

**Digital Storytelling: a qualitative
methodology for amplifying hidden
voices in higher education**

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Introductions and Overview

- Researching student voices
- What is digital storytelling?
- Examples of digital stories
- Digital storytelling as research
- Resources and publications



Concerns with current methods

- proxy measures for student voices
- data privilege: big data and objective measures of voices
- misrepresentative voice (not voices)
- use and abuse of student voices
- marginal concerns for ethics



Principles for future methods

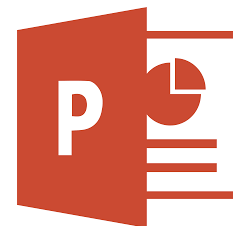
- innovative
- dialogic
- empowering
(counter-stories)
- accessible
- inclusive
(esp. language)
- ethical

Digital storytelling

- Still images (photo/icon)
- Text
- Recorded voiceover (optional)
- Music (optional)
- Various software
- 2-3 mins in length
- Aim to empower and give voice to individuals or groups who are often overlooked in mainstream culture (counter-storytelling)
- Used as an educational tool, a research method, a therapeutic medium or to increase community engagement
- The agency of the storyteller as editor and the use of software to enable this is key



Adobe Spark

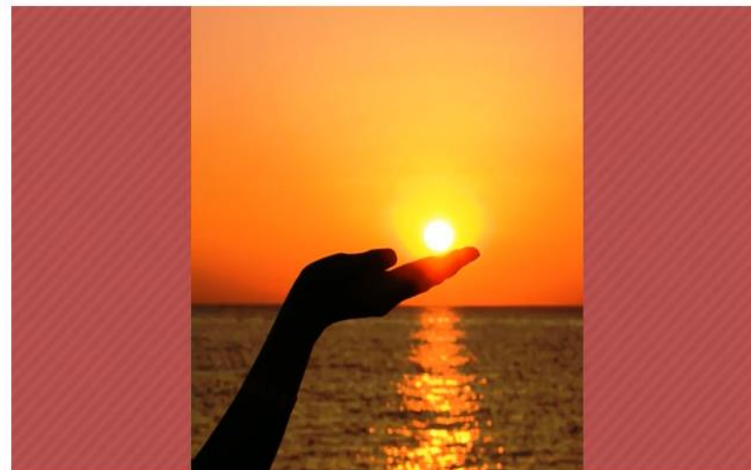


- **Digital Storytelling Library**

<https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/steer/digital-storytelling-shu/studentvoices/>

- Hidden student voices (outside curriculum)
- Hidden student voices (in curriculum)

My Journey to University



Digital Storytelling Staff Voices

- **Digital Storytelling Library**
- <https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/s/teer/digital-storytelling-shu/staff-voices/>
- Institutional research stories (success and lessons learnt)
- Staff reflections on Critical Whiteness



Digital stories as research

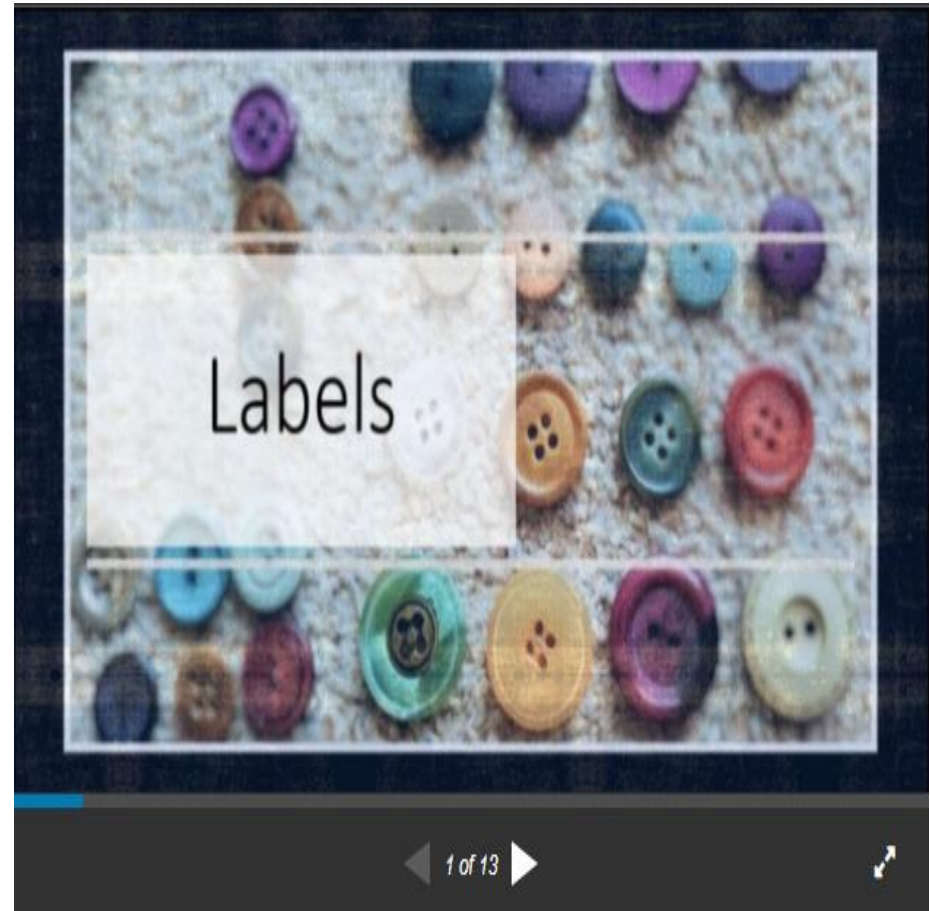
- qualitative inquiry as a variant of visual research methods
- inclusion of audio narration, visual images and sections of text position this methodology as multimodal storytelling
- adopts a constructionist view of narratives and narrative inquiry



In practice.....?

- Data collection
- Sampling
- Confidentiality and Anonymity
- Consent
- Use of Images
- Analysis
- Outputs

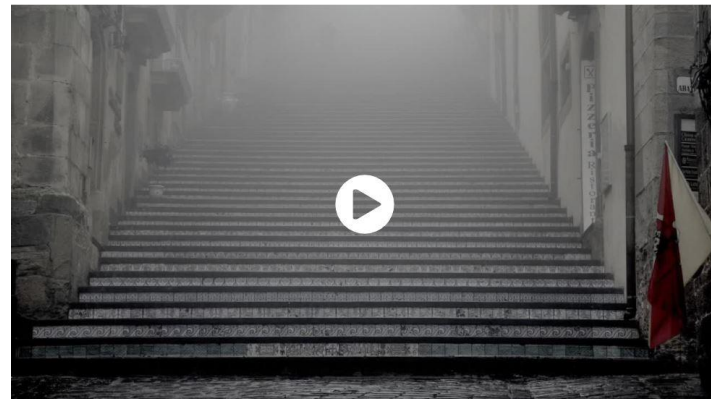
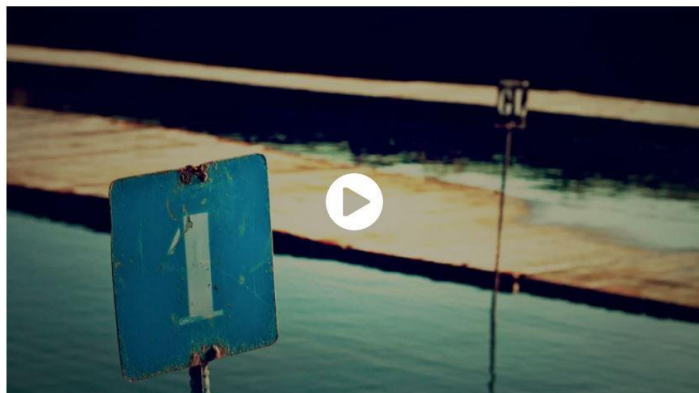
AUSTEN, JONES, and WAWERA, (2019)



Student reflections on the pedagogy of transitions into higher education, through digital storytelling

- 17/18 first year cohort of the Integrated Foundation Year Art and Design (IFYAD)
- 65 students completed a digital story as a formative PPDP task
- Ethical approach for re-purposing of student information
- Retrospective student consent sought via opt in process (eradication of researcher effect but small sample)
- n=15 digital stories from the were analysed by two researchers during a collaborative analysis session.

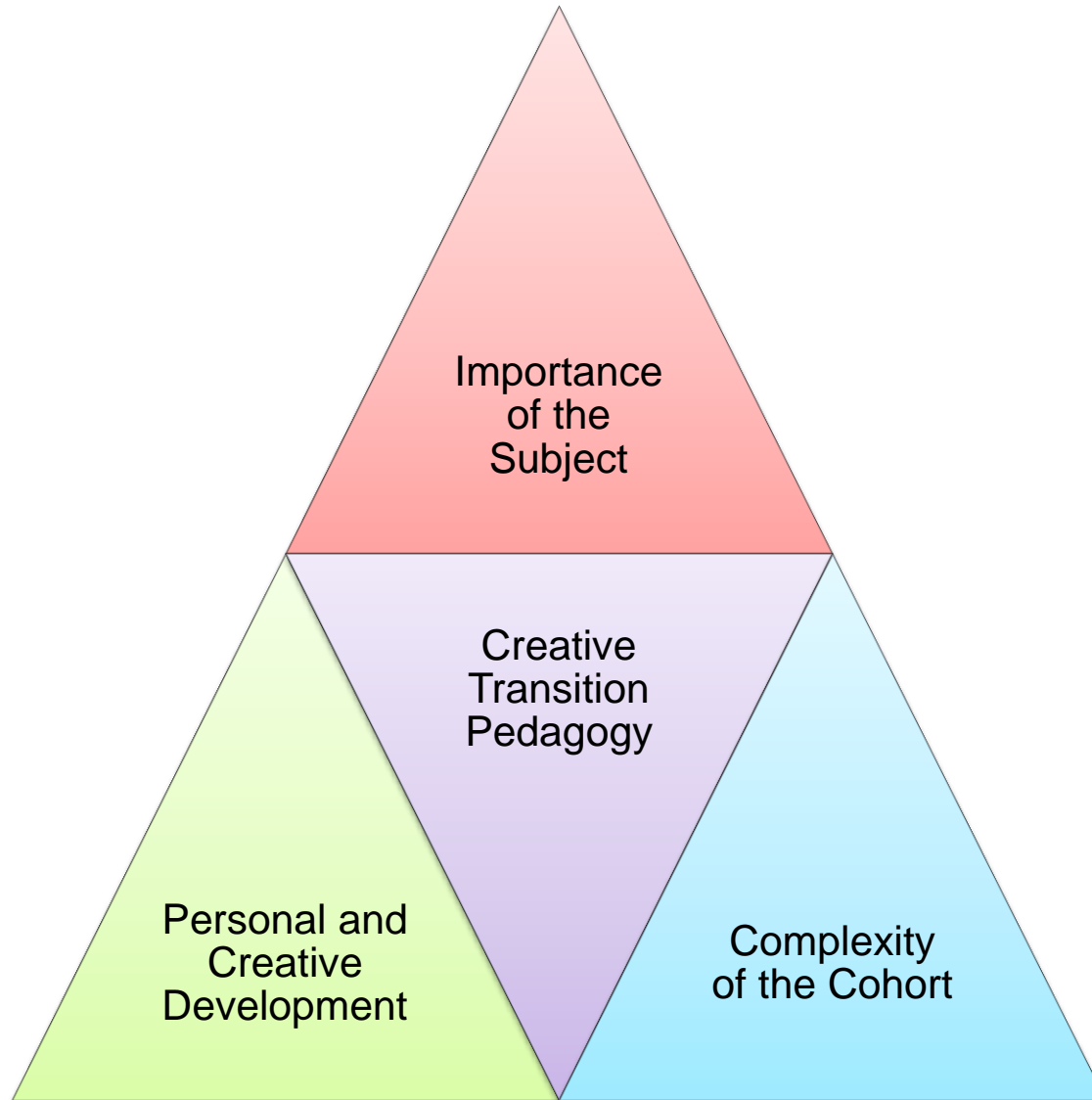
Austen, Pickering & Judge (under review)

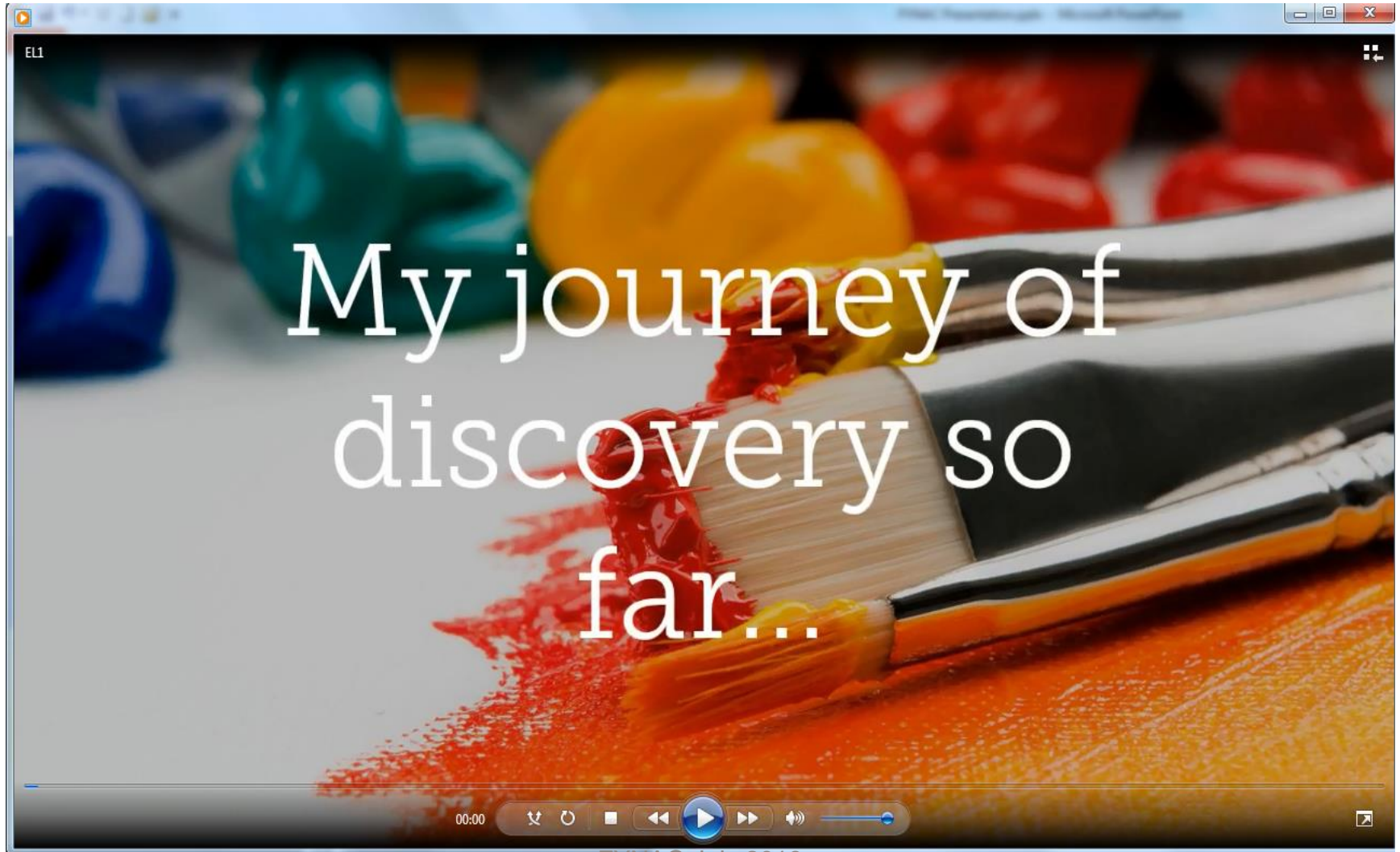


Research Questions:

- Is digital storytelling an effective medium for student reflection?
- In what ways is the experience of IFYAD students unique?
- What does an effective pedagogy for IFYAD need to consider?

Student reflections on the pedagogy of transitions into higher education, through digital storytelling





Further Resources: how to

- QAA Enhancement Theme Webinar | Engaging Student and Staff Voices (October 2018) <https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/current-enhancement-theme/optimising-existing-evidence/webinar-series>
 - Digital Storytelling Guide
 - Example Consent Forms and Information Sheets (DST)
 - Engaging Student Voices: Ethical checklist
- AUSTEN, Liz (2019) Once upon a time: hearing student stories, *WonkHE*, 27th March 2019, available online at <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/once-upon-a-time-hearing-student-stories/>
- AUSTEN, Liz, JONES, Megan and WAWERA, Anna-Sophia (2019) Exploring digital stories as research in higher education, *Social Research Practice - the Social Research Association Journal*, 7, Winter 2019, available at <http://the-sra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/social-research-practice-journal-issue-07-winter-2019.pdf>
- AUSTEN, Liz (2018) 'It ain't what we do, it's the way that we do it' – researching student voices, *WonkHE*, 27th, Feb 2018, available online at <http://wonkhe.com/blogs/it-aint-what-we-do-its-the-way-that-we-do-it-researching-student-voices>

Forthcoming publications: why do

- AUSTEN, Liz. The unknown student, and other short stories: An ethical and methodological exploration of students as data, in ARDAY, Jason. and THOMAS, David (eds.) (forthcoming 2020) *Doing Diversity for Success in Higher Education: Redressing Structural Inequalities in the Academy*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- AUSTEN, Liz (forthcoming Aug 2020). The amplification of student voices via institutional research and evaluation, Chapter in LOWE Tom, & EL HAKIM, Yaz A *Handbook of Student Engagement: Theory into Practice*, Taylor Francis.
- AUSTEN, L. PICKERING, N. & JUDGE, M. (forthcoming 2020) Student reflections on the pedagogy of transitions into higher education, through digital storytelling

Thank you for listening: any questions?

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