Digital Storytelling in Electronic Portfolios for Reflection and Deep Learning
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Themes
• Portfolios
• Assessment for Learning
• Reflection
• Storytelling
• Digital Storytelling
• Examples

Digital Stories and e-Portfolios
• highly motivating project-based learning activity
• powerful artifacts in electronic portfolios
• the importance of reflection in e-portfolios
• tools for scaffolding reflection: blogging and digital storytelling
• overview of the literature on reflection and learning
• some new perspectives on storytelling as reflection on experience to improve learning (McDrury & Alterio)
• the role of reflection in brain-based learning (Zull)

The Bottom Line:
pedagogical and theoretical justification for integrating digital storytelling into the curriculum

A tale of two paper portfolios
• High School graduates in Washington state (and Utah, too!)
• High school freshman in NY (Jim Mahoney, Power and Portfolios published by Heinemann)

What's the difference between those two stories?
• What are the variables that produce these extremes in attitudes toward ownership of portfolios?
What is a Portfolio in Education?

What goes into that type of portfolio?

"The Blind Men and the Elephant"

• Eskimos having 49 different words for “snow”
• Those who don’t live in that environment tend to see it all as the same cold white stuff
• Same goes with “portfolio”

Metaphors!

• Mirror, Map, Sonnet
• C.V. or Multimedia Resume
• Test
• Story

• http://electronicportfolios.org/metaphors.html

Purpose & Goals for the portfolio (Determine Content)

• Multiple purposes:
  – Learning/Process
  – Assessment
  – Marketing/Showcase

A few thoughts about Assessment – What Type?

• Assessment OF Learning? or
• Assessment FOR Learning?

What is your portfolio?

• A standardized checklist of skills? (Positivist)
  or
• A reflective story of deep learning? (Constructivist)
Reflection
The “Heart and Soul” of a Portfolio

What is Reflection?
• Major theoretical roots:
  – Dewey
  – Habermas
  – Kolb
  – Schön
• Dewey: “We do not learn from experience...we learn from reflecting on experience.”

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

Jennifer Moon’s Definition
• Reflection is a form of mental processing – like a form of thinking – that we use to fulfill a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome. It is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge and understanding and possibly emotions that we already possess (based on Moon 1999)

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
Maxine Alterio, Helen Barrett, Janice McDrury
December 9, 2004 - Dunedin, New Zealand

**Links between Learning and Storytelling**

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<td>Noticing</td>
<td>Story finding</td>
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<td>Making sense</td>
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<td>Making meaning</td>
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<td>Working with meaning</td>
<td>Story processing</td>
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<td>*Transformative learning</td>
<td>Story reconstructing</td>
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**Storytelling as Reflection**

(Schön, 1988)

"...for storytelling is the mode of description best suited to transformation in new situations of action."

**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)

**Linking Two Dynamic Processes to Promote Deep Learning**

- Portfolio Development Process
- Digital Storytelling

**Linked to...**

- Online Portfolios
- Digital Storytelling
- Blogs & Wikis
- Games
How might an e-portfolio support development of personal knowledge?

How might an e-portfolio support reflection and development of metacognition?

Digital Storytelling is BOTH...
HIGH TECH and
HIGH TOUCH

Why include Digital Storytelling in ePortfolios?
Learner Motivation and Affect
Brain Research on Emotion in Learning

Deep Learning
- involves reflection,
- is developmental,
- is integrative,
- is self-directive, and
- is lifelong
Voice = Authenticity

Where is the “voice” in most electronic portfolios?

Digital Paper or Digital Story?

Digital paper = text and images only
Digital story = tell your story in your own voice.

Multimedia = audio and video

A high school student inquiry

“I am a student in high school. Why is it mandatory for me to make a proficient on my portfolio for me to graduate? I have all of my credits to graduate, but if I make lower than proficient I don’t get to graduate.”

How would you answer this student?

Read my complete answer in my blog: http://electronicportfolios.org/blog/

My final advice to that student:

Remember, you are telling us a story, and not just any story. Your portfolio is meant to be your story of your life over the last four years as well as the story of where your life might be going during the next four years: tell it with pride!

(adapted from the Mead School District’s DRAFT Guidelines for Culminating Project)

Researching Digital Storytelling

On the DVD-ROM:
- A set of research questions and suggested research strategies
- A set of rubrics for evaluating digital stories (based on Scott Co. Schools - KY)
- A literature review on digital storytelling