examples of three-scene storyboarding

narratives of learning-for-living

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The Career-learning CAFÉ
quick start

Three-scene storyboarding frames a process for reflecting on experience. It can be adapted to face-to-face, curriculum, and community-project use. People reflect on their own experience and develop a special episode into a narrative. They are helped to ‘round out’ their story by asking themselves all the who-what-when-where-how-why questions.

The questions may be about what that goes on at school-or college, at home, on the street, or on a visit. Each three-scene episode hinges on a turning-point. That is a time when there could be a change-of-direction in what this person is doing with his or her life. A turning point brings into view another way to go – it is often a surprise. It becomes the ‘big scene’ - in a three-scene scenario, between an ‘opening scene’ and a ‘following scene’.

**step one - remembering:** jot down notes for the big scene, then for the opening and following scenes

![step one - remembering](image)

**step two - showing:** put the those thoughts and feelings into a words-and-pictures ‘movie’

![step two - showing](image)

**step three - futuring:** collect your thoughts about what you can now do about the episode

![step three - futuring](image)

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**professional note**

triaing has developed various formats  
- the latest is on the following page  
- and other versions appear on ensuing pages
Some people readily take to it. They may want just to get on with it, learning how by trial-and-error. In some cases it can be completed in an-hour-or-so. However, the process can be taken deeper - and over more than one session. Examples of what completed formats can look like are set out on the following pages.

twelve worked examples

The twelve examples are each introduced by case notes, which an educator, adviser or researcher might set down.

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What is noted by a professional and set down by the person is the same story, but told in different ways. Storyboarding helps us to see how professional expertise and personal experience can make different sense or what is going on — leading to different ideas about what needs to be done.

That is be useful in conversation between the professional and the person - giving each a basis for questioning the other, and helping each better to understand the other.

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find a short account of design features, with links to more information, on pages 28-29
1: Will - saving whales with science

Will - 5 May

Quiet lad. No trouble at school. A few close friends - who keep themselves to themselves.

Both parents at home. Seem to work in clerical and service industry work. Quiet and grateful for any help that we can give. Say they don’t understand qualifications these days - it’s all so different

Says he’s bored at school. Wants to leave as soon as possible.

Median grades. Expected to do well enough. No particularly strong subjects or weak ones.

Has done the tests and inventories. Flat profiles. Slight preference for outdoor activities. Higher scores on spatial abilities. Shows no interest in any of the suggestions that come out of this.

Says the only job idea he has is in science. Came to him while watching tv. Seems to be about marine-life conservation.

Had a quick look at a brochure about marine biology. Agreed to take it - but without much enthusiasm.

The most animated moment in this whole conversation was Will talking about boring science. He said if marine biology means staying to do A-level science forget it.

1
scenes in my life

1

ideas for my opening scene

science lesson on marine life
I'm bored
my mates are bored
the whales are bored

remembering

2

ideas for my big scene

same day - coincidence - on tv about whales being chased by big boats - for food
woman scientist with 'world wild-life something-or-other' - dangerous work!

showing

3

ideas for my following scene

tried to tell my mates about programme
they were all watching the football
they say I must be mad
I don't care

futuring

my ID

yesiwill

opening scene

evolution...... reproduction...... examination......

bored

big scene

lewis hamilton

(tv) whales! chase! danger!

following scene

tv last night - football
who cares

they think I'm mad

places to go

the zoo

don't know

people to talk to

don't know

things to do

biology exam?
Sarah - 15 September

Sarah hasn’t said much about her background. But she is well-turned-out and seems settled and steady enough.

She says that the main thing that worries her about careers is upsetting her best friend - Paula. They live in the same street and went through primary school together. Sleepovers are a frequent part of their relationship. From the way Sarah talks about it, there is no reasons to suppose that this is an issue for either family.

But some weeks before we met, Sarah had been on sleepover at Paula’s house and briefly met Paul’s sister Jane. Jane is several years older, and seems to be starting university in a few weeks. She came into Paula’s bedroom briefly to say hello to Sarah. She was carrying her joining booklet - all that Jane needs to know before she goes up.

Sarah finds it hard to talk about it. It has made quite an impression - Jane was so excited about everything and the booklet looked so ‘cool’ to Sarah.

But, she says, Paula and she - maybe for a year now - have had this plan that they would both be dress-designers. And that they would work in the same place and be friends forever.

And now Sarah wants to change her mind - and go to university instead. Like Jane.

But, Sarah, says - right at the end of our time - Paula doesn’t like Jane. P & J argue about everything!

So Sarah doesn’t know whether she has changed her mind about her career or not.
Scenes in my life

1. Developing ideas
   - Opening scene: At school with Paula, best friends. We are going to be designers.
   - Big scene: Jane at sleepover, Jane showed me uni book. Never known anyone like that before.
   - Following scene: On the way to school, tell Paula, being best friends does not mean agreeing about everything.

2. Storyboarding
   - Opening scene: Paula - you are my best friend! Paula - we are going to work together as designers.
   - Big scene: This is my sister Jane. That is sooo exciting.
   - Following scene: Paula - I really liked your sister. I want to go to university. You don't have to agree with your friends about everything.

3. Futuring
   - Places to go: designing at university.
   - People to meet: Show this to mum & dad.
   - Things to do: do exam subjects for university.
3: Sean - me and Jason

researcher’s notes

Sean - 7 October

No clear impression of family life - Sean is 
unforthcoming about it. May be a single mother. No 
mention of sibs. Sean is courteous - restrained in 
dress and manner.

Talks a lot about his friend Jason. They seem to 
spend a lot of time together - just wandering the 
streets - laughing and talking. There are 4-5 others 
in their group.

An incident on the street when they are accosted 
other boys - one with a knife. Seems to have been a 
gesture rather than a real threat. Shocked Sean.

What upset him most was the way Jason and the 
others started talking about ‘sticking together’, 
‘looking after each other’ and - worst of all -  
‘carrying weapons for protection’.

Sean says it is ‘mucking up’ all his plans. Their talk 
has been of going to college together - different 
courses but one place. That way they will still meet 
up and maintain their friendship.

Sean says he can’t see how that can happen now. He 
doesn’t want to spend any more time with this group. 
He says they are only friends because they live near 
each other. He doesn’t like them very much - except 
Jason.

It means that that he has to think again about 
career. The local college is out.

Sean doesn’t talk about the other gang. And when 
he does it isn’t with fear. His feelings of shock are 
at the reaction of his own group.

But his mainly about Jason insisting on loyalty to the 
group. Sean fears that their friendship is over.

loosely based on Alexander Rose: http://www.battlefront.co.uk
my-scene-page

1. ideas for my opening scene
   - hanging with my friends - especially Jason
   - having a laugh
   - we look out for each other

2. ideas for my big scene
   - on the street
   - kids I've never seen before - one pulls a knife
   - I walk away
   - next day
   - tell Jason I don't want to hurt anyone
   - he says we should all stick together

3. ideas for my following scene
   - the sooner we get out of school and go to college the better
   - it'll be a laugh
   - we've got to stick together - especially now, we all need each other
   - sorry Jason - I'm not prowling around looking for enemies
   - (thinks) so what am I doing?

my ID
Sean

places to go
not to that street anymore

people to meet
want to stay friends with Jason

things to do
don't know
When people asked me what I want to do I always said ‘dentist’. It was dad’s idea. He used to say ‘that’s where the money is!’

We all wanted to be rich.

But now I say ‘pattern maker’. Dad doesn’t like me saying that. He says that Mum’s dad worked hard as a woodworker and never had two pennies to rub together. He and nan still live in a council house!

But we had this bloke come, in history, to talk with us about his job. He said he used to be a pattern maker - til he got redundant. He said it was the best thing he had had ever done. He is older than me dad - but I really liked him.

He brought this little wooden thing in a plastic bag. He said it was a test-piece - or something. He said he made it when he was not much older than us.

And it was so great - small and so smooth. And with tiny little grooves and ridges - all exact and perfect. Just think of being able to make something like that.

He said that every test piece is unique. That means nobody else has got a piece like this. It made me feel funny - like I might cry or something.

So that’s why I now say ‘pattern maker’. Nobody knows what it means - except me.

And maybe granddad.

I hope so.
**my-scene-page**

1. **ideas for my opening scene**
   - I always said 'dentist'
   - It was Dad's idea
   - We all want to be rich

2. **developing ideas**
   - storyboarding
   - ideas for my big scene
     - Visitor to school
     - Older than me dad
     - Brought this tiny wooden thing he made
     - So cool
     - Reminded me of granddad

3. **big scene**
   - This was my test when I was 19 - it's the only one ever made
   - Pattern making
   - (thinks) so cool!

4. **following scene**
   - So - what do you want to be Lucy
   - A pattern maker

5. **places to go**
   - Do woodwork on work experience
   - Ask adviser about pattern making
   - Go round granddad's - ask him about his job - it was something to do with woodwork

6. **people to meet**
   - A dentist
   - Good girl! - that's where the money is!

7. **my ID**
   - Shoes-on Lucy

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**Important Notes**

- Lucy says: 
  - So - what do you want to be?
  - Lucy says: 
  - So - what do you want to be?
5: John - rock star

adviser's notes

John – 8 June

No very clear career plans – has considered driving but doesn’t seem keen now.


Does well enough at school – middle of the range in most results. Teachers say he could do better – bright kid, but lacks aspiration. Stays out of trouble.

Offered an interest inventory – but John said he already knows what he’s interested in. When I asked what? He said ‘driving’ – he likes the free-and-easy life.

I see no point in pushing things. Not now anyway.

I said my door is always open – anytime he wants to come back and do some serious thinking about the future.

He said ‘yes, thank you’ – very politely.
my scene page

1. ideas for my opening scene
   everybody in our house is a driver - mum drives a bus, granddad a lorry - I planned to drive a limo

2. ideas for my big scene
   then we saw this really bad band win 'talent!' - and dad said gran was a singer before I was even born

3. ideas for my following scene
   so forget driving - if that crap band can make it, so can we - it's only fair

my ID
Johnny guitar

opening scene
our house

big scene
the winners!
your gran was a band singer - she could've made it if she'd stuck at it
rubbish

following scene
we're good - better than the crap on 'talent' - we'll be discovered - if that rubbish can make it so can we!

more gigs
more gig managers
more practice
6: Stan - for poor people

Stanley - 14 February

Stanley says that he has been thinking of doing mostly vocational courses next year - he had more-or-less settled on information technology, tourism and English.

He doesn’t like academic work. He gets quite animated about this - ‘it’s boring because it doesn’t have anything to do with real people doing real things. It’s just stuff to write down from books and worksheets’.

But now, for reasons that aren’t clear to me, he is considering changing his options. He’d like to do geography and asks are there any other subjects he could do like that?

I asked about the reason for the change of direction and he said it was something he found on YouTube. (‘Does the Tube teach geography or other subjects like that?’)

I need to talk to colleagues to see what they say. His results suggest that he could do well - whatever he wanted to do - if he puts his mind to it. The geography teachers is mystified by his wish to do it.

We only had five minutes - I’d like to see Stanley again.
Scenes in my life

1. opening scene
   - geography project
   - homework
   - YouTube
   - not fair to poor people
   - want to help
   - but it's geography - which is boring

2. big scene
   - YouTube: "Fruit in video channel!"
   - Tour holidays in Indonesia
   - where Adibak shoes are made for $2 per pair
   - Wow! Factory works in Jakarta
   - Click! Click! Go Click!
   - Thank you! Thank you!

3. following scene
   - Can't sleep! Want to help!
   - What can I do?
   - Do I have to do GEOGRAPHY!

Places to go

Don't know

People to talk to

Don't know

Things to do

Find more out about cheap shops

How do clothes and shoes get to shops?
Mark - 8 June

Mark says he just wants me to find him a job. He says he has never intended to stay at school beyond this year. He has been waiting for this for a long time.

Eventually agreed to do the on-line preference schedule - once I told Mark ‘there are no right answers - just your feelings’. Said he didn’t need to do the ability tests.

Top of the list of recommendations was ‘lighthouse-keeper’! - and I mentioned it as if it were a joke. But Mark said ‘fine - who do I talk to about that?’

He lives in Peterborough!

When he’d got what he called ‘a solution’ he just stuck to it. He wrote down all the leads I was able to give him. I’m sure he will follow up in the information centre.

There’s more going on here than he’s telling me about. I want to see him again. He’s not too keen.
places to go

ideas for my opening scene

teacher telling us about tests
worrying
Alec doesn’t care

ideas for my big scene

night before test
can’t sleep
mum says it’s not worth the worry

ideas for my following scene

this is too much
I know I’m going to leave as soon as possible

my ID
Mark Jones

storyboarding

opening scene

(teacher) your tests are coming up...
(thinks) I can’t do this!
just put up with it - and leave as soon as possible

big scene

I can’t remember what the teacher said
it’s not worth the worry
mark - I’ll bring you something to help you sleep

following scene

mum and alec are right - I can’t stay at school if it is like this

developing ideas

my-scene-page

places to go

not school

people to meet

not teachers

things to do

find out what else I can do

futuring
8: Errol - formula-one driver

Errol - 4 April

Errol’s postcode has no labour market to speak of – some families have people who have been out-of-work since the late eighties. Nearby primary-industry sites have been taken over as business centres and theme parks. Errol’s address is in the middle of a high-crime area – feeding a widespread use of class-a drugs.

We didn’t bring up the drugs issue – Errol did. He insists he is not a user. We don’t think he is trying to hide a habit. This is genuine outrage.

Didn’t want to talk about family. Gave names, relationships (his mother has a live-in partner). Said his mum told him that his dad left to look for work and never came back. Says he doesn’t know anything else.

Errol is evasive on career plans. Says he has plans – but that they are his business. We both got the feeling that he doesn’t want anybody pinching his idea.

He says he doesn’t need any advice. He is getting to know people who will help him.

A very self-contained and determined young man. With a lot of self-control. He believes he knows what he wants, what he has to do, and what he can expect to get out of it – or, at least – he tells himself that.

We really don’t know that he is wrong about this.
Nobody asks me what I want to do.

I find out I'm going to get no help at home.

So I'll do it by myself.

If anybody ever asked me what I wanted to do I'd say 'formula-one driver'.

(Coppper) Sorry madam - your man has driven a car into a shop window - we're holding him on a drugs charge.

(Her) He's been out-of-work for eighteen months - most of the time he doesn't know where he is.

I want a proper life - I don't know anybody who's got one.

And I'm not letting mum's bloke teach me to drive.

Lewis Hamilton

Get money for driving lessons - not drugs.
teacher’s notes

Marjorie - 1 June

She’s three months gone. She says she intends to have the baby.

I don’t think anybody ever expected this of Marjorie. It will certainly put any career plans she has on hold.

I asked her whether she understood the pseh lesson on contraception and she said she did.

The last time we talked about her career plans she seemed unhappy and withdrawn. She said that she wanted to do something in retail – which seemed suitable enough.

I don’t think she will be coming to school after the baby arrives.

She was a quiet student – with few friends. But she seemed happy enough to me. I liked her.
my scene page

1. developing ideas
   - ideas for my opening scene
     - jobs go to pretty-pretty girls
     - they think they are somebody
   - ideas for my big scene
     - Alice's sister has a baby, money and a flat
     - she has a life - she is somebody
   - ideas for my following scene
     - a mother is a real person
     - but sex?

my ID
margarine

2. storyboarding
   - opening scene
   - big scene
   - following scene

3. planning
   - places to go
   - people to meet
   - things to do
   - a boy I can fancy
   - not posh shops, not reception work, not beautician, not receptionist - all yuk! yuk! yuk!
   - don't ask
We’ve had a complaint from Alice’s mother. She says our ‘Get-to-Know-You’ project was ‘very unfortunate’.

Apparently Alice has become firm’s friend with another of our girls – Natalie – who lives on the New Bishop Estate.

The mother insists that Alice’s has been conned into believing that it is alright to live like ‘these people’. Alice ‘actually’ wants to bring ‘this Natalie person’ to her family home. And she has been critical of the family’s attitudes to poor people.

She says that if the scheme is to be repeated next year then we should take care to pair-off students in a more suitable way – so that ‘like spends time with like’. She says that she did not send her daughter to school to be turned into a ‘riff-raff’.

Alice has also told her parents that she is changing her mind about career. She does not want now to follow her father into financial services. She is thinking about social work.

Her mother claims that her husband is ‘aghast’. But we haven’t heard from him directly.

Mr Timms (adviser) confirmed that Alice had dropped in to search the database on ‘work that helps others’.

Somebody should talk to Alice.

And we must reply to the mother’s letter.
I ought to know more about the people who live on the estate - they are not scary

I want to meet Natalie again - but I can't tell her what I thought before I met her

I can't exactly see myself becoming a social worker - I don't know what I exactly can do about this
11. Mary - and the maths teacher

Mary - 15 November

My mother and father have never given the slightest credence to any doubts about my future as a poet. 'Shit, you can do whatever you feel like, Pokey', Daddy would say, while my mother would claim 'those idiots at school wouldn't know poetry from piss ants'.

But Mr Briggs is telling me that I'll need math more than I know. 'Actually', I say, 'I intend to be a poet, sir'...

'How you plan to get folks to pay you for it?'. This stumps me a minute. Finally, I say, 'I'll sell my books'.

'How much you think that'll make you?' he says... I want to say he's being unfair. But I can't quite locate the unfairness of it... I peel the bottom of one sweaty thigh up from where it's stuck to the chair and tug down my skirt...

Briggs waves his hand saying, 'Let's drop the poet thing. It's true you don't need math to write poetry. But any other task you undertake will require a thorough grounding in mathematics'...

My own silence nudges me to the edge of tears...

I know better than to invite Mr Briggs into the various lives I've constructed for myself - an apartment in New York, a beachcomber's hut, a Victorian mansion surrounded by a maze-like garden.

*based on: Mary Karr (2001). 'Girl's stuff'. *The Guardian Weekend*, 16/06/2009*
Developing Ideas

Opening Scene
- They know nothing, Mary
- Whatever you want, Mary
- Thank you, Mom - thanks Dad - I'm really gonna be a poet
- Famous past students
- I'm going to write and sell poems
- He doesn't believe me - but he's wrong - I will do this

My Scene Page

My ID
- Contrary Mary

Big Scene
- The farm
- Mom and Dad
- Being a poet
- At school
- Mr Briggs
- Made me sweat and cry - so I know what I'm going to do
- So everything I do will be aimed at getting what I want most of all
- And I have Mr Briggs to thank for that

Developing Ideas

Storyboarding

Following Scene
- I'll never forget Mr Briggs
- I'm going to write and sell poems
- You've got to do better at math
- Whatever you want, Mary
- They know nothing, Mary

Places to Go
- I so need to see New York as soon as possible
- I've never actually met a poet who sells books

People to Meet

Futuring

Stop worrying about math

Things to Do
- I've never actually met a poet who sells books
- Stop worrying about math
12: Joey - his teachers and their boffs

researcher's notes

Joey - 9 September

Us lads found each other in Year Eight. We had our own ways of seeing things and doing things. We got drunk round each other’s houses, and knocked each other about at school. We cheered each other up and took the piss out of the boffs. We’re the grown ups, the boffs are children, and the teachers are our enemies. It makes you feel alive.

I asked me Mum what she wanted me to do for work - and she said there’d be no point in telling me. ‘You’d do what you like anyway. And anyway you’ll hate work - like I hate it’. So I thought ‘Ah well!’.

That’s the most important thing in life. You’d go berserk if you couldn’t have a laugh. It’s not the teachers who give you your future. I couldn’t survive on the money I’d make from any job they could help me get. They’re no better than us. What matters is the kids you go with: we live now - the boffs have got to wait a bit before they start living. We know what we’re doing and why we do it. We never stop talking about it. There are not many people like that.

We’re special!

idea for my opening scene
friends for a long time
boffs and teachers

idea for my big scene
Mum
why should I care?

idea for my following scene
getting your life the way you want it now

opening scene
boffs are wankers
teachers are the enemy
please miss!

big scene
what should I do Mum?
(thinks) Ah well!
do what you like - you'll hate it anyway

following scene
we're having a laugh
we're special

places to go
the pub

people to meet
my mates

things to do
same as always

Pal Joey

my ID
why like this?

graphics
The filmic framing of three-scene storyboarding calls on both words and images. Images have a language of their own - not least for showing locations, relationships and feelings. And, although a storyboard can be assembled without drawing, drawing has a way of physically engaging an embodied person.

journey and race
The format sets in motion an exploratory process. It is not looking for immediate answers to competitive questions. It is inviting people on a journey, rather than entering them in a race. It looks for new possibilities – enlarging thinking and feeling.

But life does sometimes call for a person to look good in selection and recruitment situations. And having your own distinctive story can help with that – especially when the most searching question come up....

... ‘what gave you the idea of applying for this?’
... ‘why do you want to join us?’
... ‘what is it that you have particularly to bring to us?’

Recruiters and selectors are looking for distinctive responses to questions like these. They are not impressed by ready-made clichés. Storyboarding elicits a narrative which is distinctively each person’s own.

voice
All of this means that storyboarding opens a conversation which cannot be structured in advance. There can be no ready-made effectiveness criteria.

Storyboarding is evaluated, not in terms of imposed criteria, but in terms of the uses that people actually make of it. And, for that, we have to wait for them to tell us. Each storyboard express each person’s distinctive voice.

continued/...
learning for living

Storyboarding sets down both formal and informal experience. No matter how confusing and pointless that experience may seem, storyboarding enables people each to attribute their own meaning to it, and to realise their own purposes out of that meaning.

It is, then, learning how to learn – necessary if people are to take on-going control of their own lives.

well-being

Storyboarding is designed to engage students in reflecting on how they might move on - from a remembered past to an imagined future. The focus on a turning-point opens doors to unforeseen possibilities and ready-for-anything flexibility. This is an enabler of personal and social well-being – life-wide and life-long...

... noticing what might otherwise be missed - learning from surprise
... knowing what to hold onto, and what to let go
... finding what drives, and grasping hope for its realisation
... getting fired-up for sustained commitment to that action

professionalism

The learning is also professionally useful – it can be...

... in helping: an additional method for engaging learning from experience
... in enquiry: collected into a collated account – useful for reform

for a detailed account of the theory-and-practice of storyboarding go to:
http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbL4L.pdf

a presentation at:
http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbstrybrd.ppt