Introduction to Twine: Narrative and Storyboarding

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ENGW3302: Advanced Writing in the Sciences

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Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Workshop Agenda

- Workshop objectives
- What is Twine?
- Important vocabulary and functions
- Twine Demonstration
- Hands-on activity

Link to module materials: https://bit.ly/sp24-gilreath-twine

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Workshop Objectives

In today's workshop, we will learn:

- The key functions of Twine as they relate to this class
- Twine-specific vocabulary to aid independent work
- How Twine can be used for storytelling and storyboarding

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Twine Example

You see a cat sitting on the back of the couch, licking her paw.

Pet that cat.

Cat Petting Simulator 2014 - *nenongrey*

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What is Twine?

Twine is a narrative tool that is open-source and free to use.

Through a combination of **passages** (individual portions of text) and **links** (connections between **passages**), Twine allows users to create interactive narratives that are not restricted to the linear form. It publishes to HTML and can therefore be included on a variety of platforms in order to showcase your work.

Twine is particularly useful for the following projects:

- 'Choose-your-own-adventure' storytelling
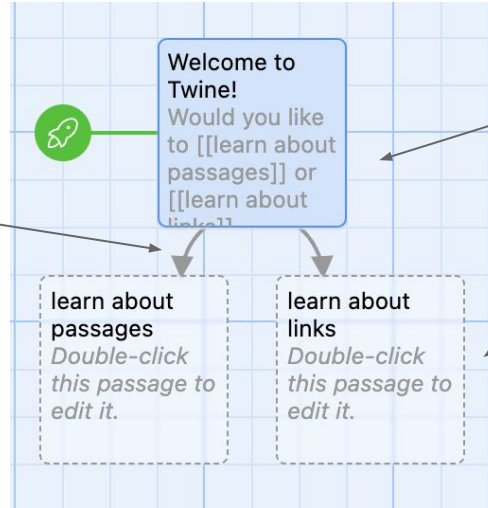- Storyboarding as a means of project-planning

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Twine Vocabulary

Twine functions through the use of **hypertext,** a digital text that is connected to other digital texts through links.

You come across **hypertext** all the time in your daily online activities.

"Everyone kind of knows," said Mr. Chrzanowski, who, along with 57 percent of Ohio voters on Tuesday, cast his ballot against Issue 1. "It seems underhanded. It doesn't seem like the way we should conduct our politics."

From "Why Ohio Voters Said No To Ballot Measure" - Campbell Robertson, NYTimes

Ohio Issue 1 Election Results: Amendment Approval Threshold

Ohioans are voting on a measure where a "yes" will raise the threshold required to pass any ballot measure amending the state's Constitution to 60 percent, from a simple majority. The measure, sponsored by Republican leaders in the legislature, is meant to make it harder for voters to pass a November ballot measure that would establish a constitutional right to abortion.

Latest results from 6m ago		>95% OF VOTES IN
Answer	Votes	Pct.
● No	1,744,094	**57.0%**
Yes	1,315,346	**43.0**
Total reported	3,059,440	

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Twine Vocabulary

Twine narratives are called **stories** and are made up of **passages** (individual portions of text) and **links** (the connections between **passages**).

This is a **link.**

These are **passages.**

Welcome to Twine!
Would you like to [[learn about passages]] or [[learn about links]]

learn about passages
Double-click this passage to edit it.

learn about links
Double-click this passage to edit it.

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

How are stories, passages, and links used?

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Twine Stories

When beginning a project on Twine, you will be asked to create a **story.** These can be titled in whatever way you prefer. In order to create a new project, navigate to the top left of the page and click on '+ New'.

What should your story be named? You can change this later.

Untitled Story

✓ Create   ✕ Cancel

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Twine Passages

Twine **stories** are organized around **passages,** or individual portions of text that the user navigates through.
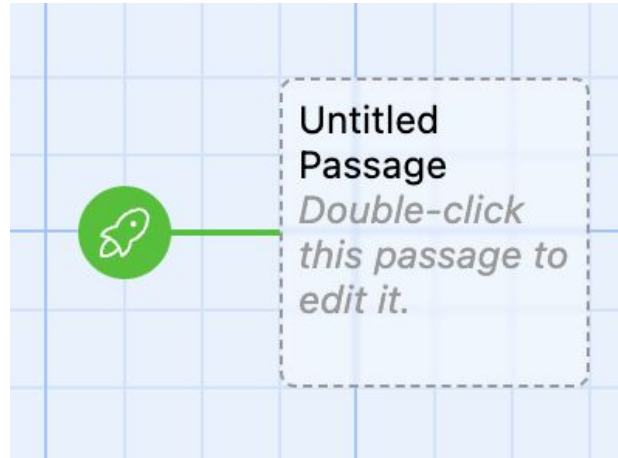
When used as a means of storytelling, these can be thought of as distinct pieces of dialogue, plot points, arguments, etc.

When used as a means of storyboarding/planning, these can be thought of divisions of time, priority, or sequence.

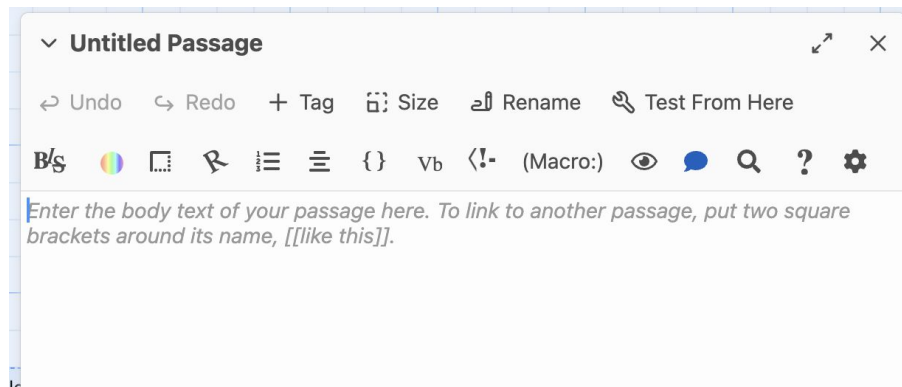*Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!*

Twine Passages

When you open your **story** there will already be an untitled **passage** on your board. Double-click this **passage** box in order to edit it.
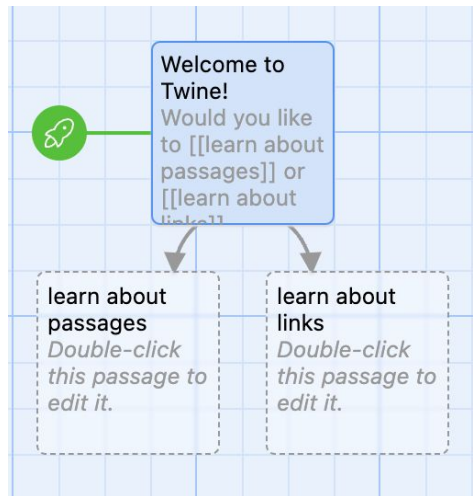
Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Twine Passages

Once you do click on the passage, a box will appear where you can edit the name and content of the **passage**.

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Twine Links

Twine **passages** are connected by **links**, which allow the user to move from one passage to another. A **passage** can be linked to a single other **passage,** or it can be linked to several, allowing the user to choose where they go next.

For example, this passage has two links:

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Creating Twine Links

If you would like your user to go directly from one specific **passage** to another, you can create one **link.** If you would like your user to have a choice of where they will go next, you can create multiple **links.**
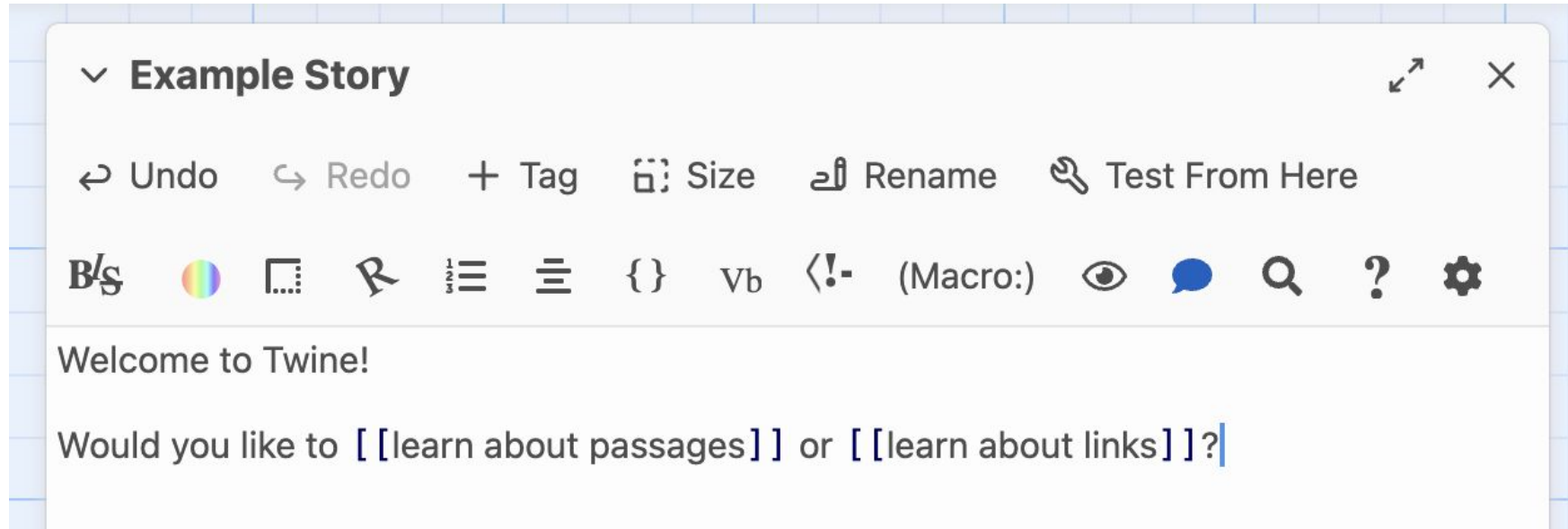
To create a link, double-click the **passage** you would like to link from. Within the body text, add **double brackets** around the text you wish to link to the next **passage.** For example:

Welcome to Twine! Would you like to [[learn about passages]] or [[learn about links]]?

Twine will then automatically create two new passages (titled whatever is within your brackets) and link to these.

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Creating Twine Links

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Desktop App vs. Browser

Twine can be freely downloaded to your personal computer and used as an application. This allows you to save your work directly to your device and allows you to work on projects without internet.

Twine can also be used online in your browser. While this is an attractive option if you are concerned about your device's storage, it is not a good option if you are hoping to work on your project over multiple sessions as the browser platform does not save your work on their server. Rather, it saves it on your personal browser cache which can lead to accidental deleting of a project.

For this reason, we recommend you download Twine here: https://twinery.org/.

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Demonstration of Tool

Together we are going to practice creating a simple interactive game about starting your undergraduate degree at Northeastern.

What are some mistakes you made when you first arrived at Northeastern? What is some advice you wish you'd known?

Link to jamboard: http://bit.ly/gilreath-twine-jamboard

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Your Turn

Using the following excerpt, practice:

- Starting a story
- Creating passages
- Linking passages

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When the Sunshine Protection Act was first debated in a House subcommittee, experts said switching to permanent daylight saving time would do everything: save lives, reduce crime, conserve energy and improve health.

And pretty much everyone agrees that ending the time changes is generally a good idea. Our bodies can be very sensitive to disruptions to our circadian rhythms.

But the medical community has taken issue with how the bill proposes to make the change — specifically, that it mandates all states adopt permanent daylight saving time rather than sticking to standard time.

Doctors and scientists argue that standard time is better for our health. Our internal clock is better aligned with getting light in the morning, which, in turn, sets us up for better sleep cycles.

From "What to know about the political debate around daylight saving time" - Emily Olson

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Group Discussion

- What did you find surprising or interesting in your exploration of the tool?
- How does Twine help you rethink your choices around narrative structure?
- What are some challenges you faced? How might you work with these as you move forward?

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