

ICT in the Classroom - PDST Technology in Education (formerly NCTE)

Using digital storytelling in the classroom (Primary)

Ref: 13-04

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the benefits of using digital storytelling in the primary classroom, some ideas for classroom use to support literacy and numeracy and some further resources to enable you to effectively integrate the use of this technology in your classroom.

Digital stories are “mini movies” made by using digital tools on a computer rather than by using a movie camera. Stories are usually short (less than 7 minutes) and digital tools such as Microsoft Photo Story 3 or Animoto make it possible for pupils and teachers to become authors and digital storytellers. The digital tools enable the construction of multi-dimensional stories that are conveyed through a combination of text, images, motions, and sounds.

In this module we will use Microsoft Photo Story 3 which is a free download from Microsoft. It enables you to create digital stories, projects and photo slideshows from still images. PhotoStory 3 is a fun, discovery-based tool which is not difficult to use but produces an excellent final product. You and your pupils can add audio, narration, background music and effects that include transitions and motion. The video file may then be saved to the teaching computer, school blog, CD or the web for sharing.

An alternative for creating digital stories is Animoto, an easy to use, online site where pupils can create mini-movies quickly and with minimal fuss. The free version of Animoto allows pupils to create 30 second videos that combine images, songs and text. Animoto for Education gives teachers free access to the plus version which allows videos of unlimited length.

Benefits

The benefits of using digital storytelling in the classroom include:

- Digital storytelling can play an important role in group work and collaborative learning within the classroom
- It enables pupils to create multimedia resources using images, voice, text and music which can be shared with peers and the wider community.
- The digital story produced may be published on the school website, virtual learning environment or made available on the school's network to other classes.
- Creating digital stories will enable pupils to learn how to be safer and more responsible digital publishers as they learn about copyright, citing sources and the responsible use of personal information and images.
- Great way to engage pupils and teachers.

Classroom Application

Literacy

Ideas for classroom application of this technology to support literacy include:

- Create instructional photo stories showing how to do a procedure i.e. making a sandwich using appropriate steps, sequence and instructional language.
- Create instructional photo stories showing how to play a game using appropriate processes, sequences and language.
- Create sequencing photo stories with images of for example a daily routine. The story can be accompanied by a narrative written and delivered by the pupils.
- Narrate a poem and illustrate its “story” with images. Pupils could draw their own illustrations and import them as images after recording them on the digital camera. Pupils will learn about appropriately narrating a poem, timing, diction etc. as well as many ICT functional skills.
- Compose a 5-minute drama. Having created a storyboard and script, they could use plastic toys for the characters and create the backdrop during Art. They can customise the motion, add audio and save as a video.
- Take photos on a class trip or event. Later, the pupils can explore the photos and reflect on their learning experience by creating a personal or group photo story.
- Create Book Trailers by scanning, drawing or taking pictures related to a book. They import the pictures into Photo Story 3, add narration to the pictures and choose or create suitable music. Photo Story 3 then generates a stand-alone video to be shared with other.
- Compile ‘Alphabet Books’ where each pupil is assigned a letter of the alphabet. Having taken an image of something in their environment starting with that letter they record their own narration.
- Create ‘Talking Books’ or audio books accompanied by images they record or create.
- Present new vocabulary using individual objects or by miming actions.

Numeracy

Ideas for classroom application of this technology to support numeracy include:

- Create mathematical photo stories. The story can be accompanied by a narrative written and delivered by the pupils.
- Take photos on a maths trail. Later, the pupils can explore the photos and reflect on their learning experience by creating a personal or group photo story.
- Allow pupils to create explanations of key topics i.e. The Story of Nine.
- Teacher creates a video introducing a topic i.e. money to capture pupils’ interest.

Assessment

These examples outline ways in which digital storytelling can be used to assess literacy and numeracy:

- Creating an assessment rubric will assist in the assessment of students’ oral, reading, and writing skills when using digital storytelling. There are rubric examples online but before the project is assigned you should clearly plan the learning intention of the project.
- Set clear goals as to what you want the pupils to achieve:
 - Visually
 - Communicatively in their narration.

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- In terms of content understanding.
 - In terms of any accompanying documentation.
 - In terms of responsible use of digital tools.
 - Pupils can peer assess each other's work using the 'three stars and a wish' structure.
 - Pupils can create a digital story on a particular topic to demonstrate their oral, reading and writing skills.
 - Pupils can build up a digital portfolio during the year by recording their work on digital camera. This could then be made into a digital story with narration.

Special Educational Needs

These examples outline ways in which digital storytelling can be used to assess pupils with SEN:

- Record a daily diary using personalised resources.
- Create a digital social story.
- Create an e-portfolio.
- Create a bank of visual cues for the pupils. This can be built on as language is learned, to include text and audio.
- Give the pupils 'a voice' – encourage them to create stories for a wider audience.
- Encourage collaboration and group work.

Useful Tips

- Be conscious of copyright. ImageBank, <http://www.imagebank.ie> is a photo sharing library created by the NCTE. It provides moderated images and photos for photostories, homework, project and classroom use. All photos are shared under Creative Commons licence and may be used once the copyright holder is acknowledged. Teaching pupils how to upload their own photos for sharing will quickly teach them how to apply a Creative Commons licence to their own photos while helping them to understand their copyright law responsibilities.
- While the 'Select Music' option lets you choose a piece of music from your computer, network folder, or the Internet. You must make it clear to pupils that unless the music is their own creation it will be the property of others and subject to copyright law. They need to understand the issues of plagiarism and copyright, particularly in relation to copying schoolwork or downloading music and photos. If they seek and are given permission to use track by the copyright holder they can credit and acknowledge the copyright holder either in the opening credits or on a 'Credits Side' at the end of the story.

Video Tutorials

Please take some time to access the video tutorials for this topic.

- Digital Storytelling – Starting Photostory 3 and organising images
<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#21909>
- Digital Storytelling – Adding text to your story
<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#21901>
- Digital Storytelling - Narrating your story
<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#21984>
- Digital Storytelling – Customising motion in Photostory 3

<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#21905>

- Digital Storytelling – Viewing your story
<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#21899>
- Animoto - Creating a video and adding text, images, videos
<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#22896>
- Animoto – Sharing an Animoto Video
<http://www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/VideoTutorials/#22895>

Useful Links

- Video Tutorials
http://drscavanaugh.org/digitalcamera/photostorytelling/storytelling_PhotoStory.htm
- General educational uses
<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/>
- Project ideas
<http://21stcenturyteaching.pbworks.com/w/page/833439/Ideas-for-Photostory-3-Projects>
- Something that begins with play
<http://www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=36049>
- Using Photostory 3 in the PreK-2 Classroom
<http://cnx.org/content/m32299/latest/>
- Photostories using PhotoStory 3
<http://beinspiredbyict.blogspot.com/2011/04/photostories-using-photostory-3.html>
- Digital Writing
<http://digitalwriting.wikispaces.com/Home>
- Sample - How to wash your hands correctly
<http://vimeo.com/469913>
- 60 second video guide on how to use Animoto
<http://www.learnitin5.com/Animoto>
- Musopen – copyright free music
<http://www.musopen.org>
- How to use Animoto in the classroom
<http://www.brighthubeducation.com/teaching-methods-tips/57062-animoto-com-in-the-classroom/>