IMPROVING LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH DIGITAL STORYTELLING FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS

By

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To my husband Taylor for all of your love and support throughout this process. To my family for all you have encouraged me to do and help me become the educator I am today.
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Storytelling is perhaps the oldest form of education. History presents itself as a collection of information passed on for generations to come. Some of the greatest stories have come from all over the world and from various cultures, sometimes intermixed to form a new and exciting adventure painted inside a child’s canvas mind. Storytelling has been a lifestyle or even a religion as Romans and Greeks have evolved from legends of old and numerous gods depicted for honor and recognition. Each story creates a feeling of any kind. Love, hate, happiness, anger, pity, envy, and joy are sometimes interwoven as a story evolves and the message becomes clearer (Smeda, Dakich, & Sharda, 2014). With these concepts in mind, I am hoping to answer the question: What is the impact of digital storytelling on improving primary students’ language skills?

In 2016, I began my teaching experience three years ago in a small rural town in the southwest corner of the state in the upper Midwest. My journey to teaching has taken me on a journey I could only imagine. Growing up in the 2000s up in a rural area in Northeast Iowa, I was surrounded by amazing and encouraging teachers that supported me through all of my learning and growing experiences. After attending the University of Northern Iowa in 2016 as an undergraduate, I wanted to further pursue my education in literacy and work towards helping students deficient in reading and writing.

I have always loved reading and want to pass that desire on to my students. My first job was as a kindergarten teacher which provided a great challenge and yet, the great growth of learning and excitement to continue learning with students. In 2017, I transitioned into first grade the next year with some of the same students and continued to
pursue a desire to continue my understanding of how I could better support my students' literacy instruction. For me or as a teacher, the conveying of stories creates the question: Where does our story then begin?

**Chapter Overview**

In chapter one, I will explain my rationale for choosing this topic and the importance it has on the development of literacy in primary grades. I will give examples of my experiences with technology in my classroom and how storytelling and digital storytelling create an impact on how young students learn and perceive informational text and reading development. Within this chapter, I will also give insight into the cognitive theories and introduction to the research included in chapter two. The purpose of this chapter is to give an idea of the experiences that have influenced my knowledge of this topic and how I can better understand the impact of digital storytelling in order to improve language development in the primary grades.

**My Technology Experience**

As a first-grade teacher, I see the primary grades of education as some of the most important and fundamental years a child will learn to comprehend, interpret, and transfer information. Based on Jean Piaget’s theory of cognitive development (Tracey & Morrow, 2017), a child’s brain development progresses so quickly during this age and the amount of information they take in and begin to understand is mesmerizing. At this age, children are beginning to decode sounds and produce words based on phonemic awareness and metacognition within connections to stories and their underlying meaning (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Based on what children begin to understand at this age from literacy
development and instruction, technology plays a role in how students comprehend as well as communicate their language skills.

Since the early 1980s, technology in schools appeared and students were taught how to use and create materials from resources described by teachers and literature. Sweeney-Burt (2014) discusses that as time progressed, more and more schools began adapting to 21st-century learning devices and received grants for Elmo machines, tablets, iPads, Chromebooks, smart boards, etc. Projectors and movie screens were replaced to make room for more innovative devices designed to engage students to the highest level of education and help their knowledge progress at a faster rate. These resources have begun to foster a relationship that alters how a child reads a story to how a child listens to a story (Sweeney-Burt, 2014).

Since starting to teach in 2016, the majority of my students find storytelling to be very appealing and will often tell versions of the stories to their peers. I also observe that many of my students are drawn to visuals and will draw or write about the stories on their own as well. Storytelling can be a captivating and intriguing skill just by itself, but as technology advances, so does the opportunity for messages once spoken only by tongue to be translated and developed into a screen with images and added features that help readers visualize and connect to messages in another way. Students are drawn to visuals and grasp onto anything that will help them understand the words appearing before them.

According to Tracey and Morrow (2017), many times, young students have difficulty entering the primary grades with little to no social skills which further inhibits their ability to communicate and connect to peers around them. As they are asked to branch out and begin the reading process by decoding sounds, syllables, and words, they
can shut down with the paralyzing anxiety that they cannot speak or read a text in front of others. Storytelling can be such an amazing gift for those that have a soaring imagination and have been exposed to fluent and cognitive reading strategies while reading texts to gain more concepts to share. For those that cannot progress beyond a couple of words, digital storytelling has a way of presenting these students with material that they are able to listen to with their own abilities and comfort, as well as develop their own tales. To get a better understanding of how language develops, I will take you back to my childhood experiences, and the efforts that caused me to dig deeper into reading.

**Storytelling**

Storytelling is something I have always enjoyed and even remember one of my first memories with my grandmother was her reading to me on the couch after preschool. For me, there is something about storytelling that causes a sense of wonderment and imagination to a young child. Storytelling is a tradition as old as time and generations have reaped the benefits as it was one of the few communicative structures of the beginning. Today, storytelling in education promotes a wide variety of benefits that encourage cultural understanding, increased curiosity, and development of focus and social skills.

The history of storytelling evolves from a true story or legend and is passed from generation to generation. Since televisions, movies, and radios were not around in times of old, adults, and children created their own entertainment to pass the time and even learn a lesson from the tale. Without storytelling, teachers and students alike would not be connected to the past, we would not know how to create text with a beginning, middle, end, or be inspired to create our innovative ideas. We are able to make predictions as
storytellers, express the desire to hear something for the first time through someone else's eyes, or even, give meaning to our lives.

I include read aloud in my reading block daily since hearing someone read can help students gain a sense of fluency and understand new vocabulary words (Bear, 2000). As I read, my students are listening to the words that are different or amusing. If there is a word they have not heard before or it sounds creative, they will often ask for its meaning which stirs a curiosity to know more. I chose books that really draw them in with cliff-hangers at the end of the chapters in order to leave them wanting more. For this purpose, I often chose mystery stories that always leave my students wanting to know what happens next. I also have my students participate in readers theater (Bafile, C. 2005) having them chose parts and get motivated by acting out scenes and activating different voice analogies. It is amazing to see students react in ways they never would have seen themselves unless they were given the opportunity to do so. Storytelling has a place among historical attributes to language development but with new technologies, storytelling can become more theatrical and influence the way students think digitally.

Digital Storytelling

As 21st-century learning suggests, educators want to build digital citizens that are equipped with skills that help them succeed in a world of technology circumstances and opportunities (Watanabe-Crockett, 2016). Many schools across the state where my capstone will take place have adopted the “World’s Best Workforce” motto from the Minnesota Department of Education where students are taught how to problem solve and determine how to meet the needs and skills of their upcoming generation. Technology plays a large role in education today. Since computers and cellphones, humans, young
and old, have been drawn to devices for their uses, discoveries, and connections to others around the world.

Digital storytelling presents a new kind of discovery within itself. The idea of this technique is a “combination of old storytelling tradition with new technology” (Saponaro, 2017, p. 2). Ever since I have taught in an elementary classroom, my students are able to use numerous technology tools such as iPads, computers, and tablets at their young ages to connect their understanding based on stories and videos they watch daily. My district has one to one devices that allow students to explore various apps that support literacy development. Over the past few years, I have learned about more sites and apps that students can use to read, play games, and follow along with highlighted sections of songs and stories that help them sound out phonemes and break down word families.

Some of the sites I have had my students use for literacy purposes are Epic!, Tumble Books, and ABCya.com (Reading Websites for Kids, 2017). Each of these sites presents opportunities for students to engage in creative learning and skills that allow them to physically engage with the content. The high level of my students' engagement in these sights was evident in January 2019. In January, my students were working for several weeks with these sites. Evidence of their high level of engagement was during this time my students have rushed to me for password logins, so they can build on their lessons and gain rewards from the digital learning perspective. As students logged on to accounts through apps on digital devices, another indicator of their high levels of engagement was seeing them simultaneously cheer as they reach new levels and gain insight into the next task. My experience with these sites demonstrates to me that there is
so much reading love that comes from these opportunities to read digitally and create their own stories from this background knowledge.

**Conclusion**

In summary, there is so much to be gained from stories created and stories listened to. Technology has progressively advanced the way children decipher messages and decoding skills and create meaning from texts. Children and teachers alike are on a journey to discover how storytelling by itself and digitally can captivate audiences with expression, detail, and uniqueness to one another. As an educator, I am learning with my students. Growing up in a world with budding technology, there is so much to teach the young children entering the classrooms today. Saponaro (2017) stated, “We should merge the digital skills with the literate education; this is where teachers still have a role to play, even in the digital age” (p. 2). Throughout this capstone journey, I would like to gain more insight into the best ways to present primary students with 21st-century learning skills while helping them develop a love for reading, listening, and writing. I would like to further my understanding of my research question for this project: *How can digital storytelling support the development of primary students’ language skills?*

**Chapter Overview**

In Chapter Two, I will research professional literature that establishes support for my research question with an introduction into the sociology behind storytelling. I will look into ways the reader can better understand the history and significance of how storytelling supports a child’s literacy development, and the benefits it has on their oral vocabulary. I will include types of technology that has enhanced student learning and 21st-century learning skills.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

In Chapter One I reflected on my experiences with storytelling and read alouds that, in my experience, are necessary for students of primary ages to build on in their comprehension and skill levels. Chapter One explored the foundation of digital storytelling and its impact on today’s society as an era of technology and advances in literacy education. Chapter One also described my reasoning for why this concept is so important and fundamental in my teaching experiences. There are so many opportunities for children to grow in a wealth of knowledge and understanding of beginning reading and writing skills.

With a child’s development in literary components, it all begins with the connections made in pedagogy and their own experiences and environments. In the following quote, Tracey and Morrow (2017) have explained how children engaged in the reading process can greatly benefit from the communication involved in storytelling. They describe how “Engaged readers are mentally active, using metacognitive strategies to build their understanding of the conceptual content of texts” (Tracey & Morrow, 2017, p. 146). Lisenbee and Ford (2017) suggest that the more children are exposed to peer interactions and reading with one another, the more social they typically are and therefore describe in detail about what they are learning and reading. For example, when reading, students can do a “pair and share” that allows them to individually describe their thoughts
and understandings of what they have just read, usually done after whole-group instruction.

This chapter will focus on the literature and research analyzing the progress of digital storytelling with primary aged children. The topics of building literacy through storytelling, implementing digital storytelling in the classroom, how digital storytelling can be used across the curriculum, and looking at who digital storytelling benefits. In the end, these components will better explore the research question for how can digital storytelling support the development of primary students’ language skills?

**Building Literacy Through Storytelling**

Digital storytelling provides great and valuable opportunities for children to become engaged and enriched in the learning content of a classroom. Kolk (2019) discusses attributes of building literacy through storytelling on the site *Creative Educator*, which include reading, writing, listening and speaking, and media literacy (p. 1). The benefit of students starting their literacy journey through digital storytelling is that they are equipped with the basic knowledge and skills they can build on from these attributes.

With reading and writing, students “gather, comprehend, evaluate, synthesize, and report on information and ideas” (Kolk, 2019). Listening and speaking allow for practicing fluency, especially for those who are not confident readers or are new to the English language. Kolk (2019) explains that effective digital storytellers do not just “wing it”, they revise, edit and practice until they have a result they are comfortable with. Finally, media literacy involves building essential 21st-century digital communication skills and knowing how to be effective consumers of media and online information.
**Definition.** Traditional storytelling is “a process where one personalizes what they learn and construct their own meaning and knowledge from the stories they hear and tell” (Behmer, 2005). Since traditional storytelling has existed throughout history, the basics of the oral language and body language are left to interpret the message of a tale or story. Lisenbee and Ford (2017) describe different ways in which children can participate in the activity of traditional storytelling. From orally reading to a peer, using picture cards to tell the sequence of events, or illustrating stories to visually represent what a story is depicting.

While there are different ways to participate in digital storytelling, all forms include many of the same concepts and features as traditional storytelling. However, this particular form of communication is defined by The Digital Storytelling Association (2011) as a “modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling” (p. 47). Digital learning is an up-and-coming feature that many children throughout history have never had the experience of knowing. As children learn to pronounce sounds and transfer them into forms of writing, they are initiating a form of motivation to keep creating new meanings and words (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Kervin and Mantei (2011) suggest that there is a large support for aiding primary students with language skills and confidence in these reading abilities.

**Technology in Storytelling.** As digital storytelling becomes more common in the learning environment, Lisenbee and Ford (2017) note how digital storytelling is one way to use technological devices and tools such as tablets, Smartboards, computers, and iPads. According to these authors, these technological tools provide a way for students to use multiple senses when exploring features and increase engagements to gain a fuller
understanding of what they are using. It is with the use of these technological tools that Lisenbee and Ford (2017) allow digital stories to become more than something being communicated orally (Lisenbee & Ford, 2017).

**Effectiveness in the classroom.** The review of the literature completed for this capstone identified three factors for teachers to be aware of to increase the effectiveness of digital storytelling in the learning environment (Smeda, Dakich, & Sharda, 2014). The three factors are explicit teaching of the digital storytelling process, awareness of the literacy skills that are supported by digital storytelling, and knowledge of challenges to the use of digital storytelling in the learning environment (Smeda, Dakich, & Sharda, 2014). The first factor of teaching the digital storytelling process involves teachers' ability to select stories for student use that instill a sense of fun, emotions, colorful images, effective pacing, a range of characters, and appropriate reading level. Students need to have a sense of connection to the story and characters they are reading about, so they can expand their responses and communicate their purpose to their audience (McTighe & Wiggins, 2013).

The next factor of literacy skills in this process involves a focus on five literary elements that make up a story: setting, theme, characters, plot, and conflict. The last factor of knowledge and challenges in the learning environment asks students to process information through “reading about characters, writing about the theme, illustrating the setting, reporting the conflict, and re-creating a connection with the characters in the story” (Wright, 2008, p. 133). Students will co-construct their knowledge of literary elements as they make connections while appealing to students and meeting their needs as a reader, writer, and creator of digital storytelling.
According to Yuan and Bakian-Aaker (2015), before students can begin the digital storytelling process, they must be prepared in understanding the use of video stories that could include visuals, sound, or text. Students must be enriched on literacy skills that help promote their cognition of reading and writing while being encouraged to facilitate creativity and development of a storyline. Through the process of a child’s story development, young children include themselves as the center part of many storylines which helps them make connections to their own experiences. Boase (2013) stated, “Some psychologists view the construction of personal narrative as being central to the development of a sense of identity because of its potential of giving meaning to personal actions” (p. 4).

Although there are many benefits of digital storytelling, there are a few drawbacks to teaching and exploring the uses of digital learning in primary classrooms. Teachers may not be trained in all aspects of design in order to foster or scaffold young children for storytelling while some students may not have exposure to digital devices or literature at home so their cognitive development to storytelling may be limited (O’Byrne, Houser, & White, 2018).

Furthermore, schools may not have the resources to purchase specific devices for classrooms or have professional development to train teachers on new software (Lisenbee & Ford, 2017). In order for educators to be more effective to work around some of these drawbacks, Troy Hicks (2013) suggests starting small and focusing on one element of the digital process at a time. This way, students are building on each level of instruction and implementing more techniques as they go from writing to recording and gathering information along the way.
**Collaboration and learning.** Xu and Baek (2011) acknowledge that many researchers have determined primary aged students have the ability to become more active learners and participants when they are focusing on the end goal and especially in the writing process. Through the writing process, students learn how to expand their reasonings and connections as they describe and discuss what they see. The writing process becomes the visual of what is being recorded on digital devices and as students dig deeper into the writing process, they should begin to develop an accurate depiction of what they are wanting to communicate to their audience. This will help them identify their purpose and why it is significant to them based on their connections (Watanabe-Crockett, 2016).

When students create a good storyboard with details of what they have learned from various texts, their outcome will be more effective and successful (Xu & Baek, 2011). This begins with traditional storytelling strategies and can then begin using digital tools and applications. As students begin the storyboard process, they learn how to examine details and organize events as they appear. They also learn from other ideas and examples. In addition to enhanced communication and developing connections across digital media, students can also create better organizational skills and converse with peers by gaining confidence in their reading and oral language development (Smeda, Dakich & Sharda, 2014).

**Implementing Digital Literacy**

There are a variety of ways in which digital storytelling can be implemented in classroom learning. *Creative Educator* (Kolk, 2019) suggests going beyond personal narratives to aid students in making deeper connections to content areas. Some of the
ways educators can implement digital literacy components into their lessons are through visual poetry, book trailers, news reports, video biographies, interviews, and public service announcements. These ideas can also be placed into cross-curriculum content areas such as social studies and science (Eades, 2005).

**The basics.** Before students can even begin the process of developing content for their digital stories, they have to understand how features such as visuals, text, and sound all contribute to the creation of stories and their purpose (Watanabe-Crockett, 2016). Depending on the age group of primary students, and the level of cognitive ability they have with reading and writing skills, there are ways educators can help students create and develop formats that help them achieve the goal that best fits their needs.

Yuan and Bakian-Aaker (2015) focus on movie making for readers in grades K-2. They say that by using digital storytelling techniques and devices has the potential for opening up new opportunities for students and inviting in a rich variety of texts for them to explore. As teachers set the stage for their students to develop digital storytelling projects, teaching elements are considered and practiced in phases (Yuan & Bakian-Aaker, 2015).

Helping children select stories, drafting and organizing information, previewing and editing storyboards, peer review, digital tool setup, and features, and finally creating the stories are the steps necessary for a teacher lesson planning.

Sweeney-Burt’s (2014) study found the following:

Equipped with these approaches, teachers can facilitate young children to engage effectively in the development of digital stories, offering teachers a rewarding tool
that supports a range of literacy skills, and can be used in a range of classroom projects to support the development of 21st-century skills. (p. 21)

Potential for struggling writers. Struggling writers are considered those who view capable writers as hardworking, write long paragraphs, and have good penmanship (Bright, 1995). Struggling writers find themselves with little motivation or lack of interest in an assignment that greatly affects their outcome of quantity and quality in writing composition (Graham & Harris, 1997). Fortunately, there are other literacies that help struggling writers to create with their writing and apply connections that are important to them. Among these literacies are technological literacy, visual literacy, media literacy, and information literacy (Eades, 2005).

Struggling writers are not going to write about things that are not interesting to them. Instead, these types of digital literacies offer a “motivation and scaffold understanding of traditional literacy” (Sylvester & Greenidge, 2009, p. 284) for struggling writers. Many times, what limits a struggling writer is the ability to start the assignment or know where to find information conducive to the requirements from basic texts. Instead, by creating digital stories, it invites the students to combine old and new literacies to create a moving picture based on a narrated soundtrack from their chosen topic and implement the information found into writing on a screen (Sylvester & Greenidge, 2009).

Who Does it Benefit?

As technology continues to change and become upgraded, there are differences in how images on the screens appear and how text is presented to students following along in the reading. There are so many ways students learn and process information while
making connections to prior experiences (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). A few of the groups that could really benefit from the experience of digital storytelling and text reading are visual learners, tactile learners, and special education students. Even though there are so many more, I chose to focus on these groups of learners because they are able to take so many sources in and can begin to decipher mental images to fit their needs of comprehension.

Children have been able to use digital literacy as a way to create, become writers, and show what they are thinking. Being very capable of creators of digital work and stories, children are able to be involved in drawing conclusions on their own text and images included in their work (Kervin & Mantei, 2011).

Kervin and Mantei (2011) found that:

Throughout the process of constructing a digital story, we have found children are actively engaged as problem solvers as they make decisions about the images, think about the annotations they offer for images and co-edit these texts into one digital story. (p. 5).

**Visual learners.** Much of what children read and learn from is based on the context of mental images and illustrations that go along with reading (Visual Imagery, 2018). Since birth, children are natural receptors to pictures, colors, and different forms of movement (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). According to an analysis done by Barr (as cited in Collins, 1999), “children’s story drawings and maps of play suggest that children use drawing to communicate stories because they find an iconic mode of symbolization more powerful and more easily manipulated than writing” (p. 85). In my experience, children I have taught in primary grades have used symbols and sounds to describe pictures or
illustrations when enhancing decoding skills. When asking children to retell a story for mastery of sequence of events, students are asked to use pictures and place them in order of how the story was told. White noted that this form of mental image processing is used as a key role in helping children struggles in order to make sense of a story (Collins, 1999).

Through pedagogy, students are constantly making connections to observations while actively exploring their surroundings and build upon prior knowledge (Lisenbee & Ford, 2017). Technology includes many factors and devices that students can use in classroom settings. Students have a wide variety of ways to develop and express information learned. Examples include; reading to a peer, illustrating a storyline, or acting out a Reader’s Theater (Lisenbee & Ford, 2017).

**Tactile learners.** As children observe and process new learning habits, they begin to create beyond just picturing something in their mind. Storytelling mixed with play is a fundamental development for many children in order to make connections and increase visual expression (Collins, 1999). Based on Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development, Smeda, Dakich, and Sharda (2014) state that, children are able to learn through play and hands-on activities while “ensuring students are actively engaged in learning that will make them self-directed, lifelong learners in the long run” (p. 6). Both traditional and digital storytelling have ways for students to make connections and analyze information from texts to build cognitive development and problem-solving strategies in order to be active 21st-century learners (Lisenbee & Ford, 2017).

As digital storytelling becomes more integrated into classrooms, primary students are able to use technology tools such as iPads and SMART boards to enhance their
learning environment. Through the SMART board software and iPad devices, students are able to use their fingers to insert images, use problem-solving strategies by aligning the sequence of events, as well as sorting sounds and words in phonics games and activities. Traditional and digital storytelling alike has the ability to allow students to engage in hands-on applications while “constructing their knowledge of academic standards from real-world experiences” (Lisenbee & Ford, 2017).

**Early childhood and special education students.** Among the ways of creating, visualizing, and enhancing traditional storytelling, special education students can greatly benefit from the activity of digital learning and illustrative features (Bratitsis & Ziannas, 2015). A study has connected the particular theme of empathy to groups of early childhood and special education children. The group of early childhood students was observed when interactive storytelling was presented to them from the theme of empathy. The result was that when students listened to the interactive digital story of *The Sad Little Chicken* and *The Sad Little Bear*, students showed more empathy and compassion towards one another. Through social intelligence, inclusion, and social interaction, the purpose of this study was to help children approach those with special needs and reach out to them to gain an understanding of their social behavior (Bratitsis & Ziannas, 2015).

**Across the Curriculum**

Digital storytelling is much more than just the process of implementing reading and writing strategies in the field of literacy. Digital storytelling can be transferred across all content areas and curriculum standards. Through the content areas of social studies, science, art, music, math, and English, there is a theoretical base for digital storytelling through four different sections of pedagogical study (Niemi & Hannele, 2014). Learner
engagement has motivational qualities that students inspire themselves to have motivation across studies while implementing skills learned from 21st-century learning environments.

A figure in the study by Niemi and Hannele (2014) depicts the four sections of global sharing across the curriculum as digital literacy, collaboration, knowledge and skill creation, and networking. These features in digital literacy and storytelling allow for students to increase social skills, identify cultural literacy and understanding, learn from others, share ideas and experiences, think critically, form arguments and ethics, develop social media skills, and create content meaning. The purpose of this article was to share how the active process of students’ digital work could transform others’ content knowledge and initiate contexts and designs from several perspectives (Niemi & Hannele, 2014).

21st-Century classrooms. Schools today are diving into the approach of supplying students with the learning tools that help them succeed in a fast-paced and changing world using instructional tools that help them visualize and develop understanding through digital stories. Riesland (2005) states, “the combination of powerful, yet affordable, technology hardware and software mesh perfectly with the needs of many of today’s classrooms, where the focus is on providing students with the skills they need to thrive in increasingly media-varied environments” (p. 222). According to Robin (2008), there are seven elements of digital storytelling that create a multimedia story to increase students’ interests when exploring new ideas. These elements are: computers, image capturing devices, audio capturing devices, multiple literacy skills, engaged students and teachers, promoting 21st-century skills, and digital media software.
These elements set the stage for how students create their digital story by allowing individuals to construct their own meaning, edit digital images, research, organize, and present information in a new way that helps them feel accomplished in hands-on activities (Allen & Kelly, 2015).

Both traditional and digital storytelling help support the practice of 21st-century skills in early childhood students. Ohler, Robin, and Swiniarski (2018) state, “the ability to engage students in a variety of literacies, including digital standards across all curriculum supporting global literacy and education” (p. 3). Engagement in learning is one of the best ways for students to fully invest their understanding and commitment to accomplishing goals and completing tasks through the process of creating a digital story. According to Blair (2012), 21st-century readiness for every student comes from combining the traditional three R’s with the four C’s: critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration (p. 5). With these implemented, students are able to provide an effective application to real-world situations and have a cognitive and cultured understanding as they begin life on their own.

**Project-based learning.** Project-based learning is an instructional and learning approach to help students use hands-on approaches when transferring and importing information into an activity rather than just reading or writing about texts (Hung, Hwang, & Huang, 2012). Students are able to collect data, problem solve, discuss, and present the results of the information found. Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1994) state that, “project-based learning enhances the collaboration and the cooperation between group members, reinforcing learning cognition, and promoting learning achievement” (p. 369).
As digital storytelling is introduced among hands-on learning and collaboration with peers, an application of multiple media and software uses the art and techniques with new methods, so learners can become more involved in the learning process (Haigh & Hardy, 2010). A project-based learning study showed the effect of digital storytelling on science learning and motivation among elementary aged students. Groups of students were asked to create short presentations on the topic of saving energy using video clips, images with digital cameras, developing a story based on the uploads, adding titles and subtitles, backgrounds, and finally presenting the story. The results showed the innovative approach “improved the learning motivation, attitude, problem-solving capability and learning achievements of the students” (Hung, Hwang & Huang, 2012, p. 376).

**Developing craftsmanship.** Digital storytelling is not limited to just computers and iPad devices. Students can partake in the virtual world of creativity using VR (virtual reality) headsets that help them visualize various settings and situations. “In the virtual world, students can visit virtual places using the teleporting function, without any constraints of time and space. Through the visualization, they can see the structure of the whole story clearly” (Xu, Park, & Baek, 2011, p. 189). This VR technology allows students the opportunity for open-ended learning and ways for them to interact in ways that time and distance make unavailable.

As cited in Nilsson (2010), Vygotsky, a child psychologist, wrote an essay about a child’s imagination and creativity. In his writing, he argued that “each stage of childhood has its own characteristic form of creativity” (p. 150-151). According to Vygotsky (2004), imagination and actions correlate to children expressing interests in relationships
and other complex forms of creative communication that allow children to learn and imply meaning to situations and their environment (p. 137).

**Progress Monitoring**

According to Tracey and Morrow (2017), many children are capable of learning by doing (p. 57). This type of learning fits the standards for children experimenting with digital devices and making connections to the placement of objects and touch through hand-eye coordination. As young students become more familiar with hand-held devices, they can process information at a higher rate and have texts read to them instead of just sounding them out without instruction. Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2010) address a variety of assessments that are helpful to teachers when educating students on the uses and outcomes of digital learning and literacy strategies (p. 56).

Self-correction strategies during oral reading and running records are some of the formative assessments that link to instructional objectives for student progress (TeacherVision, 2007). Teachers are also able to design multimodal assessments that “strengthen students’ critical thinking, media literacy skills, report writing (Ohler, 2006), and content knowledge in specific disciplines” (Sadik, 2008). Teachers should provide directions and examples that correlate with multimodal learning assessments and allow for peer collaboration that helps students organize information more clearly while using graphic organizers, drawings, or tables. Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2010) state, “when engaged in collaborative assessments, students learn new strategies and adjust their approach to literacy tasks, especially when assessments are used for feedback and guidance” (p. 421).
**Mobile technologies in reading activities.** Students today are in a new era of learning via technological devices that help them communicate faster, complete tasks more quickly, and look up information at the touch of a finger (Yang, Hwang, Hung, & Tseng, 2013). Students are able to turn in assignments online or into “drop boxes” where teachers can review content and provide feedback if necessary. Chao and Chen (2009) address that students can use iPads to scan QR codes that can “link offline information to online content, effectively providing additional information and even multimedia resources” (p. 41).

**Assessment in writing.** There is a lot to be said about the craft of digital writing in storytelling. Whenever young children are involved, there is a need to take a step back and slow down the process as many of them are just beginning their writing journey. Teachers are to scaffold the need for revision and redrafting thoughts to make sense for the understanding of the reader. Teachers like to call this process “teachable moments”. “We use it to describe the times when we have found a valuable and authentic opportunity to teach something useful, something we think needs teaching, to someone who needs to learn it and who is ready to learn it right then” (Glasswell & Parr, 2009, p. 354).

Teaching the writing process at a young age takes time and patience to foster a commitment for young children to see their worth in their own work and creative writing skills. Hicks (2013) book *Crafting Digital Writing* describes the process of creating the vision and goal for good writing. Writing is a very personal journey at times and students can make connections based on their own experiences and understandings of events. Teachers are asked to teach young children the basics while helping them identify how to
transfer, take pictures, or upload documents to share with peers or edit their writing skills. According to Hicks (2013), one of the most important things for students in the writing process is to slow down and “when writers begin to think intentionally about creating meaning in their readers’ minds, they are beginning to master the craft of writing” (p. 13).

**Chapter two summary.** In chapter two, I identified how literacy can be built on in storytelling itself, the implications and usefulness it has in the classroom for students building on prior knowledge and connections, and how students can work together through collaboration by sharing at their own comfort level. I identified the basics of implementing digital tools and technologies in the classroom with ways writers can be encouraged through the process. Digital storytelling can impact many kinds of learners such as tactile, visual, and special education. Everyone learns in different ways and digital tools can even be applied across the curriculum.

Digital storytelling is not limited to the content areas of literacy, it can be used in subjects of social studies, science, and math (Kolk, 2006). These subjects provide many opportunities for students to share their creativity and feel accomplished as growing readers and writers. At the end of this chapter, there is a section that identifies how teachers can monitor the progress of students through their journey of creating and developing storyboards, organizing information, and carrying out projects. Digital storytelling has so many benefits that allow the creator to really think about what they want to invest their time in to. It takes time and commitment but, in the end, the result can show how children are becoming life-long learners when showcasing their achievements as they enter the real world.

**Chapter Three Overview**
In the following chapter, I will provide a detailed explanation of the project based on my research on digital storytelling. Students in the classroom setting and teachers who are interested in a model for integrating cross-curriculum studies for digital storytelling will be my main audience groups. This project will identify how digital storytelling can be used across several content areas such as math, social studies, and science. I will expand beyond the primary age group of students to show how the model can apply to teachers who teach upper-level elementary grades and curriculums. This model will include an eight-week period for implementation depending on the age group and differentiation involved in the setup. I will provide sections on resources teachers can use in addition to the model such as Trade Books and sharing videos with peers. Through this model, I feel teachers can benefit from digital storytelling beyond the confinements of just supporting reading skills in one particular subject or grade level.
CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

The focus of this project is to better explore the findings for my research question of how can digital storytelling support the development of primary students’ language skills? There is a great need in my classroom to help develop students’ reading and writing skills that can be assisted with the use of digital tools and through the creation of digital storytelling. Within this chapter, I designed an approach for teachers to use in their classrooms and presented how digital storytelling can be used specifically in the content areas of social studies and science during a session of professional development workshop days throughout the school year. In chapter two, I addressed the use of digital storytelling formats across the curriculum and how I planned to narrow down those features for teachers to concentrate on for their students’ learning environments since social studies and science are seldom a primary focus in many grade levels.

In this chapter, I discussed the research framework that gives teachers a background on the usage of digital technology tools in the classroom, addressed the curriculum used to pair with Minnesota state standards in the area of social studies and science, and reviewed the setting it will be used in along with the participants. I then described the details of the implementation and gave teachers an understanding of the timeline format in the typical classroom. Finally, I explained the effectiveness of the project and how the assessments measure student accomplishment and benefits.

Project Description
Based on my research of the literature, and observations within my classroom I designed a presentation for a teacher’s professional development workshop on specific days throughout the school year that adhered to the needs of educators who feel like social studies and science curriculums have little focus during many educational years. This workshop focused on the development and implementation of digital storytelling and its technological features with adaptations for K-12 classrooms. Teachers were given an introduction to the background of storytelling and digital storytelling history in the public-school system. Teachers were also provided with samples of digital tools they can use, per the district’s expense to include in their classroom curriculum. These tools would include picture cameras, iPad devices, VR headsets (used in the upper grades as they are more developmentally appropriate for those age groups) and a concentration on PrimaryAccess (Ferster, Hammond, & Bull, 2006).

According to Ferster, Hammond, and Bull (2006), PrimaryAccess is a digital setting online that “enables students to select primary source documents, arrange them to create a sequenced narrative, and project the results via a computer projector for whole class instruction” (p. 149). This setting will take place in a rural setting with the K-12 staff. This particular lesson would be primarily used for social studies curriculum development as it has features for students to create and present documentaries based on past events and people. Even though this is a social studies example, not all teachers have to teach this content, it is one example that teachers can use to adapt to their own teaching specialty. During the showcase of this feature to teachers during the workshop, PrimaryAccess will introduce the steps involved when creating a digital documentary. I will walk them through the items of selecting sources, setting a timeline, writing a
narrative, setting motion, and finally, showing the movie. Each step will be explained briefly to give time for educators to play around with the presented technology features on their own computers or iPads, provided by the school district.

Students can create digital documents to collect, create, and then present information to teachers according to curriculum standards and a preset rubric assessment. The following presentation slide is what teachers were shown around April or May as a way to assess student achievement according to digital media scoring guides (Dorman, 2007).

![Assessing a Digital Story](http://www.digitales.us/evaluating/scoring_guide.php)

For the content area of science, teachers were introduced to the idea of RSL (reflective self-learning). I featured the software for digital video editing of QuickTime Pro, operated by system Windows (Brinkmann, 2017). To break up the time periods throughout the year-long workshop, a selection of sessions was offered regarding ICT (information and communication technology) class lessons. During the back to school workshop, session 1 was an introduction of QuickTime Pro Player, session 2 was
presented in October as a video revision of workprint clips, session 3 was presented in January for adding text, session 4 was presented in March for creating the oral ‘voice over’ or subtitles, and session 5 was the presentation to teachers, parents, or peers in May. Each session within the presentation took about 40 minutes (Valkanova & Watts, 2007). The following slide was shown during the back to school workshop as a way to guide teachers with ways to get started using digital technologies (Dorman, 2007).

Framework and Curriculum

During this technology integration of digital storytelling within the social studies and science curriculums, Valkanova and Watts (2007) suggest using CHAT (cultural-historical activity theory) to self-reflect on their own experiences and apply them to a project throughout the school year. As teachers tie their regular curriculum into the framework of this final project of either social studies or science, it is mainly student driven and they are the ones who investigate, research, develop, and process. Teachers
are the ones who are aiding in project development, assessing, progress monitoring, and helping to apply details with information while working one on one with devices.

For digital storytelling in a science classroom, students will begin with self-reflecting on pieces or topics they are interested in. As they brainstorm and organize their research, the video observation, visual self-narrative, and oral self-narrative all sequence into the overall learning of language development within the content area of what they are studying (Valkanova & Watts, 2007). For digital storytelling in social studies, students are researching based on credible information from sites such as primaryaccess.org and storycenter.org (Ferster, Hammond & Bull, 2006). These lead into setting a timeline (depending on the topic), writing the personal narrative, getting slides, information, titles, and subtitles set up, and then presenting the final product. The following slide was shown in March as an example for students to find resources and gather media content (Dorman, 2007).
Setting

**School district.** The curriculum is designed for implementation in a rural school district in a selection of both upper and lower grade classrooms. Within this school district, there are less than 600 students throughout the K-12 district. This small rural community supports the growth of student learning and outcomes that provide direction for the educational future. Even though the district is small, there are a number of features that make it ideal for learners to engage in the basis of technology and advanced digital tools.

According to the Russell-Tyler-Ruthton district website (www.rtrschools.org), the ethnic demographics are made up of .7% American Indian/Alaskan Native, .3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.8% Hispanic, 1.7% black (not of Hispanic origin) and 93.1% white (not of Hispanic origin). Special needs and English language learners are made up accordingly to the enrollment of student population: English learner 1.4%, special education 8.9% and free/reduced price lunch 27.5%.

**Audience.** My intended audience for this project will be primarily for classroom teachers throughout the K-12 district with the intended use for their classrooms that range in size of students from about 15-25 students. Since I will focus primarily on social studies and science, these content areas will be more useful to classroom teachers who use these standards in their daily teaching. Possible secondary audiences would include school curriculum coaches and leaders in professional development who could use your materials as a model for how to create their own professional development, especially in the area of social studies, science, digital technology tools, or digital storytelling.

**Implementation and Assessment**
Throughout the implementation of this project in the classrooms, teachers used a variety of formative assessments, found in Appendix, Figure 1 and Figure 2, to gauge student learning and understanding while integrating technology tools into the content areas of social studies and science curriculum. The teachers scaffolded the learning of simple tasks on iPad devices and Chromebooks such as setting up accounts on websites used in the project development, touch screen features, an overview of the topic set up. As teachers went through their standards, they picked one or two from the social studies and/or science curriculum and focused on what they wanted their students to accomplish based on those standards (MDE, 2019).

For example, when teachers are implementing standards from social studies using the task of digital storytelling, students might set up an account through PrimaryAccess in order to facilitate sources needed to develop a bibliography on a historical figure. Students can use the features of voiceover to record and develop a storyline about the person’s life and add information in bubbles or text boxes to highlight important information. Using the standards of science, teachers can help students upload and develop research for topics using QuickTime Pro Player. Students may use this on iPad or Chromebook devices to show how plants develop, and the nutrients needed to help them survive. They may choose to add features and subtitles that explain the life cycles and uses they provide.

For a summative assessment regarding both content areas of social studies and science, students will produce a project from apps, sites, or presentations developed and aided through teacher explanation and curriculum learning throughout the year.

**Summary**
Within this chapter, I addressed what I would like to implement for a professional development day at my district that shows how teachers can integrate digital storytelling into the social studies and science curriculum areas. This chapter starts with an introduction and project description of what would be included in the setup of the professional development day and how teachers could join sessions that broke down information on technology devices and digital storytelling itself in the current curriculum. In chapter four, I will describe the outcomes and progress of my project and get a better understanding of my research question, how can digital storytelling support the development of primary students’ language skills?
CHAPTER FOUR

Reflection/Conclusion

Introduction

Since the beginning of my journey to writing and developing a capstone project, my thoughts focused on topics that were current or future driven that would help advocate for literacy development in young children. Since then, I have reflected on my experiences with literacy and phonics teaching in the classroom, researched child development theories, and devices in the classroom that could help aid in creating digital storytelling opportunities in the classroom. The first three chapters of my project were designed to introduce the history and importance of storytelling has on our daily lives, review the literature that has shown successful implementation and skill building for young children to gain confidence in their reading abilities, and finally, design a teacher’s professional development workshop outline that would help establish steps of digital storytelling features in all classrooms. In my previous experiences and guided approach to developing a topic for this project, my goal was to answer the question: How can digital storytelling support the development of primary students’ language skills?

Overview

Within chapter four, I will address the overall topic of digital storytelling in the primary grades of elementary schools, what research has shown as ways for students and teachers to benefit from digital literacy acceleration from theories based on early childhood and how the research continues to aid teachers and students as technology continues to expand and offer more opportunities in schools today. Through this chapter,
I will also review the project I created based on the information I studied and will give examples of ways teachers can use digital storytelling elements in classrooms K-12, specifically in the content areas of social studies and science. From the project description, I will discuss limitations associated with the topic of digital storytelling and where we as teachers can continue to make improvements in the learning for students daily through reading confidence and phonetic identification. Finally, I will conclude chapter four with some closing thoughts and personal success through the research and development of these chapters and capstone overall.

**Literature Review**

Throughout the process of this literacy capstone project, I have developed a greater understanding for the components that develop an achievement of digital storytelling in the classroom today. Digital storytelling is a topic that is far broader than I had initially thought which gave me plenty of information and examples I needed to narrow down in my literature review to make it more specialized with the project I created for this capstone. Regarding the question: *How can digital storytelling support the development of primary students’ language skills?* it all stems down to the finer points of early childhood development and the theorists who helped improve studies in early childhood learning.

Tracey and Morrow (2017) are a phenomenal resource that make up much of the literature review since they have explained how children engaged in the reading process can greatly benefit from the communication involved in storytelling. Digital storytelling provides great and valuable opportunities for children to become engaged and enriched in the learning content of a classroom. Melinda Kolk discusses attributes of building literacy
through storytelling on the site *Creative Educator* (2019), which include reading, writing, listening and speaking, and media literacy.

Sites such as these have benefited teachers globally since technology is so vast and progressive that it allows students to develop listening and speaking skills and provide for practicing fluency, especially for those who are not confident readers or are new to the English language. There are many steps that go into integrating digital storytelling into the classroom, especially in the primary grades because not everything is developmentally appropriate for them and it takes time for students to understand how to use features involved in creating and presenting stories.

Yuan and Bakian-Aaker (2015) best explain that before students can begin the digital storytelling process, they must be prepared in understanding the use of video stories that could include visuals, sound, or text. There are several lessons teachers should teach and describe since students must be enriched on literacy skills that help promote their cognition of reading and writing while being encouraged to facilitate creativity and development of a storyline.

As I went through the research on this capstone, there were many findings on ways to incorporate not only reading but writing to students who struggle with lack of motivation or the ability to develop writing skills in the early grades. Sylvester and Greenidge (2009) says that by creating digital stories, it invites the students to combine old and new literacies to create a moving picture based on a narrated soundtrack from their chosen topic and implement the information found into writing on a screen.

This project really drew me into other topics related to digital storytelling that impacted more than just one kind of student. There are so many ways students who are
visual and tactile learners, special needs, or students who have reading disabilities can benefit from elements featured in digital storytelling. Technology includes many factors and devices that students can use in classroom settings. Students have a wide variety of ways to develop and express information learned. This information led me to the focus of developing a way digital storytelling can be versatile among other content areas besides literacy. This topic has the ability to be shared across the curriculum and used in specific content areas such as social studies, science, math, music, and many more. The literature review for my capstone question prompted me to create a professional development workshop for teachers, narrowed down to the content areas of social studies and science across a K-12 school district.

**Project Description**

The project for this capstone was designed to help educators implement digital storytelling features into the classroom with the aid of digital tools provided at the cost of the school district. In order to reach beyond language arts skills and content, I decided to focus on content areas that are seldom a focus in many grade levels. This project was based on social studies and science integration and presented teachers with ways that would help them increase their student engagement and comprehension of skills throughout the school year they could continue to build on for years to come.

I chose to design a yearlong professional development workshop that would break down features through five sessions starting at the beginning of the year. The sessions were broken up as follows: Session 1 (presented at the back-to-school workshop) was the introduction of QuickTime Pro Player, session 2 was presented in October as a video revision of workprint clips, session 3 was presented in January for adding text, session 4
was presented in March for creating the oral ‘voice over’ or subtitles, and session 5 was the presentation to teachers, parents, or peers in May. A PowerPoint presentation was used to guide the teachers through visuals and information that was also printed out for them to make adjustments and take notes according to their classroom needs.

The purpose of this project is to aid students in self-reflecting on pieces or topics they are interested in for social studies or science activities. As they brainstorm and organize their research, the video observation, visual self-narrative, and oral self-narrative all sequence into the overall learning of language development within the content area of what they are studying (Valkanova & Watts, 2007). The setting for this project is projected for a small, rural school district in south central Minnesota. Even though the district is small, there are a number of features that make it ideal for learners to engage in the basis of technology and advanced digital tools.

The idea of this workshop presentation is for teachers to start small when implementing digital storytelling into their classroom. They will start with picking one or two standards they would like to work on for a goal to be accomplished with digital technology integration by the end of the school year. Depending on what is developmentally appropriate for students in a K-12 setting, teachers will need to scaffold device learning and features that would help students succeed in creating and presenting information based on what they have learned from selected standards.

**Project Limitations**

Even with how far technology has developed, there are still improvements to be made with making software and applications accessible to teachers and students and helping them to work around tedious tasks when creating storyboards and uploading
materials. These issues are very small compared to the issue of availability of tech devices such as iPads, tablets, Chromebooks, and others that many schools cannot simply provide to their students and staff based on class size or budget.

Teachers are limited to the software and tech tools that are available in their schools and some students may not even have these devices at home to work on projects that may be assigned for students to work on outside of class time. Since the project is based on a professional development workshop model, it will be a yearlong process for teachers to be trained on how to implement digital storytelling into their classrooms. Besides being time consuming, not all teachers may find the topic useful to their content area or be able to work it into their schedules or student work time.

Where Do We Go From Here

Despite the limitations of digital storytelling with budget and availability of digital technology tools, there are so many things teachers can do to prepare students for an era of technology advancement. For as long as storytelling itself has been around, digital storytelling is just the beginning to opening windows of opportunity for future generations. Not all stories can be recorded or brought to life, but with the upgraded tech tools at our fingertips, children can make memories and create imaginative storylines for ages to come.

Conclusion/Author’s Thoughts

Throughout the process of this capstone project, many of my thoughts when starting a new section were, *where do I even begin?* There is so much to take in for what seems like a short period of time with research and deadlines. I am so proud of what I have accomplished in my understanding and reading of material regarding digital
storytelling and its benefits in classroom settings. At first, my literature review began with specific studies in the early education years and then continued to expand to the point where I was developing a workshop model for educators in a K-12 school district.

I hope my inspiration for this topic continues to develop and I can take my learning to a new level as I continue to develop and integrate digital storytelling features into my lessons and students’ cognitive development. I am certainly someone who enjoys a good story, whether it’s full of humor, encouragement, perseverance, or just someone’s experience, one can always find a reason for it to be told.
REFERENCES


doi:10.1016/j.procs.2015.09.267


doi:10.1080/00405840802153916


doi:10.1186/s40561-014-0006-3


APPENDIX
Figure 1. Grades 1-6 Storytelling Rubric (Paul, 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Story Elements</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student explains</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characters, setting,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and main events.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content/Ideas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student stays on</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>topic. Student clearly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explains story events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Style and Voice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student shows own</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personality. Optional:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student uses different</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice pitches.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fluency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student has a variety</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of story elements.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story is complete and</td>
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<tr>
<td>makes sense.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Choice</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student tries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interesting words</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and/or tries not to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeat too many words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student uses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transitional words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story events are in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>order and has a clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beginning and ending.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2. Grades 7-12 Storytelling Rubric (McKinney, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 Points</th>
<th>2 Points</th>
<th>1 Point</th>
<th>Missing 0 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Content is appropriate. Student included proper and clear storytelling components. Story was in logical sequence.</td>
<td>Student included the majority storytelling components but not clear.</td>
<td>Student did not include enough information. Story did not flow properly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student clearly made appropriate ties to curriculum or subject area. Student included sufficient research/data. Student included appropriate factual information related to their subject area.</td>
<td>Student tied presentation to subject area but data is minimal. Student could have expanded.</td>
<td>Student included insufficient amount of research/data.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Story has depth. Student included details and properly planned.</td>
<td>Story included some details. Story is missing minor details.</td>
<td>Story does not include details and is poorly planned.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Titles are written clearly. Font is the proper size.</td>
<td>Titles mostly are the proper size.</td>
<td>Titles are too small or too large.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Color contrast is appropriate. Text is easy to read.</td>
<td>Most text is easy to read.</td>
<td>Text is hard to read.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Title are properly capitalized. Spelling and grammar are correct.</td>
<td>Text is mostly correct, few (2-3) mistakes.</td>
<td>Text has many mistakes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pictures are appropriate for subject area. Pictures are clear. 20-25 pictures</td>
<td>Appropriate pictures with 1-2 pictures that need to be adjusted.</td>
<td>Pictures are not clear.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Presentation is paced properly. Presentation flows properly.</td>
<td>Pacing is mostly correct. One or two pictures are placed incorrectly.</td>
<td>Presentation is too fast or too slow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Recorded sound is clear and included expression when speaking.</td>
<td>The majority of recorded sound is clear.</td>
<td>Sound is not clear.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Music included is appropriate for presentation. Music was extended over the presentation properly. Music was clear. Music does not include improper language.</td>
<td>Music is appropriate but not extended properly or not clear.</td>
<td>Music is not appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Transition is included for each picture.</td>
<td>Transition is missing for 1 or 2 pictures.</td>
<td>Transition is not consistent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>