

4-H DIGITAL STORYTELLING



Judges will use the criteria outlined in this tip sheet to **evaluate digital storytelling exhibits whether audio or video**. Some evaluation criteria may not apply to audio storytelling projects.

Definitions of terms used:

Story—also known as narrative or plot, is the events that appear in a production and what we can infer from these events.

Purpose—is the point or reason for making the production, e.g. to provide the audience with information about a topic, to tell a short story, to create in the audience a sense of wonder, to cause the audience to question their assumptions, etc.

Point of view—refers the perspective from which the story is told.

Storytelling form—is the structure or way in which the story's purpose is accomplished. For example, narrative forms might include a structured series of events linked by cause and effect or a chronological or linear story with a beginning, middle, and end. A non-narrative story might use as poetic or abstract forms.

Atmosphere—refers to any concrete or nebulous quality or feeling that contributes a dimensional tone to a production's action.

Tone—is the mood or atmosphere of a scene, often revealed by way it is directed, e.g. serious, humorous, satiric, amusing, etc.

Transitions—include several ways of moving from one shot or scene to the next, including such transitional effects or shots as a cut, fade, dissolve, and wipe; a transition focus between two scenes means the current scene goes out of focus and the next scene comes into focus.

Pace—is the speed/tempo of the dramatic action, which is usually enhanced by the soundtrack and the speed of the dialogue (speech rhythm and voice punctuation), the type of editing, etc.

What's the judge looking for?

For all exhibits, be prepared to explain:

- 1) What did you plan to learn or do? (What was your exhibit goal(s)?)
- 2) What steps did you take to learn or do this? Explain what you wanted to do so it is easily understood. The judge wants to know and understand the steps you used to make your exhibit.
- 3) What were the most important things you learned?



All digital storytelling projects should include the following:

- A clear purpose for the story
- Clear, decipherable video and audible throughout
- Creative aspects to the storyline, point of view, video or audio content, or storytelling form
- Story succeeds in accomplishing its purpose

As youth become more advanced in their digital storytelling and production techniques, look for the following:

- Story maintains a clear focus throughout
- A point of view that is well developed, consistent, and contributes to the overall meaning of the story
- Contents create a distinct atmosphere or tone that matches different parts of the story
- Effective use of transitions between segments and clips that contribute to the overall pace and tone
- The overall effect of the storyline, point of view, content, narrative, and storytelling form is engaging

Complex digital storytelling projects should demonstrate:

- Presentation of a meaningful dramatic question that is answered within the context of the story
- Creative or sophisticated use of camera and recording equipment or use of technically complex or difficult techniques
- Images and words communicate symbolism and/or metaphors; there are multiple layers of meaning
- The pacing contributes to the storyline, atmosphere, and tone
- The production is fully inspired and creative in its story, point of view, content, narrative, and storytelling form

An excellent source of more information about digital storytelling, filmmaking, and videography is the National 4-H Filmmaking Studio and Workshop. <http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/4-h-filmmaking-studio-and-workshop/>