Title of Session: Arts and Literacy - NGA Storytelling Institute
Moderator: BJ Berquist
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BjB: we'll wait a couple more minutes to see if anyone else is going to join the discussion

RachelA: ok, I'm actually really interested in integrating technology into the classroom, so this should be really useful for me

BjB: let's start with introductions, please.

BjB: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

BjB . o O (cool, Rachel...this should be very interesting for you)

MarshaR: I'm from Kansas and teach in a middle school

BjB: a little background on the institute

RachelA: I'm a math teacher in New York but I'm also the technology resource teacher in my school

BjB: this was the third and last digital storytelling institute that the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC offered

BjB: participants spent a week in Washington and in the NGA listening to speakers and then actually creating our own digital stories

ToniWa joined the room.

BjB: the speakers demonstrated various forms of storytelling

BjB: hi, Toni

RachelA: wow- that sounds great

ToniWa: Hi!

MarshaR: hi

BjB: each participant was supposed to arrive at the institute with a script for their story

RachelA: what age group?

BjB: on Wednesday we met Joe Lambert and Emily Paulos from the storytelling center in California

JosephU joined the room.

BjB: the participants in the group were educators...

BjB: everything from Museum educator to K-12 teachers...both art and other disciplines

BjB waves hi to Joe

JosephU waves

BjB: take a look at www.storycenter.org

BjB . o O (Joe and Emily work at the storycenter)

RachelA: this is great web site

BjB: on the first day a few of us read our stories...

BjB: which ranged from stories about quilts to stories about loss and renewal...very wide range of topics

BjB: we brainstormed ideas and made suggestions about the shared scripts

BjB: then, we had a tutorial on using iMovie

BjB: this is a Mac program. There are similar programs for the PC

MarshaR: I was just going to ask...is it mostly making movies from still pictures or video

RachelA: Did you or the other educators talk about maybe asking students to develop these stories? It looks like a great way to integrate a subject with technology.

ToniWa: Are iMovies hard to do?

RachelA: It looks like you could use Microsoft power point and add movie clips???

BjB: Marsha, we used mostly still pictures, but also captured images from moving pictures to extend the panning feature

BjB: Toni, we had some excellent help

BjB: Rachel, the whole purpose of the institute was to use the information we learned with our students

BjB: any other questions?

BjB: iMovie allows you to turn still photos into a moving series of images with interesting transition effects between the photos and pictures

MarshaR: I'm interested in using this kind of approach with math and sicence kids

BjB: absolutely, Marsha!

JosephU: Microsoft PhotoStory (a free download) is a windows product for similar projects

BjB: right, Joe

ToniWa: Is there a "sample" we can see?

BjB: take a look at www.nextexit.com

JosephU: I'm interested, like Marsha, into extending this technique to have students create projects which go beyond the personal (not that there's anything wrong with personal!)--into different kinds of content areas--making links to broader (or more "academic" issues and themes).

BjB: you can use the process with any discipline, Joe.

MarshaR: I would love to make a movie about percents

BjB: the process certainly allows you to extend any idea or concept

BjB: that could be a lot of fun for the kids, Marsha

MarshaR: doesn't that crack you up...especially given the arty looking pictures that I see as examples

JosephU: I've seen some good examples Rina Benmayor at Cal State Monterey Bay http://lumen.georgetown.edu/projects/posterTool/index.cfm?fuseaction=poster.display&posterid=178 and other members of the Digital Storytelling Affinity Group of the Visible Knowledge Project http://lumen.georgetown.edu/projects/posterTool/index.cfm?fuseaction=poster.display&posterID=191

BjB: the storycenter link has some good resource links too

JosephU: With my own students, I've been working on Digital Poetry Projects (using MS Powerpoint as Rachel suggested above). It's a very powerful tool for student learning!

BjB: our workshop was primarily to use artwork to tell stories...since it did take place in the National Gallery

RachelA: Did you or the other educators talk about maybe asking students to develop these stories? It looks like a great way to integrate a subject with technology.

MarshaR: that also interests me quite a bit....did you use the actual artifacts or did you use digital images of them

BjB: Powerpoint is good, but it has the same traps and pitfalls as any other electronic medium...don't lose the message in the bells and whistles

BjB: yes, Rachel, the teachers learned about storytelling so that we can have our students do it

JosephU: Very true. One of the best lessons for students is to think about the bells and whistles--using them intentionally and for definite reasons, instead of just because they're there.

MarshaR: with the explosion of CC licensing, I would think we are opening up new possibilities for students to use photos

JosephU: BJ, I missed some of the beginning. What about audio? Did you use music, or just narration?

BjB: both, Joe.

BjB: we did have a sound room where we recorded our narration

JosephU: I find that for some students, music really adds to the power of the experience. But for some faculty members who have seen the student projects, they found the music distracting.

BjB: the leaders of the institute recommend that you invest in a good sound system

MarshaR: BJ....how did you use the NGA artwork to help students tell their story?

JosephU: Personally, I think that the recorded narration and music together are excellent. And moments of silence, too.

BjB agrees...you have to be careful with the music. And of course there are copyright issues

RachelA: yes I agree- recorded narration adds something

BjB: we used paintings and sculpture to add interest and to help explain parts of our stories

MarshaR: I've struggled with adding both narration and music to Moviemaker stuff

MarshaR: until this summer when I've discovered Audacity

JosephU gives thumbs up to Audacity

BjB: one thing that we had to do was make sure our script was only one page of double spaced type

MarshaR: now it's easy to create audio files with multiple tracks, export them as mp3s and use them in MM

BjB nods about Audacity

RachelA: I teach in an inclusive setting and students with disabilities really like the opportunity to work with technology and record their voices and use music

ToniWa: At what grade would you begin with in making these movies? Is upper elementary appropriate? Can you simplify it some?

MarshaR: Why only 1 page? length of movie?

BjB: that was another thing that was demoed, Rachel....

BjB: how special needs kids can really blossom with their storytelling

JosephU: I also find it's a good technique for students with limited English skills. They can't always easily express their understanding of a poem in a traditional paper, but they can use this medium much more effectively.

BjB: Toni, we saw examples of movies done by 3rd grade, but I think 5th grade was a bit easier

BjB: the movies were only about 3 minutes long

JosephU: I would imagine that below 5th grade you would need some skilled support staff--and small class sizes (isn't that always the way?)

RachelA: yes- I've seen that too (children really like the opportunity to tell stories instead of the writing component)- it could really be seen as an alternate assessment

BjB: if you work with paintings or prints of artwork, sometimes really great stories can be told

ToniWa: My special needs students normally do much better when they can use technology.

BjB: http://www.nga.gov/

ToniWa: My students love telling stories based on art. It gives them a springboard.

MarshaR . o O (Hopes BJ is going to say more about using prints to spur great stories)

BjB agrees with Toni...it's especially good with ESL/ELL students also

RachelA: in my school system we have lab aids that can assist students in first and second grade- of course what they produce is a lot simpler- but its great to get them involved in computers as early as possible- with the right supervision

BjB: I just posted the NGA site.... http://www.nga.gov/

BjB: you can search the gallery for art images

JosephU: On the other hand, I have found that sometimes, for some students, especially older students (and older students from other countries, too), the technology can be quite daunting at first. That's when pairs or small groups can be very good--less intimidating.

BjB: good idea, Joe

ToniWa: Great site!

MarshaR: You know I would love to kind prints of grids...

MarshaR: I'm using a hundreds chart in math...and I know that much of art is based on grids similar to a hundreds chart

RachelA: yes I agree with you Joe- I try to make heterogeneous groups when assigning groups for a project like this

MarshaR: how would I search for such a theme inside a print?

BjB: Marsha, look at www.backflip.com/members/BjBerquist

BjB: there is a folder for art and math

MarshaR: I usually drown in fractal pictures...but not much else

BjB: with some cool sites on tessellations and grids

JosephU: There's something about this kind of project that really motivates students--the multimedia nature...the way it can be "published"...the fact that it's new or cool or different...I'm not sure what exactly. Last year I had a student with a broken finger (Olympic Judo trials), and every week he would come in and take the cast off his finger, just so he could work on his project. I've never seen a student do anything like that for a *term paper*!

BjB: try http://www.nga.gov/kids/zone/wallovers.htm Marsha

RachelA: Marsha- there is also a cool video "Donald Duck in Math-Magic Land" - it is Donald Duck taking a tour in Greece and he goes into Fibonacci numbers, and the golden ratio

RachelA: how have parents responded to these projects of video storytelling?

BjB: Parents are very excited about the projects

RachelA: that's good

BjB: here are some "educational examples" from Joe Lambert's book

BjB: www.alaskacenter.org/idida_movie/index.html

BjB: oops...404

BjB: let's try the next one. www.scott.k12.ky.us/technology/digitalstorytelling/ds.html

BjB: www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/jan02/banaszewski.htm

RachelA: those were some excellent examples- you can really get a feel for all the different types of stories students can create

JosephU nods

BjB nods.

BjB: the one most important things I think I learned from the experience

RachelA: I think the one about dr. king looks very moving

BjB: is that EVERYONE has a story to tell

ToniWa: Those give me some great ideas!

RachelA: I agree with you!

BjB: there are many storytelling sites, listservs and groups

BjB: there is also a storytelling group here in Tapped In

BjB: if you would like to join The Art of Storytelling the group room has quite a few resources

ToniWa: This would also be a great alternative to book reports, history reports etc.

RachelA: can the storybooks be saved to a diskette? or do they need more memory?

BjB: oh, my gosh, yes!

BjB: Rachel, the stories are pretty big

BjB . o O (even the short ones)

RachelA: so a CD would probably be better?

BjB: yes.

JosephU: I tried to join the storytelling group earlier today...waiting for approval!

RachelA: Bj- I want to thank you for this discussion- I learned a lot and will definitely pass on the information I received here and try to incorporate it in my own practices as well

JosephU: Hear, hear!

RachelA: thank you good bye

JosephU: Thank you much, BJ

BjB: nice to hear, Rachel. Thanks

JosephU: Good night.

BjB: the group was created at a meeting at the U of VA Curry school of ed

ToniWa: This was wonderful! Thank you! I can't wait to try my own story.

BjB: Julie Springer from the NGA was participating and the group was created to support the digital storytelling institute

MarshaR: I found some great pieces in Wayne Thiebaud's work...this site could be just the ticket to what I was looking for....

BjB: I can't wait to hear your story, Toni

BjB: cool, Marsha. Did you find the art on the NGA site?

ToniWa: Goodbye!

BjB waves goodnight

MarshaR: yes thanks.

MarshaR: Learned quite a bit and appreciate the helping hand

BjB: excellent.

MarshaR: bye everyone

BjB waves goodnight to Marsha