An elderly couple is riding bicycles on a paved path. The woman on the left is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and tan pants, and she has a joyful expression. The man on the right is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark pants, and he has a white beard. They are both wearing light-colored shoes. The path is lined with trees that have yellow and orange autumn leaves. The background is slightly blurred, showing more trees and a clear sky. The overall mood is peaceful and active.

# Storytelling

Benefits of Storytelling

Presented by: Amanda Oporta, IU Health Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Service.



# STORYTELLING IN 10 MINUTES

## VISUAL/ ORAL STORYTELLING

30,000 BC

Primitive Art:  
Chauvet Cave cave paintings,  
murals in short series of events  
depicting rituals/ hunting



1,000 BC



## History of Storytelling

Our earliest storytellers were over 30,000 years ago when cave drawings were made.

Myths & Legends

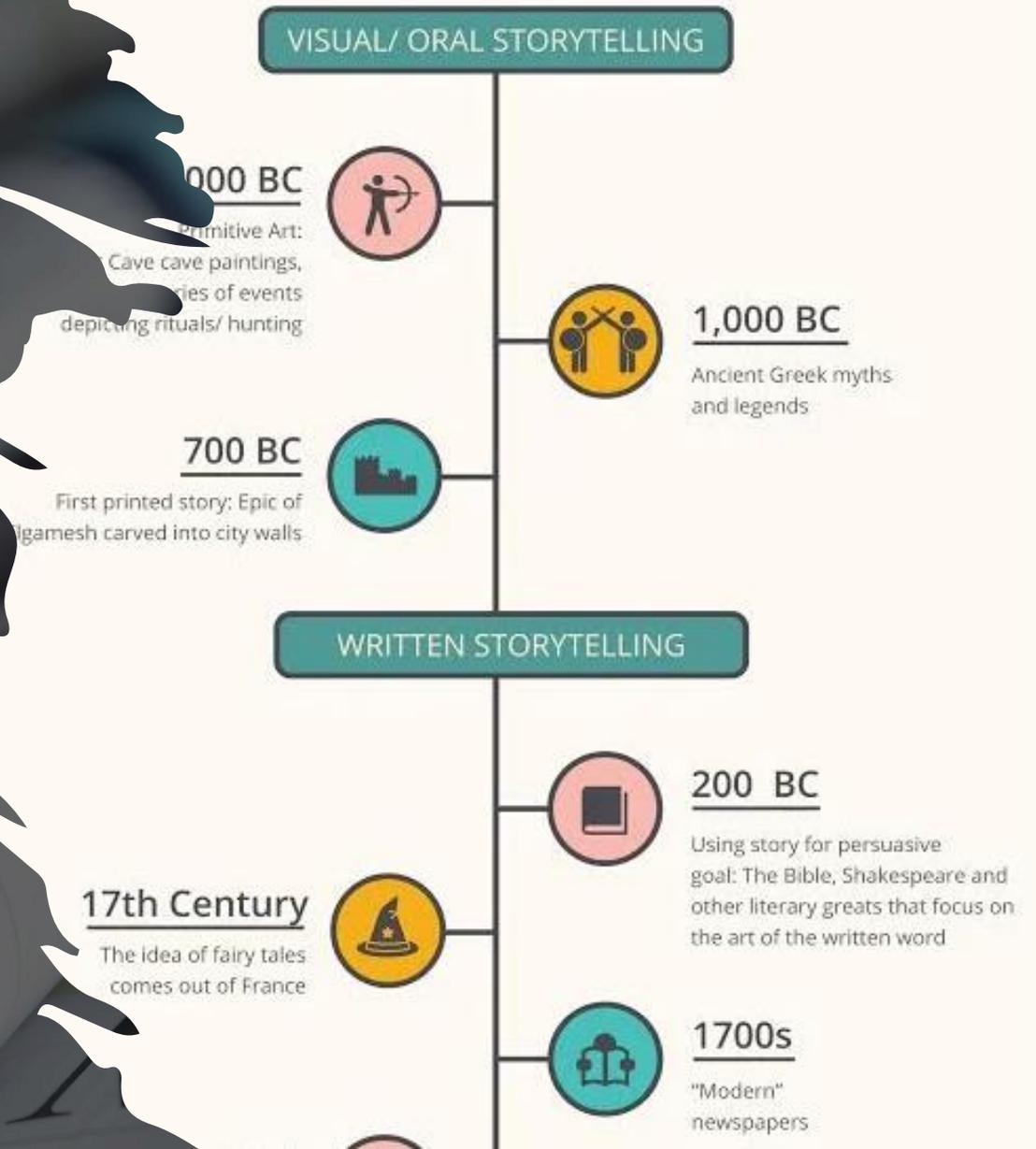
# History of Storytelling

Written stories

Photos

Newspapers

Magazines



# History of Storytelling

Digital age

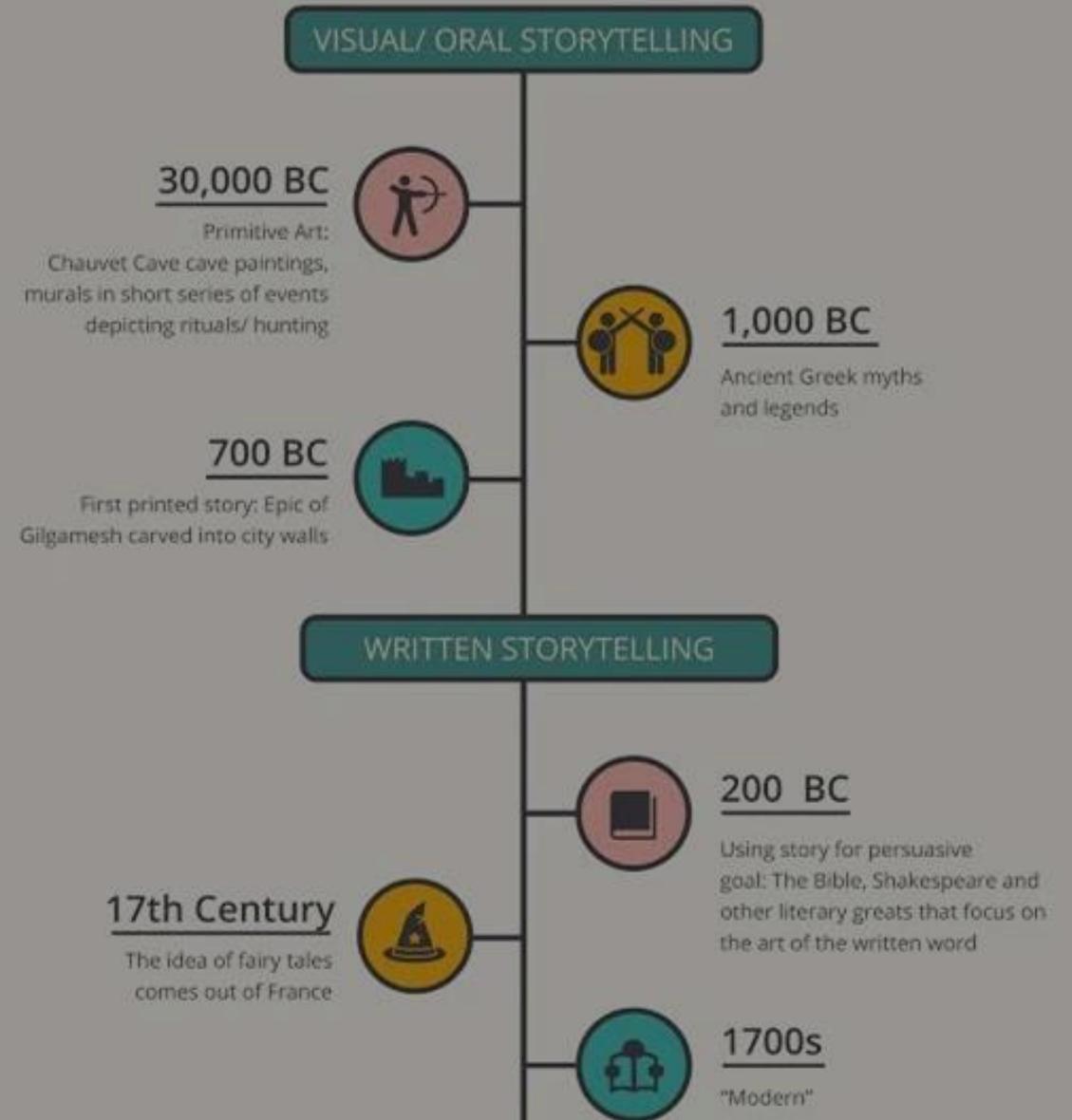
TV

Videos games

Music Videos

Media

VR



# Nursery Rhymes have a story with rhythm

- *Hickory dickory dock. The mouse went  
up the clock  
The clock struck one. The mouse went  
down  
Hickory dickory dock.*
- *Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,  
And can't tell where to find them;  
Leave them alone, And they'll come home,  
Wagging their tails behind them.*



# Narratives



STORIES ARE NARRATIVES THAT  
HAVE A BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND  
END.



WHY DO WE TELL STORIES?  
INFORMATION, ENTERTAINMENT,  
EDUCATION OR GIVE LESSONS FOR  
ALL AGES...



HOW DO WE TELL STORIES?  
IMAGES, ORALLY, BOOKS, MUSIC,  
PLAYS, TV, MOVIES, YOUTUBE,  
SOCIAL MEDIA, BLOGS...

# Why are stories so important or powerful?

Helps us relate to each other through empathy

Gives us a sense of identity and history of our lives

Provides lessons that help us not repeat same mistakes by learning about the past

Gives us news of the surrounding area or events happening in our worlds

It is a way to express ourselves and have a creative outlet

# How does our brain respond?

Chemically and Physically





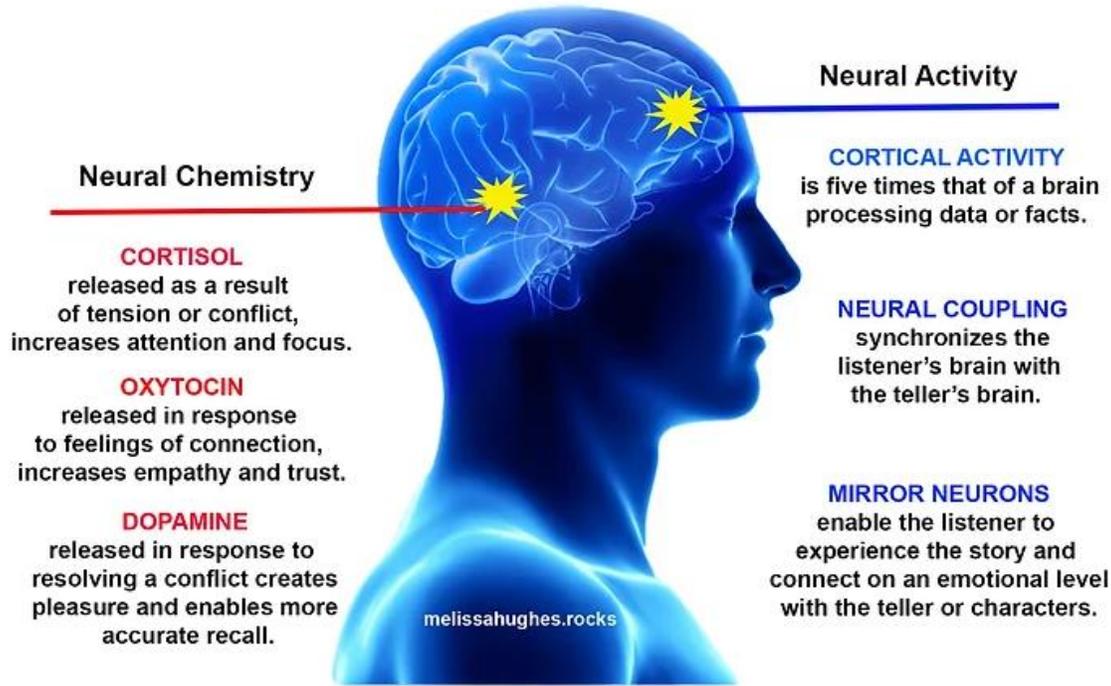
***“The stories we tell literally make the world. If you want to change the world, you need to change your story.” — Michael Margolis***

*Emotions heighten our ability to remember experiences and improve information processing. Emotions are a signal to the brain that this experience is important. As a result, the brain pays much more attention and stores the information that is charged with emotion into deeper regions of the brain such as the cerebellum. – Melissa Rocks*

- <https://www.melissahughes.rocks/post/story-telling-changes-our-brain-and-our-behavior>



# STORYTELLING CHANGES THE BRAIN



storytelling changes the brain

# Reactions to Stories



WHEN A STORY IS TOLD OUR BRAIN REACTS WITH EMPATHY TO THE STORY AND IF IT IS SAD, RELEASES CHEMICALS, IF IT IS HAPPY, RELEASES DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHEMICALS.



THOSE CHEMICALS PLAY A ROLE IN HOW WE FEEL WHEN A STORY IS BEING TOLD WHICH LEAVES A LASTING PHYSICAL ROUTE IN OUR BRAINS.



LATER WE MAY NOT RECALL THE DETAILS OR THE WORDS OF THE STORY, BUT WE REMEMBER HOW IT MADE US FEEL.



THIS IS WHY CERTAIN SONGS, SMELLS OR LOCATIONS CAN LINK US TO A FEELING FROM LONG AGO. IT CAN MAKE US COMFORTABLE, ANXIOUS, NOSTALGIC, ETC...





David  
remembers his  
story

<https://youtu.be/WuIMDxRerzo?feature=shared>

# ON AIR

David is recording his stories to reminisce as well as to pass his story along to others.

- David's story came with a strong output of reaction from the adrenalin in his fight or flight response. This leaves a lasting change on the brain and when he may not be able to remember every detail of the story due to dementia, he can recall how it made him feel.
- The same happens with a happy story.

# How is storytelling important for people living with dementia?

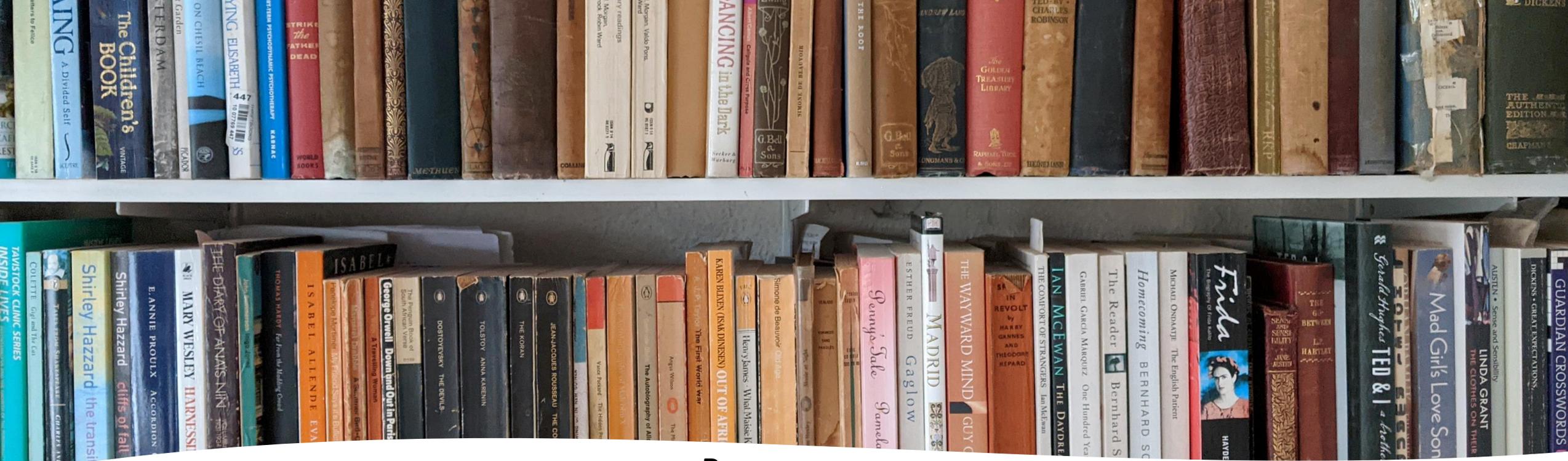
- To help with sense of identity and who the person is.
- To bring forth feelings of happiness and comfort (sometimes this is a good distraction as well if a person seems overwhelmed or anxious)
- When a person tells a story over and over, it could indicate a few things and is not always about not remembering.
  - They are trying to entertain, and this helps them feel a part of the conversation
  - They may have an unresolved feeling that needs to be validated
  - They have a very strong tie to the feeling that it creates when they express through the story



# In what ways can you collect stories?

- Record verbal, video
- Write stories
- Use prompts to record
- Social media or blogs
- Photos with narratives
- So many options today....





## Resources:

### Talking Memory Books

<https://www.talkingproducts.com/products/talking-memory-book-deluxe-dementia-aid>

### Story Corp

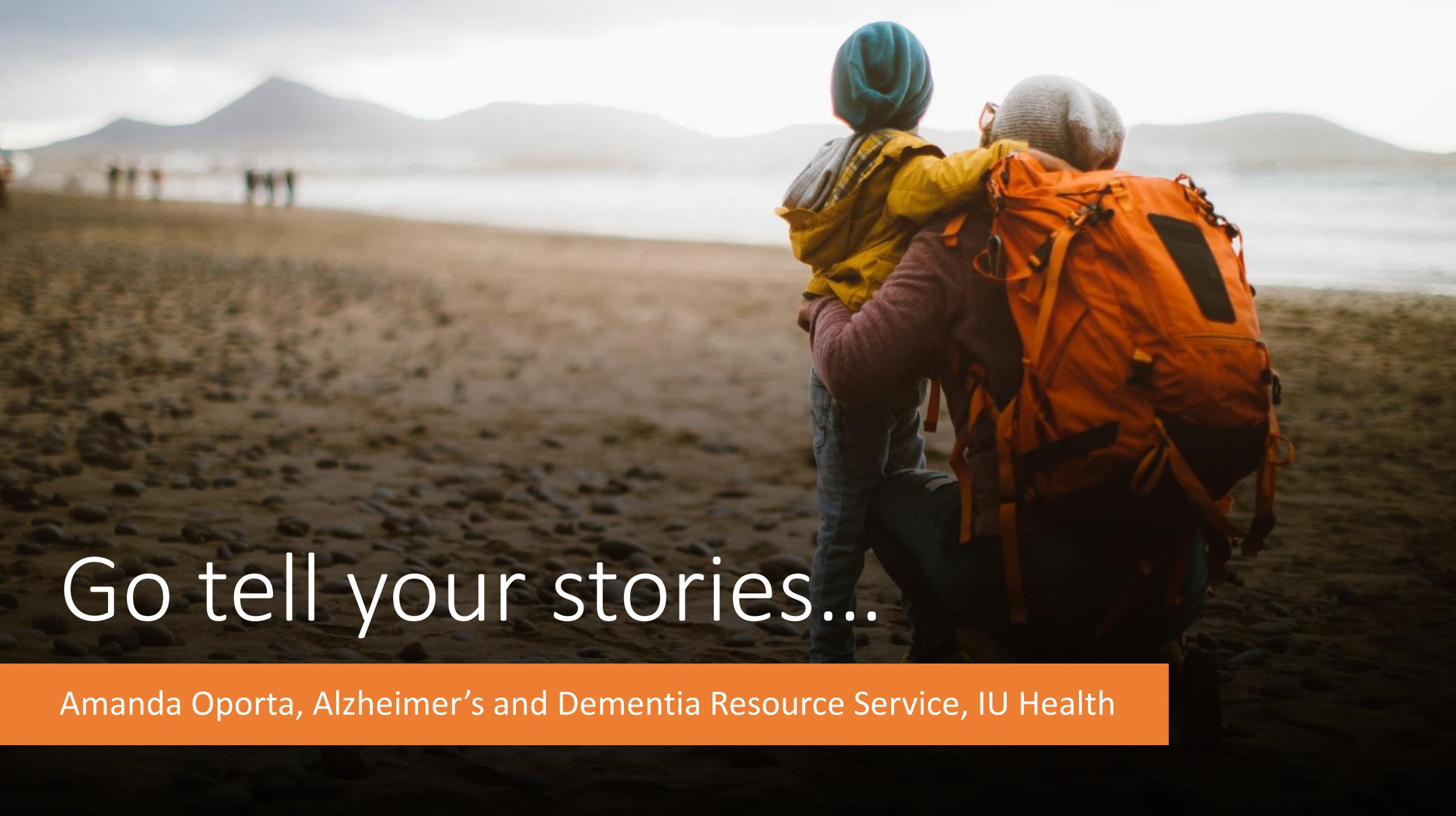
<https://storycorps.org/>

### Recording Life Stories

<https://www.dementiauk.org/information-and-support/living-with-dementia/creating-a-life-story>

# References and Credits

- <https://www.melissahughes.rocks/>
  - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8848055/>
  - <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/dementia-together/apr-may-2021/ideas-help-person-dementia-record-their-stories>
  - <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/storytelling-and-cultural-traditions/>
  - <https://www.meetcortex.com/blog/the-history-of-storytelling-in-10-minutes>
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Go tell your stories...

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