



## Thrive Outside Evaluation 2019|2020 Participation Voice Combined Protocol

prepared by:  
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On behalf of:  
thrive outside communities  
fueled by Outdoor Foundation



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## INTRODUCTION

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This document is intended to serve as your guide in implementing qualitative data collection within your community. There are four different approaches included within this protocol guide that you may choose from: interviews, focus groups, photo-voice | photo-elicitation, or digital storytelling. Each approach requires thoughtful consideration of your network's capacity and what is doable, manageable and feasible for your community within the programming and time restraints.

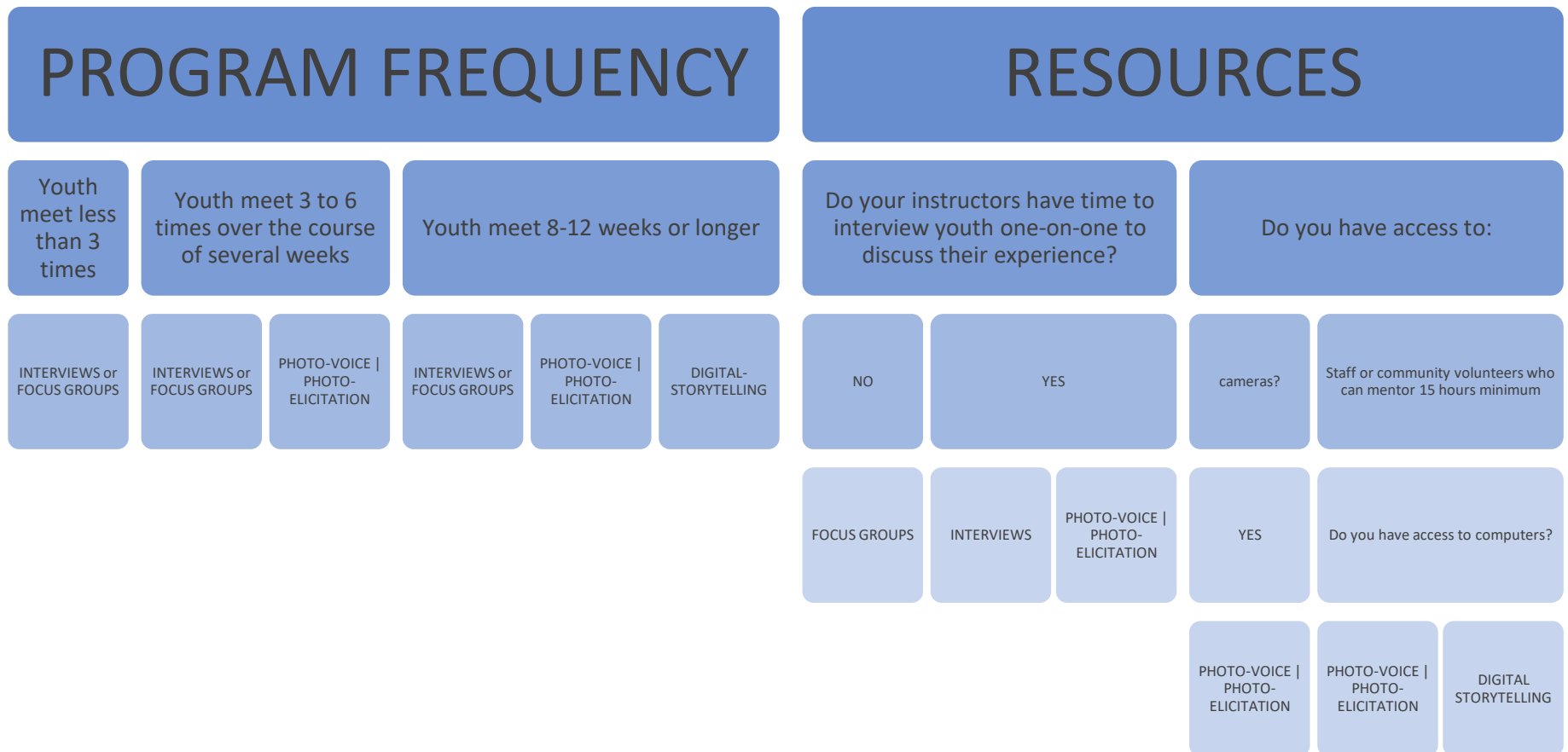
While we invite you to choose the tool that is best fit for your community, we ask that you follow the specific protocol for that tool and do not deviate from the protocol structure or questions. This is critical for data analysis and understanding shared outcomes across all Thrive Outside communities.

That being said, **ask the YOUTH** which tool they might want to use to express their voice and experience. It will need to be a collective decision as your network should only choose ONE tool for this first year. Many may be drawn to the photo or video tools. If that is a considerable lift for your network at this point in time, build up to it. Start small. Listen. And have fun.



PARTICIPANT VOICE TREE: CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE...

Think of a target program in your network that would represent a good showcase of what your network does or aims to do. Depending on the tool of choice, you will want a minimum of 8-10 youth, but no more than 20. You will then ask these youth to participate in the tool of choice based on program frequency, available time, and resources. We invite you to navigate this evaluation tree to help guide you to the best fit tool. And as always, please don't hesitate to reach out with questions, comments, clarification or concerns:



**PARTICIPANT VOICE COMBINED PROTOCOL  
PROTOCOL + CHECKLIST**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PARENTAL OPT-OUT   CONSENT for participants | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to student-led photos (if applicable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student assent                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Cover Sheet + Questions Completed            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio recording device                      |   |

**PARTICIPANT VOICE COVERSHEET**

**\*\*CONSENT/ASSENT IS REQUIRED FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS\*\*  
\*YOU MUST HAVE CONFIRMED PARENTAL CONSENT PRIOR TO INVITING STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE\***

Organization | Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_ School (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Program Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Sampling of participants:

- **Ensure that parental informed consent is provided** for each youth selected
- FOCUS GROUPS: Select 8-10 youth, at random, from permission slips; may conduct multiple focus groups
- INTERVIEWS: min.= 8; max = 20, select at random, from permission slips
- PHOTO-VOICE: 8-10 youth who are interested in project; may have all participate if 20 or less
- DIGITAL STORYTELLING: 8-10 youth who are interested in project; may have all participate if 20 or less

STUDENT PARTICIPANTS: (first name, last initial)\*:

PARENT CONSENT	Student Name	Student Name	PARENT CONSENT

\*Student names will NOT be used in final written report; name collection is a means of tracking parental consent only.



## STUDENT ASSENT SCRIPT FOR ALL TOOLS

“The purpose of this interview/conversation/exercise is to understand your experience with [XXX PROGRAM]. I want to hear about both the positive and negative experiences you had, if any, because it’s important for us to know what’s working or not. I also want to understand if this experience has changed the way you connect with nature and the outdoors, if at all.

It is your choice whether or not to participate in these activities and you can stop at any time. Although our conversation will be audio recorded, your responses will be anonymous. That means we will not use your names.

This is a place where I am going to listen to what you have to say. You may have specific questions, and I’ll do my best to answer them. I want to hear your stories and how you feel about your experience, including what you liked and what you didn’t like.

It is very important to be honest with me while we talk about your experience. I am very interested in your answers and will not be mad or hurt if you say something that I may not agree with. That is okay to do here. Ok?

Would you like to ask me any questions before we begin? You are welcome to ask me questions anytime here.”

- PARENTAL Consent
- STUDENT Assent

ADDITIONAL NOTES/OBSERVATIONS:

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**MAKE SURE YOUR AUDIO RECORDING DEVICE IS NOW TURNED ON!!!!**



## MAKE SURE YOUR AUDIO RECORDING DEVICE IS NOW TURNED ON!!!!

### FOCUS GROUPS + INTERVIEWS

[IF ONLY INTERVIEWING OR FOCUS GROUP, BEGIN HERE AFTER READING STUDENT ASSENT]:

To begin, tell me about...

Your experience with XX PROGRAM in general and what it's meant to you since you started...

Since XX PROGRAM, what has been the biggest change you've noticed in yourself?

Since participating in XX PROGRAM, how would you describe your connection to nature and the outdoors?



## PHOTO-VOICE | PHOTO-ELICITATION

### [IF CHOOSING PHOTO-VOICE OR PHOTO-ELICITATION, BEGIN HERE AFTER READING STUDENT ASSENT]

Photo-voice is a great way to capture participant experience *through their eyes*. It works best when applied toward the middle or end of a repeat program experience; however, it can be used for shorter programs (less than 3 weeks). The idea is to share with participants the open-ended prompt below and give them enough space and time to authentically capture those images.

Photo-elicitation is a similar process that uses photos taken by the instructor (or other adult leader) of participants engaged in activities, or of the outdoor places and spaces in which participants engage. The photos are then used as a way to prompt conversation and discussion.

Either approach requires the ability to circle back with participants after the photos have been captured. However, photo-elicitation can be a good alternative if access to cameras is limited or it is logistically challenging for students to take their own photos.

You will need to circle back with youth to interview them one-on-one about their photos, using the prompts below. Please wait no longer than one week to conduct follow-up interviews.

You will need:

- Cameras for each participant
- Prompt print-outs for participants
- Journal or paper to record thoughts
- photos (e.g., iPad, printed copies of images, etc.)
- Audio recording device
- Digital or print access to

### **STEP 1: INTRODUCE PARTICIPANTS TO PROMPTS**

Photo prompt:

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“I want to hear about your experience with this program and I’d like you to take some photos of things that resonate with you and speak to your experience. This process is called photo-voice: it provides a way for you to share your experience using photos you’ve taken and your own words. And it can be both positive (good) and negative (bad) parts of your experience. This is YOUR story.

The three questions I’d like to explore with you AFTER you take the photos are:

1. Tell me about...your experience with XX PROGRAM in general and what it’s meant to you since you started...
2. Since XX PROGRAM, what has been the biggest change you’ve noticed in yourself?
3. Since participating in XX PROGRAM, how would you describe your connection to nature and the outdoors?

It’s helpful to keep these in mind as you take photos that might help frame your response. However, please take photos of anything about your experience that is meaningful to you. Then, we’ll spend some time talking about the photos you took and why you took them.”

### **STEP 2: SET BOUNDARIES (if appropriate due to age, geographic terrain, safety, etc.)**

If time allows, give students several hours or days to collect/capture photos that express their experience of the program. Ideally, these photos are taken during program hours. Limit the photos: no more than 6-8 photos/participant. This challenges students to really select the photos that resonate most with their experience.





While photos can be taken of other people in the program, the idea is not to capture photos of friends only, but instead to capture how a space or place makes them feel. Particularly as it relates to their program experience.

Students are invited to take photos of things that make them feel both good and bad, if relevant to their experience.

Invite participants to write down their thoughts as it relates to their photos as they are capturing the images so as to remind them of why they took the photo.

### ***STEP 3: FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS***

AFTER participants have been given adequate time to capture their photos, plan a time to revisit their photos with them. This is the time you will interview them about WHY they took the photos they did. Use the above questions to help guide the conversation, starting with “tell me about the photos you took...”

You may schedule a follow-up interview any time after the photo session(s). However, please aim to follow-up **within one week of taking the photos** so that the meaning and saliency does not fade. That being said, reflection is a powerful tool, so it’s best to wait a day or two, if possible.

The three questions I’d like to explore with you AFTER you take the photos are:

1. Tell me about...your experience with XX PROGRAM in general and what it’s meant to you since you started...
2. Since XX PROGRAM, what has been the biggest change you’ve noticed in yourself?
3. Since participating in XX PROGRAM, how would you describe your connection to nature and the outdoors?

### ***STEP 4: SHARE!***

You may choose to share the youth’s photo-voice. You can create simple story boards using their interviews and photos. Or, you might just share the photos. Let the youth decide.

Your participants may just be sharing their photos with one another or they may choose to share with a City Council, Planning Commission, nonprofit board, Office of Parks and Recreation, or the school board. Regardless, there will be advance planning involved to make the sharing process meaningful to the participants. Asking them to invite friends, family, and community members to the process is a wonderful way for participants to share their end products and their experiences through the process.



## DIGITAL STORYTELLING

### [IF CHOOSING DIGITAL STORYTELLING, BEGIN HERE AFTER READING STUDENT ASSENT]

#### Intro to Digital Storytelling

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*“Personal stories can touch viewers deeply, moving them to reflect on their own experiences, modify their behavior, treat others with greater compassion, speak out about injustice, and become involved in civic and political life. Whether online, via social media, in local communities, or at the institutional/policy level, the sharing of stories has the power to make a real difference in supporting a more equitable and just society.” Storycenter*

A digital story leverages technology and helps participants *“to become creators of content, rather than just consumers.” Samantha Morra*. Participants can integrate images, video, music, text, and voice to share their perspectives. A digital story contains three main components: a short narrative script that becomes the voice-over; still photos and short video clips combined to create the visual component of the story; and music that sets the mood and accentuates the overall effect of the video.

Creating a 2-3 minute video provides an accessible and meaningful process to practice listening, speaking, reading, writing, and technology skills. While this may seem like a simple endeavor, creating a digital storytelling video involves multiple steps and **requires program sites to have a minimum of 15 contact hours with participants**. If you are interested in the digital storytelling process but do not have sufficient time with participants, [PhotoVoice](#) is a less time-intensive activity that enables participants to create visual representations of issues that matter to them.

For your reflection about why you might want to incorporate digital storytelling into your programming: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/the-power-of-digital-story-bob-dillon>; [Why you Should be Doing Digital Storytelling with your Students](#)

This protocol describes an 8-step process for developing a basic digital story and shares tips and resources for deepening the experience for your students and was compiled from several open source digital storytelling resources.

1. Materials Inventory
2. Digital Storytelling Overview
3. Idea Generation
4. Drafting a Script
5. Storyboard
6. Gather or Create Audio, Images, Video Components
7. Pull it all Together
8. Share and Gather Feedback

#### Digital Storytelling Protocol

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##### **STEP 1: MATERIALS INVENTORY**

The cost and availability of equipment and software can ultimately impact the scope of a project. While you can be created with limited resources, there are certain materials that will be required to ensure participants have a meaningful experience.

- PARENTAL consent forms to grant permission for images of people in the digital stories
- STUDENT assent to grant permission for images of people in the digital stories
- Digital cameras or camera phones
- Computers
- Moviemaking software: (software that is available on school or community center computers works great)



- Headphones
- Personal flash drives to save digital story components

Additional materials and supports that are not necessary but helpful include a microphone for recording narratives and volunteers to work one-on-one with participants to support the development of their digital stories. If there is a high-school technology club or college or university close by, they may have students that could volunteer to support your participants!

### **STEP 2: DIGITAL STORYTELLING OVERVIEW**

Introduce the group to digital storytelling by sharing a few examples of digital stories that might grab their attention based on background experiences and interests.

A few sites that collect digital stories include:

- <https://www.wevideo.com/blog/for-schools/3-powerful-examples-of-digital-storytelling-to-amplify-student-voice>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6aU2x7gxwk&list=UU19I08gJfD24WsoRcdkAMug>
- <https://firstinourfamilies.org/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyOBmpTnVTI>
- <https://8ms.com/blog/6-great-examples-of-digital-storytelling/>

After you have reviewed a few example digital stories, debrief what students noticed about the videos and about the experience listening to student stories.

Debrief questions:

1. What did you notice? What was compelling about the story?
2. Try to think of a specific moment that was compelling. What did this moment make you think and why did it stick with you?
3. What was it like to listen to the stories and hear student perspectives?

Following the debrief time, transition into idea generation while the creative ideas are flowing!

### **STEP 3: IDEA GENERATION**

Idea generation is the start to developing out a narrative. Provide each student with a journal, computer, or paper and pencil. Write up one or more open-ended, essential questions and allow for ample free-writing time.

Essential Questions:

1. Your experience with XX PROGRAM in general and what's changed for you since you started coming here?
2. Since XX PROGRAM, what has been the biggest change you've noticed in yourself?
3. Since participating in XX PROGRAM, how would you describe your connection to nature and the outdoors?

After responding to the essential questions, ask students to think about what they might want to focus more concretely on in their digital story and have them write down a summary statement describing their story. The summary could be a list of details, key points, or an explanation of why they want to tell their specific story.

For participants that are getting stuck, it is helpful to sit with them individually and ask them more specific questions about an experience or topic that they might focus on in their digital story. Peer brainstorm groups can also be helpful.

Additional prompts participants can respond use to flesh out their story ideas:

- Shift to another of the five senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste)
- Look at things from close to far away or from high to low (or vice versa)
- Tell the story from another person's point of view



- Answer who, what, when, where, why, and how
- Draw out your ideas and use them to create a story
- Create a scrapbook to organize photos, words, and other materials
- Select a photo and write a story about it

TIP: It is important to note that participants move through the digital storytelling steps at a different pace, so partnering up or creating small production work groups can position participants to support one another when they get stuck or when they develop a particular expertise to share with others.

#### ***STEP 4: DRAFTING A SCRIPT***

Participants should aim to have a 1-2 page script that they will record as a voice-over to accompany the images, videos and words. While some participants will be able to write a strong script without structure, a thorough outline will help others to develop a compelling narrative (see sample outline below). Production work groups or story circles can offer constructive peer feedback. Creating time and space for participants to revise their stories is a critical part of the script writing process. Clear and focused scripts make it much easier to create high-quality movies.

TIP: Google docs can be a useful platform for a collaborative peer review and editing process.

Sample Outline:

1. Beginning
  - a. Get your audience's attention and motivate them to listen
  - b. Offer some background information about the topic
  - c. Highlight your experience
  - d. Set the tone for the story
  - e. Preview main ideas
  - f. Move to the body of the story
2. Body
  - a. Organize your main points (usually 2-5 for a story that is less than 5 minutes long)
  - b. Make sure main points support the purpose of your story
  - c. Include support material
3. End
  - a. Summarize your main points
  - b. Finish the circular journey by connecting your beginning and end
  - c. Use a strong closing statement to show the video is over

#### ***STEP 5: STORYBOARD***

Storyboarding refers to a way of planning for all the things that will appear in the digital story, such as music, pictures, words, text, photos, and video. Storyboards help storytellers to picture the entire story from start to finish.

Storyboards are created in the order of things that happened and help to show what things will appear in the video, and when. They often inspire new ideas for organization or visual effects, show gaps, and help improve the video's quality.

Creating a storyboard can be as simple as sketching out your plans on paper and more advanced ones might even include room for transitions, and background music. If you prefer to use your computer, Microsoft Word or PowerPoint are other options.

Participants can use the storyboard to plan out what images or videos they need to gather or create. They should anticipate needing no more than 20 photos for the entire digital story.



TIP: There are an infinite number of free storyboarding templates online.

### ***STEP 6: GATHER OR CREATE AUDIO, IMAGES, AND VIDEO COMPONENTS***

After participants have planned out their storyboards, they should know what photos and videos they have and what they need to create or capture. As noted earlier, participants should plan to have no more than 20 photos for the entire digital story! Saving all photos and videos to their flash drive helps to ensure that they have all of the digital storytelling components all in one place. While using Google images tends to be easier, digital stories are much more meaningful when students use their own images and they also would not have to deal with copyright issues.

Another part of this step is to record their narrative. Participants should narrate their stories while matching them up with the images or video they want to include in their digital story. Participants will want to record over and over again. Let them! They are learning about intonation and creating mood. They will want to make their stories sound interesting, and this takes practice.

Audacity is an application that creates high quality MP3 files and is easy to use. It is also possible to use the voice memo application on a phone although they will need to figure out how to download the MP3 file from a phone so that it can be used in the digital story.

### ***STEP 7: PULL IT ALL TOGETHER***

The editing phase is where the planning and recording come together. This is where participants will combine visual and audio parts to create a final product. There are several commonly-used options that provide basic tools to edit and produce videos on different platforms, such as Mac, PC, or mobile devices including iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, WeMovie and more! [Common Sense Media](#) has published an extensive list of software applications to support the digital storytelling process.

It is absolutely fine for participants to go back and revise their storyboard during this step!

### ***STEP 8: SHARE!***

Your group may just be sharing the digital stories with one another or they may choose to share with a City Council, Planning Commission, nonprofit board, Office of Parks and Recreation, or the school board. Regardless, there will be advance planning involved to make the sharing process meaningful to the participants (including preparing adults to actively listen and create a safe and encouraging space for youth to participate in a public forum). Asking youth to invite friends, family, and community members to the process is a wonderful way for participants to share their end products and their experiences through the process. Finally, debriefing the sharing opportunities is a great way to provide closure to the digital storytelling experience.

Resources used to develop this protocol:

[https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/brss\\_tacs/samhsa-storytelling-guide.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/samhsa-storytelling-guide.pdf)

<https://edtechteacher.org/8-steps-to-great-digital-storytelling-from-samantha-on-edudemic/>

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/the-power-of-digital-story-bob-dillon>

