

Digital Storytelling in Electronic Portfolios: Using Reflection on Experience to Improve Learning for K-12 students and Teacher Professional Development.

Abstract (25 words):

Digital stories are short video clips, with the learner's voice, illustrated with still images. This highly-motivating strategy uses multimedia technology to engage learners in reflection.

Objectives of the Program

Participants will become aware of using the process of digital storytelling in electronic portfolios for K-12 schools, teacher education and professional development

Participants will understand the role of digital storytelling in improving reflection on deep learning.

Evidence Base (research, expert opinion, theory)

Electronic portfolios can have multiple purposes: as assessment tools to document the attainment of standards (a positivist model--an assessment portfolio); as digital stories of deep learning (a constructivist model--a learning portfolio); and as digital resumes to highlight competence (a showcase model-- a marketing/employment portfolio).

In her recent webcast on "Electronic Portfolios: Why Now?," Barbara Cambridge of the American Association for Higher Education, identified these principles of **deep learning**, which involves reflection, is developmental, integrative, self-directive, and lifelong. An electronic portfolio should support all five of these principles.

Research reported at AERA in the last five years (Breault, 2000; Placier, Fitzgerald, and Hall, 2001; McCoy & Barrett, 2004; Wieseman, 2004) has highlighted dissonance in the portfolio development process in teacher education. Instead of viewing their portfolios as lifelong learning tools that they want to use with their own students, teacher candidates are being "turned off" by the high-stakes assessment goals of the current tools that meet institutions' data collection requirements, but do not give them the individuality to express their own voice in the stories of their learning journey. The challenge for teacher educators is how to encourage teacher candidates' intrinsic motivation to maintain these e-portfolios as a lifelong professional development tool, and to model a process that also works with K-12 students. Experiences with electronic portfolios in high schools also mirror the issue of student motivation. How can we create an environment where learners want to maintain an electronic portfolio?

There is a need to implement and research technology tools and strategies that support the constructivist approach, such as **web logs** (Tosh & Werdmuller, 2004) and **storytelling** (McDrury & Alterio, 2003) that each promote using reflection and experience to improve learning. Schön (1988) states, "...storytelling is the mode of description best suited to transformation in new situations of action" (p.26). Schön also points out:

"Stories are products of reflection, but we do not usually hold onto them long enough to make them objects of reflection in their own right.... When we get into the habit of recording our stories, we can look at them again, attending to the meanings we have build into them and attending, as well, to our strategies of narrative description."

Content to Be Presented

The ancient art of storytelling can be a powerful tool for deep learning and reflection, Add today's multimedia technology and you have a highly motivating project-based learning activity as well as a powerful artifact in an electronic portfolio. A digital story is a short digital video clip, usually told in first person narrative with the learner's own voice, illustrated primarily with still images, and often with an added music track. In this presentation, participants will see examples of digital stories created by learners of all ages, learn about the principles of Digital Storytelling, and the variety of strategies that can be used with diverse learners, from kindergarten through graduate school and into retirement.

Methods of Presenting Content

A special web site and online web-based discussion will be established for this session, to highlight exemplary practices. After a brief introduction to examples of digital stories, participants will be shown where other examples can be found online. There will be opportunity to discuss the digital storytelling process, and become aware of many resources that can be accessed when they return to their home schools.

References

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