

# The Facing Project

## The General Process:

A *storyteller* is facing the issue discussed in the collection. A *writer* has a conversation with the *storyteller* to get the story. This is an “act of empathy.” The writer obtains a consent form (if under 17 a parent is also needed), records the story, and takes notes. The writer transcribes the audio recording and then drafts the story and shares it with the storyteller. The story is revised based on storyteller input and if permission is granted is then published in a collection and performed for the public.

## Our Process/Timeline:

Depending on the number of participants we get, either you or you and a partner will be assigned a storyteller through Dr. Grouling or Kate at *A Better Way* based on times that will work for you. You will contact your storyteller and arrange a *safe* meeting place such as *A Better Way* or a study room in the library.

3/30-4/7: Conduct Interview

4/10: Interview Transcription Due

4/10-4/12: In-class writing workshops

4/14: Draft to Storyteller

4/19: Revision Plan

4/24: Editing Workshop

4/26: Final Story & Due

5/1: Finalize Event Plans by group

5/4: Final Event Presentation

## **Facing Project Grading Contract (25% or course grade):**

This project will be graded on investment, labor, and reflection. This story is not yours; it is your storyteller's. However, you will have a chance to reflect in your own voice about this project, too.

Please note that you will receive points as we go but the total will not be assessed until the final exam.

### **Process (70 points)**

Interview: 10 pts

- Initial Questions prepared in advance
- Conducted by end of day 4/7
- Audio recorded successfully
- Consent form collected

Transcript: 10 pts

- In transcription format
- Completed by 4/10
- Work distributed equally between partners (if applicable)
- Made anonymous

Workshop Days 4/10 & 4/12 10 pts

- Productive meeting with partner and/or instructor both days
- Transcript brought to class 4/10
- Outline developed for writing on 4/10
- Initial writing brought to class to share with partner and/or instructor on 4/12
- Productive writing takes place in the class period 4/12

Draft Due 10 pts

- Draft complete by 4/14
- Draft sent to storyteller
- Set up meeting with storyteller about draft

Revision/Editing 10 pts

- Revision plan based on storyteller and partner/instructor feedback 4/19
- Revisions completed to storyteller and partner/instructor satisfaction
- Edits complete to your story and another story (if applicable)

Group Work 10 pts

- Contributes equally if working with a partner
- Contributes to group for final event in a productive and equal way

Final Project Due 10 pts

- Final story is ready on time 4/24
- Final event products for your group (i.e. event planning, document design, promotion, and presentation) are completed on time and to your groups' satisfaction

## **Reflection (30 points)**

**Due 4/24**

This may take **any form you want**: an essay, a blog post, a video, podcast, etc. It is personal to you and is your response to the project. While the story is in the voice of your storyteller, this piece should be in **your voice**. Please note that your writing process is going to be discussed in the final project, so this project should focus primarily on **other issues**. In particular, this piece should focus on Concept 3: **Writing Enacts and Creates Identities**

**and Ideologies.** This piece will be evaluated on your understanding of and engagement with that idea. You may cite readings from class, but you do not need to. Some questions you might consider:

- How did your own identity and/or ideologies influence this project? How did those interact with the identity and/or ideologies of your partner and storyteller?
- What struggles did you encounter in portraying such a personal identity of someone else in writing? How did you negotiate those struggles?
- How did certain ideologies in our culture that privilege certain identities play out in this project?
- Did your own identity/ideologies shift through writing this project?

# Tips from the Facing Project

(From Kesley Timmerman's visit to our class on 3/24)

## *The Interview*

1. Allow 60-75 minutes for the interview.
2. Meet in a *comfortable* space that is public, but also fairly private.
3. Start with small talk. Make the comfortable. Save tougher questions for last.
4. Have initial questions, but primarily LISTEN. People aren't generally listened to. Show that you are *genuinely interested* in their experience.
5. Have more of a conversation than an interview. Give examples about yourself, but focus on them.
6. Record the interview.
7. Write down questions to ask later rather than interrupting when they are storytelling.
8. Try to get specific moments and descriptions using language such as "Take me to that.." or "In that moment... what did you see, hear, say..."
9. Transcribe the interview

## *The Story*

1. Use as many of their words as possible.
2. Write in first-person as them. Channel their voice. Keep them anonymous.
3. Story can be around 1000 words, but really however much you need to tell it.
4. Focus on moments and scenes.

5. This is not a newspaper story or academic piece. Don't set up the topic with background information on the issue. You tell their story: that's all.

6. Think of this a monologue.

7. Don't embellish the story. Although your point of view is fictional, you are telling the truth.

8. Do not identify 3<sup>rd</sup> parties by name, job, etc. Protect their identity, too. This is not a trial of public opinion.

9. Don't express your personal views on the issue. This is not a soapbox. You can comment on those your storyteller expresses, but they should not be dominant.

10. Let your storyteller know they control the story. Ask what doesn't sound like them, what they want to change in your draft.