



# How to Film the I AM... Digital Story

Everything suggested in this guide comes from staff who have already produced 'I am' Digital Stories with children and young people.

Digital Stories are produced to capture the young person in their natural environment focusing on the child's strengths and interests. It is really valuable to have this so that it can be shared with other people to help children when they transition between settings.



## Child-centred

*"But it also gave the opportunity for the staff to see the world from their perspective. So, the idea of the Digital Stories...is really positive and it's nice for the children to have some ownership over what they share. I think something that stood out for me was that it was very child-centred and very child-led...so to be able to give the children the opportunity to kind of show themselves and showcase themselves the way that they wanted to."*

Outdoor Learning Centre staff member

## A practice run

We can highly recommend having a practise run making a video with a family member or pet before you do the real thing.

This really helps to think about and plan the process and familiarise yourself with the practical steps.



## Find out more online

To view 'I am' Digital Story examples visit [acorns-soton.org.uk](http://acorns-soton.org.uk)





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There are some main people and things to consider when making a Digital Story.



## A key carer

A key parent or carer, or someone who knows the child well, is the best person to support the child in making the video. If this isn't possible, the person supporting the child will be able to do it better if they spend some time getting to know the child first.

## The video camera

There are several types of video camera that have been used to film Digital Stories.

- A handheld video recorder, which can also be positioned on a tripod or table to capture a larger scene.
- A wearcam, which allows filming from the child's perspective. It's important to check that the young person is comfortable with the Wearcam being attached to them and their choice must always be respected if they say no.
- A tablet, which either the child or the supporting adult can hold.

Use the camera in the room/area as much as possible to get the young person used to having the video camera there, even if you are not using all the recordings. This will help the young person to get used to the camera and potentially be less self-conscious when you want to film the clips you want to use for the Digital Story.

**! ALWAYS charge the camera after every use so that when you really need it, it is ready to record!**



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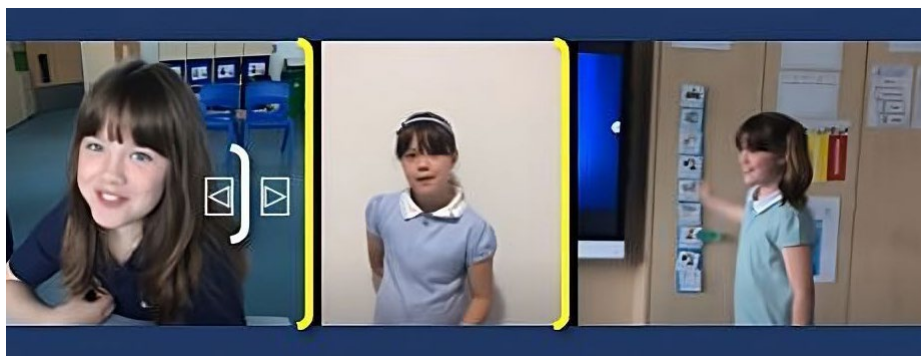


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## Mapping

Use a mindmap to help you focus on the child's interests and strengths, as well as where they might need support. You can still do extra video clips but the mindmap gives you a starting point and basic plan for what to film. (See guide 1)



## Keep clips short

Take really short clips (20-60 seconds). If clips are at the longer end of this range, you can edit them to take out smaller sections to use. Longer clips take more time to edit and you might not always capture what you want because you don't have a specific focus.

Plan when and what it is you want to film. For example, the transition from lunch time to the next lesson or enjoying team sports.

Shorter clips are also good because you can plan to do one short clip (which will take maybe five minutes to get set up and film) and know that is all you need to do on the filming that day. This can be helpful if you are finding it difficult to block out a whole session to capture lots of clips.



## Surroundings

Think about your surroundings. You need to consider: noise and light levels; who else is in the space where you are filming; what else will be in the shot e.g. wall displays containing photos or personal information.

Also consider who else to inform that you are filming so that any interruption or disruption is minimised.

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## Saving footage

Transfer and save footage regularly, for example from the video camera or SD card and onto a computer or external hard drive.

Download your clips after every video session and keep a written record.

This can be a simple form recording the date, the number of the clip, whether you will keep, edit or delete this clip.

In the editing section you can write notes to detail how long the clip needs to be and the timestamp for the start and end of the clip.

Child's Name:

Date	Clip number	Keep	Delete	Edit (record timings)
	1			
	2			
	3			
	4			
	5			
	6			
	7			
	8			
	9			
	10			
	11			
	12			
	13			
	14			
	15			
	16			
	17			
	18			
	19			
	20			
	21			
	22			
	23			
	24			
	25			

Once done, use different coloured highlighters to group together relevant video clips



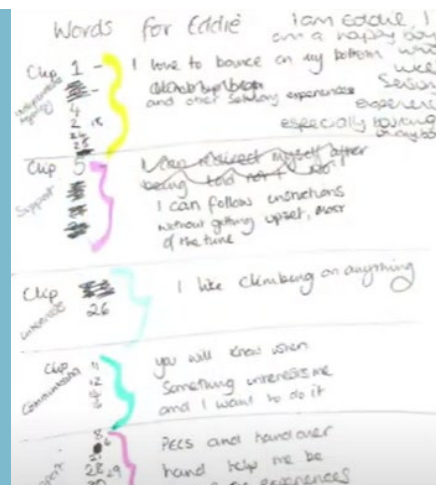
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Clip number	Keep	Delete	File
1	✓		0 - 15 seconds
2	✓		
3	✓		
4	✓		
5	✓		25 seconds
6	✓		25 seconds
7	✓		25 seconds
8	✓		25 seconds
9	✓		25 seconds
10	✓		25 seconds
11	✓		25 seconds
12	✓		25 seconds
13	✓		25 seconds
14	✓		25 seconds
15	✓		25 seconds
16	✓		25 seconds
17	✓		25 seconds
18	✓		25 seconds
19	✓		25 seconds
20	✓		25 seconds

## Grouping and choosing clips

While not essential, we recommend that when you have finished filming and completed your written record, assign a colour to each section of your mapping worksheet e.g. purple for spaces. Highlight all the clips that relate to spaces in purple.

Create a new record sheet which groups the clips together by colour. Alongside each clip, record the written description that goes with the clip. For example, alongside a clip showing the child cooking, the written description, 'My favourite activity is cooking.'



## Editing

Many staff have found Microsoft Video Editor simple to use and produces a good quality video, but if you are already familiar with different software then stick with what you know!

Show the video to key people to get feedback. The most important person is the young person! Make sure they are happy with their own Digital Story. You might also get feedback from parents and professionals who know the child well.



Tutorials available at: <https://autismtransitions.org/how-to-make-your-own/>

## Storing

Using an online storage space like Dropbox or Microsoft One Drive enables you to share the Digital Story via a secure link.



## Sharing

Think about the people with whom you can share the video, remembering to get permission from the appropriate people. This could include:

- Parents
- Staff in the new setting that the young person is moving to
- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Social workers



**AUTEK**

To view an animated version of this guide visit [acorns-soton.org.uk](http://acorns-soton.org.uk)

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