Voice in ePortfolios: Telling My Story

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

Based on 2 papers in Proceedings

- 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

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**

Website with links to movies

http://electronicportfolios.org/digistory/purposes.html
Digital Storytelling Process

- Learners create a 2-4 minute digital video clip
  - First person narrative
  - Told in their own voice [record script]
  - Illustrated (mostly) by still images
  - Music track to add emotional tone

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)

Learner Ownership and Control of Electronic Portfolio Development

Motivation
- Intrinsic
- Extrinsic

Process
- Contents
- Smell,

LEARNER CONTROL

ORGANIZATION CONTROL

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

A Dozen Purposes for DS in EP

- Introduction of Self
- Voice & Personality
- Legacy
- Biography
- Memoir
- Artifacts
  - Evidence of Collaboration
  - Documentary
  - Record of Experience
  - Oral Language

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

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
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.

Legacy & Jonathan

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.

Dad & No Ideas
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 & Changes**

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 and Changes**
Benchmarking Development

- (Joe’s Kean podcast)
- at each point (of development) a digital story snapshot would be an extremely appropriate part of a portfolio

Change over time

- Ss maintain a collection of work over time
- Ss recognize when growth and change has occurred
- Ss 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.

How to Develop Digital Stories

Process and Tools

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 - Audio

**Mac**
- **Audacity** O/S
- SoundStudio ($50) T=14 days
- GarageBand* (Apple's iLife06 Tools)
- iPod and microphone

**Windows**
- **Audacity** O/S
- **Audio Record Wizard** ($25 S/W)
- Any Windows-compatible audio recording program
Tools - Image Editing

- Mac
  - iPhoto*
  - GIMP (O/S)
  - Graphic Converter ($30 S/W)
  - Photoshop Elements ($100)
  - T= 30 days

- Windows
  - GIMP (O/S)
  - HP Image Zone Express
  - Graphic Converter ($20 S/W)
  - Photoshop Elements

Tools - Video Editing

- Mac
  - iLife Tools:
    - iMovieHD & iPhoto
    - Garage Band
    - Photo To Movie ($50) T= watermark
    - Pro Tools: Final Cut Express ($5)
    - Final Cut Pro ($$$)

- Windows
  - Microsoft MovieMaker2
  - PhotoStory3
  - Slide Show Movie Maker
  - Photo to Movie ($50) T= watermark
  - Premiere Studio ($80-$90) T= 15 days
  - Ulead VideoStudio ($100) T= 30 days
  - Adobe Premiere Elements

Microphones

- Belkin TuneTalk
- Samson USB Mic

Web 2.0 Production Tools

- Collaborative writing tools (for script development and collaborative writing):
  - Google Docs or any wiki

- Audio editing tools (primarily created to capture and publish podcasts online):
  - odeo.com, podomatic.com

- Video editing tools (primarily created to create and publish short video clips online):
  - BubbleShare.com, JumpCut.com, PrimaryAccess.org

Web 2.0 Publishing Tools

- Image sharing tools (primarily created to share images online):
  - Flickr.com, PhotoBucket.com

- Media publishing services (primarily created to share video online):
  - vimeo.com, ourmedia.org, youtube.com

What's Your Story?

Richness not possible in print
Audiences worldwide but most likely small and intimate.
My Final Wish...

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

Dr. Helen Barrett

- Research Project Director, The REFLECT Initiative sponsored by TaskStream
- eportfolios@comcast.net
- http://electronicportfolios.org/