Digital Stories of Deep Learning in ePortfolios
or YouTube meets “academic” MySpace

Helen C. Barrett, Ph.D.
Researcher and Consultant
Electronic Portfolios and Digital Storytelling
for Lifelong and Life Wide Learning

Themes
• Context
  – 21st Century Learning
• A Brief Look at ePortfolios
  – Definition
• Digital Storytelling
  – Multiple Purposes
  – Portfolios, Digital Stories and Reflection
  – Lots of Digital Stories

Voice
Individual Identity
Reflection
Meaning Making
New Literacy

Based on 2 papers online
• Authentic Assessment with Electronic Portfolios using Common Software and Web 2.0 Tools
• Purposes of Digital Stories in ePortfolios
  – http://electronicportfolios.org/digistory/purposes.html

“Voice matters”
“Building meaning”
“Building personal knowledge”
Why Digital Stories in ePortfolios?

• Reflection is the “heart and soul” of portfolios
• Digital Stories can humanize any model of ePortfolio
• Digital Stories add VOICE

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills

New Framework for 21st Century Skills

1. Creativity and Innovation
2. Communication and Collaboration
3. Research and Information Fluency
4. Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving & Decision-Making
5. Digital Citizenship
6. Technology Operations and Concepts

The World in Flat

• Thomas Friedman, New York Times Columnist
• A look at the change and globalization since Y2K

The Right Stuff - Learning in a Flat World

“How we educate our children may prove to be more important than how much.”

Abilities for a flat world:
1. Learn how to learn
2. CQ (curiosity) + PQ (passion) > IQ
3. People Skills
4. Right Brain Stuff

Friedman, 2006
A Whole New Mind

- Daniel Pink
- Balancing Right-Brain skills for the ‘Conceptual Age’ with Left-Brain skills from the ‘Information Age’

6 Essential High-Concept, High Touch Aptitudes

1. **Design** (not just function) - create objects beautiful, whimsical, emotionally engaging
2. **Story** (not just argument) - the ability to fashion a compelling narrative
3. **Symphony** (not just focus) - synthesis-seeing the big picture
4. **Empathy** (not just logic) - forge relationships - care for others
5. **Play** (not just seriousness) - laughter, lightheartedness, games, humor
6. **Meaning** (not just accumulation) - purpose, transcendence, and spiritual fulfillment.

Resource on Biology of Learning

- Enriching the Practice of Teaching by Exploring the Biology of Learning
- James E. Zull
- Stylus Publishing Co.

The Learning Cycle

David Kolb from Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, adapted by Zull

- Concrete experience
- Observations and reflections
- Formation of abstract concepts and generalizations
- Testing implications of concepts in new situations

Experiential Learning Model

- Practice
- Concrete experience
- Testing implications of concepts in new situations
- Observations and reflections
- Reflect on the experience
- Metacognition
- Learn from the experience

Storytelling as a Theory of Learning

- Two educators from New Zealand - staff developer and health educator
- Relates storytelling to literature on learning and reflection
- Provides stages of storytelling related to reflection
Learner Ownership and Control of Electronic Portfolio Development

Learner Control vs. Organizational Control
Assumption:
Greater Learner Control leads to more Intrinsic Motivation

The Power of Portfolios

Author: Elizabeth Hebert
Publisher: Jossey-Bass
Picture courtesy of Amazon.com

From the Preface (1)

“Portfolios have been with us for a very long time. Those of us who grew up in the 1950s or earlier recognize portfolios as reincarnations of the large memory boxes or drawers where our parents collected starred spelling tests, lacy valentines, science fair posters, early attempts at poetry, and (of course) the obligatory set of plaster hands. Each item was selected by our parents because it represented our acquisition of a new skill or our feelings of accomplishment. Perhaps an entry was accompanied by a special notation of praise from a teacher or maybe it was placed in the box just because we did it.”

From the Preface (2)

“We formed part of our identity from the contents of these memory boxes. We recognized each piece and its association with a particular time or experience. We shared these collections with grandparents to reinforce feelings of pride and we reexamined them on rainy days when friends were unavailable for play. Reflecting on the collection allowed us to attribute importance to these artifacts, and by extension to ourselves, as they gave witness to the story of our early school experiences.”

From the Preface (3)

“Our parents couldn’t possibly envision that these memory boxes would be the inspiration for an innovative way of thinking about children’s learning. These collections, lovingly stored away on our behalf, are the genuine exemplar for documenting children’s learning over time. But now these memory boxes have a different meaning. It’s not purely private or personal, although the personal is what gives power to what they can mean.”
Let's get personal...
Think for a minute about:

Something about your COLLECTIONS:
Suggested topics:
• If you are a parent, what you saved for your children
• What your parents saved for you
• What you collect...
• Why you collect...

Some issues to consider
• What do your collections say about what you value?
• Is there a difference between what you purposefully save and what you can't throw away?
• How can we use our personal collections experiences to help learners as they develop their portfolios?

The power of portfolios [to support deep learning] is personal.

Portfolio tells a Story

"A portfolio tells a story. It is the story of knowing. Knowing about things... Knowing oneself... Knowing an audience... Portfolios are students' own stories of what they know, why they believe they know it, and why others should be of the same opinion."
(Paulson & Paulson, 1991, p.2)

Helping Students Tell Their Stories

• COLLECT more than text documents
  – Pictures
  – Audio
  – Video
• Focus on REFLECTION over time
• Help students make CONNECTIONS
• Support multimedia presentation formats

What is a Portfolio in Education?

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress and achievements in one or more areas [over time].
(Northwest Evaluation Association, 1990)

What is a Portfolio in Education? (2)

The collection must include:
• student participation in selecting contents
• the criteria for selection
• the criteria for judging merit
• evidence of student self-reflection
(Northwest Evaluation Association, 1990)
Reflection: The "Heart and Soul" of a Portfolio

A Dozen Purposes for DS in EP

Voice & Personality

Digital Storytelling Process

Portfolio Processes

ePortfolio Components (Becta, 2007)

< Multiple Portfolios for Multiple Purposes
< Multiple Tools for Multiple Processes
< Single Digital Archive (for life?)

Traditional + Technology

- Collecting
- Selecting
- Reflecting
- Directing
- Celebrating
- Archiving
- Linking/Thinking
- Storytelling
- Collaborating
- Publishing

Learners create a 1–4 minute digital video clip

- First person narrative
  [begins with a written script ~ 400 words]
- Told in their own voice [record script]
- Illustrated (mostly) by still images
- Music track to add emotional tone

Reflection:

- Transition
- Decision
- Benchmarking
- Development
- Change over Time

Introduction of Self
- Voice & Personality
- Legacy
- Biography
- Memoir

Artifacts
- Evidence of Collaboration
- Documentary
- Record of Experience
- Oral Language

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Voice & Personality

- Voice is often missing from electronic portfolios, both literally and rhetorically.
- A digital story provides that voice: listening to the author, we hear a real person, getting a sense of their unique personality.

Victoria's 1st Grade Reflection
Family Legacy

- Digital stories can provide us with an opportunity to leave a legacy of our family stories for those who come after us.
- Legacy stories are usually told about a person or place.

*Heritage School - 8th Grade Language Arts Class*

- My Sister Sarah
- Steven’s Mom
- Andrei’s Story
- Danika’s Story
Biography

• A biography provides the facts about a life, whether of the storyteller or another person.

Victoria’s 2nd Grade Autobiography

Memoir

• Whereas a legacy story is told for or about another person or place, a memoir is very personal, told in the first person, focusing on the memories of the storyteller.
• Memoirs are autobiographical in nature, but are much more personal and reflective.
• They are often much longer than a typical digital story.

No Ideas
Jonathan Isaac
Reflection - Transition

- Some learners reflect on the major changes or transitions in their lives.
- Reflection can help us make sense of these changes.
- Telling digital stories could also help the transition to retirement or any other major life change.

Coming Full Circle

Reflection - Decision

- Digital stories can be used to either weigh the options in a decision to be made.
- Or document the process used to make decisions.

Choices

Benchmarking Development

- At each point (of development) a digital story snapshot would be an extremely appropriate part of a portfolio.

Key School Portfolio

Change over time

- Maintain a collection of work over time.
- Recognize when growth and change has occurred.
- Reflect on the changes they see in their own performance.
- Process has the potential to increase students’ self esteem.

Victoria’s Kindergarten Reflection
Evidence of Collaboration

- Much of the work in both schools and the workplace is the result of collaboration
- A digital story could provide explanation of the process.

Documentary

- A digital video can take the place of a research paper or a PowerPoint presentation.
- Story takes on characteristics of a documentary, often fact-based without emotional content.

What is Digital Storytelling?

Record of Experience

- Often no concrete product that can be represented in a discrete artifact.
- Could be used to reflect on and document an experience
- Could provide the final evidence of a project-based learning activity

Chevak
Oral Language
- learning to speak in a second language
- early childhood students learning to read in their native language
- learners record their voice, speaking or reading out loud at different stages of development
- demonstrating growth over time.
- "podcast" could be an audio-only digital story without the visual component

Rich Digital Artifacts
- Showcase student work with explanatory narrative

Naya’s Drawings

Voice = Authenticity
- multimedia expands the "voice" in an electronic portfolio (both literally and rhetorically)
- personality of the author is evident
- gives the reflections a uniqueness

How to Develop Digital Stories
Process and Tools
Process to develop digital stories
1. Script development: write the story, often with a group called a story circle to provide feedback and story development ideas
2. Record the author reading the story (audio recording and editing)
3. Capture and process the images to further illustrate the story (image scanning and editing)
4. Combine audio and images (and any additional video) onto a timeline, add music track (video editing)
5. Present or publish finished version of story

Tools for Creating Digital Stories
- Microsoft’s Photo Story or MovieMaker2
- Apple’s iMovie or Final Cut
- Microsoft’s PowerPoint
- Adobe’s Flash
- Many other software options

Microphones
Belkin TuneTalk
Samson USB Mic

Web 2.0 Development Tools
- Collaborative writing tools (for script development and collaborative writing):
  - GoogleDocs or any wiki
- Online Tools for Video Editing
  - BubbleShare
  - PrimaryAccess
  - JumCut
  - EyeSpot
  - PhotoBucket
- Online Tools for Audio Recording
  - Odeo
  - Podomatic

Finding Images & Audio on the Web
Image Search Engines
- Google Images
- Picsearch
- AltaVista
Audio Search Engines
- AltaVista
- Singing Fish
- FreePlayMusic

What’s Your Story?
Richness not possible in print
Audiences worldwide but most likely small and intimate.
An Effective Tool for Teachers

- Stories Created by Teachers Can Serve:
  - As a Lesson Hook
  - As a Way to Integrate Multimedia into the Curriculum
  - As a Way to Make Difficult Content More Understandable
  - To Facilitate Classroom Discussion

Bernard Robin, University of Houston

An Effective Learning Tool for Students

- Research Skills
- Writing Skills
- Organization Skills
- Technology Skills
- Presentation Skills
- Interview Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Problem-Solving Skills
- Assessment Skills

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Digital Stories and e-Portfolios

- Highly motivating project-based learning activity
- Powerful artifacts in electronic portfolios
- Importance of reflection in e-portfolios
- Tools for scaffolding reflection: blogging and digital storytelling
- Storytelling: reflection on experience to improve learning (McDrury & Alterio)
- The role of reflection in brain-based learning (Zull)

Name Tags

My Reflection on my own Professional Learning for my Professional Portfolio
My Final Wish...

May all your electronic portfolios include dynamic celebrations and stories of deep learning across the lifespan.

Dr. Helen Barrett

- Researcher & Consultant
  Electronic Portfolios and Digital Storytelling for Lifelong and Life Wide Learning
- eportfolios@comcast.net
- http://electronicportfolios.org/