



1250 Addison Street, Suite 103, Berkeley, CA 94702 USA  
tel: 510-548-2065 fax: 510-225-9616  
web: [www.storycenter.org](http://www.storycenter.org) email: [info@storycenter.org](mailto:info@storycenter.org)  
FIN 94-2660844

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## Theoretical Perspectives on Story: Suggested Reading

**Note:** *This is by no means a comprehensive literature review but rather is a selection of both free and for-purchase resources for those interested in delving more deeply into the function of storytelling, for health promotion.*

### General:

Jonathan Gottschall's book, [\*The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human\*](#) (2012) explores how stories absorb our attention, make us more empathic, and help us navigate the social world.

StoryCenter Executive Director Joe Lambert's, [\*Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Community\*](#) (2002; 2012), is an overview text about the theory and practice of community-based digital storytelling.

[This short article](#) by David Nussbaum with the University of Chicago School of business describes how narrative persuasion works, within stories.

### Public Health:

In [this journal article](#), nurse Vivian Day discusses the power of storytelling, for promoting health literacy.

This [online piece](#) from the Culture-Centered Approach web site offers a basic description of the culture-centered approach.

If you're looking for more in-depth information about health communication, Mohan Dutta's [\*Communicating Health: A Culture-Centered Approach\*](#) (2008) is a good place to start.

Finally, [Liz Neeley's writing](#) about the value of storytelling in public health touches on a number of theoretical perspectives underlying the use of stories in health.

### Psychology:

If you have access to an academic database, [James Pennebaker's article](#) on the benefits of narrative for individual healing is a good introduction.

If you'd rather read a popular explanation of Pennebaker's work, check out Louise DeSalvo's beautiful book, [Writing as a Way of Healing: How Telling Our Stories Transforms Our Lives](#) (2000).

[This article](#) by Tara Parker from the *New York Times* also touches on Pennebaker, as it explore the value of reflective writing for personal happiness.

If you're looking for a good overview of the concept of narrative identity, [this piece from Wikipedia.org](#) is well referenced and touches on many aspects of the theory.

#### **Neuroscience:**

Another [article from Wikipedia](#) provides useful overview to the concept of "mirror neurons," from Neuroscience research.

[This article](#) by P.J. Manney describes both positive and negative elements of the role of storytelling and the building of building empathy, in our current technological age.

[A study by multiple authors](#) from the *Journal of Applied Cognitive Psychology* explores the value of sharing autobiographical narratives, for eliciting empathy.

#### **Social Sciences:**

In this [article about social learning theory](#) from the Innovative Learning web site, an accessible overview of Bandura's theory is offered.

This [short piece by Nancy Darling](#) breathes life into the importance of role-modeling, an important element of social learning theory.

From the Popular Education news web site, [a set of useful definitions](#) of the term "popular education."

From ericdigests.org, an [article on popular education for social change](#).

And finally, the classic text on popular education by Brazilian educator Paolo Freire, [Pedagogy of the Oppressed](#) (1970).