

## The Power of Storytelling: Digital Storytelling 2.0

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In 2007 and beyond, being a learner means being connected and it means understanding how to develop connections through online networks. These connections, and the networks they reside within, form the basis of a personalized learning network that literally can make learning a 24/7 endeavor that involves co-learners and co-teachers from around the globe. Central to this ability to learn online, to participate online, is the ability to craft messages that tell stories, and provide meaningful impact in today's immense mediascape. Schools need to prepare students for a lifetime of storytelling so that students can have a voice, and a voice that is heard.

What does this mean for digital storytelling? Is there a different kind of digital storytelling on the horizon, a digital storytelling 2.0 if you will?

**What would digital storytelling 2.0 look like?** This presentation examines five components of digital storytelling 2.0.

- 1. New Media:** how can students take advantage of what others have created, and how can they contribute their own media to become collaborators? How can the process of digital storytelling help students understand intellectual property rights, through such things as Creative Commons?
- 2. New Tools:** how can the new online tools be used to literally create an online design studio, capable of distributing content in multiple formats for multiple types of devices?
- 3. New Composition Strategies:** Educators and students alike have become increasingly proficient in their ability to identify and manipulate various tools in the crafting of digital stories. However, to achieve richer stories with deeper meaning, story crafters must explore the “why” of these techniques to create a second, and sometimes third layer of meaning in the complex interplay of images and words.
  - **Movement (panning and zooming):** *Slow zoom out* gives an object a sense of place or setting. *Slow zoom in* gently focuses the viewer and draws attention to a particular object or person. Occasionally, a *quick zoom in* can add a dramatic effect that abruptly jerks the audience to pay attention to something on the screen. A *pan* creates an illusion of a storyboard, revealing information as it coincides with the narration. One note: most times, a left-to-right pan is preferred. Use right to left only to create an “uncomfortable” effect for the viewer.

- **Transitions:** In most cases, only three different transitions are desirable. We tell students to think of transitions as punctuation marks. A *cut* (or no transition) is like *no* punctuation, or at most, a comma. A *dissolve* (or a cross fade) is like a period. A *fade to black* is closest to an “enter” or a new paragraph, suggesting a change in thought or time passing--the longer the black, the longer the ellipsis.
- **Text as art:** Aside from titles and credits, text on the screen (used judiciously) can greatly enhance a production. Text can be used as the narrative line itself giving a “storybook quality.” Occasionally, text can be used as a caption to coincide with either narration or song lyrics. A more creative approach might use printed words as a “silent” conversation with the voice over, or even a poignant quotation on a blank screen to set the tone or “seal the deal” at the end can be quite dramatic.
- **“Performing” the story:** One of the gifts of DST is the ability to make words jump of the page and dance, sing, moan or cry through the use of voice. When “rehearsing,” the story should be “performed” and not “read.” Awareness of pacing, inflection, volume, tone, and mood must coincide with, or consciously juxtapose from the image on screen. A narrator may even need to take on two or more different “voices” within the story.

**4. New Messages:** how will you help students find the personal story in the content you teach? How will you use this process to have students create truly meaningful messages that enable students to tell a global audience, "Here is what I think?"

**5. New Networks:** how can networks be leveraged for distribution of student voice? How can networks be amplified to enlarge the message? Can this be done safely, within the expectations that schools and communities have for student relative to online safety?

Many schools have had a great deal of success using digital storytelling as a learning process. Those same schools can continue to enrich and grow their program to provide the most compelling and meaningful experience for students by focusing on the next iteration of digital storytelling-digital storytelling 2.0.