

Building Literacy in Secondary

New approaches through
creative technology





As a Technology Trainer for the School District of Hillsborough County in Tampa, Florida, I believe that students need to be able to demonstrate their knowledge through writing and a variety of multimedia tools.¹ I also believe we can encourage creativity and critical thinking by providing students opportunities to express their understanding through art, imagery, and technology.² In 2009, my colleague and I developed a “Create a Cover Contest” to offer low performing readers the opportunity to creatively express their understanding of a required reading, as an alternative to a written book report.³

Many of our students speak English as their second language, which presents additional challenges to our teachers and students alike. Through the arts, English learners are introduced to a variety of ways to learn and use vocabulary, and benefit from collaboration with other pupils.⁴ The contest supports this type of creativity and collaboration by its very design.

We begin the contest by supporting the teachers as well as the reading coaches who will be involved.⁵ We offer hands-on training with Pixie and ImageBlender so that educators are familiar with the tools their students will be using and feel empowered by the new technology, rather than burdened.⁶ Following the training each teacher is provided with a 5-pack of the

software for installation at their school site.

In the classroom, students who decide to participate select a book from the state list of required readings for their grade level. Students then complete a series of exercises aimed at developing their vision for a new book cover. The exercises include researching book cover design, exploring the audience, and writing a proposal. The entire process is facilitated by reading coaches and teachers with the help of rubrics and other assessments that help clarify goals and expectations.

Students explore the characters in their book of choice and the relationships between these characters using a formal character sketch.⁷ They then prepare a cover proposal, describing their vision in written form, and submit it to their teacher for review. In a round of peer review, they discuss their proposal with classmates to further develop their understanding of the book and sharpen

their vision of the cover. A final proposal is prepared and submitted.

Before they begin to design on the computer, students are taught to use the tools (Pixie or ImageBlender) and given time to gather digital resources for their cover. After they complete their final cover art, students submit both the cover art and proposal to their teacher where they are evaluated on how well the artwork communicates the vision in the proposal.⁸

All submissions are celebrated at the school level and judging determines which submissions move on to the next round. A second judging occurs at the curriculum leader level, and a third at the sponsorship level. Prizes are awarded to students in both Middle and High School levels, and a single grand prize is also awarded. As families connect with teachers and coaches during the celebrations, the sense of community grows stronger in our schools.⁹

Every year of the contest has shown a steady increase in both participant numbers, the number of final submissions, and the quality of student work and engagement. Those that participate come away from the experience with a better understanding of their own abilities and strengths - the most important reason we consider the Create a Cover Contest a success.¹⁰





Footnotes/Research:

1. According to Afrilyasanti and Basthomi (2011), students need to be sophisticated in expressing ideas using multiple communication technologies, not just the written word. As Afrilyasanti and Basthomi (2011) note, students have to be equipped with the core abilities including: ability in understanding multicultural literacy, global awareness, risk taking, personal and social responsibility, and ability in producing relevant products. By having these 21st century skills, the students can be at the level to become creative, inquisitive, reflective, collaborative, efficient, flexible, tenacious, and open-minded, and in turn, can be effective learners, collaborators, communicators, and creators.

Afrilyasanti, R. and Basthomi, Y. (2011). Adapting comics and cartoons to develop 21st century learners. *Language In India*, 11.11, 552.

The challenge here for schools is (a) how to accommodate into the curriculum the range of skills young people might acquire outside formal education, (b) how to recognize and validate this extended cultural sphere, and (c) how to acknowledge that the various forms of popular culture have a place in an expanded notion of literacy (Sefton-Green, 2001).

Sefton-Green, J. (2001). Computers, creativity, and the curriculum: The challenge for schools, literacy, and learning. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 44.8, 726.

2. As Appel (2006) stated, intuitively, we know that the arts inspire creativity and intellectual curiosity. We too wanted to encourage their creativity by providing the opportunity to express their understanding through art, imagery and technology.

Appel, M.P. (2006). Arts integration across the curriculum: engagement in the arts ignites creativity and provides students with opportunities to critically interpret the world around them. *Leadership*, 36.2, 14.

This opinion was echoed by Selwood (1991), perhaps the most obvious area of common ground between art and technology is the harnessing of new technologies to present art. Selwood, J. (1991). *Culture, Technology & Creativity in the Twentieth Century*. *Women's Art Magazine*, 41, 26.

According to Eaker and Santas (2009), as educators, it is obvious that allowing the least challenging option to define the dimensions of our teaching, and the potential for student learning, severely limits the prospects for engaging creativity and critical thinking. Eaker, L. and Santas, A. (2009). The eyes know it? Training the eyes: a theory of visual literacy. *Journal of Visual Literacy*, 28.2, 163.

Visual literacy—the ability to understand, think, and create graphically—is far more than passively taking in visual images. It involves highly active pattern-seeking and pattern-making activities (Horton, 1992).

Horton, W. (1992). Visual thinking and creativity. *Technical Communication*, 39.4, 685. Streich (2009) shrewdly explains that using visuals in our teaching promote students' analytical skills and activate higher level thinking ability.

Streich, M. 2009. Political Cartoons in History Lesson Plans: Using Posters, Photographs, and Paintings as Historical Sources. (Online accessed on October 31, 2010).

3. Whitin (2009) further states that digital literacy's offer myriad possibilities for teachers of reading and language arts, using technology to increase literacy achievement and promote critical thinking poses challenges for teacher education, professional development, and classroom instruction alike.

Whitin, P. E. (2009). Tech-to-stretch: expanding possibilities for literature response. *The Reading Teacher*, 62.5, 408.

4. Appel (2006) states there is also evidence that in creating a safe environment for learning, engagement in the arts helps to develop academic language proficiency among English learners.

Appel, M. P. (2006). Arts integration across the curriculum: engagement in the arts ignites creativity and provides students with opportunities to critically interpret the world around them. *Leadership*, 36.2, 14.

5. It has been observed by Huang, Johanson, Leal, and Toth (2004) the relationship built between the tutor and student can often make or break the success of the student's engagement with the reading process and learning itself.

Huang, C., Johanson, G., Leal, D., and Toth, A. (2004) Increasing at-risk students' literacy skills: fostering success for children and their preservice reading endorsement tutors. *Reading Improvement*, 41.2, 75.

6. One of my concerns early on was identified by Ernest Balajthy (2007) in that many teachers have had bad experiences with poorly considered technology choices that put even more burdens on precious teaching time, with little or no payoff for their students. Balajthy, E. (2007). Technology and current reading/literacy assessment strategies: there are many new tools for assessment that take advantage of advances in technology. Teachers may find some of them useful for improving their classroom practice. *The Reading Teacher*, 61.3, 240.

7. Whitin (2009) notes that writer's block is one of the "possibilities" for the lack of expression and lack of communication that comes with writing.

8. Whitin (2009) noted that both text and images convey messages on their own, but they can carry greater impact when coordinated.

Whitin, P. E. (2009). Tech-to-stretch: expanding possibilities for literature response. *The Reading Teacher*, 62.5, 408. According to Siegel, (2006) verbal expression cannot always capture one's thought or meaning.

Siegel, M. (2006). Rereading the signs: Multi modal transformations in the field of literacy education. *Language Arts*, 84(1), 65-77.

9. Huang, Johanson, Leal and Toth (2004), identified the relationship between the tutor and student also became a bridge into the homes and hearts of the families of these children.

Huang, C., Johanson, G., Leal, D., and Toth, A. (2004) Increasing at-risk students' literacy skills: fostering success for children and their preservice reading endorsement tutors. *Reading Improvement*, 41.2, 75.

10. Arp, Burke, Hensley and Woodard (2004) point out that the purpose of engaging a student in practice is to ensure personal confirmation that a new concept, skill, or idea has been learned and mastered.

Arp, L., Hensley, R. B. and Woodard, B. S. (2004) Curiosity and creativity as attributes of information literacy. *Reference and User Services Quarterly*, 44.1, 31.



While comics, cartoons, and graphic novels have been around for years, recent movie blockbusters based on comics and graphic novels, including **Fantastic Four**, **Spider-Man**, **300**, and **Watchmen**, have fueled even more interest in the genre. Art Spiegelman's graphic novel memoir of the Holocaust, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*, has also helped to elevate the graphic novel to a more respected genre.

As educators, we're always on the lookout for ways to use popular culture to engage our students. The creative application of comics, cartoons, and graphic novels provides an opportunity to connect our classrooms to the world outside, making learning relevant to students' lives.

Finding ways to motivate students to read is crucial in our quest to build student literacy. Integrating graphic novels into your reading program is a great way to reach out to reluctant readers and help them view reading as a pleasurable activity. Nearly every teacher can tell you a story about a student whose interest in reading soared after being introduced to stories in comic or graphic novel form.

The comic book genre can help us engage students, improving literacy

skills as they explore content in new ways. Kids think that comics are fun... so let's capitalize on that interest to promote learning and improve comprehension and thinking skills!

Brain-based teaching tells us that students learn by doing. Having them create their own comics as a form of expression and communication will provide additional opportunities for learning.

Increasing Achievement with Comics

A comic book is a combination of pictures and text that tell a story through a series of panels. When developing their own comic books and graphic novels, students practice summarizing and creating non-linguistic

representations—two of the instructional strategies proven to boost student achievement. (Marzano et al., 2001)

Creating nonlinguistic representations of knowledge requires students to organize and elaborate on the information. Marzano and team state, "the more we use both systems of representation – linguistic – non-linguistic – the better we are able to think about and recall knowledge." Comics are a natural marriage of these two forms of representation.

Because comics require illustration, they validate the learning needs and strengths of visual learners who may need more than words to convey meaning. The illustrations required by the comic genre also support second-language learners in our classroom, allowing them to demonstrate knowledge even when they don't know the words.

Summarizing involves deleting, substituting, and evaluating which information is most crucial for meaning, requiring students to engage in detailed analysis of the content. The limited amount of space in a comic's panels requires students to choose the most significant points in a text or story. Their completed comic then provides a vehicle for assessing each student's comprehension of the ideas in the content they are reading.





Comic Themes

When you consider comics and graphic novels, you cannot help but imagine a superhero struggling against “the forces of evil.” Each of us has someone we admire and can call a hero. Using a heroes theme focuses student work with biographies, and provides a natural fit with studies during Black History Month and Women’s History Month.

Heroes, or heroic qualities, are also a useful vehicle for exploring the myths and legends of other cultures. We believe we can learn from a hero’s triumphs or mistakes, so a good myth or legend includes a heroic journey that we can relate to our own lives. Exploring what makes a hero and defining the characteristics that make a person a hero supports character education. Developing myths and legends of their own can help students explore possibilities for overcoming challenges in their own lives.

The Characteristics and Composition of Comics

Students can learn a lot about effective communication as they study the characteristics of successful comic books and graphic novels. Telling stories in a limited space requires comic authors to carefully consider composition, viewpoint, and character expression. How these elements are combined into text and illustrations will determine how the reader interprets the story.

The pace of action in a comic is real-time—it happens as fast the reader progresses. Students need to determine how they want to structure their story within the panels so that it progresses at the pace they intend. Using many panels leads the reader to believe that the action is occurring at a rapid pace. A single, highly detailed panel slows the reader down while providing lots of information that can help set up a future scene.

Comics also provide an opportunity to explore tense. Since dialogue is viewed as present tense, students need to be creative in demonstrating events that occur in the past. A simple caption may suffice, but age differences, dream sequences, and remote settings can also achieve this effect. As students brainstorm strategies for showing events in the past, they build stronger vocabularies and skills that will help them establish mood in their non-comic writing.



When creating comics, students learn to guide their readers’ thoughts and feelings with pictures and dialogue, building more sophisticated communication skills that will help them as they work on debate and persuasive writing projects. The space between panels also requires a reader to infer or imagine what is happening, requiring students to provide context and clues to help the reader make correct inferences.

Sequencing and logic are crucial to good storytelling, and students quickly learn that they can’t simply jump forward in time or around in space. Grouping different scenes together leads to non sequiturs, confusing the reader. A series of events that do not include the

important elements of plot can lead the viewer to the wrong conclusion.

Successful comic authors also employ point of view in both images and text. When developing their comics, students need to choose between first and third person. The first-person perspective helps them connect with the reader; the third-person perspective is often more versatile. Developing illustrations that show perspective helps students create a richer mental picture of “I felt...” or “I jumped at...” This gives them more information to draw on when adding descriptions and detail to other narratives.

As students learn skills and techniques to tell their stories, they will also start to realize how the media uses those same techniques to capture viewer interest and lead viewers to specific conclusions. As they learn to succeed as media producers, students also naturally become more savvy media consumers.

Having students showcase their ideas using comics and graphic novels is yet another tool you can add to your bag of tricks to make learning relevant and fun!

References and Resources

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D. J., & Pollock, J. E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Westby, C. (2005, Sept. 27). Language, Culture, and Literacy. *The ASHA Leader*, pp. 16, 30.

Biography



Melinda Kolk

Melinda Kolk has been helping educators implement project-based learning and creative technologies like clay animation into classroom teaching and learning for the past 15 years.



More Than Just a Writing Prompt

Using multimedia to
make writing vibrant!

by Tiffani D. Brown

A few years ago, I heard a presenter at a conference proclaim, “If your students are not participating in meaningful, structured writing time every day, you DON’T have a writing program!” What?!? I don’t?

The comment made a significant impression on me, and though the presenter’s comment was laced with hyperbole, I took the message to heart. If we want kids to be better writers, they have to do it more often, and it has to be engaging.

We’ve all been there... the complacency zone... where we require students to have a spiral notebook, read a prompt off the board, and write in their journals. But often during this automated process, students simply check out. At the end of the term, we wind up with a pile of half-destroyed journals, many smeared with some mystery goo and looking like they have lived in the trunk of a car for three months. Where’s the “meaningful” in that?

I decided that I was done with “old-school” journaling that wasn’t making anyone happy or meeting anyone’s

“...I tried meeting my students where they already were – in the land of MP3s and YouTube – and my classroom was forever changed.”

needs. Instead, I tried meeting my students where they already were — in the land of MP3s and YouTube — and my classroom was forever changed.

I started by using a song from a popular contemporary band. The moment I hit *play*, I had the attention of 35 would-be writers. They sang along, we talked, we discussed, we analyzed. We found metaphors. We connected to their experiences. We activated their prior knowledge. What started out as a 15-minute journaling session quickly found us at the end of the period.

Some kids were clearly at the beginning of their ability to formulate thoughts about the music’s meaning and symbolism, but others ran with it, making connections to the music from day one. This struck me as a potential teaching gold mine.

My next experiment was with a photograph. I displayed it with the projector while the students walked in. They were already commenting before class started, oblivious of the connections they were making and skills they were practicing. They made projections about the setting; they asked questions about the characters; they noticed the symbols and structure. When I led them a bit further, they began to analyze critically, support with evidence, address mood and tone, and identify purposes.

There were so many hands in the air, waiting to share ideas that I was almost overwhelmed. Finally I said, “OK, I want to hear all of these ideas, but we have to end the discussion here. If you didn’t get a chance to share, write down your follow-up thoughts in your journals.” What happened next was nothing short of a miracle. Zippers of backpacks zipped, binders clicked and clacked, pieces of paper crinkled, and hands began to write... feverishly!

Over the next two or three days, the students literally came through the door asking what we were going to



my repertoire! It got to the point where they were disappointed when they arrived in class and we didn't journal.

When I did my first round of grading, I noticed two things. The first observation was that ALL of my students, no matter their writing ability or skill, were producing exponentially more writing. The second observation was that many advanced kids were making very sophisticated connections and finding evidence of personification, symbolism, and metaphor!

With this new information, I decided to address what I considered to be two things needing improvement. First, we needed to create a way to bring the beginners up to the level of those making deeper connections, and second, we needed cut down on how much paper we were using.

I transferred the writing prompts to a blog so that the kids could answer electronically, even when they were

also meant I could grade from anywhere at any time without having to cart home 150 journals. Moving to a blog allowed the students to respond to the writing of other students through comments. This really proved a benefit to the students who were still beginners because they had access to other student's responses to the same media.



In addition to the beginners getting exposed to the other students' responses (thank you, Vygotsky!), I put in place a phase system for the responses. The kids could start in Phase 1 and self-differentiate whenever they were ready to take the next step.

Phase 1: Observations

Students make 10 observations about the media. For example:

I see a red room, there is a stairway in the center of the picture, there is light shining in from the hallway, I hear a lot of drums, the singer sounds sad.

Phase 2: Questions

When students are comfortable with the process of observing, they can begin asking critical questions about the media, beginning their questions with "Why" and "I wonder..."

Examples include:

Why did the artist choose red? Where does the stairway lead? Who is the song talking about? What evidence is there for the mood or tone? Why did the artist choose to make the drums so significant?

Phase 3: Connections

When students have been successful questioners for a few weeks and have had a significant chance to observe other students' responses on the blog and during class discussions, encourage them to begin answering questions

Tips for Making Daily Writing a Success

by Tiffany Brown

1. Model, model, and model again! Demonstrate the process by letting students see what observations you would make, letting them know what questions you have, and joining the blog conversations with your critiques and ideas.
2. Have all students first practice Phase 1 and let them all experience Phase 2. You will soon be able to see which students are ready to move on. Some students will be tempted to jump right to Phase 3 thinking, but working in Phase 1 and 2 first will ensure they have the foundation in place to ensure that their conclusions are supported and meaningful.
3. Use websites or apps that scan the Internet for media. I like StumbleUpon.com because it asks about your interests when you first sign on. If you include photography and art in your interests, you will gain access to lots of images and media you may not have found otherwise. I built most of my library this way.
4. Keep an eye out for copyright and proprietary issues. Music and artwork are the property of the artist. Instead of posting media directly to a blog, post URLs so that the artists get credit for their work and students can find out more about the artist and/or the subject.
5. Validate the work of students who are successfully giving evidence to support their thoughts. Encourage student growth with regard to having differing opinions from their classmates and collaborating in a social learning environment, both in classroom discussions and on a blog.



they asked in Phase 2. Examples:

I think the artist chose red for the room because red represents anger. I think the stairway leads up because the room is abandoned and it doesn't seem like anyone would want to go into it, they would probably want to get out of there. The song seems sad because of its slow pace and melancholy lyrics.

Student work in Phase 3 is the basis for success in multiple strands of

Language Arts standards. For example:

- Talking about a picture and giving examples of what you see and why it is important equals supporting with evidence.
- Talking about the mood of a song is equivalent to inferring the mood or tone of a poem.
- Describing colors and structures as symbols is using figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, etc.).
- Discussing the meaning of a photo or song is invaluable practice at finding the author's message or exploring recurring themes.

Moving away from the textbook can make you feel like you may be leaving students under-prepared for assessments. When others suggest to me that while this type of work is nice, they don't have time for that in

THEIR classrooms, I respond that these activities are so packed with standards, they don't have time NOT to be doing them!

Using multimedia for writing response helps students develop thinking and learning skills that extend beyond the classroom. By teaching with videos, photographs, music, and other media, you get students in the habit of critical thinking and analysis each night, during the weekend, and over school break as they encounter these forms of media in the world around them.

If you are ready to get started, begin on a small scale. I used the idea of Music Fridays in the beginning. If you choose a song or picture that YOU are excited about, your energy will be more believable and authentic and students will respond in kind. Soon you too will be collaborating in a big way and making a lasting and profound impression on your students.

Biography



Tiffani D. Brown

Tiffani D. Brown is a seventh- and eighth-grade Language Arts teacher at Rio Seco School in Santee, California. She is an active conference presenter and member of CUE, ASCD, and NMSA.

Creativity Connection

Exciting learners with challenging projects



Amanda Levine

"The curriculum at Krieger Schechter Day School requires students to use different modalities as they learn. We

begin projects with a task or guiding question and students then work together as they read, write, illustrate and discuss the objectives. After completing a unit on owls during a larger unit about endangered species, third-grade students were challenged to 'interview an owl.'

After watching several sample interviews, students decided what elements are involved in an interview. We discussed perspective, style, and question- and answer-length and students determined a structure for a good interview.

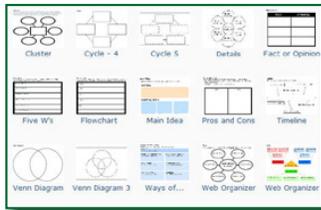
Students worked with a partner to research a chosen owl and together wrote the introduction, questions, answers, and ending for their interviews. We typed the interviews into a word processing program and used Pixie to illustrate a detailed picture reflecting the information discussed in their interview. Students recorded the interview, with one child acting as the interviewer and one child acting as the owl, and then combined their slides to create a movie.

The best part of this project was watching the students read, process, analyze, and apply information through writing and creating detailed illustrations for their interview. My classroom was loud, noisy and bustling for the eight sessions it took to complete. At the end of the project, the students agreed that this all-encompassing project was a motivating and exciting way to learn."





During the 1980's, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) teamed up with teachers searching for a comprehensive way to assess student writing. The resulting guidelines consider six aspects of writing, including ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, as well as how the writing is presented (presentation). In addition to providing a framework for evaluation, the 6+1 system helps students understand the characteristics of "good" writing and assists them in identifying specific steps they can take to improve their writing.



If you use digital writing tools, like Pixie, Wixie, or Share in your classroom, you already know how students can use this exciting creativity tool to combine text, clip art, original imagery, and voice recording to share work as booklets, comics, trading cards, online storybooks, and more. Creating and publishing these engaging and motivating writing products can help students develop the 6+1 traits of writing.

Ideas

This trait refers to the main message the student's writing is intended to convey. Ideas should be supported by details that are interesting, important and informative.

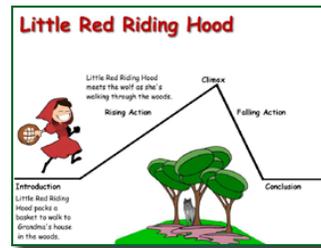
Begin the process by brainstorming ideas. You can encourage this process with a cluster diagram around a central idea or even main character. A cluster or web that includes a pre-existing number of ideas sets an expectation for the number of ideas they should generate. If students will come up with more ideas than are included in a traditional cluster, have them brainstorm on blank paper.

Combining their writing with images they have drawn and clip art they have added can help them clarify their thinking. If writing needs more ideas and details, have students look at the images they have added and record additional details they fine. Reluctant writers often add more details to original illustrations than their writing and sometimes it is helpful for them to write, draw, and then write again.

Organization

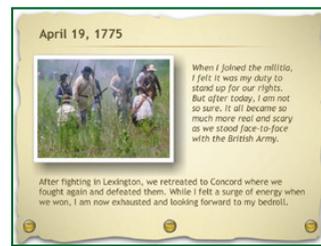
Organization refers to the structure of the writing. In organized writing, events proceed logically, information is provided to maintain readers' interest, and the conclusion has a resolution to the problem. When writing an original story, or retelling

and existing one, diagramming the plot can help them organize their writing, ensuring that it includes key plot elements.



Voice

Effective use of voice helps writers show that a real person is talking, and that they care about the message the writing conveys. Voice is less about sharing the author's personality than it is about imparting a tone to the writing to achieve a specific purpose.



To help students learn to convey passion in their writing, ask them to create public service announcements for topics they are passionate about. Creative software tools allow students to support their writing with images and recorded, narration,



making it obvious how the narrator feels and wants the audience to feel about the topic.

Word Choice

Writers become truly effective when they are able to choose specific words to convey meaning. Interesting word choice and creative descriptions also help engage readers. Students can improve their word choices and vocabulary using visual learning strategies. For example, ask students to examine photos or images, such as those from Pics4Learning.com, and describe what they perceive. As they focus on specific areas of an image they “encounter” words they might not otherwise use in their writing.



Fluency

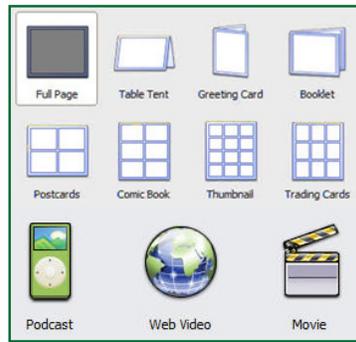
Fluency refers to the rhythm and flow of the writing. To help students identify problems with the fluency of their sentences and paragraphs, have them capture their voices as they read their writing aloud. As listen again and hear themselves trip over wording, they locate the places in their writing where they can adjust the wording or punctuation to improve the fluency of their writing.

Conventions

Writing conventions include spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar/usage, and paragraphing. Conventions often pose some of the biggest challenges as students work to become effective writers. Students want to complete an error free and beautiful work. Digital writing tools allow them to edit and correct more easily, leading them to write even more.¹ Digital writing tools mean students can run a spell check to verify the accuracy of a text object or selection or enable the inline spelling and grammar check so they can learn to identify mistakes as they are typing.

Presentation

Presentation refers to how the writing looks on the page. Is there enough white space? Is the font large enough to read? Do illustrations support the content?



Publishing options like comic books, trading cards, podcasts, and online storybooks provides numerous ways to make presentation a motivating part of the writing process. These creative presentation formats continue to engage students, encouraging their

writing while providing an authentic context for their work.



Using the 6+1 traits is an invaluable way to focus student effort as they hone their writing skills. Using creative technology tools for digital writing engages students in the process and encourages them to practice and build proficiency with each of the traits in the 6+1 model.

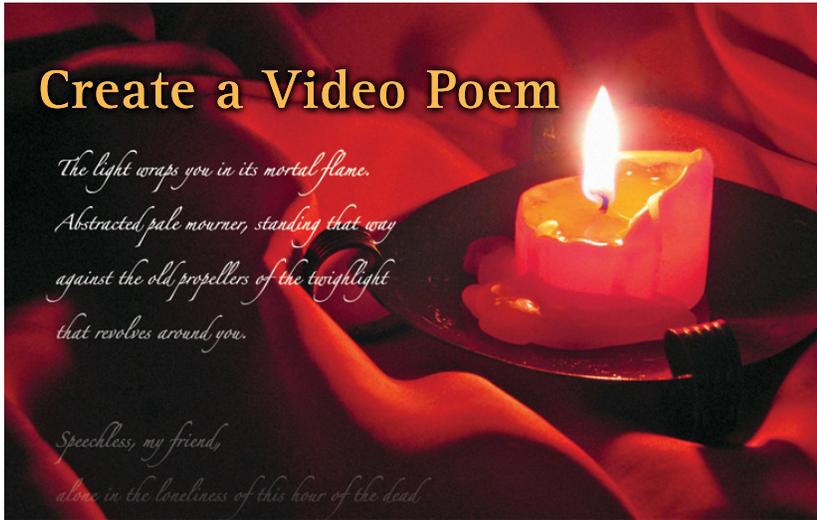
Biography



Melinda Kolk

Melinda Kolk has been helping educators implement project-based learning and creative technologies into classroom teaching and learning for the past 15 years.

1. Writing, Technology and Teens. Apr 24, 2008. Amanda Lenhart, Sousan Arafah, Aaron Smith, Alexandra Macgill <http://bit.ly/100TWrv>



Identifiers

Grade Level

4-12

Subject

Language Arts

Duration

1 week

Objective

Students will create a video poem as they analyze the imagery in the text.

Description

Students will analyze a poem by breaking it into scenes. The text for each scene will be supported by appropriate images and sounds. They will use Frames to create their video poem.

Application

Pixie®, Wixie®, or Frames™ and Pics4Learning

Process

Introduction

The National Poetry Council is looking for ways to promote interest in poetry. Since most homes have a television, they have decided to broadcast short poems set to music and pictures. They have asked for help to build their collection.

Procedure

Creating a visual version of a poem by translating it into a video is a fun and motivating way to help students analyze verse and explore meaning. The first time you implement this idea, it is helpful to create a poem as an entire class.

Before You Begin

Choose the poem you want to use. Print a copy of the poem for each student. You may also want to project the poem using an overhead or data projector.

Step 1: Explore a Poem

Read the entire poem as a class. What does the poem mean? Have students circle some of the words that make them think of something specific or feel a certain way. Discuss their choices as an entire class.

Step 2: Analyze a Stanza, Line, or Couplet

Divide the poem into smaller pieces, such as one line, one verse, or a rhyming couplet.

Give each student one piece of the poem. Have them use a graphic organizer, such as a cluster, to brainstorm different words that will help them identify the meaning, and feeling, of the words in the poem.

Step 3: Locate a Picture

Once students have analyzed their piece

of the poem, they need to create or locate a picture that helps portray the emotion and meaning in the poem. They can use ImageBlender to paint a picture, a digital camera to take a picture, or a web site like Pics4Learning to locate a picture.

Step 4: Create a Poetry Movie

Place each student's image into one folder. Choose one student to work on the computer and compile the images in Frames. You will want to have the student practice with Frames and complete the Frames – Digital Storytelling Recipe online at www.recipes4success.com so that they are familiar with the tools and features in Frames.

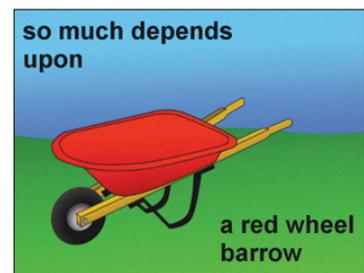
Step 5: Share the Video Poem

Share the movie on the morning announcements, at an assembly, or on local access television.

Assessment

After you have read the poem as a class, you can begin assessing student understanding as they choose key words that evoke feelings or ideas. Evaluate each student's comprehension as they complete a cluster graphic organizer sheet for their part of the poem. You will want to be available for questions and discussion as they work through their analysis.

You can also evaluate their choice of an image. Remember, the quality of the image reflects both their understanding and analysis of the poem, as well as their ability to complete an effective internet





Steps for Students

Creating a Video Poem in Frames™

Once you have all of your images collected, use Frames to combine them into a video poem.

1. Launch Frames.
2. Click the New blank frame button on the toolbar to add more frames.
3. Click the Library button to add clip art, photos, or images you have collected.
4. Click the Tools button to use drawing tools to create your own illustrations.
5. Click the Clone button on the toolbar to duplicate frames. Make changes to the objects on the frames to create animation.
6. Click the Text tool on the Tools panel to add text. Use the handles and Format options to change how the text looks.
7. Click the Record tool on the Tools panel to add narration.
8. Select a frame or group of frames and adjust the Duration slider on the Tools panel to change the timing.
9. Click the Save button on the toolbar to save the file.
10. Click the Project button and choose *Export* to create an animated movie to share.



search, visual ability to draw, and/or skill capturing an image with a digital camera.

As they make the movie, listen to the discussions between students. They will be making observations and comments and may even change their mind about their picture. If you are adding music to the background, the musical selection may also indicate student understanding of the poem.

Resources

Janezcko, Paul B. (2000) **Teaching 10 Fabulous Forms of Poetry**. Teaching Resources. ISBN: 0439073464

Sweeney, Jacqueline. (1999) **Teaching Poetry: Yes You Can!** Scholastic. ISBN: 0590494198

International Library of Poetry
www.poetry.com

Poetry Anthologies and Thousands of Poems
www.bartleby.com/verse

Project Gutenberg
www.gutenberg.org/catalog

Standards

Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts - Grade 4-12 Reading Standards

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

NETS 3-5 Performance Standards

1. Use keyboards and other common input and output devices (including adaptive devices when necessary) efficiently and effectively. (1)

4. Use general purpose productivity tools and peripherals to support personal productivity, remediate skill deficits, and facilitate learning throughout the curriculum. (3)

5. Use technology tools (e.g., multimedia authoring, presentation, Web tools, digital cameras, scanners) for individual and collaborative writing, communication, and publishing activities to create knowledge products for audiences inside and outside the classroom. (3, 4)

NETS 6-8 Performance Standards

5. Apply productivity/multimedia tools and peripherals to support personal productivity, group collaboration, and learning throughout the curriculum.

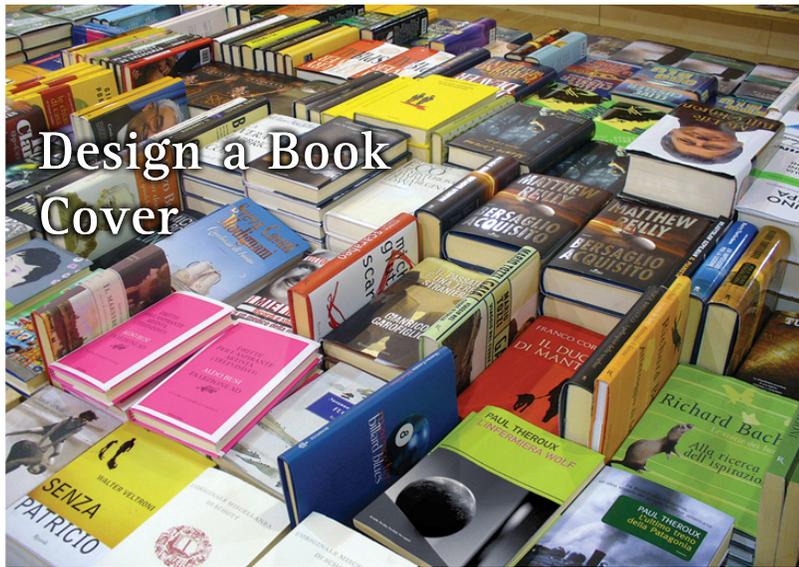
6. Design, develop, publish and present products using technology resources that demonstrate and communicate curriculum concepts to audiences inside and outside the classroom.

NETS 9-12

7. Routinely and efficiently use online information resources to meet needs for collaboration, research, publications, communications, and productivity. (4, 5, 6)

NETS 9-12 Performance Standards

10. Collaborate with peers, experts, and others to contribute to a content-related knowledge base by using technology to compile, synthesize, produce, and disseminate information, models, and other creative works. (4, 5, 6)



Design a Book Cover

Identifiers

Level

7-10

Subject

Language Arts

Duration

1 week

Objective

Students will explore character, plot, setting, symbolism, and conflict for a book they are reading.

Description

Students will apply what they know about the character, plot, setting, symbolism, and conflict to create and design a book cover.

Application

Pixie®, Wixie®, Share™, or ImageBlender®

Process

Introduction

Images can be powerful ways of communicating. People instinctively respond to images based on their personalities, associations, and previous experience. Graphic designers use this instinctive response to visually communicate ideas and information. They work with different tools and mediums to convey a message from a

client to a particular audience. As a graphic designer, have students create a sample cover for a book they have read to show their design expertise.

Procedure

Step 1: Prepare for the Project

As a class, look at the covers for several books you have read. Does the cover art reflect the content and mood of the book?

Have students choose a book they have read recently.

Step 2: Research Ideas for the Cover Design

To help students review what they learned about the book, have them complete a character sketch about the main character. This will help them develop details about the main character, so they communicate information about the character linguistically before trying to do so visually.

Step 3: Explore the Audience and Write a Proposal

Graphic designers need to think about the goal of the images they create. A book cover design should not only give the viewer an idea of the content and mood of the book, but should also be eye-catching to encourage customers browsing in a bookstore to pick up a book they may not be familiar with.

Have students think about the message they want to convey with their book cover and write a short proposal about what they hope their book cover will convey.

For example, in *Esperanza Rising*, a proposal might look like:

Pam Munoz Ryan's Esperanza Rising is a story about a well-to-do Mexican girl who had to begin a new life in the farm fields of California. Despite all of her misfortune and hard work, Esperanza Rising is a story about hope for a bright future. The book cover for this story should show her background in Mexico and her hard work in the fields, but the mood should still be uplifting.

Have students share their proposal with a partner who has read their book and discuss the merits of the idea.

Do you agree with their summary of what should be included on the cover?

Do you agree with the mood they have chosen?

What images might they use?

Have students revise and submit their proposal for your review.

Step 4: Explore Visual Possibilities

Once the students have their proposal written, they should begin looking for potential images they can use in their cover design. Using the descriptive words in their character sketch and cover design worksheets, have them use a digital camera to capture appropriate images and the Internet to explore and download copyright-friendly images from Pics4Learning (www.pics4learning.com).

You may also want to give them access to a paint program or art supplies so they can also create original illustrations and artwork.

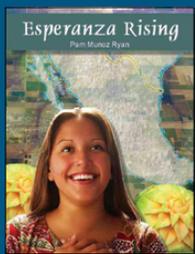


Steps for Students

Designing a Cover in ImageBlender™

Once you have collected all of your image resources, use ImageBlender to combine them into a book cover design.

1. Open ImageBlender.
2. Click the New button on the toolbar. At the New Image dialog, change the Units pull-down menu to inches and change the Height to 8 and the Width to 5. Click the OK button.
3. Use the Add an Image as a Layer option to begin adding your resource images as layers.
4. Use the Selection tool (magic wand) and eraser tools to remove parts of layers you do not want.
5. Click and drag the layers to control their order in the image.
6. Click and drag the Opacity slider to change the transparency of a layer.
7. Click the Effects tab to add effects to the selected layer.
8. Click the Text tool on the tool palette to add a title and author name to the book cover.
9. Use the settings on the Options panel to change the font and size.
10. Click the Save button to save your finished cover.
11. Click the Export button to save your cover design as an image file.
12. Click the Print button to print a copy of your cover.



Step 5: Design the Cover

Once students have collected all of their image resources, have them use ImageBlender to combine them into a book cover design.

Have students export their book covers as an image file and print a copy you can share in a display.

Step 6: Share and Evaluate Cover Designs

When the cover designs are completed, have students work in small teams to evaluate them. Collect all of the evaluations and then distribute them to the cover designers.

Assessment

Use the character sketch to evaluate how well students understood the content of the book, as well as their skill at describing the characters and events in the text. Use their cover proposal to evaluate how well they can translate their content research into a design that shares this information visually.

The cover design is a great summative assessment for students' overall skill communicating in a visual medium.

Resources

Powers, Alan. (2001) **Front Cover: Great Book Jacket and Cover Design**. Mitchell Beazley. ISBN: 1840004215.

Powers, Alan. (2003) **Children's Book Covers: Great Book Jacket And Cover Design**. Mitchell Beazley. ISBN: 1840006935.

Poggenpohl, Sharon Helmer. (1994) **Graphic Design: A Career Guide and Education Directory**. Watson-Guption Publications. ISBN: 0823062988

Cover Story: Designing Book Covers
www.creativepro.com/img/story/011404_coverstory.pdf

Graphic Design
www.bls.gov/oco/ocos090.htm

Standards

Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts - Grade 4-10 Writing Standards

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

NETS 6-8 Performance Standards

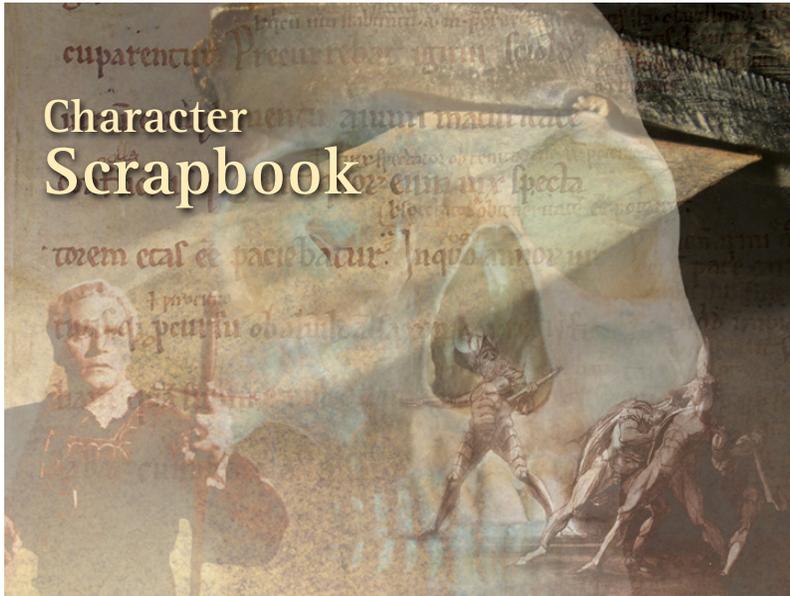
6. Design, develop, publish and present products using technology resources that demonstrate and communicate curriculum concepts to audiences inside and outside the classroom.

7. Collaborate with peers, experts, and others using telecommunications and collaborative tools to investigate curriculum-related problems, issues, and information, and to develop solutions or products for audiences inside and outside the classroom.

NETS 9-12 Performance Standards

7. Routinely and efficiently use online information resources to meet needs for collaboration, research, publications, communications, and productivity. (4, 5, 6)

10. Collaborate with peers, experts, and others to contribute to a content-related knowledge base by using technology to compile, synthesize, produce, and disseminate information, models, and other creative works. (4, 5, 6)



Identifiers

Grade Level

4–12

Subject

Language Arts

Duration

2 weeks

Objective

Students will analyze the main character in a novel they have read.

Description

Students will create a digital scrapbook that showcases the viewpoint of the main character.

Application

Share™

Process

Authentic Task

When we read novels, authors provide details about the main character through descriptive sentences, events that directly involve the character, and what other characters think and say about the main character. To show what you know about the main character in a novel you are reading, create a digital scrapbook for this person!

Engage

Scrapbooking is becoming a popular pastime. Asking students to demonstrate knowledge in this format provides them with an opportunity to express individuality and creativity in an authentic, popular format. Inviting local community members who scrapbook or a local scrapbook company representative to speak to the class regarding their creative techniques may help further inspire students.

Share examples of traditional and online scrapbooks with students. (You can find online examples in the resources section). As a class, discuss differences they see between a traditional scrapbook and a digital scrapbook. Ask students to consider the composition of images, and use of text, narration, and sound effects. Discuss how the use of multimedia elements can change the impact of a scrapbook.

Have students choose a novel they have recently read and focus their attention on the main character of the story. Have them reread the story and take notes in the form of a double entry journal that describes the main character and events that take place during the story, focusing on events that the main character is

directly involved in and what other characters in the novel say about them. You can also have students complete a character attribute map or graphic organizer to help them get a deeper understanding of the main character.

Create

Ask them to share their preliminary ideas for the scrapbook. This is a great time to check for understanding. The more students understand the action, behavior, and events the main character is involved in, the easier it will be for them to create a scrapbook from the main character's point of view.

Share your expectations for what the scrapbook will include. For example, you might spell out what you would like to see on each page.

Page 1 – Cover

The cover should include the character's name, the title of the book, the author's name, and your name.

Page 2 – Journal Entry #1

A summary from the main character's perspective.

Page 3 – Pictures and Photographs

Images that reflect events important to the main character. Include a caption for each that explains why it was included.

Page 4 – Letters

One letter from the main character to a secondary character about a problem in the story. A second letter for the secondary character's likely response.

Page 5 – Souvenirs and Mementos

At least three objects that reflect events in the story or important aspects of the main character. Include an explanation for each.

Page 6 – Journal Entry #2

An entry from the main character's diary that shows growth over time.

Have students complete a storyboard to help them map out the design and content of their scrapbook.

When you have approved their storyboard, students should begin



Steps for Students

Create a character scrapbook in Share™

Students can use the tools in Share to create their own scrapbook.

1. Launch Share.
2. Click the New Page button on the toolbar to add pages to your scrapbook.
3. Click the Text tool on the toolbar to add a text box to a page.
4. Adjust the settings for the text box in the Options panel. Double-click the text box to add text to it.
5. Click the Library tab to add images, photographs, and more to the scrapbook.
6. Click the Arrow tool on the toolbar. Click the background of a page and use the Sound pull-down menu on the Options panel to add background music, narration, or explanation.
7. Use the drawing tools on the toolbar to add original illustrations to a page.
8. Double-click the nodes and adjust the arrows to manipulate the illustration.
9. Click the Library tab and open the Buttons folder to find and add navigation buttons.
10. Click the Save button on the toolbar to save the scrapbook as you work.
11. Click the Publish button on the toolbar to convert the scrapbook to a PDF you can share.



gathering resources from the Internet, or the Library and Pics4Learning in Share. Then have them use the tools in Share to add media elements to each page of the scrapbook and create navigation between the pages.

Share

Have students present their finished scrapbooks to their classmates, working with a partner to explore and evaluate the media included. You might also consider sharing the scrapbooks with the school librarian or media specialist, or invite them in to help evaluate the final products. They may also be interested in posting student work to a station in your school's media center or library as a way to get other students interested in reading the book.

Assessment

If you require the journal entry, letters, and diary entry to be written before the structure of the project is designed, you can assess the writing even before the scrapbook is complete. The double-entry journal and character attribute map will give insight into the direction students are heading with their project.

Assessing these items prior to any other written work can help ensure the successful completion of the project. The final scrapbook will help you assess their understanding of being able to analyze and depict the main character through multimedia elements.

Resources

Davis, Lori J. *Picture Yourself Creating Digital Scrapbooks*.

ISBN-10: 1598634887

Heritage Scrapbooks:

<http://www.crcstudio.org/heritage/>

Ideas for Scrapbooking Pages:

<http://www.secret-scrapbookingideas.com/ideas-for-scrapbookingpages.html>

Kress, Nancy. *Characters, Emotion & Viewpoint: Techniques and Exercises for Crafting Dynamic Characters and Effective Viewpoints*. ISBN-10: 1582973164

Lewis Carroll Scrapbook Collection:

<http://international.loc.gov/intdl/carrollhtml/lchome.html>

Standards

Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts - Grade 4-12 Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

6. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

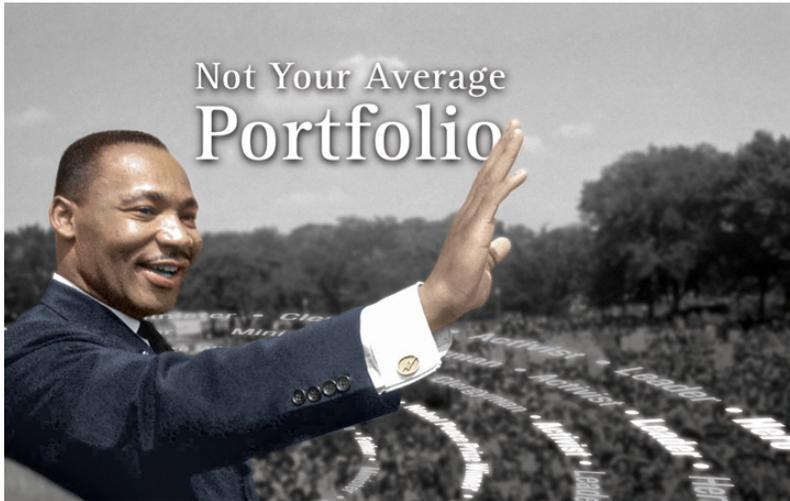
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

NETS for Students:

2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.



Identifiers

Grade Level

4–10

Subject

Language Arts, Social Studies

Duration

1 week

Objective

Students learn about the life of a famous person and write nonfiction.

Description

Students will research the life of a famous person and create a digital portfolio describing their accomplishments.

Application

Share™

Process

Authentic Task

With the economy down, things are tough for everyone. As the agent for a famous person you are studying, it is your job to develop a portfolio for him or her that will help them showcase specific skills and accomplishments to potential employers.

Engage

This project sets the stage for high-interest reading with a purpose and presents a twist on the traditional biography project. Student teams research a famous person and use Share

to create a digital portfolio showcasing this individual's skills and achievements.

Begin by asking students to define what makes a biography. What sort of things would they expect to find in a biography about a person's life?

Work as a class to brainstorm famous people on the topic you have chosen. Then add any additional names you want students to consider.

Share a biography of Martin Luther King, Jr. and ask students to work in pairs to generate questions about his life. Then ask for their ideas on how this information might be organized or categorized. Pass out a web graphic organizer and discuss how categories and subcategories can be used to summarize a person's life achievements.

Work as a class to choose the categories they will include in their biographical portfolios. They may come up with categories such as:

- General Information
- Major Contributions
- Challenges and Obstacles
- Unique Aspects
- Geographic Region

Ask teams of three students to research a famous person, or have students choose a person to study and find two other students willing to team with

them to develop a portfolio. Have students question each other as to what they already know about this person, as well as things they do not know but want to learn.

Create

Ask students to begin basic researching and skimming biographies to answer the questions they generated about their selected person. Then have students add this information to the categories on the web graphic organizer.

Now that information is beginning to be organized, have students work to research more complete information for each category and begin writing. Teams should review their research and edit written text to ensure that the information will be easily understood by the viewer.

Design affects our ability to communicate information and share our ideas effectively. Once the research and writing are complete, teams should consider how to design the portfolio to represent and reflect their individual. Give teams a storyboard to design the layout for their individual's portfolio.

When the web organizer, storyboard, and written descriptions are complete, students are ready to start creating the portfolio in Share. If time is limited, you may want to encourage students to open and work from an existing portfolio template.

While students can present their portfolios using Share, remember that they can also use Share to post their work online or publish their portfolios as interactive PDF files, interactive Flash files, or HTML that can be distributed on CD or by email.

Share

Give student teams an opportunity to present their portfolios to the entire class or small groups of students and make a



Steps for Students

Create a biographical portfolio in Share®

Students can use the tools in Share to create a portfolio for a famous individual.

1. Launch Share.
2. Click the **Open** button on the toolbar. Click the **Templates** option in the list on the left.
3. Open the **Portfolios** folder and choose the **Binder** portfolio.
4. Click the **New Page** button on the toolbar to add a page for each topic of the portfolio.
5. Double-click the text objects on each page to add content.
6. Click the **Library** tab to add images, photographs, and more to the portfolio pages.
7. Use the **Drawing** tools on the toolbar to add original illustrations to a page.
8. When all of the pages are complete, you are ready to complete the navigation. Click the **Master Page** button in the lower left corner of the window.
9. Click the **Foreground** page. Click each tab and click the **Hyperlink Edit** button on the **Options** panel to link to each of the pages.
10. Click the **Pages** button to return to your project.
11. Click the **Save** button.
12. Click the **Publish** button on the toolbar and publish the project.



pitch about why this individual would make a great potential employee.

You may want to ask a representative or two from local businesses' HR departments to review the portfolios online for feedback on the qualities as if they were looking to hire individuals for a position. You could also invite these people to your class to view presentations and provide feedback!

Assessment

Initial assessment should begin by having students turn in their web graphic organizers for a quick review before receiving a storyboard. This will give you insight as to whether the students are on the right track to completing their person's portfolio. A mini-conference may be needed for students who are struggling with the structure of information.

Have students write a reflection on what they have learned about the value of using a web graphic organizer to help them recall and organize information. Once the reflective journals have been written, the oral presentation can be assessed in two ways: a rubric and a peer evaluation write-up based on the quality and completeness of information given.

Resources

Gifford, Clive.

1000 Years of Famous People

McLeod Humphrey, Sandra.

Dare To Dream!: 25 Extraordinary Lives

Bio True Story -

<http://www.biography.com/>

Biographical Dictionary -

<http://www.s9.com/>

Standards

Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts - Grade K-12 Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation

NETS for Students:

1. Creativity and Innovation

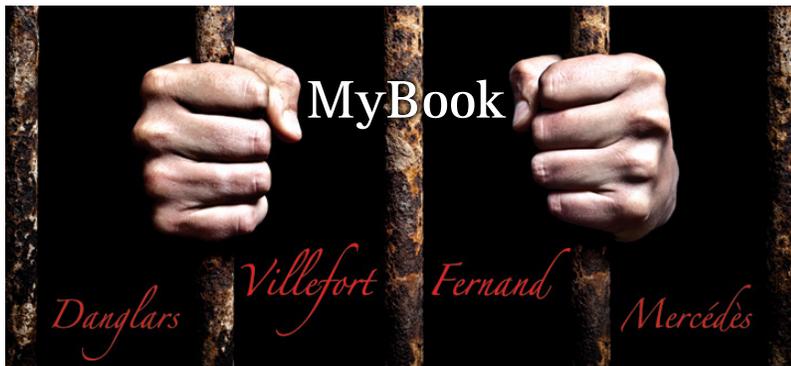
Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.

2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

3. Research and Information Fluency

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.



Identifiers

Grade Level

6–12

Subject

Language Arts

Duration

2 weeks

Objective

Students will analyze the protagonist or antagonist in a novel they are reading and examine that subject's relationships to other characters in the story.

Description

Students will create a mock social network page from the viewpoint of the protagonist or antagonist in a novel they are reading.

Application

Share™

Process

Authentic Task

Creating characters for a story requires writers to invent a new person. When we read novels, authors provide details about these characters through descriptive sentences, events that directly involve the character, and what other characters think and say about the main character. In this project, students will take on the viewpoint of a character in a novel they are reading, creating a mock social network page using Share's MyBook social network template that

reflects information they have analyzed for this character.

Engage

Social networking is transforming the way we communicate. This popular medium of expression can engage students in content they are learning in the classroom.

Share with students a few business or professional social network sites. As a class, discuss what differences there may be between a personal social network page versus a professional or business page. Then, discuss how use of text, individual responses, photographs, and videos make an impression on the reader. For example, how do wall posts reflect the relationships between people?

Ask students what they noticed about how network site profiles reflect the business or individual they represent. Prompt students to discuss profile text, pictures, videos, friends, and conversations.

Ask students to reread a novel of their choosing, focusing their attention on the protagonist or antagonist. Have students complete a double-entry journal to take notes on the selected character and events that take place during the story. Remind students to include events that the character is directly involved in as well as what other characters in the novel say about them.

Create

Next, students will need to analyze the character and start to identify the important things to include in their social network page. The more they understand

the actions, behavior, and events the character is involved in, the easier it will be to create a profile page from the character's point of view. Having students complete a character attribute map is a great way to help them gain a deeper understanding of the character.

Once students have completed their notes, have them reflect on ideas that are specific to their characters. For example, a student reading "Kindred" by Octavia Butler might post something on Dana's wall about how, as a character in Franklin's group, you've missed her in the five years you have been gone. Since students will be commenting on the main character's status posts from the perspective of another character, prompt them to think about the point of view other characters have about the main character. Print out the pages from the MyBook template in Share to use as a storyboard for the project.

Page 1 – MyBook Wall

The heart of a social network profile, this page should include photographs, illustrations, and videos of the main character and their friends, status updates and quotes from the point of view of the main character and replies made by the character's friends.

Page 2 – Information Page

Some of this information may need to be created and should be relevant to the character's actions, behavior, events, and relationships.

Page 3 – Pictures and Photographs

This page should contain images that reflect events important to the main character. Students may choose to illustrate some of the images.

Once students understand how to share analyses of their characters using mock social networking pages, they should begin gathering resources from the Internet, using the illustration tools to create artwork, and searching for clip art in the Share Library.



Steps for Students

Creating a MyBook profile for a character in Share®

Students can use the tools in Share to create a social network profile.

1. Launch Share.
2. Click the Open button.
3. Click the Templates option in the list on the left.
4. Open the Design folder and open the Projects folder. Double-click the MyBook template.
5. Text boxes are already in place. Double-click the text boxes to enter the appropriate text.
6. Adjust the settings for text boxes using the Options panel.
7. To insert photographs into placeholders, click the Library tab and either navigate for a photo in Pics4Learning or browse to a folder containing images you want to use.
8. Locate the image and drag and drop it into the appropriate square.
9. Use the illustration tools and illustrate the character and friends.
10. To insert a video, click the Insert menu and choose the appropriate media type. If you choose an online video source, you will be prompted for a URL. Choose the Image or Movie option to use a movie on your computer.
11. Click the Save button on the toolbar to save the MyBook profile as you work.
12. Click the Publish button on the toolbar to publish the site to HTML, PDF, or Flash.



Once students have completed their preliminary work, they should use the tools in Share to create their character's MyBook profile.

Share

Have students share their finished MyBook profiles in small groups with other classmates who have read the same book. Compare and contrast MyBook profiles across the class to explore the effectiveness of this medium of communication with writing and supporting illustrations and movies. Share these projects with others in your school Your Librarian or Media Specialist may be interested in posting student work to a station in the media center/library as a way to get other students interested in reading the books that includes these characters.

Assessment

The double-entry journals and character attribute maps provide insight to the direction students are heading with their project, helping to avoid wrong turns and ensuring successful completion of the project. Short meetings with each student during the process will help you assess their progress and identify any misconceptions.

The final MyBook profile will help you assess each student's analysis of the main character and evaluate their ability to communicate ideas using multimedia elements.

Additional Ideas

Science—Element from the Periodic Table

Math—Geometric figure

Social Studies—Historical figure

Resources

EdWeek – Digital Directions:
<http://bit.ly/c1IDXX>

TeacherTube:

<http://bit.ly/fkgBK5>

Kist, William R. *The Socially Networked Classroom: Teaching in the New Media Age*
ISBN-10: 1412967015

Cook, Colleen. *Frequently Asked Questions About Social Networking*
ISBN-10: 1448813298

Standards

Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts - Grade 6-12 Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate task, purpose, and audience.

a. interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.

b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.



Entice Your Reader

Identifiers

Grade Level

5–12

Subject

Language Arts

Duration

2 Weeks

Objective

Students explore character, plot, and theme and learn to write persuasively.

Description

Students write a compelling script and use Pixie to create a booktalk in the form of a movie trailer to promote a book they have read.

Application

Pixie®, Wixie®, or Frames™

Process

Authentic Task

Between iPods, cell phones, portable game consoles, and TV, kids are spending less time reading than ever before. The local public library is looking for a way to promote reading to elementary students. They have asked you to create a short digital booktalk – like a movie trailer for a book – that they can use in the children’s section of the library.

Big Idea: *How do I get a young reader hooked on a book?*

Engage

Getting students to read isn’t always easy. Choose one of your favorite books and share it with your students in a way you think will get them excited about reading it. Then, tell why it was your favorite book.

Ask students what gets them excited about reading. Is it the characters? Is it the setting, an exciting plot, interesting themes, or a personal connection with the story?

Let your students know they will be using Pixie to create a booktalk in the form of a movie trailer to promote one of their favorite books.

First, have students determine which book they want to promote. Then, have them answer the following questions:

Have I read another book by the same author?

Did I like it as much as this book?

What genre is this book?

Is this a book part of a series?

Do I have a personal connection to this book?

To better advertise their book, students need to be able to identify the theme. Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are BIG ideas, like friendship, love and courage. For

example, when a character stands up for a friend in a story, we can infer from their actions that friendship and courage are themes in the story.

Common themes your students can look for in their books include:

- | | | |
|------------|---------|-----------------|
| friendship | love | cooperation |
| courage | loyalty | determination |
| fairness | anger | being different |

As a class, explore how authors use themes to guide their writing. Ask students to reread important parts of the book and take notes as they analyze the book’s characters, setting, and plot to determine the theme. The actions of the main character are a great place to look for the theme.

To gather information students can use to develop their booktalk, use graphic organizers like thought webs and the 5 W’s to show the central theme of the book as well as events in the story that relate to the theme.

Create

Next, have students prepare a script for their booktalk. An exciting script should include:

An interesting hook.

A vivid description of an event that supports the theme.

The title and name of the author at the conclusion.

A call to action.

Remind students that showing the story is more effective than trying to retell the story. As they write the script, have them think of the booktalk as a movie trailer. Their goal is to leave the viewer with a compelling reason for checking out that book!

To transform the script into a video, it is helpful to have a storyboard or map of each student’s vision. The storyboard should include information about which



Steps for Students

Creating a Booktalk in Pixie™

Students can use Pixie to combine text, narration, sound, illustrations, and images into an exciting multi-page booktalk.

1. Launch Pixie. It will open to a single blank page.
2. Click the **New** button on the toolbar to add more pages.
3. To create your own illustrations, click the **Paint** or **Shapes** button on the tool palette.
4. To add a Pics4Learning image as the background, click the **Open** button and navigate to the Pics4Learning folder. Once you have an image selected, click it and choose **Open**.
5. Click the **Library** tab to locate clip art or to insert an image using the Browse for a File option.
6. Click the **Text** button to add text to a page.
7. Use the formatting options in the **Options** panel to change how the text looks.
8. Click the Record button at the bottom of the Options panel.
9. To use a sound effect instead of narration for a page in Pixie click **Options** from the menu bar and select **Choose Sound File**. Reminder, Pixie can only have one sound file per page, whether that be narration or a sound file.
10. Click the Save button to save the booktalk as you work.
11. You can add music to the background of your booktalk by choosing the storyboard view from the View options at the bottom left of the screen. Then check the Background Sound box on the Options panel.
12. Click the **Edit** button next to Background Sound to select the music file you want. Use the Volume slider to adjust the volume of the song.
13. Click the **Projects** button on the toolbar and choose **Export**. Then select the desired video output.
14. Click **Create** and choose your video output.



portion of the script each scene will include and what images and sound files will be used to support it. When the storyboard is complete, have students begin gathering images, music, and sound effects to support their vision.

Have students use Pixie to build their booktalk. They can use images from Pics4Learning, or illustrate using the paint tools to create their own images. They should record their script, add sound effects, or background music to match the tone and purpose of the booktalk.

Share

Share the book trailers with the rest of the class or play them on the morning announcements to encourage others to read the books. The librarian may choose to show the trailers in the library as other classes come in for their scheduled library time. If your district or community has public access television, try to get your students' booktalks aired. This is a great way to encourage the entire community to read!

Assessment

The final booktalk is a great summative assessment of student skill communicating in a visual medium. During the process, you can assess progress using students' notes and thought webs. Having students turn in their scripts and storyboards prior to creating the booktalk animation will help ensure that they are on the right track.

You may also want to look at time management strategies and help students develop a project calendar.

Resources

Littlejohn, Carol. *Talk That Book: Booktalks to Promote Reading*
ISBN: 0938865757

Scholastic

<http://bit.ly/scholastic-book-review>

Children and Student Book Reviews

<http://www.buildingrainbows.com/>

Mount Saint Vincent University Library

<http://www.msvu.ca/library/bookrev2.asp>

Standards

Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts - Grade 5-12 Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently

Writing Standards

Text Type and Purposes

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.