

Free and Easy Digital Animation Storytelling

Chris Scott

Santa Ynez School

Grade Levels: 7-8th

Subjects: History, Technology

Project Summary: Students adapt and develop a history lesson to animate. Students choose from a variety of free web 2.0 animation resources to create the story. Utilizing a variety of Language Arts, Social Science and NETS Standards the students develop the history lesson for the animation program. This project was well received and got students excited about learning. This project caused students to move higher on Blooms taxonomy to synthesize their knowledge into an appropriate digital storytelling animation.

Introduction:

Students worked on this project while learning about Medieval Islam in the 7th grade Social Studies class. Specifically students were charged with “Using as many slides as necessary, demonstrate that you understand "Life as an Arabian Nomad".” The animation programs use the slide feature where each scene is a slide. After introductory lessons on the topic students must design the animation on paper. This initial design takes on many shapes and should be very “rough.” After I have reviewed the rough draft the students are allowed to begin the digital animation. As part of the introduction I introduce a variety of web 2.0 animation sites that are free, easy and school-friendly. Students are given time to explore a few of the options that they decide may work for them. Digital storytelling works because it encourages the use of digital tools, inventive thinking, effective communication and high productivity.

Student Impact:

Students learn the appropriate state-standards while exploring digital tools. This project provides students an opportunity to extend their learning and apply it in an animation. Also students will be introduced to a variety of web 2.0 animation programs that could be used for future projects, in various classes. Digital storytelling promotes digital age literacy, inventive thinking, effective communication and high productivity all the qualities educators hope to incorporate in projects.

Students benefit when the responsibility of learning is placed in their hands. Students will leave this project having developed their ability create visuals from conceptual knowledge. Students benefit by enjoying the learning process.

Assessment:

I believe in developing assessments with the students. You can start with the two I mentioned above:

Links to rubrics and further information regarding digital storytelling:

its.ksbe.edu/dst/PDFs/Rubrics/digstorysample.pdf

http://21stcenturyteaching.pbworks.com/w/page/833431/Digital%20Storytelling

This site has great resources regarding digital storytelling:

http://teachnology.pbworks.com/w/page/19978623/Digital%20Storytelling

Standards:

Various NETS for Students:

2a. Student understand the ethical, cultural, and societal issues related to technology.

3a. Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

3b. Students use productivity tools to collaborate in constructing technology-enhanced models, prepare publications, and produce other creative works.

4a. Students use telecommunications to collaborate, publish, and interact with peers, experts, and other audiences.

4b. Students use a variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences.

History/Social Science standards:

- Teaches research methods and communication skills
- Develops listening, questioning, analyzing, and storytelling skills
- Integrates individual/family history with local, California, national and international history in context of time and place – brings history to life!
- Illustrates cause and effect, importance of life choices, values, character
- Shows role of family, community, institutions, government in individual life
- Supports respectful communication with elders
- Supports empathy across generational and ethnic/racial divides

"The use of biographies...and other narrative artifacts from our past is encouraged to foster students' understanding of historical events by revealing the ideas, values, fears and dreams of the people associated with them. Found in archives, museums, historical sites, and libraries across California, these original materials are indispensable resources. The State Board hopes schools will take advantage of these repositories and encourage students' direct contact with history."

History/Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools (Intro. page vi)

Materials/Budget:

Access to computer with internet connection. It is helpful for your students to have their own email address. Google Apps for schools is free and safe for schools. Our students have their own laptops that the school has supplied making a digital project very easy. I believe most schools at least have a computer lab available.

With the grant monies I will purchase digital video cameras to enable my students the step from animation to film-making.

Lesson Plans:

Day 1:

Prerequisites: working knowledge of subject matter

Time Required: 45 minutes

Resources needed: Computer with internet connection

Process: Students have been introduced to the material and are at a point where they feel comfortable to do more exploring on their own. Explain the project and your goals of the project. Set up a timeline with specific dates on the work students should have completed toward the completion of their project. Establish a working rubric that your students agree is appropriate for the project. Offer the several web 2.0 animation programs for the students to explore. Allow the students about 20 minutes to explore the programs on their own. Don't expect the students to be ready to design and make their own animation yet. The purpose of this step is to allow the students exploration to help determine the style and flow of their animation. Each animation website works a little bit different and the students can adapt their ideas to best fit the animation site they choose.

After the 20 minutes of exploration ask the students to begin drawing up a basic rough draft. Students can use a simple 6 or 9 box story board template to draw a rough draft, or if they prefer to write they could write up an explanation of each scene. The following is a list of web 2.0 animation sites that my students have liked:

goanimate.com

doink.com

memoov.com

fluxtime.com

<http://www.abcya.com/animate.htm>

toondoo.com

pixton.com

<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/>

Links to rubrics and further information regarding digital storytelling:

<its.ksbe.edu/dst/PDFs/Rubrics/digstorysample.pdf>

<http://21stcenturyteaching.pbworks.com/w/page/833431/Digital%20Storytelling>

Day 2:

Prerequisites: working knowledge of subject matter and a rough draft of animation (see day 1)

Time Required: 45 minutes

Resources needed: Computer with internet connection

Process: 30 minutes: Students should have finished their rough draft animations and are ready for critique and improvement. This class should be dedicated to the refining improvements to better ready the students draft. I suggest allowing the students to share with others in various sized groups to gather feedback and help from their classmates. The teacher should be the "guide on the side" during this process. Allow the students to help each other. Set up a few guiding questions that help the student-reviewers provide valuable feedback.

Last 15 minutes could be used for group feedback and discussion. Students should decide

which animation program they are going to use.

Days 3-5:

Prerequisites: working knowledge of subject matter, updated draft of animation.

Time Required: 45 minutes

Resources needed: Computer with Internet connection

Allow the students to work on their animation project. As with most web 2.0 sites your students will need to make an account. You can use a joint email account or hopefully all of your students have a Google apps email account. The teacher should help the students not as much with the technical side of animating, but helping them stay on track to meet the appropriate state-standards. This will likely take 3+ days depending on how much you ask of your students. I tend to start with a big question leaving much of the responsibility up to the students. My charge to the students was to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of life as an Arabian Nomad. Students are free to decide how many scenes they think are necessary to adequately satisfy this requirement

A few examples from my students:

<http://goanimate.com/movie/0o6Mg71PHicw?utm%255Fsource=embed>

<http://www.doink.com/clips/KmKiller/1794808/nomads>

http://goanimate.com/movie/0Y4rSetxCuJA?utm_source=embed&uid=0hcZJKJACUOY

<http://goanimate.com/movie/0ukfJJXQJ2j8?utm%255Fsource=embed>