Digital Storytelling ...a powerful tool!

Digital Storytelling

The ancient art of storytelling has recently gained new life through an unlikely partner: technology. Digital storytelling harnesses the power of digital tools to allow students and teachers to tell and archive important stories in exciting new ways. The leader in this area is the Center for Digital Storytelling (www.storycenter.org).

Digital Storytelling in Education

In recent years cameras, scanners, powerful computers and easy to use software (ex: Photo Story) have become available to educators allowing them to explore the world of digital storytelling. Educators have started to develop digital stories about educational content and practices and archive them on their teacher webpage.

The best way to learn about the different ways educators are using digital storytelling is to explore some examples. To help you through the process download a rubric from at http://www.digitales.us/evaluating/index.php.

Article at http://www.teachingteachers.com/story.htm

Top 10 Reasons to Implement Storytelling

1. Inspires dedication to work
2. Encourages creativity
3. Promotes problem-solving
4. Embraces diversity
5. Captivates attention
6. Piques interest in writing
7. Fosters group dynamics
8. Addresses different learning styles
9. Creates positive classroom climate
10. Incorporates the multiple intelligences

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Articles on storytelling and background information: http://www.ije.org/v2n1/index.html
Teachers agree the easiest to use Digital Storytelling software upon is Photo Story. Photo story is free and everyone should have it on their computers.

Here are some ways to implement storytelling and Photo Story with your students:

- During a science investigation, take pictures of students doing the different steps. Put pictures on the students’ shared drive. The students can do this in groups of two or whatever way best fits your age group. Have students use Photo Story software to import the pictures from the shared drive. Part of Photo Story is the narration section which they can use to create a story retelling their investigation using all the new vocabulary they learned.
- After reading a story or a book students can take pictures of other students reenacting the book. You can even take the pictures with a simple background behind the students. Then, have the students import the pictures into Photo Story. Use the narration feature to retell the story for each picture.
- Use library databases or appropriate internet websites to find pictures of a time in history or a specific historical event. Students can describe the event and make a story timeline. Have students take pictures of geometric figures around the school and then import their pictures into Photo Story. They can narrate each picture with a definition and name other real world examples.

Tips:

- On the narration screen in Photo Story, the red circle button means “record.” The black square button means “stop.” The arrow button means “delete narration.”
- When narrating, make sure you are clicked on the picture that you want to narrate.
- If you want to redo the narration on a picture, make sure to click the arrow to delete the narration. Otherwise you will just be adding to the previous narration.

Articles on storytelling and background information:

- http://www.ijea.org/v2n1/index.html
- http://www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/
- http://webtech.cherokee.k12.ga.us/tech/jberry/MovieMaker/articles_resources.htm

Tips and Tricks

Problem: In the lab, students are paying more attention to their monitor screens than your instructions.
Solution: Have students stand up, turn their chairs around to face you until you are finished with your instructions.

Problem: Students are leaving the computer lab equipment in a jumbled mess.
Solution: Before you dismiss them, have students stand behind their chairs after they have straightened their keyboard, mouse, headphones and have pushed in their chairs.
Poetry Splatter:  
http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/gamestation/poetrysplatter/default.mspx

Students ages three through fourteen can use this online and interactive poetry game to create their own unique poems. They will first choose a title that interests them, and then drag words to fill in the blanks for results. After finishing this game, you can create your own by taking a couple of well-known children’s poems, crossing off one or two words per line, and having students replace those words with their own. Next change a whole line, then two, etc. until your students are writing their own short poems.

Random Word Picker:
This web tool selects a random word from a list that you provide. When used with a projector, it is a great way to review vocabulary words, important dates, or concepts -- or use it to randomly pick a name from your student list.
To see the full version, go to:  
http://www.classtools.net/main_area/fruit_machine.htm

1. Click the “Example” button below to enter some names OR enter your own list of words in the yellow area below.
2. Click either the “Typewriter” or the “Fruit Machine” button to randomly pick a word from

Calendar Template
Here you will find numerous printable classroom calendar templates -- by month and year. Just print fill in and post.
http://www.abcteach.com/directory/teaching_extras/calendars/

Count On
http://www.counton.org/

All areas in math are covered on this engaging interactive website. (this site is from England so they call it maths) Under resources, check out the misconceptions section that describes 22 common but basic errors made in mathematics and the explanation why.

Tech Tips

- To create a shortcut on your desktop to a program you use frequently, click Start >> All Programs (or just Programs). Right-click the program you want to create a shortcut to and then click Send to Desktop (or Create Shortcut).

- Want to find out the names of the buttons on the toolbars? Hover the mouse over any button and its name will appear in a box near the mouse pointer.

- Want to find out what the buttons on the toolbars do? Choose What’s This? from the Help menu. The mouse pointer will turn into a pointer with a “?” symbol. Click on any button (or any other element or object on the screen) and Word will give you some information.
Using Microsoft Photostory 3

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PREP: On your machine, or network drive, create a folder or directory, and name it appropriately. All images, music and Photostory 3 files will be stored in this folder. This tutorial assumes you have located the images you will use to create your digital story.

STEP 1:

1. Open Photostory 3.
2. Select “Begin a New Story”
3. Click Next.

This step also allows you to edit a previously made story or play a story.
**STEP 2: Import and arrange your pictures**

**Things you can do:** import images, remove black borders, rotate imagery, simple photo editing.

1. Click Import Pictures. Locate the folder where your images are located. If you have not found images, visit [http://www.jakesonline.org/websearching2.htm](http://www.jakesonline.org/websearching2.htm) to access a list of search tools that can be used to locate digital imagery.

2. Click on your first image. Hold the shift key down. Click on the last image-this will select all images. To select images non-sequentially, hold the control key down and select. Click OK once selected. The images will now load into the timeline.

3. To reorder your images, click and drag and reposition in the timeline.

**NOTE:** you can always add other imagery by repeating step 2 above.
4. **OPTIONAL:** Once the order of the images have been determined (this may be predetermined in a storyboard), you may wish to remove the black borders of your images. Click Remove Black borders. Click Yes to All. Click OK.

5. **SAVE EARLY SAVE OFTEN!!!** At this point, save your file. Save it to the folder created in the Prep step above.

6. Click Next.
STEP 3: Add a title to your pictures

Things you can do: add titles and add effects to your imagery.

1. Click on the slide you wish to add text tool. Type your title into the window and use the various tools to change the font, font color and the positioning of the title on the slide.

2. Click Next.

Effects can also be accessed here. Click on the arrows to move through the slides to add text to any image.

You may wish to add text to slides to create an additional effect. Also consider adding a black image at the beginning of the digital story to hold the title. Creating a black image would need to be created outside Photostory 3 with a graphics editing program OR accessing http://www.jakesonline.org/blankslides.htm and right-clicking on the links and choosing Save Target As….
STEP 4: Recording Your Voice-over (Narrate your pictures) and Customizing Motion

Things you can do: add narration to each individual slide, customize motion by adding transitions, pans and zooms, set the amount of time for each image, and preview your movie.

SET UP: To record sound, insert your microphone into the appropriate ports in your computer. Configure the microphone and sound level by running the Sound Hardware Test Wizard.

1. Select the image you want to record sound on.
2. Click on the record sound button.
3. Record your narration. Click on the stop button.
4. Test your voice-over by selecting the Preview button.
5. If acceptable, repeat steps 1-4. If the voice over needs to be redone, remove the voice over by clicking on the appropriate button and following steps 1-4.
Customizing Motion

1. Click on the image in the timeline you wish to work with.
2. Click on the Customize motion button directly below the picture.

3. The program defaults to the motion and duration tab. This allows you to determine pans and zooms.

4. Click the Specify start and end position of motion. The images in the Start position and the End position will have handles appear. Use the handles to position the images for the desired effect. In the example above, when this image appears in the movie, it begins as a large image and zooms inward upon completion of the image in the movie.

   Additional options:
   - Set start position to be the same as end position of the previous picture. This will allow for smooth transitions between the images.
   - Set end position to be the same as the start position. Use this effect to have no change throughout the time the image is displayed in the digital story.
   - Number of seconds to display the picture: overrides the automatic feature above, allows for more specific user control of image display.
5. Preview the effect
6. Save the effect. NOTE: this is a save function just for this image effect it does not save
   the project.
7. Use the arrows to migrate to the next image.

Transitions:

NOTE 1: Cross dissolve is the default function
NOTE 2: Just because you can does not mean you should.

1. Click the Transition tab across the top.

2. The program displays the previous picture and the current picture with the effect between
   it.
3. Use the scroll on the right side of the window to select the transition and preview. Use
   the arrows below the time display to migrate from picture to picture.
4. Click Save (again, saves the transition effect to the slide and not the file itself) and then
   Close if you are done.
5. Repeat as necessary.
STEP 5: Add background music

Things you can do: add background music.

1. Click either the Select Music button or the Create Music button. The Select Button enables the user to select mp3 files created or downloaded from a source outside of Photostory. The Create Music button enables the user to take advantage of the onboard music of Photostory 3.

2. For our purposes, we will use the Create Music button to add music.

NOTE: mp3 music files can be obtained at freeplaymusic.com or ccmixter.org. Files from freeplaymusic can be used royalty free.
3. Play to preview the music. If you like it, click OK.

4. The music will now load into the track.

5. Be sure to reduce the volume of the music track. See next image on next page.

6. Go next.
To add more than one music track, select another image in the timeline and repeat the above process. The second track will appear in green. NOTE: Photostory 3 will drop the level of the first music track to transition to the second music track.

Go to the next page to finish your movie.
STEP 6: Save your story

Things you can do: complete your movie

You may wish to render the movie as a 320X240 file if your intent is to post the movies online.

1. Select the location of the completed movie.
2. Click next. Photostory builds your movie.
3. Click view your story.

Congratulations!!! You now have a completed digital story.