Moth-Like Storytelling Group at the Aphasia Resource Center at Boston University

Aphasia Access Conference April, 2025

Meet Tim Sweeney!



What is our Storytelling Group about?

- The implementation of this group included initial exploration of professional Moth story examples, discussion and lessons on story structure and theming, and finally opportunities to practice and share personal stories with group feedback.
- Importantly, the Moth organization emphasizes that "Empathy starts with a story" (The Moth, 2024). Our group format exemplifies this as members take turns sharing stories, asking questions, and supporting each other with feedback. In this, the group helps develop functional storytelling skills while also providing psychosocial support for members to bond over the diverse and common lived experiences expressed through their stories.
- While individuals with aphasia experience a loss of language, their stories remain and the Moth inspired storytelling group provides a platform for members to voice those stories.

Storytelling First Steps:

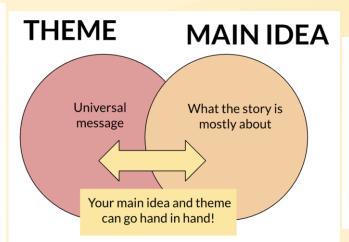
create a first line that makes the listener:

have more questions

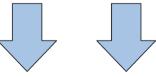
"see" the scene (imagery)

"feel" something (humor, shock, etc)

can have any or all of these components for your first line!



RAISING THE STAKES



What do you stand to gain or lose?

Why is what happens in the story important to you?

STORY PLOT BREAKDOWN

Rising Action:

- introduce the problem/challenge in the story that kicks off the action
- introduce the "stakes"

Climax:

- turning point in the story
- usually most exciting/ surprising part of story

Falling Action:

- all events leading up to end of story
- describe outcome

Introduction:

introduce...

- 1. people involved,
- 2. setting,
- 3. basic situation needed to understand the story
 - start with an "attention graber" as a strong "hook" for your first sentence

Resolution:

- tie up all loose ends
- finish with a "clear" ending
- conclude story with an impactful final line that potentially highlights the theme/meaning of story

(The Moth, 2024)

STORY PLOT MAP **MOTH STORY MAP** 3. Raising the Stakes 3. Raising the Stakes What do you have to win or lose? What matters to you 2. And Then One Day... and whu? What happens to set the story in motion? 2. And Then One Dau... 4. The Moment of Change 4. The Moment of Change What happens that changes how you see things? 1. The World As It Was 1. The World As It Was 5. The World As It Is Now 5. The World As It Is Now What do we need to know about you to How are you different after understand this storu? the events of this story?

Storytelling Structure

Storytelling Outline