

IPAD SURVEY

REPORT
FOR 2020



CONTEXT

Stories have the power to change society. For just a moment, they allow us an escape to appreciate the world through another perspective. Whether through podcast, film, novel, poem or song, StoryArk helps students tap into the power of storytelling as an art they can use to navigate conflicts and grow in their understanding and empathy of each other.

StoryArk invites students from all different backgrounds into a creative space to express what matters most to them through storytelling. However, we unfortunately find that many students do not have adequate resources to accept our invitation. Technologies often provided to students by schools - specifically Chromebooks - hinder their ability to engage in virtual education due to poor audio and video quality. Chromebooks also limit students' ability to be creative due to the limited number of creative apps and software's that they support.

The majority of participants in StoryArk programming had school districts provide them with Chromebooks in the transition to online learning due to COVID-19. However, many students find this technology limiting due to the factors mentioned above.

INTERVENTION

In its commitment to bridge the digital divide, StoryArk implemented universal design by providing free iPads with keyboards for students to own in its My Story, Your Story, Our Story program which began in November of 2020 and ends in April of 2021. A collaboration with Stillwater, Hastings, Mankato, St Peter and Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton school districts, the program provides students the opportunity to become part of a creative team, engage in conversation with peers and build storytelling skills in a large-group setting. Students can write a script, act a role, produce a podcast, or engage in a variety of other modes of creative art.

Midway through the program, StoryArk surveyed students about the quality of their experience of owning their own iPads, and the data revealed that the iPads had an impact beyond just StoryArk's programming - they help students stay engaged in school during online learning sessions and help them stay connected to friends and family.

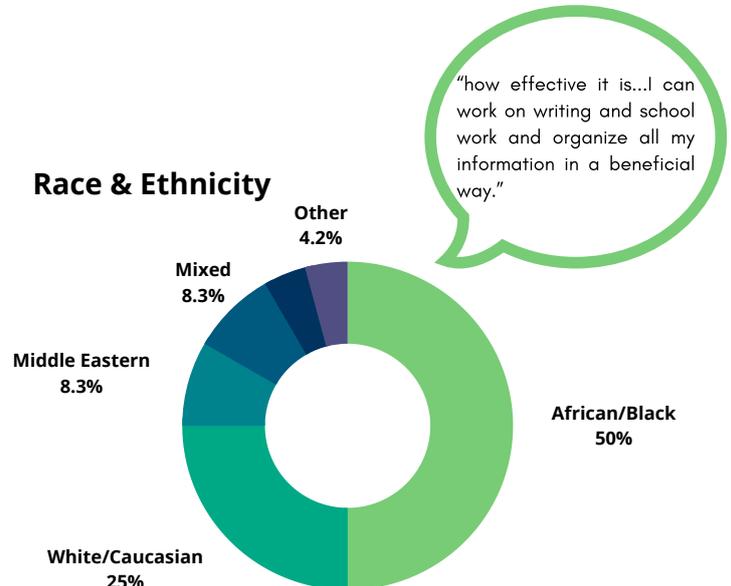
OUR FINDINGS

StoryArk sent a survey to 28 program participants between the ages 15-18, out of which approximately 86% of participants (24) responded. Of the students that responded, 75% identified as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). Of those students, 50% (12) identified as African American.

In the My Story, Your Story, Our Story program, students found the iPads to be highly versatile and critical in helping with education-related functions such as organizing themselves, reading books and writing papers.

100% of students used the iPad for school, 92% used it for StoryArk programming, 62.5% used it for entertainment and 42% used it to stay connected with friends and family during the pandemic. All students said it was a useful tool with 75% reporting that they use it every day. One student used their iPad to create their college portfolio.

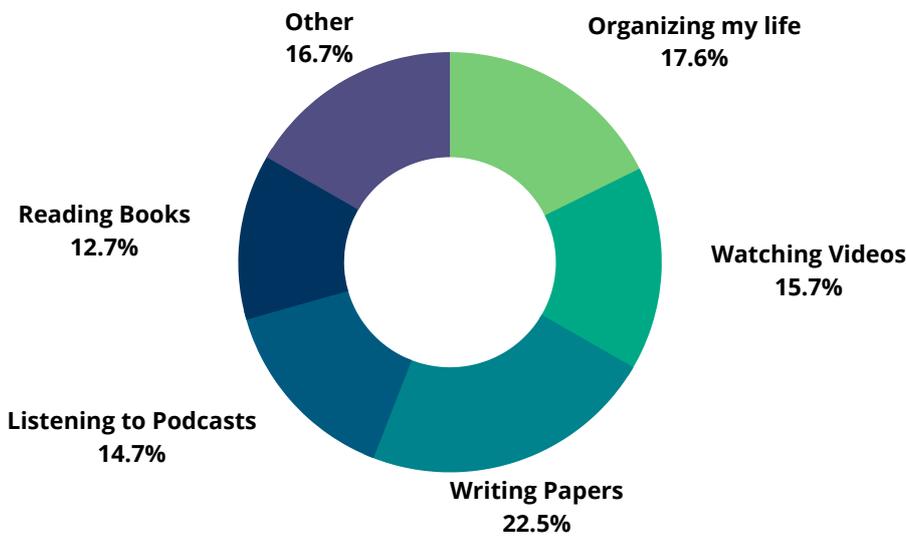
ALL STUDENTS REPORTED THAT THEY LIKE THEIR IPAD AND FIND IT USEFUL.



OUR SURVEY ALSO FOUND

that iPads are critical for students' ability to engage in artistic inquiry. Students in the program consistently commented that iPads helped them fill a unique gap that their laptops, mobile phones and Chromebooks could not help them with. Because the iPads are more versatile, encourage creative thinking and have split-screen functionalities, students are better equipped to exercise their creative energies.

"Some people don't have access to other technology like computers in their homes, so they are dependent on their phones in order to complete numerous tasks. This can be a problem if people don't have certain programs that they may need for school or work. Having an iPad that allows them to accomplish more is very beneficial."



*This project is a part of the Absent Narratives Project, a collaboration with StoryArk, Stillwater, Hastings, Mankato, St Peter and Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton school districts as a part of their commitment to empower, uplift and amplify the voice of youth - especially those stories underrepresented and marginalized.

CONCLUSION

There is a strong ethical and data-based case for investing in students to have access to the technological tools they need for better intellectual engagement and creative agency. StoryArk's pilot program of providing students with iPads and keyboards that they own helped provide students with the tools they needed to be fully-engaged digital citizens and storytellers.

