

# Digital Humanists' Help Desk: Tools and Approaches for Digital Storytelling

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with thanks to Emily Esten

**Find these slides & other materials at**  
**<https://bit.ly/digi-story-rdds>**

# About Me

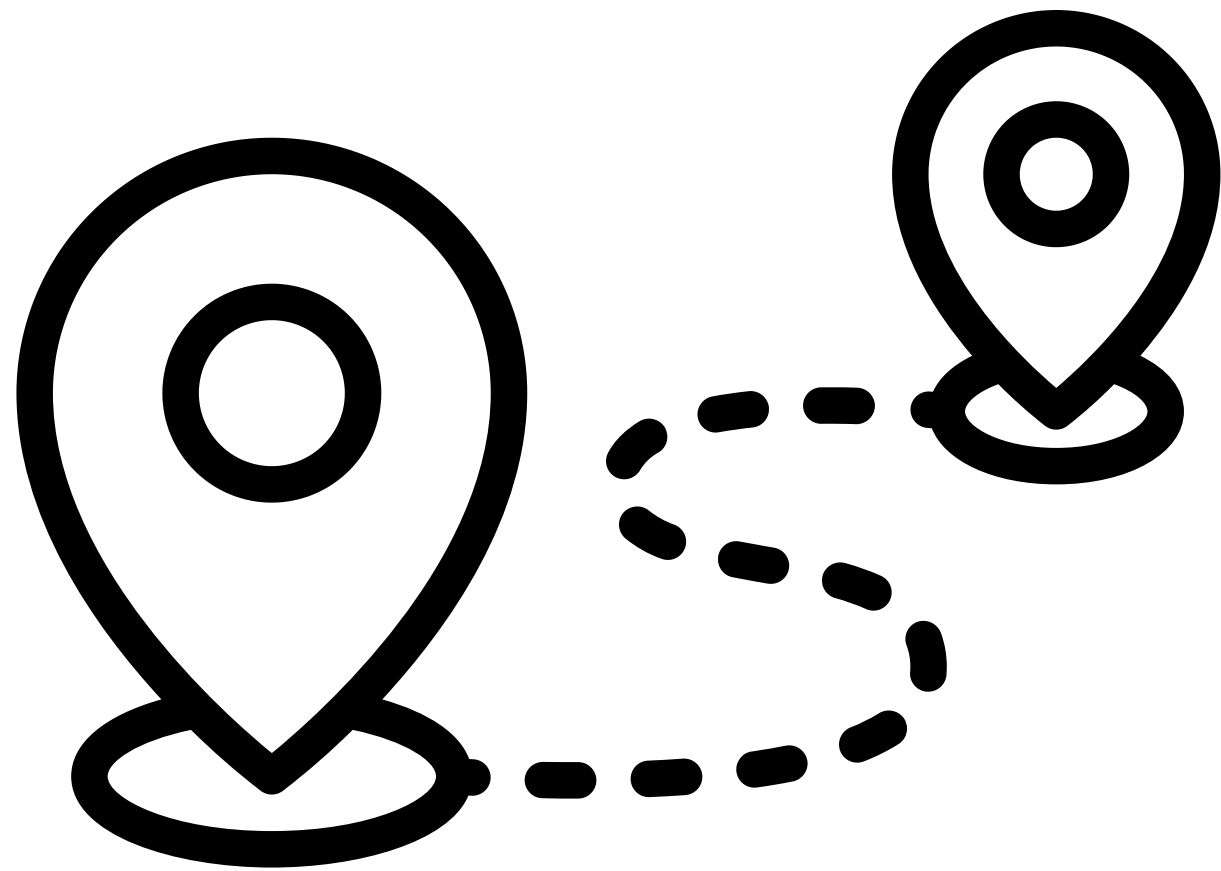


I'm **Cynthia Heider**, the Public Digital Scholarship Librarian at Penn Libraries.

I can help with:

- Digital projects for public audiences
- Digital projects involving community partners
- Choosing the right tool or platform for your digital project
- Working with data in the humanities
- Connecting with digital project resources at and beyond UPenn

# Workshop Roadmap



- define digital storytelling
- explore best practices and approaches for getting started with digital storytelling
- identify key outcomes and options for tools and platforms to create them

# What is Digital Storytelling?



Digital storytelling combines narrative techniques with digital tools and multimedia elements to enrich communication about research and ideas!

**But you don't have to take my  
word for it....**



Good storytelling engages the  
imagination, emotions, and intellect.

# Digital Storytelling

# Outcomes



# Multimodal publications

## Definition:

- Digital publications that usually contain interactive elements
- May be developed independently or as counterparts to traditional publishing outcomes

## Tools:

- ArcGIS StoryMaps
- Scalar
- Manifold
- PubPub

## Example:

[A Monument to Climate Change: Reinterpreting the "Indian Statue" in Wissahickon Park](#)



# Digital archives and exhibits

## Definition:

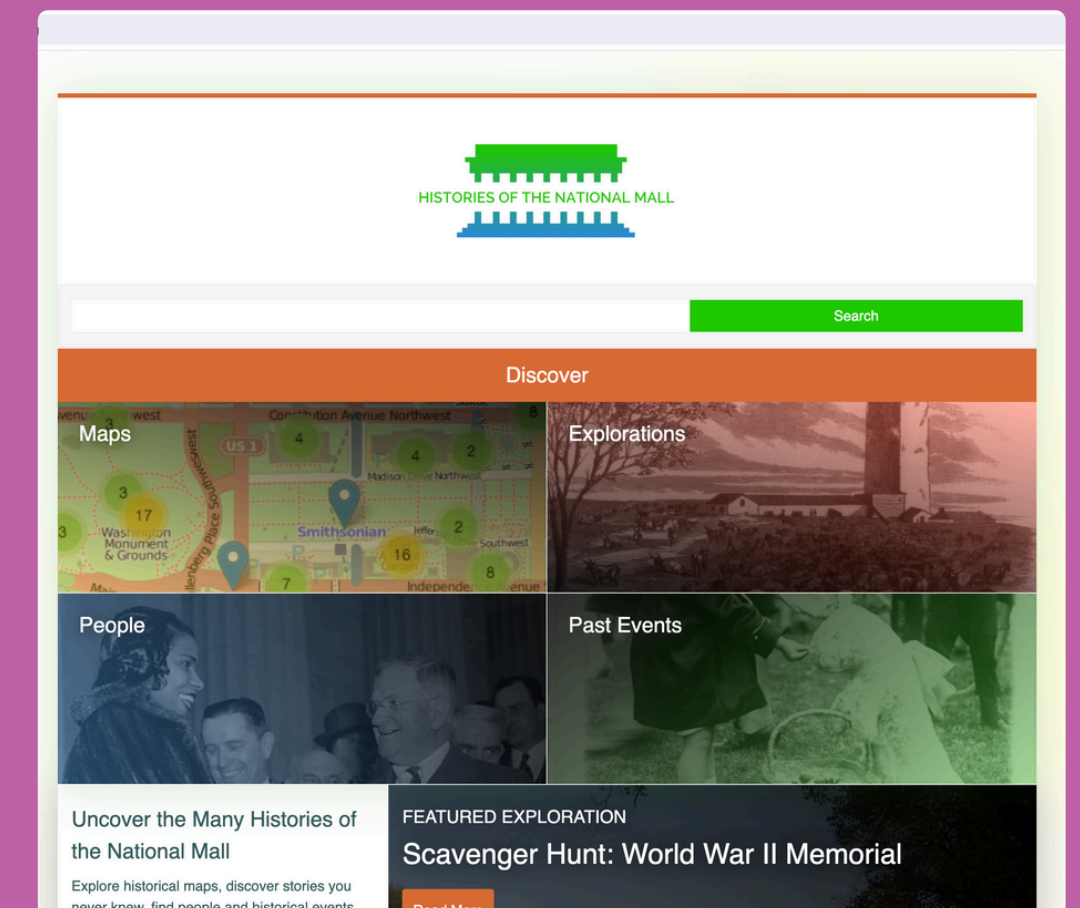
- Digital archives and exhibits gather items into collections and provide contextual information

## Tools:

- WordPress
- Omeka
- CollectionBuilder
- Wax

## Example:

[Histories of the National Mall](#)



# Interactive maps and visualizations

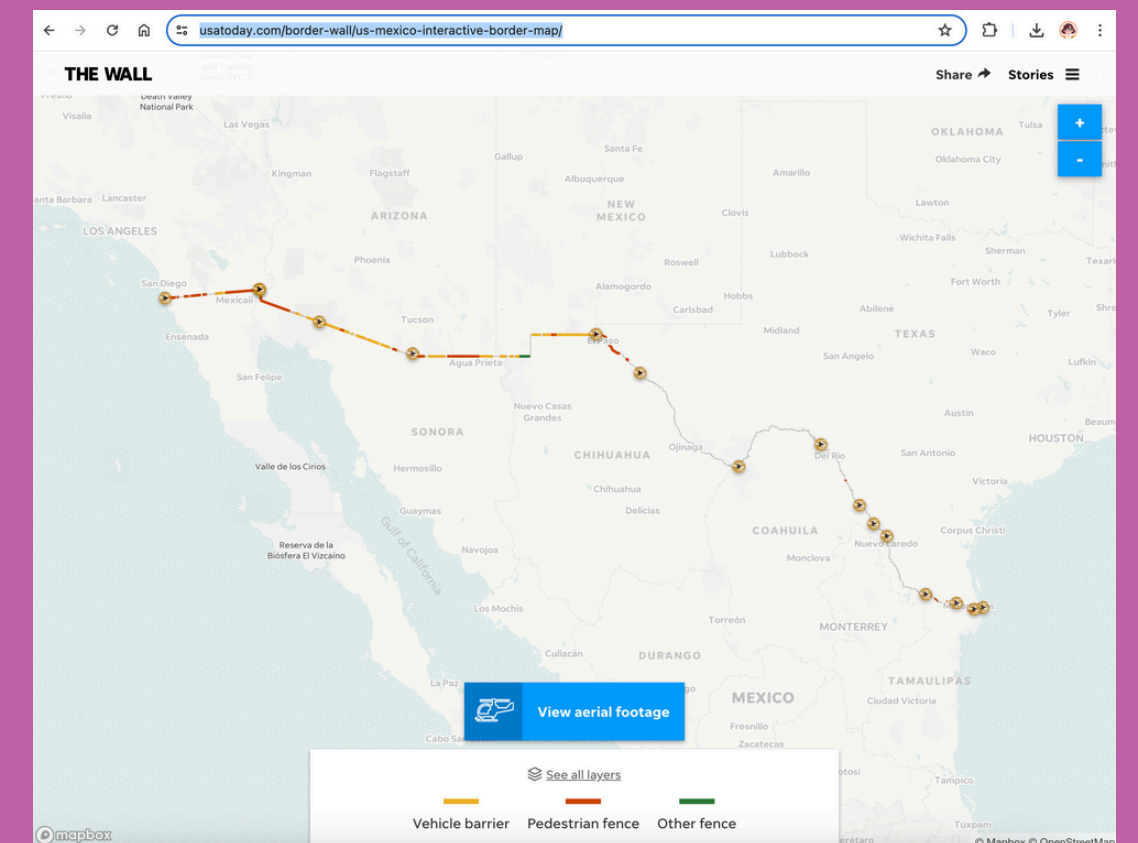
## Definition:

- Interactive maps and visualizations put events and stories into context with spatial information or additional data to support an argument

## Tools:

- Google MyMaps
- Felt
- Leaflet
- ArcGIS Online

Example:  
[USA Today "The Wall" interactive map](#)





# Audiovisual productions

## Definition:

- Audiovisual productions can include podcasts, video essays, animations, documentaries, and much more

## Tools:

- Audacity
- GarageBand
- iMovie
- Adobe Creative Cloud software

Example: The Moth Radio Hour

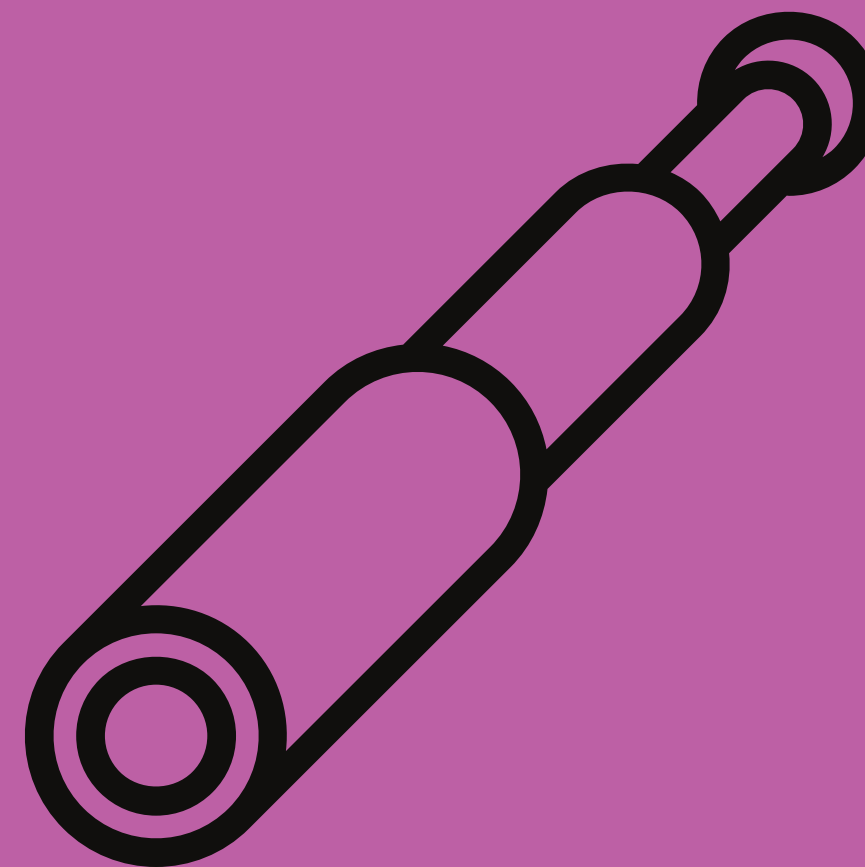


# Approaches to Digital Storytelling

# Creating an Experience

Considering:

- Audience and tone
- POV and perspective
- Calls-to-action
- Interaction and feedback
- Choosing the medium





# Crafting a Story

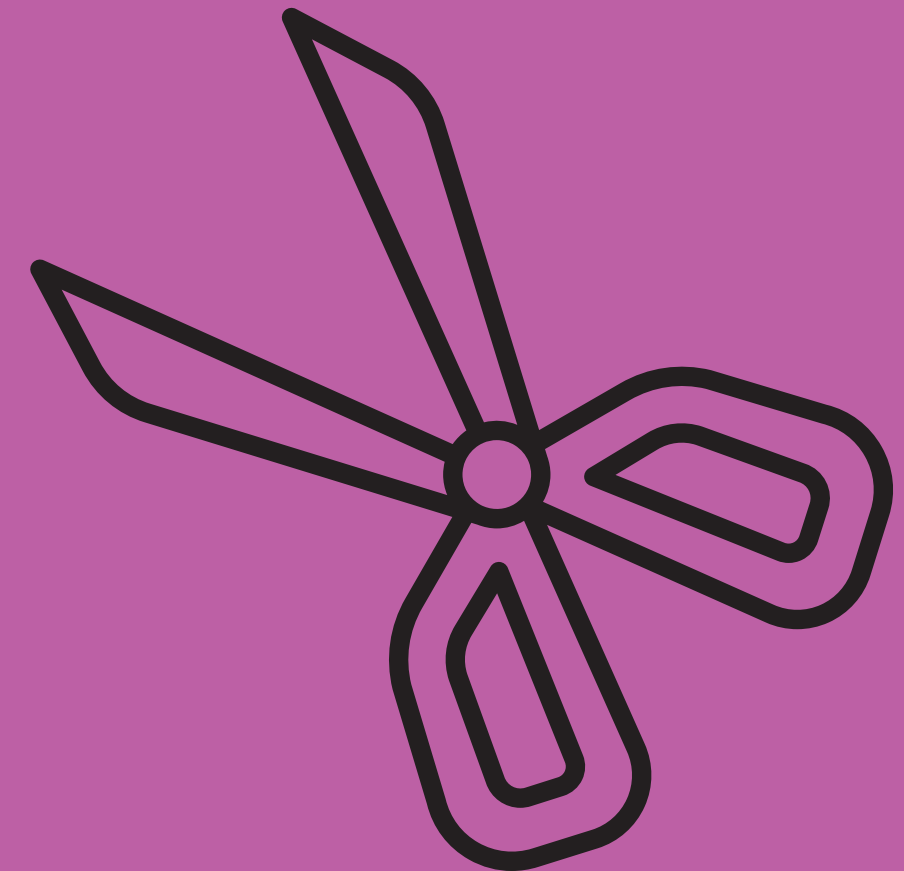
What are the building blocks of your story?

- Characters and settings
- Sequences of actions
- Narrative arcs
- Emotions to convey
- Take-aways



# Writing for the web

- Keep it short and evocative.
- Eliminate jargon.
- Use headings and other “signposts”
- Give a clear “next step”

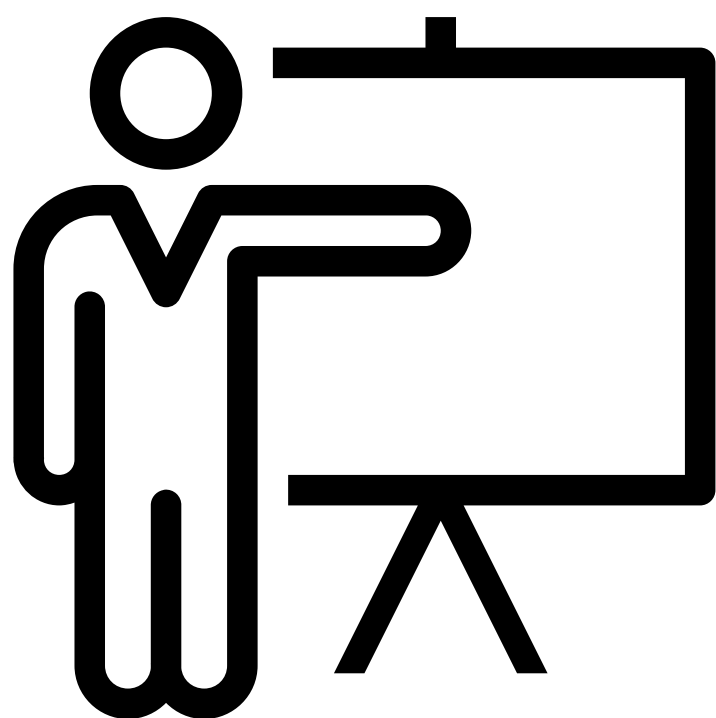


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# Further Resources

# Penn Resources



[Graduate Student Center workshops](#)

[Penn Libraries Digital Scholarly Publishing library guide](#)

[Penn Libraries Public Digital Scholarship library guide](#)

# Elsewhere

[Digital Storytelling resources](#) from Sonia Chaidez

[StoryCenter](#)

[“Nine Steps to Great Storytelling”](#) from [ArcGIS](#)