fashion sites really messed with my brain and woke me up a little. Thanks.



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As I write this, I'm watching one of our tutors, Kelsey, work with a little girl who has been homeless all year. She has disappeared for days on end, and rarely comes to school on time. She lives at the extreme edge of instability, but Kelsey is an adamant advocate for this child. A few months ago, she didn't know any letters at all, and she wasn't coming to school enough to make much progress. But Kelsey really wanted to keep her in the program.

Today the child was late again, so she is eating breakfast and working with Kelsey at the same time. It's hard to see the challenges this student is trying to overcome because right now she's just a happy little kid who is just starting to sound out words for the first time.

She's kicking her pink shoes against her chair leg while she's reading, and the flashing lights on her shoes are blinking nonstop while she sounds out each word on the page.

And I just saw her trying to read the words on her carton of milk.

And in September she didn't know a single letter.

I don't have any doubts at all about where she would be right now if it weren't for Kelsey.

Some of our students have very unstable lives. We can't stop that. But in that context, our tutors are doing some pretty remarkable work giving kids some daily stability and the boost they need to succeed in school.

Day-in-life videos brought the mission home



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Thank yous all over the place!

Thank you, from Literacy First

Inbox x NP Email Materials x

Mallernee, Rachel K via utexas.onmicr Mar 2 ☆ Share this email

to Rachel

Rachel!!!!

How wonderful it is to receive notification of your Amplify Austin gift! I wanted to express my sincere appreciation for your generous and continued support of our program. Thank you so very much for helping us Amplify Literacy First! You are changing the lives of children in Austin by helping them learn to read so they may read to learn, and we are forever grateful.

I'd love to share with you [this fun video of the 'life of a Literacy First tutor'](#) which exemplifies the work that we do and how your investment is truly making a difference. It's precious and takes only a few minutes.

We are so proud to have you in the Literacy First family (and holy cow is it way more fun to say Literacy First and not ACE anymore!!!!!!) Thank you again, Rachel, for your support, your advocacy and your friendship. I can't wait until we get together.

Have a wonderful rest of your day,
Rachel

RACHEL MALLERNEE, Director of Development
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We've moved! [3925 West Braker Lane](#) Suite 3.801 Austin, TX 78759



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**We just called to
say we love you!**



Sorry we missed you!

World's Worst Cat



Meet Perdita, not for the faint of heart.

LIKES: staring into your soul until you feel as if you may never be cheerful again; the song Cat Scratch Fever, the movie Pet Cemetery, jump scares (her specialty), lurking in dark corners, being queen of her domicile, fooling shelter staff into thinking she's sick (vet agrees...she's just a jerk).

DISLIKES: the color pink, kittens (so chipper), dogs, children, the Dixie Chicks, Disney movies, Christmas and last but NOT least...HUGS.

She's single and ready to be socially awkward with a socially awkward human who understands personal space. **FREE ADOPTION!**

Takeaways

- Stories are more persuasive than claim-making because they force the audience to experience things from our point of view.
- You need to constantly be on the lookout for stories including popular plots like David v. Goliath, Odd Couples, and MacGyvers.
- A good story includes a hero, a guide, readability, and emotion.
- Great storytelling can happen through imagery, hashtags, or just one sentence.



Storytelling Resources

#1 Wall Street Journal Bestseller

DONALD MILLER

New York Times Bestselling Author

BUILDING A STORY BRAND



Clarify Your Message
So Customers Will Listen

Use the 7 Elements of Great Storytelling to Grow Your Business

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

Why Some Ideas Survive
and Others Die

MADE to STICK

Chip Heath & Dan Heath

With ADDED MATERIAL (now extra sticky!)



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Questions?

Get the slides:

mightycitizen.com/storytelling

And these tools:

- How to Write Effective Web Copy Webinar
- Editorial Content Calendar Template

Thank You!



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