PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL SERIES

Professional Learning Guide

Digital Storytelling

Buffett
Early Childhood
Institute
at the University of Nebraska

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Guide Introduction and Purpose

INTRODUCTION

This professional learning guide is a companion to the professional learning video hosted by Dr. Chip Donohue in partnership with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, "Digital Storytelling." It is designed to support the professional learning of PreK through Grade 3 teachers to build foundational knowledge around what digital storytelling is, why it's effective with young children, and how to get started. The guide is intended for professional developers and coaches to use with groups of teachers in school districts, school buildings, and child care settings. Individual teachers can also use this guide to promote reflection and deepen understanding around the concepts presented in the video.

PURPOSE

In Donohue's asynchronous session, "Digital Storytelling," he connects his expertise around children's use of technology to a foundational understanding of child development. A link to this one-hour session can be found at: youtube.com/watch?v=wd4v_QdxXzM. His ideas affirm early childhood educators, while guiding them to use technology effectively as a tool to enhance children's learning and development. This professional learning guide builds on the ideas presented in this video to help educators develop the knowledge and skills they need to effectively implement digital storytelling with children to achieve the following goals:

- Promote children's learning and higher-level thinking
- Provide children with tools to show you what they know and what they value
- Empower children to see themselves as authors and creators of digital content
- Allow educators to more deeply understand children, their families, and their culture

EQUITY FOCUS

Working toward equity in education involves prioritizing policies and practices that effectively promote the learning of all children. This requires addressing disparities in learning opportunities, family supports, and child outcomes. Equitable teaching and learning reduces or eliminates the predictability of who succeeds and who fails. It is dependent on changing the root causes of institutionalized racism, classism, sexism, prejudice, and bias through fundamental systemic changes in how children are taught, treated, and cared for. The vision of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute is that Nebraska will become the best place in the nation to be a baby. This vision involves a commitment to all children in Nebraska with a central focus on eliminating gaps in opportunity and achievement.

The pandemic and the rush to virtual learning solutions have revealed troubling disparities in access to technology and children's ability to participate in home learning experiences. If technology is to fulfill its promise in promoting educational equity, then schools must work to address three pressing equity issues: (1) access to a connected device (a laptop or tablet for learning), (2) a reliable and affordable broadband internet connection (for accessing and downloading materials, viewing video content, and participating in video chats and real-time instruction), and (3) technology skills-building for parents and caregivers who need basic skills to use the tools and to support their child's home learning with technology-mediated solutions. Recent experiences demonstrate that too many families and children have found themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide and effectively left out of the school experience. Hybrid models and fully online approaches to teaching and learning cannot succeed unless every child and family has equal opportunity to access, participate, contribute, and achieve.

HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

The "Digital Storytelling" session can deepen educators' learning and understanding by viewing the one-hour asynchronous session in "bite-sized" learning segments. This professional learning guide presents opportunities to expand knowledge, reflect, and apply learning to practice. Each segment includes a focused objective and a link to the corresponding video segment, along with four categories of learning opportunities from which to choose:

- **Reflective Thinking and Group Discussion**
- **Equity Focus**
- **Optional Extension Activities**
- **Additional Resources**

The professional learning guide serves as a resource and tool for educators in a variety of roles. It has been designed to be flexible and offer educators choices based upon their own needs and interests. The suggested questions and activities in each section are open-ended and serve as a menu of options. There are several ways that this guide can be used. For example:

- **An administrator** could choose to provide their staff with a learning series about technology in the early years. They could choose to follow the full series, approaching each segment as a 20- to 30-minute professional learning session spread out over weeks or months. The administrator could also select segments that focus on content their staff needs.
- **A professional learning facilitator** could choose to conduct a full-day workshop around technology in the early years for a group of educators, using the segments of the asynchronous session and providing participants opportunities to deepen reflection around concepts, engage in focused learning discussions, and co-plan. A facilitator could choose to spread out segments of learning over weeks or months with 20- to 30-minute learning segments. Another choice could be to provide educators time to watch the full asynchronous session in its entirety, and then select specific focused discussion questions or activities to deepen learning after everyone has finished watching.
- **An individual educator** could watch each video segment independently, pausing to reflect using the discussion questions, explore additional resources, and take time to plan for integrating technology into practice.
- **A team of educators** could watch each video segment independently or as a group, pausing after each to reflect using the discussion questions, discuss with one another, explore additional resources, and take time to co-plan for integrating technology into practice.

MATERIALS NEEDED

This guide has been designed for either virtual or face-to-face professional learning. Participants will need access to:

- Professional learning guide
- Optional handouts
- Notetaking tools (paper, pencils, etc.)
- Personal lesson plan book and/or curriculum materials (to reflect upon current practices and plan for changes)

If facilitating face to face, additional materials generally used for professional learning experiences will be beneficial:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Dry-erase board
- Dry-erase board markers
- Sticky notes
- Highlighters

Setting the Stage

OBJECTIVE

Participants will define digital storytelling.

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the term "digital storytelling"?
- What tools are your students currently using to tell their stories?
- How do your students currently use technology tools? In what content areas or context do they use them?

EQUITY FOCUS

- Describe the broad concept of equity and explain the value of looking at the use of technology through an equity lens.
- How does your students' access to technology compare to other children their age from different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds? Consider not only the quantity of technology use (e.g., how much time they spend on a device), but also the variety and quality of their experiences with technology.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Conduct an internet search of the term "digital storytelling." Generate a list of the ideas you find. Review these ideas to create a beginning definition of digital storytelling.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- *Digital Storytelling in Early Childhood: An instructional digital story to explain digital storytelling and how it can be used to support and enhance the curriculum.* The Seeds Network, LLC. http://www.theseedsnetwork.com/digital-storytelling-early-childhood/

Part 1: What Is Digital Storytelling?

1.1 | Introduction to Digital Storytelling

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/VPtVERRYZ7Q

OBJECTIVE

Participants will review the role storytelling plays in children's language and literacy development and recognize how digital tools can enhance storytelling experiences.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS

Review the following quote presented in the video:

"We are all storytellers. We live in a network of stories. There isn't a stronger connection between people than storytelling."

Jimmy Neil Smith

Review this progression, presented on slide 6:

- Consuming media
- Meaning-making
- Creating media
- Digital storytelling
- Becoming authors

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

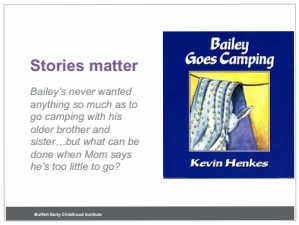
- What role does storytelling play in children's language and literacy development?
- Consider how children currently use digital media in your classroom. What percentage of time do they spend in each of the five types of activities presented on slide 5?
- Many of us take pictures or videos of children in our classrooms throughout the day. What might happen if we turned the camera around and allowed children to capture photos and videos?

EQUITY FOCUS

- Storytelling is a valued experience in many collectivist cultures, including Native American culture and many cultures from Asia, Central America, South America, and Africa. Passing down stories to the next generation is a way of connecting, as well as celebrating and sustaining cultural traditions and values.
  - How do you currently provide opportunities for students to learn about each other's cultural backgrounds and make connections with one another?
  - Read "American Indian Storytelling" by Jefferson Currie II. https://www.ncpedia.org/culture/stories/american-indian

SLIDE 1

SLIDE 2



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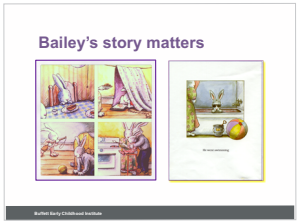

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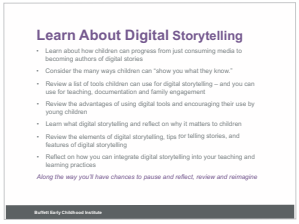


SLIDE 5

- Watch the video of Jim Bruchac (Native storyteller and author) describing his experience with storytelling in Native culture. https://artsandenrichment.org/jim-bruchac-native-american-storytelling-presentations/
- Think back to your own experiences as a child. How did adults in your life share stories to connect you with your cultural background and family values?

- Gordon C. James, the illustrator of the picture book, "I Am Every Good Thing," explained the motivation behind his work in the following quote: *"I wanted through the illustrations for these kids to feel empowered ... I want them all to feel like they belong everywhere, like there are no limits to the places they should be, or the things that they can be. No part of this life—this full, amazing life—should be off limits to you just because of who you are."* Read a transcript of the interview with author Derrick Barnes and James. https://www.npr.org/2020/10/24/925482149/a-new-picture-book-reminds-black-sons-you-are-every-good-thing
  - Reflect and discuss the following questions:
    - Which children in your classroom can most benefit from the message that "I Am Every Good Thing"?
    - How can digital storytelling reinforce this empowering message for children?
    - How does this message connect to culturally responsive practices for digital storytelling?

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Review the definition and description of digital storytelling posted in Wikipedia for an overview of what it includes, examples of technology tools, and the kinds of media that can be included: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_storytelling
- In small groups, participants can take turns sharing short personal stories from memory.
  - What does your story tell about you as a person?
  - How could you represent your story digitally?
- Refer to the second slide, "Creating media and digital storytelling matter."
  - Make two lists: a list of the media you consume and a list of the media you create (digital footprint).
  - How are your experiences in the digital realm the same as or different from your students'? How might this impact how you approach the process? How might this impact how individual students approach the process?
  - Looking at your list, when do you consider yourself an "author"? When do your students have the opportunity to be "authors"?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Digital Storytelling in Early Childhood.* The Seeds Network. http://www.theseedsnetwork.com/digital-storytelling-early-childhood/
- *How to Incorporate Digital Storytelling to Empower Student Voice*. Edutopia. https://www.edutopia.org/discussion/how-incorporate-digital-storytelling-empower-student-voice

- *Playful Storytelling – Using a Story Bag, Basket or Prop Box.* The Empowered Educator. https://www.theempowerededucatoronline.com/2018/11/story-bag-basket-or-prop-box.html/
- *Storytelling for Children.* The Child Development Institute. https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/child-activities/storytelling-for-children
- *Storytelling cultures in early years classrooms.* He Kupu. https://www.hekupu.ac.nz/article/storytelling-cultures-early-years-classrooms

1.2 | Tools for Digital Storytelling

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/Y1FZTTAuXCg

OBJECTIVE

Participants will identify digital storytelling tools and a range of ways to apply them.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

Review the list of digital tools presented in the video:

- Laptop or desktop computer
- Tablet, smartphone (mobile-friendly, media-rich, interactive)
- Digital camera (photos and video)
- Digital voice recorder/audio recorder
- Microphone
- Headphones
- Storytelling apps and websites
- Multimedia authoring tools
- Presentation software
- Google search

Review the list of apps presented in the video:

- Book Creator
- My Story Book Maker
- Story Creator
- Our Story 2
- PowerPoint
- Keynote
- Google Slides
- Voice Thread
- Wakelet

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Which of the listed digital tools and apps do you currently have access to?
- What barriers do you experience in access to tools and apps?
- Of the tools you do not currently have, list your top three "wish list" items.
- How might you gain access to these tools and apps (e.g., borrow from the library or community resource agency, write a grant, purchase with departmental funds, seek district approval, etc.)?
- What tech tool do you feel most comfortable with that would be a good place to get started?

EQUITY FOCUS

- Identify at least one tool that you feel confident ALL of your children's families have access to (e.g., smartphone, camera). Draft a digital storytelling activity that children could complete at home with their families using this device.
- From the apps that you identified as the top three on your wish list, which would be most accessible to students and families? What would be needed to ensure all families could access these resources? What steps would you need to take to ensure access?

SLIDE 6

SLIDE 7

SLIDE 8

SLIDE 9

SLIDE 10

- From the apps that you identified on your wish list, which best represent the learning needs, cultures, and interests of the students and families that you work with?

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Reflect on the equation: a child's story + access to devices = digital storytelling. Using a sheet of paper and markers, pens, or crayons, make a pictograph to illustrate what this might look like in your classroom. A pictograph is a pictorial symbol for a word or phrase; a symbol or image that represents an idea.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *30 Sites and Apps for Digital Storytelling.* Tech and Learning. https://www.techlearning.com/tl-advisor-blog/30-sites-and-apps-for-digital-storytelling
- *Ten Digital Storytelling Tools for Students of All Ages.* Practical Ed Tech. https://practicaledtech.com/2019/08/26/ten-digital-storytelling-tools-for-students-of-all-ages/
- *Apps and Sites for Storytelling.* Common Sense Education. https://www.commonsense.org/education/top-picks/apps-and-sites-for-storytelling

PART 2: Why Digital Storytelling?

2.1 | Digital Storytelling Benefits

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/_A_BesDj9Yc

OBJECTIVE

Participants will examine the barriers and benefits of implementing digital storytelling.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

Follow the directions provided on slide 12:

- Reflect on the list of barriers below and identify those which are currently most challenging in the classroom and for hybrid or remote teaching.
- As we begin our exploration of digital storytelling, make a quick list of three of the benefits listed below that would have a positive impact on children and parents during the pandemic and beyond.
- Add any other benefits you can imagine to your list.

Barriers to digital storytelling in the early childhood classroom:

- Technology access
- Number of students
- Time constraints
- Teacher workload
- Professional development

Benefits:

- Using digital storytelling as an alternative problem-based learning tool
- Enhancing young children's motivation
- Providing impetus for change in teacher practice
- Overcoming parents' resistance across early childhood education
- Providing equal opportunity for all students
- Supporting use of technology in early childhood teaching

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Discuss the listed barriers you find most challenging and/or most prevalent in your school community.
- Discuss the listed benefits you feel have the most positive impact on children and families.
- What benefits would you add to this list? What barriers? How has your school addressed some of these barriers or maximized on the benefits?

SLIDE 11

SLIDE 12

EQUITY FOCUS

- Do some of the benefits and barriers listed above disproportionately impact certain groups of students and families? What can you do to remove barriers and maximize benefits for all?
- Explore the article "Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors in the Early Years Classroom:" https://www.eecera.org/guest-post-mirrors-windows-sliding-glass-doors/#
  - Why are "mirrors" important?
  - Why are "windows" and "sliding glass doors" important?
  - How do digital screens function as mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors?

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Craft a reflection or journal entry explaining the benefits children experience from engagement in digital storytelling.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Bridging the Digital Divide in Classrooms.* Education Week Teacher. https://www.edweek.org/technology/opinion-bridging-the-digital-divide-in-classrooms/2014/07

2.2 | Advantages of Using Digital Tools for Storytelling

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/JGWjF3f6zRk

OBJECTIVE

Participants will identify advantages of using digital tools for storytelling.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS

Review the advantages to using digital tools:

- Child-centered
- The child is in control of the technology and the story
- Already familiar with the affordances of digital devices
- Can be used alone or together (child-child, adult-child)
- For inquiry, investigation, research, representation
- Review the advantages of using digital tools
- Search, collect, curate, and digitize artifacts
- Document learning in multiple ways
- Show you what they know and how they learn
- Save their story
- Share their learning
- Revisit ... and revisit again

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Follow the directions provided on slide 17.
  - Reflect on the advantages to children of using digital tools for storytelling and the kinds of behaviors and dispositions digital tools can encourage.
  - Think about how you are currently leveraging digital tools in your class—in the classroom and during remote learning.
  - Make a quick list of the technology tools available to children in your classroom.
  - Beyond digital storytelling, jot down a few of the benefits you see for children from integrating technology successfully into teaching and learning practices.
- Discuss your responses with a colleague. What are the pros and cons of using digital tools (camera, tablet, smartphone) versus more traditional analog tools (paper and pencil)?
- Discuss the behaviors and dispositions digital tools encourage. How can digital tools promote social and emotional development?

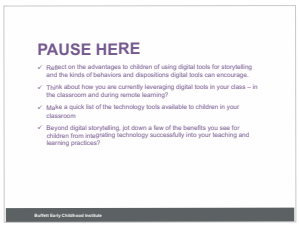
SLIDE 13

SLIDE 14

SLIDE 15

SLIDE 16

SLIDE 17



EQUITY FOCUS

- Review the 10 categories of Funds of Knowledge described in this online resource: https://modules.nceln.fpg.unc.edu/sites/modules.nceln.fpg.unc.edu/files/foundations/handouts/Mod%204%20Funds%20of%20knowledge.pdf
  - Which funds of knowledge do children in your classroom regularly share with you and their classmates?
  - Which funds of knowledge are less often shared?
  - How might you use digital storytelling to tap into the full range of knowledge that your children and their families possess?

- Read the information found in "What You Need to Know About ELLs: Fast Facts" from Colorín Colorado: https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/what-you-need-know-about-ells-fast-facts
  - What are some of ELLs' strengths and challenges in relation to engagement in digital storytelling?
  - Why is digital storytelling a powerful tool to provide opportunities for ELLs to engage in personally, culturally, and linguistically responsive language and literacy experiences?

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Read from the Center for Promotion of Social & Emotional Learning: https://www.cpsel.org/2019/04/12/technology-a-bridge-to-social-emotional-and-mental-health/
- Reflect on the students in your class. How might technology be impacting their social and emotional development, both positively and negatively? How can you amplify the positive and minimize the negative?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Digital Storytelling in the Primary Classroom.* Creative Educator. https://creativeeducator.tech4learning.com/2018/articles/digital-storytelling-in-the-primary-classroom
- *Digital Storytelling: Putting Students' Passion for Technology to Good Use.* Resilient Educator. https://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/digital-storytelling/

2.3 | Digital Storytelling Matters to Children

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/Hi9JZOuevp0

OBJECTIVE

Participants will investigate why digital storytelling matters to children.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

Review the following quotes:

- *"Digital storytelling is the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. Throughout history, storytelling has been used to share knowledge, wisdom, and values. Stories have taken many different forms. Stories have been adapted to each successive medium that has emerged, from the circle of the campfire to the silver screen, and now the computer screen."*

  Rule, Leslie. Digital storytelling: Never has storytelling been so easy or so powerful. Knowledge Quest, vol. 38, no. 4, 2010, p. 56+. Gale Academic OneFile.

- *"When educators and teachers invite children to invent stories, they're nourishing their narrative skills and enriching many other competencies, such as creativity and linguistic skills. By creating stories, children have the chance to consolidate their knowledge and acquire new ones."*

  Barrett, H. (2006). Researching and evaluating digital storytelling as a deep learning tool. In C. Crawford et al. (Eds.), Proceedings of Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference 2006, (pp. 647–654). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.

- *"Educators can use digital storytelling to support students' learning by encouraging them to organize and express their ideas and knowledge in an individual and meaningful way while developing voice and facility in child-computer interactions."*

  O'Byrne, W. I., Stone, R., & White, M. (2018). Digital Storytelling in Early Childhood: Student Illustrations Shaping Social Interactions. Frontiers in psychology, 9, 1800. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01800

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Reflect on the quotes shared in the video and highlighted above. Which quote resonates with you most. Why?
- Follow the directions provided on slide 25.
  - Take a moment to review the reasons why storytelling matters to children.
  - Think about the last two reasons on the list and write two or three sentences about the benefits to children of gaining technology skills for storytelling and across the curriculum (I can learn about technology tools and storytelling).
  - Imagine the benefits to a child in your class from becoming an author and being able to share his/her story with classmates and with family members, and how empowering it is for a child to be a media creator, not just a consumer. Write two or three sentences about the benefits and

SLIDE 18

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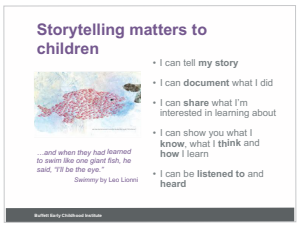
SLIDE 20

SLIDE 21

SLIDE 22



empowerment you can imagine children experiencing in your class (I can be an author and media creator).

- Share your thoughts about the benefits and empowerment children could experience through digital storytelling in your class.

EQUITY FOCUS

- Read the information in "Storytelling to Celebrate Cultural Diversity" from the BBC: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/storytelling-celebrate-cultural-diversity
- Are you familiar with the traditional stories that are important in the cultural heritage of your students' families?
- How could you provide opportunities for students and their families to tell traditional tales with digital tools?

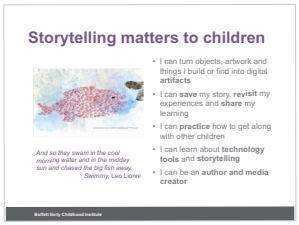
OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Think about a story that is important to you, whether from your own life, your cultural traditions, or your imagination.
  - Create your own digital story and share it with your students.
  - Reflect on the following questions:
    - What skills did I use to create my story?
    - How did it feel to share my story?
    - How did it impact my relationship with my students?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Exploring Folktales and Family Stories.* Start with a Book. https://www.startwithabook.org/sites/default/files/swab-folktales-family-stories.pdf
- *We Are Storytellers: Exploring Multicultural Folktales, Fairy Tales, and Myths.* Start with a Book. https://www.startwithabook.org/we-are-storytellers-exploring-multicultural-folktales-fairy-tales-and-myths

SLIDE 23



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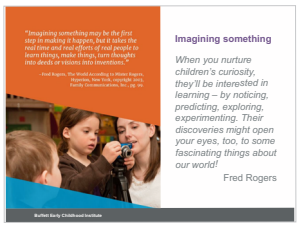

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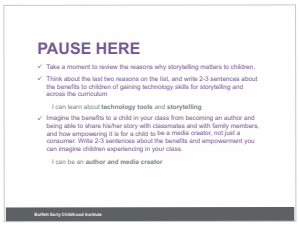


PART 3: Digital Storytelling in Practice

3.1 | Digital Storytelling and Familiar Children's Literature

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/AQmEqMYgIpA

OBJECTIVE

Participants will be able to use anchor texts as models to guide digital storytelling.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

Follow the directions provided on slide 38:

- Take a moment to review what you have learned about digital storytelling and young children.
- Write down your thoughts about a few of the questions from the previous slide:
  - How will you integrate digital storytelling into your teaching?
  - How can you integrate digital storytelling into children's learning across the curriculum?
  - What tech tools do you need to get started?
  - How can you use digital storytelling to enhance family engagement?

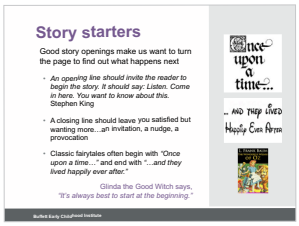
REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Discuss how you will integrate digital storytelling into your teaching and children's learning across the curriculum. What ideas do fellow participants or colleagues offer that can deepen your thinking and enhance your practice?
- Which of your own personal favorite children's books could you utilize as anchor texts to inspire children's digital storytelling?
- Which children's books that include diverse representation of race, culture, and language could you utilize as anchor texts to inspire children's digital storytelling?

EQUITY FOCUS

- Explore the article titled "How You Felt When You Recognized Yourself in a Book for the First Time" on the website, "We Are Teachers." https://www.weareteachers.com/diverse-books-meaning/
  As you read, consider the answers to the following questions:
  - What is reading diversity?
  - Why is it important for children to have access to diverse literature at home, in school, and in the community?
  - How can access to diverse children's literature support children's journeys as digital storytellers?

SLIDE 26



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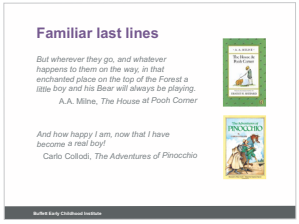
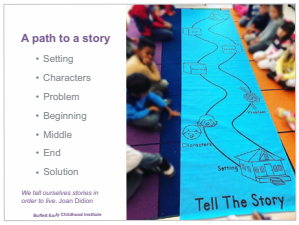
SLIDE 28

SLIDE 29



SLIDE 30



- Through reflection, students establish their own understanding of the world as they see it, which is shaped by the culture they are representing. The NAEYC interest forum for diversity and equity education for adults offers suggestions for building a diverse, anti-bias library for young children. You can access the forum's tips and resources at the following link: https://earlychildhoodequity.wordpress.com/2015/08/13/building-a-diverse-anti-bias-library-for-young-children/
  - Do you remember the first time you saw yourself represented in a book?
  - What was the book about?
  - In what ways did you see yourself reflected?
  - How did it impact your desire to keep reading?
  - Did it encourage you to begin to document and tell your own stories?
  - Take a moment to write your ideas on a piece of paper and then share with a partner or in a small discussion group.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Brainstorm with colleagues a list of resources for selecting and utilizing diverse children's literature.
- Review the list of children's literature including diverse representations found at https://www.readbrightly.com/18-kids-books-diverse-main-characters/. Select one book to explore that might help a child you know see themself represented.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Author Interview: *'More Mirrors in the Classroom.'* Education Week. https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-author-interview-more-mirrors-in-the-classroom/2017/01
- *Celebrate Black Stories and Black Voices.* Storyline Online. https://www.storylineonline.net/
- Fleming, J., Catapano, S., Thompson, C. M., & Carrillo, S. R. (2016). *More mirrors in the classroom: using urban children's literature to increase literacy.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

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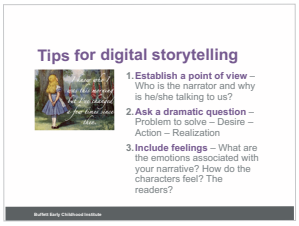

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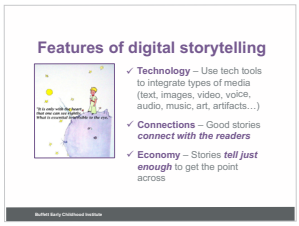

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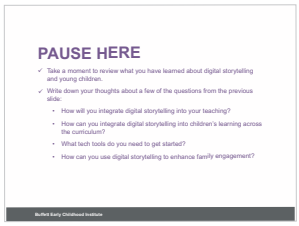

3.2 | Storytellers Are Story Collectors

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/sOA66nr3dH0

OBJECTIVE

Participants will define the concept and value of story collecting for children's learning.

VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

Review the following quote presented in the video:

- *"To be a person is to have a story to tell."*
  Isak Dinesen

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- "Great storytellers are relentless story collectors." What does this mean to you?
- How could you systematically or intentionally promote the idea of "story collecting"?
- What types of experiences could students collect and share in the form of digital storytelling?
- How could a current task or assignment you utilize with your class be enhanced through digital storytelling?

EQUITY FOCUS

- What role can families play in story collecting?
  - How can families participate in story collecting with their children?
  - What can you learn from families' story collections to enhance culturally, racially, and linguistically responsive practices in your classroom? For information about responsive practices, access this link: https://www.edutopia.org/article/culturally-responsive-teaching-early-childhood-education

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Dombrink-Greere, M., & Paley, V. G. (2011). A Conversation with Vivian Gussin Paley. *Young Children*, 66(5), 90–93. https://hello.naeyc.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=120ab5ac-0efc-481f-a589-1ffda889c08a
- Flewitt, R., Cremin, T., & Mardell, B. (2016). Paley's approach to storytelling and story-acting: Research and practice. In T. Cremin, R. Flewitt, B. Mardell, & J. Swann (Eds.), *Storytelling in early childhood: Enriching language, literacy and classroom culture*. London and New York: Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781317394143/chapters/10.4324%2F9781315679426-9

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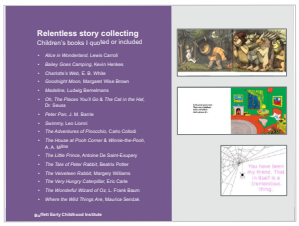


3.3 | Digital Storytelling in Action: Example 1

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/_PsSeyYzHUw

OBJECTIVE

Participants will examine digital storytelling in action in the classroom.

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Laura Marr stated that she was inspired to engage children in digital storytelling because she was having difficulty getting children to write. Children didn't see themselves as authors. Through digital storytelling, she noticed that through the use of digital tools children were more inspired and excited to use language, tell stories, and engage in high-level cognitive development. Why do you think digital tools are inspirational to children in storytelling?
- Marr discussed digital storytelling as a tool for children to document their own learning and the learning of others. Why is this practice valuable?
- Digital storytelling can promote children's social and emotional learning. Marr described how digital storytelling provides a great opportunity for collaboration. Describe examples of ways children collaborate through digital storytelling.
- Digital storytelling can promote children's cognitive development. Marr spoke about the importance of children engaging in planning as a first step in their digital storytelling. How does intentional planning for digital storytelling support children's cognitive development?

EQUITY FOCUS

- Marr stated that her school has a large population of English Language Learners and children living in poverty.
  - Through an equity lens, why is access to internet and digital tools critical for children from racial, cultural, and socioeconomic groups who frequently experience gaps in opportunity and achievement?

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Review your upcoming lesson plans. Select an activity on your plan that can be enhanced with digital storytelling. Include the following in your plan:
  - Opportunities for children's intentional planning
  - Opportunities for children's collaboration with one another in their storytelling

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Digital Storytelling in Early Childhood: Student Illustrations Shaping Social Interactions.* Frontiers in Psychology. https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01800/full
- Sylvester, R. & Greenidge, W. *Digital Storytelling: Extending the Potential for Struggling Writers.* Reading Rockets. https://www.readingrockets.org/article/digital-storytelling-extending-potential-struggling-writers

3.4 | Digital Storytelling in Action: Example 2

VIDEO LINK
youtu.be/rSBuMkjgjUs

OBJECTIVE

Participants will examine digital storytelling in action in the classroom.

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- Alex Morgan referred to teachers as "adult collaborators" in children's digital storytelling. What does this mean to you?
- What idea presented by Alex and Greg Morgan do you find most exciting?
- Alex explained that work in digital storytelling evolves over time. Children are able to use photos and videos from previous experiences to create stories that build in complexity. Why is the process of revisiting, revising, and expanding work valuable for children's learning?
- Greg shared that his language is dance. He brings his interest in dance into his practice of digital storytelling. What is your language? What is your interest? How can you bring what you are passionate about to digital storytelling in your classroom?

EQUITY FOCUS

- Greg described how he engaged children in digital storytelling while teaching virtually during the pandemic.
  - What steps can you take to ensure equitable access to digital storytelling experiences for all children? Which of these steps would need to involve colleagues or school leadership?
  - Through digital storytelling, children were able to stay connected, maintain relationships, and continue working together. Looking at this value through an equity lens, how can digital storytelling be a way to promote equity, quality, and continuity in children's learning experiences?

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Investigate the "Digital Storytelling with ScratchJr" resources and information from Nebraska Extension's Designlab-21-Innovative and Experiential Teaching and Learning: https://unlcms.unl.edu/ianr/extension/4-h-youth-development/designlab21/digital-storytelling-scratchjr
  - Brainstorm with colleagues how to utilize the information presented to integrate and enhance digital storytelling in your classroom.
- Generate a list of digital storytelling ideas presented in the video.
  - Which idea do you find the most interesting?
  - Which idea do you think is a good way to get started utilizing digital storytelling in a similar way as presented in the video?
  - Which idea seems challenging but may be something to strive for?
- Investigate the Scratch website: https://scratch.mit.edu/
  - Work with a group of colleagues to brainstorm, try new ideas in the classroom, reflect upon and share experiences, and sustain digital storytelling practices with Scratch.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- *How to Use Scratch for Digital Storytelling.* Common Sense Education. https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/how-to-use-scratch-for-digital-storytelling

Final Reflections

OBJECTIVE

Participants will plan ways to incorporate digital storytelling in children's learning experiences.

REFLECTIVE THINKING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

- What stories can my students tell (interests, hobbies, talents, experiences)?
- What are some of the ways students in my class can "show what they know" across content areas through digital storytelling?
- Where could digital storytelling enhance a lesson you teach?
- What would you need to plan for?
- What would the process be like?
- How would students then share their stories?

EQUITY FOCUS

- How do your plans for incorporating digital storytelling in children's learning experiences embody culturally responsive practices as defined by the following characteristics?
  - Awareness of your own cultural perspectives
  - Appreciation and respect for other cultures
  - Identification and use of cultural resources
  - Willingness to learn from the cultural perspectives of others
  - Flexibility

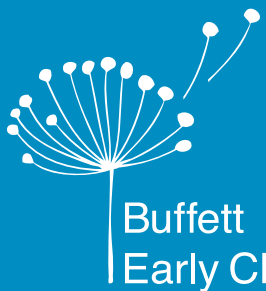
OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Access the site "Digital Storytelling in the Primary Classroom" to view examples of digital storytelling: https://creativeeducator.tech4learning.com/2018/articles/digital-storytelling-in-the-primary-classroom
  - Brainstorm as a group: What ideas does this generate for using digital storytelling in your classroom?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Online workshops. Story Center: https://www.storycenter.org/
- *Share Your Story: A How-to Guide for Digital Storytelling.* SAMHSA. https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/samhsa-storytelling-guide.pdf

The Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan is made possible by the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties and the 11 school district superintendents in metro Omaha. The plan continues to evolve and thrive because of the expertise and contributions of school district leaders, principals and teachers, home visitors and family engagement specialists, University of Nebraska faculty partners, and other professionals. The Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska facilitates implementation of the plan, which is funded largely by the Learning Community.



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