Telling Stories with Technology

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Why Do We Tell Stories?
“Story’s structure and rhythm, as well as the emotional involvement it encourages, can help us remember important information that might be forgotten if it’s delivered to us in the form of reports, lectures, or isolated bits of information.”

- Ohler, 2008
Facts and non-fiction play an important role in creative writing. When authors craft works of fiction they may use scientific facts and other information to help them create an engaging story.
What Makes a Good Story?
ANNIHILATION
Featuring Jeff VanderMeer
April 24, 2017
DeKalb, IL
The tower, which was not supposed to be there, plunges into the earth in a place just before the black pine forest begins to give way to swamp and then the reeds and wind-gnarled trees of the marsh flats. Beyond the marsh flats and the natural canals lies the ocean and, a little farther down the coast, a derelict lighthouse. All of this part of the country had been abandoned for decades, for reasons that are not easy to relate. Our expedition was the first to enter Area X for more than two years, and much of our predecessors’ equipment had rusted, their tents and sheds little more than husks. Looking out over that untroubled landscape, I do not believe any of us could yet see the threat.
Good Writing in Any Medium

- Grab your reader’s attention
- Introduce characters
- Set the tone
- Introduce important elements of the story
Images as Stories
Elements that Impact Meaning

- Focus
- Lighting
- Composition
  - Balance
  - Rule of Thirds
  - White Space
  - Perspective/Shooting Angle
  - Focal Points
Visual Design Elements

Explain why an image has its effect in terms of:

- **Line**
- **Color**
- **Light and Dark (Value)**
- **Space**
- **Texture**


Lyn Lacey, *Art and Design in Children’s Picture Books*
One place:
Three Ways
Pixlr – Photo Editor

• Pixlr.com
• Free
• Web-based or App
• 3 Tools
  • Editor
  • Express
  • Pixlr-o-matic
Let’s Try!
Words, Pictures, Voice, and Music

Digital Stories
What is a Digital Story?

Three to five minute multimedia productions that use computers to combine narrative, still images, video, and music in a meaningful and personal way.

McLellan, 2006
What is a Digital Story?

“...the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories.”

Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling
University of Houston
digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu
7 Elements of Digital Storytelling

- Point of View
- A Dramatic Question
- Emotional Content
- The Gift of Your Voice
- The Power of the Soundtrack
- Economy
- Pacing

http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/7elements.html
Why a Digital Story?

- Teaches problem solving and thinking skills
- Helps to develop deeper understanding
- Provides personal connection through visual and verbal elements
- Encourages organization of ideas
- Promotes 21st Century technology skills
“Authors become creative in designing information and communicating understandings with the images, graphics, movement, and music of digital media. Digital storytelling provides a unique opportunity to mix and dance media together until they coalesce into something that did not exist before.”

Porter, 2015
Commonalities Among the Practices in Science, Mathematics, and English Language Arts

Based on work by Tina Chuek ell.stanford.edu
Fine Art Standards - Visual

- Creating – Investigate, Plan, Make, Reflect, Refine, Continue
  - VA:Cr2.3.7 a. Apply visual organizational strategies to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas.
- Presenting – Relate, Select, Analyze
- Responding – Share, Perceive, Analyze
- Connecting – Interpret, Synthesize
Fine Arts Standards - Media Arts

• Creating – Conceive, Develop, Construct
  • MA:Cr1.1.8 a. Produce a variety of ideas and solutions for media artworks through application of chosen inventive generative methods (for example, concept modeling, prototyping).

• Producing – Integrate, Practice, Present
  • MA:Pr5.1.7 a. Exhibit an increasing set of artistic, design, technical, and soft skills through performing various roles in producing and presenting media artworks (for example, creative problem solving, organizing).

• Responding – Perceive, Respond, Evaluate

• Connecting – Synthesize, Relate
Empowering Students

- Identify a cause, issue, or challenge
- Research how the issues impact them and their community
- Explore and describe personal connections
- Find or create images to enhance the message or illustrate their point of view
- Share the stories to amplify their voice
Classroom Ideas

- Fact-based fiction
- Historical figure “autobiography”
- Visual scavenger hunt
- Personal reflection
- Teaching video
- Wordless stories
Video Examples

• Progression – A Digital Story
  https://youtu.be/2V_OLABwQjQ

• Personal Digital Narrative by Nadine Baylon:
  https://youtu.be/2V_OLABwQjQ
Storytelling Tools

- Google Slides
- PowerPoint
- Magisto
- Powtoons
- Storybird
- MoveNote
- WeVideo
- Prezi
- Animoto
- LittleBirdTales
- ABCya Animate
- VoiceThread
- Toontastic
- Lego Movie Maker
- Puppet Pals
- Friend Strip
- Adobe Spark
Adobe Spark

- https://spark.adobe.com/
- Free
- Web-based or app (ios only)
- Sign-in with an email address is required
- Final projects can be downloaded and saved or shared via a link
Story Templates

- Promote an Idea
- Tell What Happened
- A Hero's Journey
- Show and Tell
- Personal Growth
- Teach a Lesson
- An Invitation
- Start from Scratch
Let’s Try!
Today

• In groups, brainstorm and storyboard ideas
• What images, colors, or ideas dominate Today?
• Photo Safari – use and ipad to take some images
• Use Pixlr to edit images
• Use Adobe Spark to create your story
Reflection

Where could digital storytelling fit in your classroom?
Questions?
Resources

Digital Storytelling – Jason Ohler
http://www.jasonohler.com/storytelling/storyeducationWIX.cfm

Creative Educator – Bernajean Porter
http://creativeeducator.tech4learning.com/v04/articles/The_Art_of_Digital_Storytelling

Kathy Schrock’s Guide to Everything
http://www.schrockguide.net/digital-storytelling.html

Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling – U of Huston
http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/

Edutopia
http://www.edutopia.org/
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Or visit our websites for more:
• http://www.niusteamworks.com/
• http://stemread.com/
• http://smartspacenu.com/