



Storytelling 2026

The Art and Science of Throwing a Really Great Party Every Day



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Course Description – Ready for Action?

This is about you trying things. This course is very action/workshop oriented, providing coaching for your experiments and written materials for the acquisition of new ideas.

Do you have the nagging sense that your store could be stronger – if you could just get to a point where you could focus on marketing and display? Or are you someone who has a lot of strength in marketing and display and hope to achieve a new level of excellence that can be shared by everyone?

This advanced program is accessible to those curious and new to the topic and also challenging to those who bring deep experience. The course structure is designed to leverage the experience of our cohort.

Whether we're talking about a great book or a great bookshop, the need is the same: a clear story that sparks curiosity for a specific person. Your bookshop IS a story. When we think about our bookshops like a publisher thinks about a book, we get clearer about our big idea and the experience we hope to give our customers. Let's call it "storyselling" and embrace the (surprising) insight that our work begins and ends with marketing.

This course offers fresh perspectives drawn from the disciplines of design, writing, entertainment and anthropology. We'll bring cases and experiments from some of the nation's thought leaders in bookselling.



Use this course to elevate and expand your practice and improve the things that matter most to you:

- Gain clarity on your shop, its purpose, and the story you want to tell
- Understand more about your community and customers, as well as how they move through and interact with your space
- Increase touch (and sales) through irresistible display
- Connect all store activities cohesively – like a well-edited book (curation, events, marketing)
- Craft store experience and spark curiosity through storyselling

Course Schedule

This course is a read/practice/reflect learning model. It contains 3 workshops, and a textbook to be read. You'll be challenged to try field work in your store before coming to a live class to discuss, share, and learn together.

Live classes are held Wednesdays at 12:30 pm ET / 11:30 am CT / 9:30 am PT.

October 21: Workshop 1

Clarity: Knowing Your Store – Explore your store's mission, name, location, and programming to acquire a deeper understanding of the story you are telling, what you are really offering, and what experience you are creating.

October 28: Workshop 2

Curiosity: Knowing Your Customers – Observe your customers, realize how they move within your space, and become more aware of how they interact with your merchandise and events in order to better understand your community and how to be an integral part of their story.

November 4: Workshop 3

Creativity: Unforgettable Together – Using all you have gleaned from clarity and curiosity, discover creative ways to display with intention, market with your unique voice, and engage with your community to the positive benefit of all.



You'll receive course emails with links, recordings, and information, and will have access to the Storyselling Discord server for discussions, chat, and sharing.

Instructor Information

Lisa C. Uhrik is the co-founder of Plenty Bookshop and co-owner of Franklin Fixtures — organizations that share a dedication to elevating reading. An SPHR (senior professional in HR) and organizational development facilitator, her career has been about helping businesses thrive with innovative structures and systems. As a bookstore advocate, she has devoted the last decade to understanding sustainable models and best practices, leveraging her unique access through Franklin to a broad array of successful bookstores.

Kit Little is the owner of Little Extra LLC, a business focused on helping independent businesses and nonprofit organizations define needs, actualize plans, and achieve success. A fully certified professional bookseller, Kit has not only fulfilled the various roles within a bookstore, but also studied them. More than a decade as an independent bookstore director of marketing and events has given her a unique perspective on how curation, merchandising, programming, marketing, and community partnerships work together to create a space that becomes an experience. As an educator, she focuses on honing difficult concepts into accessible ideas and ambitious dreams into attainable goals.

Professional Booksellers School, Inc.'s Code of Conduct

The Professional Booksellers School, Inc. (PBS) values the dignity of everyone with whom we interact. Our safety and anti-harassment policies are critical to ensuring that this core value guides how we speak and how we act. All participants in PBS courses and events are required to adhere to PBS's code of conduct, as described below. This includes booksellers, PBS staff,

instructors, speakers/presenters, guests, donors, volunteers, and all affiliated students.



PBS is committed to a broad vision of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), ability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in all of its activities or operations. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or other disrespectful or unlawful behavior based on any of these characteristics. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for our students, staff, volunteers, instructors, donors, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

Behaviors that violate this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive verbal comments related to any protected category above
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcome propositions, attention, words, or conduct of a sexual nature
- Unwelcome virtual contact inside or outside of PBS settings
- Inappropriate or obscene jokes, remarks, or gestures
- Intimidation, stalking, or trolling
- Disrespect towards difference of opinion
- Sustained disruption of speakers, conversations, classes, or events
- Unauthorized screenshots, photography, or audio or video recording

PBS expects all participants in its programs to follow established rules throughout official classes, office hours, virtual platforms, and related social gatherings.

PBS takes any violation of this policy seriously. Accordingly, participants who violate this policy may, in the judgment and discretion of PBS, be asked to stop; may be expelled from a PBS class or event, without refund if applicable; may be prevented from attending future PBS classes or events; may be banned from virtual platforms; and may have future PBS participation privileges revoked.

If you are being harassed, observe someone else being harassed, or have concerns about potential violations of this policy, please notify PBS staff immediately. PBS will take all appropriate action in response to protect anyone affected by violations of this policy.



Privacy Statement

For Stores

PBS asks for both public (address, etc) and private (square footage, POS, sales levels) information from stores who are enrolled. We ask for this information to help us understand and support students. The only public-facing information in our website directory is the store's name, address, contact information, and regional trade association. PBS uses both private and public information to analyze the effectiveness of our courses and our school, but reports only aggregate data. All other store information is protected and available only to PBS staff.

For Individuals

PBS asks for both public (bookstore, job title) and private (home address, demographic, years of experience) information from individuals who are members. The only public-facing information is the student's name, bookstore, job title, and earned certifications. PBS uses both private and public information to analyze the effectiveness of our courses and our school, but reports only aggregate data. All other information is protected and available only to PBS staff. The exception to this is for students who are receiving financial support or reimbursement from their regional association, with whom their enrollment, attendance, and certification status will be shared.

For Homework

We recognize that homework can contain personal or sensitive information. Student homework assignments are uploaded into a location available only to the individual student, PBS staff, and instructors, with the exception of projects delivered live in class. These projects are announced well in advance and student presentations are never recorded. All student homework for PBS is owned by the student, not PBS or the student's employer, and is confidential and protected. All shared, spoken, shown, submitted, and typed information is protected and confidential and not to be discussed, saved, or shared outside of applicable PBS classes, platforms, or events without express permission.