Digital Destiny

Story as a concept/problem introduction

This method is used to introduce a concept or a problem to the students in a more attractive and comprehensive manner, providing context for increased students' interaction with the concept/problem.

Expected Outcomes – students will:

- ✓ Be able to explore additional perspectives of an issue/problem/situation by examining other contexts through a story.
- ✓ Be able to set criteria for examining a context through a story.
- ✓ Be able to work with abstract notions.
- ✓ Be able to be actively involved in a debate (show active listening to others and building arguments to support their opinion).

Timing

The minimum amount of time you should plan for **10-15** minutes.

Material

This working method can be implemented in-person or in a blended format if you choose. It can be implemented also by combining the two approaches.

Offline	Blended
Create three large visual spaces (board or large paper) to collect small group (or plenary) ideas, categorize/group ideas, brainstorm questions. One of the spaces is for creating a concept map.	Create a Miro board account. Create a Miro board. Create a Padlet account. Create a Padlet. **More info on the tools?**

Prepare yourself!

Offline or blended

Miro:

- → At the top it names the concept/problem to be discussed; below there is a section (e.g., a circle or a rectangle) named "Brainstorming" virtual or real sticky notes that the students can write on.
- → A new section in the same space (e.g., another circle) to categorize/group the ideas from the first section.

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- → Another space for creating a concept map based on the categorized brainstorming ideas.
- → Another space for reflection after the story.
- → Use multicolor post it notes.

Padlet:

- → Create a column Padlet with two columns for the plenary activity: section 1 and section 2.

Step-by-step

Begin by deciding the concept or problem to present. We suggest you consider the following:

- → *Students' prior knowledge and experiences*
- → *Students' cultural and social background*
- → *Local context (e.g., historical background, economy elements, landmarks, etc.)*

1. Story creation/selection (preparation for the teacher)

Storytelling is about two distinct but equally important attributes. The story needs to be short (3-5 minutes) and it needs to have a strong emotional component. By that, we refer to the emotional reaction of the students and not the emotions described within the story.

Here are some tips to help you:

Emotional reaction is caused by personal attachment. Try to include elements in the story through which the students will be able to see themselves in the story. Examples are:

- → a main character of the same age as your students,
- → a main character in a same social situation as your students (e.g., living place, profession corresponding to local economy, etc.),
- → a situation common to most families (e.g., grandfather telling a story, mother reading a bed-time story, etc.).

The reference to the concept/problem should be clear in the story. For example:

- → If the concept is global warming, something related to weather change should be mentioned,
- → If the problem is "running water", the need for that should emerge for the main character in the story,
- → If the concept is "day/night", this change should be evident with a consequence in the story.

Always accompany your story with some reflective and provoking questions. An example is provided below.

You can use any story and not create your own, as long as it meets the above criteria.

2 Plenary activity before the Story

There are two options to tackle this activity. It is preferable to have the whole classroom participate and not split the students into smaller groups. This is a detection activity in which the prior knowledge, experiences and attitudes of the students are recorded, and they are also shifting to a mood of thinking about the concept/problem to be worked upon after the story. Although there are many ways to proceed, possibly the simplest and most effective one is a brainstorming session which leads to a concept map.

Proceed as follows:

All students have 1 minute to come up with 2-4 words/pictures that are connected or relevant in any way to the concept/problem. Let them browse the image search on Padlet to find the pictures.

They can then they post it on the brainstorming space section 1. Then they take 5 minutes to think about the recorded words. Duplicates can be omitted. You may propose a list of categories based on the recorded words and host a brief (2-3 minute long) discussion with the students for agreeing on the categories which will be written in section 2.

Use 5 more minutes to move or copy the remaining words to section 2. Only the most important or relevant words should be copied. Use the following approach: each student in a random order selects 1 word, explains why he/she thinks it should be included and with the majority's consensus he/she puts it in section 2. Try to have enough words for each student to participate.

3 Reviewing the story.

At this point the students view or read the story in plenary with no interruptions. It is important to view the whole story at once. Give 2 minutes to the students to reflect on the story and provide them with a third space for reflection. The space should have 3 columns in which each student may stick at least one post-it notes not already mentioned by other students. The columns are:

> The story is about _____ and relates to the concept/problem because _____ (you may use post-its with this phrase pre-filled)

> The story made me think about _____

The story made me feel _____

4 Plenary activity after the Story

Give 3 minutes to the students to observe the concept map created in activity 2. Give them 5 more minutes to perform any corrective actions in the map. Majority consensus should be reached.

If you worked in small groups when creating the concept maps, use that distribution again.

One additional idea is to create a bigger concept map by combining the group maps.

5 Next steps

From this point on many paths may be followed. If it is a concept, you may implement experiments or any other type of activities. If it is a problem, split the students in small groups (preferably considering their participation in the previous activities in order to have diverse groups and enhance interaction) and work towards solving the problem. You may use some of the methods proposed in this module.

6 Bring it home

If following a blended, asynchronous approach you might want to have the students discuss or even view the story with their families and post a second set of the post-it notes based on that discussion (preferably with a justification).