

SMILE Storytelling Rubric

Stand tall and sound proud

I moved, wiggled, and fidgeted. I did not speak clearly and used lots of “um”, “like”, “and then”, “and so”.	I stood still but stiffly in front of the microphone and ‘talked’ my story.	I smiled, took a deep breath, and told my story. My stance was relaxed.	I stood tall at the microphone, used appropriate pacing, told my story with ease and confidence, and handled mistakes, distractions, or memory lapses without getting upset.

Make the story your own

I memorized my story.	I told my story with minor changes in word choice & phrasing.	I told my story with a hook at the beginning and a strong ending. I cut unnecessary words and details. There was a fluency to my speaking. I visualized the story as I told it.	I adapted the story and considered the choice of my words to paint a picture that my audience visualized. My audience could see it, hear it, taste it, and feel it. I added feeling words. I used a variety of sentence lengths and structures to keep my listeners’ interest. I spoke the conventions of ?, !, and “_” in a natural, relaxed voice.

Interact with your audience

I avoided looking at my audience, or focused on a small area of the audience.	I scanned the audience as I told my story. I was hesitant about adding voice, expressions, or gestures to my telling.	I made eye contact with the audience. I connected with them using expression and gestures. I did not rush. I felt that they enjoyed what they heard.	I communicated with the members of the audience watching for signs of confusion and noticing parts they enjoyed. I paused so that my audience could think; I gave my audience time to laugh or be sad. I reacted to the feedback I got from my audience and adjusted my telling.

Love your story

My audience heard the main events of my story. I read my story, made a storyboard, and they could tell that I practiced a few times.	My audience could tell that I practiced telling my story at least 10 times. I told my story with some hesitation and inconsistency.	My audience could tell that I practiced telling my story a lot. My telling was smooth; I confidently included the things I had practiced and it worked.	My audience could tell that I loved my story. They could see and hear my energy and enthusiasm. I have made it my own and they heard my unique voice.

End with a smile

I stopped telling my story, said “The End”, and quickly sat down before the applause started.	I finished my story and sat down during the applause.	I ended my story with a clear ending line or a pause, waited for the applause, smiled, and sat down.	I ended my story, thanking my audience with my eyes, graciously accepted the applause with a nod and smile, and left the microphone walking tall.