



STORY DESIGN COHORT

SYLLABUS FOR OCT 7-14

OVERVIEW

This collaborative workshop is designed to guide instructional designers through the process of story development as it pertains to learning and development. Story design is very different from learning design, and the process can confuse and frustrate even brilliant IDs, trainers, and consultants.

Sage Academy has spent a decade on optimizing story development so that it follows a cohesive, linear approach that maximizes creativity and reduces conventional obstacles like cliché, writer's block, and predictable endings. This cohort lasts a week, and includes two sessions with Austin and Richard from Sage Academy, as well as a running thread with the rest of the designers enrolled in the workshop.

Finally, your finished capstone project will be a complete, engaging story that has an underlying moral learners can glean after hearing it.

COHORT SYLLABUS

The agenda for this workshop will address the following subjects:

- **Why Story** – Storytelling might be entertaining, but what does that have to do with effective learning design? We cover the tangible benefits to using stories within learning and development.
- **The Core Premise** – Within every learning objective is a story, learn how to define that story with the Core Premise.
- **Conclusion** – Early writers often get frustrated with writing their story because they don't know where it's supposed to go. A little secret is to start with the end *first*, then work backwards.
- **Moral Trait** – Learning design is about more than passing on knowledge: it's about conveying underlying truths that shift behaviors. You'll learn how in this module.
- **Conflict** – Growth requires resistance, so conflict is the necessary ingredient to drive engagement in your story. We will continue to address conflict throughout the course.
- **Metaphor** – The beauty of story is that it provides the opportunity to develop an *inductive learning experience*. Metaphors enhance that experience and stimulate critical thinking.
- **Best Character** – There is a well-known saying in writing circles: "Character is plot, plot is character." Before we can create action in our story, we must first design *who* will bring that action to life.
- **Character Wants** – Learners invest emotionally when they understand what a character Wants and what conflict prevents them from getting it. It's human nature and it drives your story forward.
- **Character Needs** – Learners relate to characters when they finally understand the underlying Need of your character.
- **Antagonist** – Avoid using the "good-manager/bad-manager" trope in learning programs. Instead, learn how to create a captivating Antagonist that is realistic and three-dimensional.
- **Story World** – This module takes you from simply creating a scenario to designing your own unique Story World to immerse your learner.
- **Causality** – Most novice storytellers confuse their audience because of one critical misstep, their story is Causal. Here we will provide guidance to ensure you don't make the same mistake.
- **Plotting** – Now that you have the foundational elements of your story mapped out, it's time to start creating those Plot Points that will get your audience to lean forward in their seats.
- **Obstacles** – But what is a good story without Obstacles along the way? Characters need roadbumps to set them off-course, and we show you creative tools to generate lots of ideas.
- **The First Draft** – By the time we get to this module, you will have everything you need to write your first draft. Now is the time to get writing!
- **Revisions** – Editing is the key to developing a clear, cogent, and entertaining story. Learn the three phases of editing to ensure a professional, polished story.

