



## Dive into the Virtual Storytelling World!

Everything keeps changing drastically in such a short amount of time lately. Mask or no mask? Which store is open? Is this 6 feet or am I too close? What's going to happen tomorrow? Too overwhelming! Okay, let's forget the uncertain reality for now and dive into the storytelling world!

Suddenly everything about our world became virtual reality....I mean, literally. Virtual meetings, virtual classes — art, cooking, dancing, meditation — even virtual happy hour and virtual dates! Are you keeping up with the craze? Well, StoryMasters didn't want to be late to the party, so we had our first virtual meeting on April 5. With over 30 attendees from different countries and states, we had a blast!



As meeting host, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't worried beforehand. What if there were technical issues? What if functionaries didn't show up? What if, what if, what if...I had so many concerns, but I should've known better. StoryMasters know how to roll!

Our Toastmaster of the day, **Catherine Magruder**, orchestrated a perfect and charming tone throughout our story time. If you have attended our meetings, you know that our meetings have no theme, but somehow I felt some kind of thread that day. Lessons! Did anybody feel that? **Antoinette Byron's** "*Weapons of Mass Influence, to Be or Not to Be*" taught us how Influencers' bells and whistles affect our lives. **Jacki William-Jones** allowed us to peek at the beginning of her wonderful teaching journey in "*Being a French Teacher.*" **Mallery McMurtrey** shared her vision for

the Youth Leadership Program titled "Telling The Story of You" for her High Performance Leadership. Our guest speaker, **Dannette Montague**, who is aiming for her second Distinguished Toastmaster title, shared a hilarious cooking lesson with a surprise twist titled, "Secret Sauce." Yours truly's personal story, "New Kid in School," taught us about the history of discrimination in Japan through her unique experience.

One of the things I love about StoryMasters is that everybody is always on top of their game. **Anna Ziss-Patton** conducted the invaluable evaluation segment with our starring evaluators **Mark Walsh, Kathy Falco, Tina Tomiyama, Judith Ferber, and Margaret Mitchell**. Because the Timer is such a crucial role for virtual meetings, **Lin Van Gelder** took extra miles to fulfill her role, juggling multiple devices and virtual backgrounds. So did our WordMaster **Aprille Isham**. The word of the day, "Fishy," was swimming through the entire meeting.

It was so nice to see new and familiar smiles and get connected with everybody. Let's do this again! Join us for the next one. When? Mother's Day @ 3-5 PM! Don't forget to RSVP to Tina Tomiyama at [tomiya2@mac.com](mailto:tomiya2@mac.com) for the meeting details. "See" you on May 10!

## Sit or Stand When You Tell a Story on Screen?

Is standing better than sitting when I tell a story on screen? That has been my question since virtual meetings started. Sure, I understand the benefit of standing, but telling a story on screen can be – or should be – different in my opinion. Not everybody has a nice big screen. My own laptop is rather small. When people stand a few feet away from the computer, I can see their body movements, but I miss their facial expressions and subtle movements that I want to see on screen.

I threw my question to long-time Toastmaster Sherwood Jones. He's been working in the film industry as an editor and post production supervisor and his knowledge about filming is worth listening to.

**Q.** *Why should we stand when we tell a story? Convince me!*

**A.** Of course, standing allows for better breathing, hence a stronger voice and more full gestures as well as creative use of the speaking area. So it depends on the content. If you want to use the stage to illustrate different locations, objects, or a timeline, then standing would allow for that. If the speech is more cerebral, more abstract in thought – rather than talking about physical events or things – then seated could be fine.

**Q.** *It makes sense. But I seldom see good standing delivery on screen, so it's hard for me to plan for that.*

**A.** Well, imagine any of the World Championship speeches – most of which use the stage in many ways to illustrate objects, actions, timelines, or even ideas – given from a sitting position. Many would not be as powerful.

**Q.** *True, but for them, professional videographers are capturing the stage. Cameras follow them when they move. For most of us, we're stuck within a fixed area. If we stand a few feet away from the camera to secure a stage area, our facial expressions – which could be a strong benefit when delivering on screen – may be lost.*

**A.** I guess one would need to determine if what is gained by using the stage and larger gestures is greater than what you would lose by not seeing the face as well. Of course, storytellers on the radio or books on tape are even more limited. I am competing online and at least one of my two speeches really requires use of space. So it can depend on the content.

Sherwood Jones is currently teaching Advanced Film Production, The Short Film (a production class), Editing, and Motion Graphics at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. As we are in the online world right now, he is still a member of Sundays by the Sea Toastmasters in Culver City, and locally, he is a member of Shreveport Toastmasters. He is currently in the contests representing that club.



Granted, what I have described is only one type of storytelling. There is also the "bedtime story" type, where everything that is physical or tangible is described by the words and vocal variety. Imagine someone with a large book in their lap, reading an enthralling story to you, with almost constant eye contact. Because you lose the physical tools, the choice of words and use of the voice become even more important in creating the story's power.

Now I get it. It depends on the content and storytelling style. The wide screen tells us the situation, location, and character overall while the closeup creates intimate feelings and shows the teller's emotional state. Personally, I want to learn more about how to tell a story to one person more effectively.

Sherwood, thank you for sharing your knowledge with us and good luck with your competition!

Now, it's your turn. Do you want to perform to the whole audience, or tell a story to your friend?

Special Event Just for StoryMasters and Friends

## Being on Camera, the Steps for Success

*Do you want to learn the tricks about how to rock on screen? Mark your calendar, StoryMasters and friends! StoryMasters will present a special event for you with a delightful coach, Jennifer Kelley Lublin.*

### On Camera Presentation Skills Workshop

April 26, 2020 @ 3PM

[Click HERE for RSVP](#)

RSVP is required. Register now and stay tuned for more details!

When it comes to being on camera for a meeting, a presentation, or a call with co-workers...there are tools and techniques you can use to ensure you deliver with impact and professionalism.

#### You will learn:

- ◆ Technical side: Camera Placement, Lighting, Background/Styling Your "Set"
- ◆ On Camera Presentation Skills
- ◆ Mindset for Success on Camera
- ◆ Confidence on Camera

#### Jennifer Kelley Lublin

Jennifer looks forward to sharing her straightforward, easy to understand approach to being successful when you're on camera.

Jennifer Kelley Lublin has been a Professional Photographer since 2008, specializing in portrait, product, and marketing photography for entrepreneurs, business owners, and artists. In addition to being a photographer, she's produced television for Hallmark, Discovery Home, FOX Reality, ABC, and more.

[www.JennKL.com](http://www.JennKL.com)



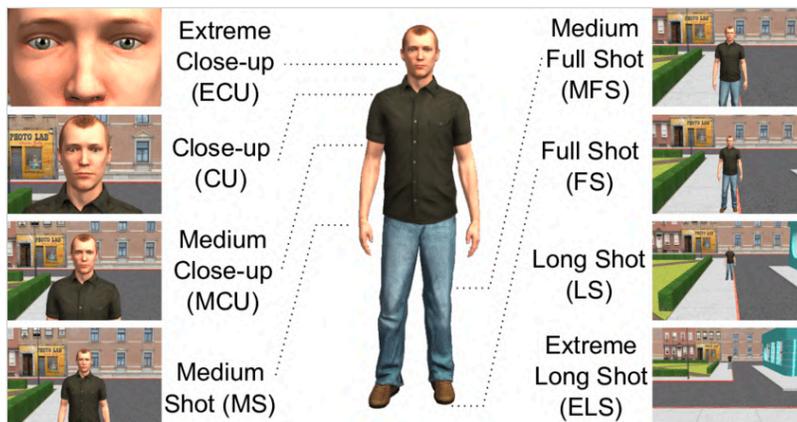
## Storytelling Stub ~ Camera Shot Types

Let's learn different camera shot types. One of the benefits of telling a story on screen is that you can mix them and make your story more compelling. You may need to be creative to do a medium full or longer shot though. If your space is limited with clutter like mine, the background may ruin the setting.

Here are some tips about closeup shot.

- [6 Tips for Playing Powerful Closeups](#)
- [Close-Up Shots: Examples of Camera Movement & Angles](#)
- [How to Design a Close-Up Shot — And When You Should Use It](#)

The more you learn, the more you realize how crucial subtle movements are when you tell a story on screen. Even a tiny eye movement can make a big difference. I will cover more next time. Stay tuned!



[Discuss in Detail the Different Types of Camera Shots and Camera Positions with Examples](#)

### EDITOR'S NOTE

## Grow Like Green Onions!

The quarantine has changed our lives tremendously and maybe permanently. It's not all the bad news though. People are taking time to connect with their family, friends, and even neighbors in a meaningful way. I've been enjoying the aroma of star jasmine and fresh squeezed lemons and oranges that I picked from my neighbors' front yards. Did you hear that Los Angeles is now blessed with some of the cleanest air in the world? (Yay LA!) Thanks to our slow-down lifestyles, our Earth is taking an opportunity to heal.

The Earth is not the only one that is taking an advantage of this situation. So am I. I'm grateful for the opportunity to take a step back from my busy life and reflect on myself. My diet has definitely improved. It wasn't bad before, but I wasn't proud of it, either. Because cooking is not my cup of tea and my schedule was tight, I wasn't interested in spending my precious time on cooking. Now that I have more time and also there was no pre-made food available for a while, I started using the chopping board and pans. I'm not a good cook and still not that interested in cooking (well, time wasn't the reason after all, was it?), but I have to admit that home-made food tastes a lot better than pre-made foods. And surprise, surprise! A plant-killer like myself is even growing green onions. It's so easy! All you have to do is to put the white roots down in a glass and add water and sun.

Looking at the green onions' growth every day makes me want to grow like them, too! So I started tapping into my creativity even more by attending virtual shows and workshops. Although my growth may not be as visible nor fast as theirs, I'm hoping that adding water and sun to myself will beget a difference someday.

Miyo Yamauchi

