> DIGITAL STORYTELLING IS THE MODERN EXPRESSION OF THE ANCIENT ART OF STORYTELLING. DIGITAL STORIES DERIVE THEIR POWER BY WEAVING IMAGES, MUSIC, NARRATIVE AND VOICE TOGETHER, THEREBY GIVING DEEP DIMENSION AND VIVID COLOR TO CHARACTERS, SITUATIONS, EXPERIENCES, AND INSIGHTS.
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> – Leslie Rule, Center for Digital Storytelling

DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROJECT WITH CHILDREN (Field-based Digital Story, "Kid Story")

You will work with one child to create a digital story. This should be in your field placement with a student you teach. If this is not possible, you must let your instructor know ASAP! Ideally, your storyteller is in a classroom setting as this is closest to how you will use this approach in your future career.

You will meet with the child and talk with him/her about a story they wish to tell. It is important to take your cues from the child as you guide them to a topic or idea. If they aren't sure of an idea, you can suggest one or offer them a variety to choose from the list below. NOTE: If you approach this by suggesting a theme or topic it is ESSENTIAL that the student has as much freedom and choice as possible. For example, giving a child a story starter (fill in the blank) or a coloring sheet and then telling them to choose words to describe it is not digital storytelling. This is not good practice so don't do it! Also, this is not to be a writing sample from another assignment but a story the student comes up with "from scratch" as a result of your work with him/her.

After determining a topic - next, focus on creating the first "draft" of the story. This may take different forms based on the developmental level and abilities of your students. They can dictate and you write; they can write in their journals; or you can orally conference and then coach them in telling their story. Another approach that also works is that they may first wish to choose visuals they want to use for a story and then write a script to go with it. Either way, this step is about **generating the story idea** and then **fleshing it out with the more detailed parts**. NOTE: Some students do this after they use a storyboard to organize their ideas. You may use either process depending on which makes the most sense for the particular project and child that you are working with.

After your student has decided on a story and begun to create it, do some informal storyboarding to decide the sequence of the story (e.g. beginning, middle, end) and how they would like to organize their story. This can be with digital images they have taken with a camera, images they (with your help and supervision) select from the internet, and/or pictures they draw and scan to digital format. NOTE: If they start with images, the storyboard will help with the "telling" or narration part - matching text to images.

You will also work with them on how they wish to tell their story. It is a requirement that their voices are included and if you need help with obtaining a means to record their voices, please let me know and I can help. They should use a headset to record directly onto the computer (e.g. as we have done in class) or on a digital voice recorder which can be checked out from Misty Colton or Dr. Nickles. You can also use an iPad to record audio and or construct the story as with 30 Hands. AUDIO IS A CENTRAL COMPONENT AND IF IT CAN'T BE HEARD, THE STORY SUFFERS!

At this point, you and your storyteller have determined the story focus, the images and words they wish to use, and any other elements such as music which is optional and not required - MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ADHERE TO FAIR USE GUIDELINES (where possible use CC or royalty-free such as those from the resources provided in class).

You will next use a digital tool to construct the story with and for the child. We will do this process in class, so you'll have all the skills you need by this point in time to be successful with this project and support your student to create something **they can be invested in and proud of**; this may be as important as you getting a good grade on the assignment!

Ideally, you will assemble the story with some help from the child (if they are very young you may have to do it and have them watch). Please make every attempt to do this if possible as this is the best way to learn how you'll structure digital storytelling when you are a future teacher.

TIP: Share the story with the child throughout the process and get their response to it as this is part of the reflection on the process.

USE THE TEMPLATE AVAILABLE IN BLACKBOARD FOR YOUR REFLECTION (3.5 to 4 pages – no "fluffing" with hard returns)

Submit 1) your Vimeo link WITH PASSWORD, 2) your storyboard in a format I can access (you may use the template in Word), and 3) your reflection in word format using the template - ALL as attachments in BlackBoard under the "Field-Based Digital Storytelling Project" link.

AND ALWAYS - if you have questions, please ask for help!!

DUE DATE: Check the course web agenda http://bit.ly/digilit

POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR YOUR DIGITAL STORIES WITH CHILDREN
NOTE: Only suggest these if your student doesn't have an idea!

- A Day in the Life of Me or A Day in the Life of My... Classroom, School, Best Friend, Teacher, etc.
- Ask a thoughtful question of a group of kids and have them choose 1-3 images that illustrate their answer. For example, What is your happiest place to go?, What really matters? What does it mean to be free? What is family? What is our community like?
- You many also choose non-fiction stories to tell such as those that relate to a topic they are studying in the curriculum (e.g. The Story of the Statue of Liberty, How Does a Frog Develop?, We Use Math Every Day) **BUT there must be freedom of choice about how they want to tell the story.** Matching facts to images is not really digital storytelling but rather a multimedia presentation; there has to be a personal connection of some kind.
- Family stories about parents, siblings, extended family members, pets.
- When I Grow Up, I..........
- My Hero - profile a memorable person or perhaps a famous person that the child/children respects or idolizes.

A good resource for more information is a Digital Storytelling wiki at http://bit.ly/9VCqa0

IMPORTANT TIPS

- For recording on the computer, use a headset and test it to make sure the recorded audio is at the proper levels
- When students draw their illustrations: Don't use lined paper and Do use color (go beyond plain pencil)
- Keep the story between 1 (no less than) and 4 (no more than) minutes
- Write down your Vimeo password carefully
- If taking a photo of the student's illustration, center and frame correctly the image so that there is not a background to distract (e.g. table, carpet)

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- **Do NOT video record a child reading a story or holding a picture and talking about it. This is not a digital story!**