

VISUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

2: PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS

How to use the storyboard tool.

FOLLOW THE PROMPTS

There are nine empty storyboard pages – each page guides you to explore an element of your story. Use the prompts and image suggestions to inspire your thinking: add images (hand drawings or printouts of photos), write descriptions, and begin to tell the story.

BE CREATIVE

If a prompt or image suggestion doesn't fit for you, cross it out and add your own. Use as many storyboard pages as you wish. The pages can be put in any order to best tell your story.

EDIT

Like any creation—writing, film, etc.—you will want to review your storyboard and make edits to focus your story and your message.

EXPAND

Once you finish your storyboard, you can use it to create a documentary film, a graphic novel, animation, or other creative expression.

VISUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

3: INSPIRATION

Reflection and inspiration.

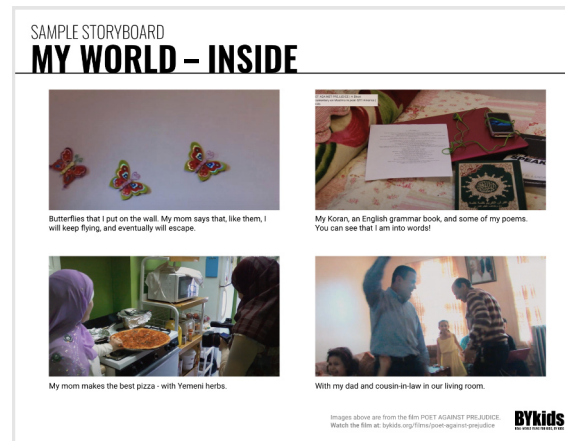
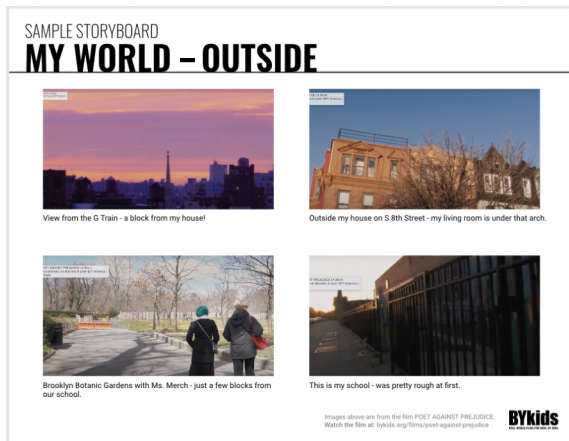
REFLECTION

Here are some questions you can ask yourself to help inform your autobiography. Be curious and see what you discover.

- What do I want to share about my world and myself?
- What do I want to discover about my world and myself that I don't already know?
- What have I learned that I want to share with others?

INSPIRATION

Use the sample storyboard pages at the end of this document for inspiration. The sample storyboards are based on the BYkids film POET WITHOUT PREJUDICE.



AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

MY WORLD – OUTSIDE

PROMPT:

What are some meaningful places to you?

1

My neighborhood.

2

Outside of where I live.

3

A place with an emotional connection or memory.

4

Outside of my school or other place of learning.

5

A place I like to have fun.

6

Your choice.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

MY WORLD – INSIDE

PROMPT:

What is inside life like for you?
What is significant to you there?

1

My room, my space. Safe? Cozy? Shared? Private?

2

Inside of my home. Family members.

3

A significant object to me, and why.

4

What I choose to struggle with.

5

What makes me happy?

6

Why, and what I believe in.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

CHARACTERS – ME

PROMPT:

What are the different aspects of you?

1

You at home or another significant place.

2

You at school/work.

3

You at play or doing something fun.

4

Your choice.

5

Your choice.

6

Your choice.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

CHARACTERS – OTHERS

PROMPT:

Who are the important people to you in life?

What groups are you involved with?

1

Important person #1

2

Important person #2

3

Important person #3

4

Other people/groups

5

Other people/groups

6

Other people/groups

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

KEY EVENT – PAST

PROMPT:

What is a key event from the past, that you remember in your life?

1

Image of key event.

2

Image of key event.

3

Image of key event

4

Suddenly,

5

After that,

6

Finally,

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

KEY EVENT – PRESENT

PROMPT:

What is a key event that is ongoing in your life at the moment?

1

Summary of key event.

2

Detail about key event.

3

Detail about key event.

4

Detail about key event.

5

Detail about key event.

6

Reflection/summary.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

KEY EVENT – FUTURE

PROMPT:

What event are you anticipating or looking forward to in the future?

1

Something that is coming up.

2

Details.

3

Details.

4

Details.

5

Fears.

6

Hopes.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

SELF-EXPRESSION

PROMPT:

How do you like to express yourself, creatively or otherwise?

1

Original image/music/text.

2

Original image/music/text.

3

Original image/music/text.

4

Link to music or other inspiration.

5

Image of you creating.

6

Your choice.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY STORYBOARD

THEMES

PROMPT:

What themes are you exploring?

What lessons have you learned?

What hopes do you have for the future?

What questions are you still exploring?

1

Short summary of theme.

2

Details about themes/main ideas.

3

Details about themes/main ideas.

4

Details about themes/main ideas.

5

Details about themes/main ideas.

6

Restate themes. Final reflection.

SAMPLE STORYBOARD

MY WORLD – OUTSIDE



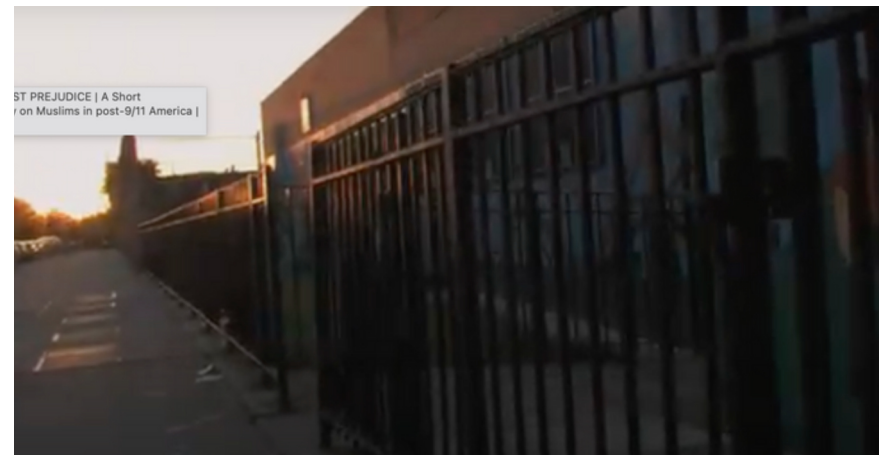
View from the G Train - a block from my house!



Outside my house on S 8th Street - my living room is under that arch.



Brooklyn Botanic Gardens with Ms. Merch - just a few blocks from our school.



This is my school - was pretty rough at first.

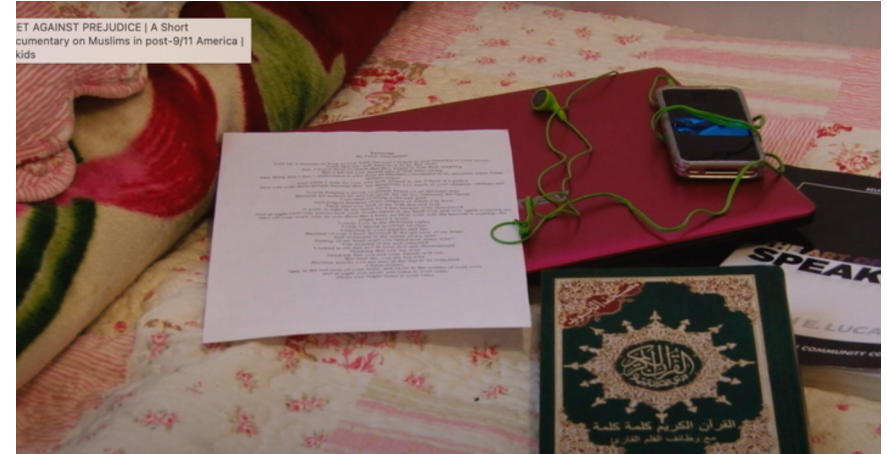
Images above are from the film POET AGAINST PREJUDICE.
Watch the film at: bykids.org/films/poet-against-prejudice

SAMPLE STORYBOARD

MY WORLD – INSIDE



Butterflies that I put on the wall. My mom says that, like them, I will keep flying, and eventually will escape.



My Koran, an English grammar book, and some of my poems. You can see that I am into words!



My mom makes the best pizza - with Yemeni herbs.



With my dad and cousin-in-law in our living room.

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REAL-WORLD FILMS FOR KIDS, BY KIDS

SAMPLE STORYBOARD

CHARACTERS – ME



Me! I am Faiza, a high schooler in BK.



I'm a poet - I started writing poems before I even knew how to spell words properly in English.



I came from Yemen as a Middle schooler.



And now I'm a filmmaker!

Images above are from the film POET AGAINST PREJUDICE.
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SAMPLE STORYBOARD

CHARACTERS – OTHERS



This is Shaif Abdul-Mami, my Imam. Even though he's a Black American, he gets what I am going through.



This is my mom. She loves me and she worries about me.



This is my cousin Jamil. He is a lieutenant in the NYPD. And he's an Arab. I know, right?



This is Ms. Merch. She supported me in my poetry and made me believe that I could make it in the U.S.

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SAMPLE STORYBOARD

KEY EVENT – PAST



I was born in Yemen. My parents moved to the U.S. when I was in middle school.



When I first arrived, I was teased and bullied in school. One time some kids attacked me and pulled of my hijab.



Other kids weren't unkind, but they didn't understand me or understand Islam.



Thankfully I found Ms. Maris - she looked out for me and encouraged me.

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SAMPLE STORYBOARD

KEY EVENT – PRESENT



My family is acclimating. My father is working and my mom is studying English. It helps that we are so close.



I realized that there must be other Muslim teens having the same challenges.



So I started a group where we can share our experiences.



I've started working with legendary filmmaker Albert Maysles. I also speak to my Imam about this.

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SAMPLE STORYBOARD

KEY EVENT – FUTURE



Through my group at school, I plan to start teaching workshops on bullying and racism.



We are planning a peaceful action at Brooklyn Bridge Park. I hope this helps to spread our message.



I am also planning to share our methods with other students and teachers.



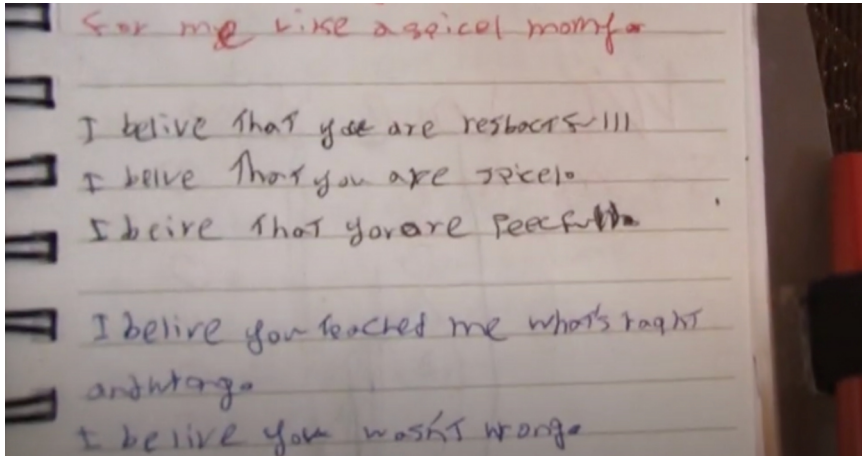
I fear that other kids will have to suffer the way I did - so I'm going to try to prevent that.

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SAMPLE STORYBOARD

SELF-EXPRESSION



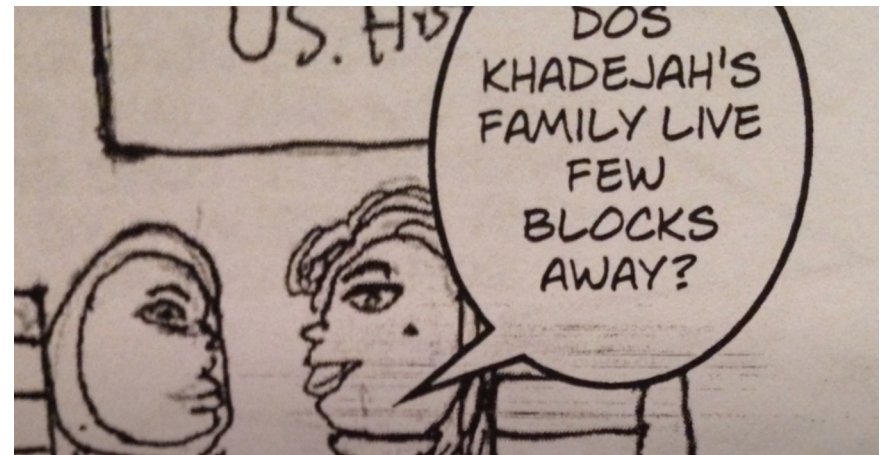
I love writing poetry. Here are some of my words.



I am getting the chance to perform now.



Some of the music I like is linked here.



Drawings of me and my best friend Khadijah.

SAMPLE STORYBOARD

THEMES



We have more in common than things that make us different.



People of all backgrounds have shared in similar struggles. My mentor, Albert Maysles, described growing up Jewish.



We need to study history.



“Know Thy Neighbor, so you can Love Thy Neighbor!”

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