



The MediaWorks Classroom

PROJECT BASED LEARNING THROUGH CREATIVE MULTIMEDIA AUTHORING

I. The Project Process

- a. Choose a curriculum topic.

Example: “Treasure Hunting in the Southwest”

- b. Select standards that align to the topic that determine what students will attempt to achieve by the end of the activity.

English-Language Arts Content Standards

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/enggrade6.asp>

Writing Applications: 2.3 Write research reports:

- a. Pose relevant questions with a scope narrow enough to be thoroughly covered.
- b. Support the main idea or ideas with facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple authoritative sources (e.g., speakers, periodicals, online information searches).
- c. Include a bibliography.

Speaking Applications: 2.1 Deliver narrative presentations:

- a. Establish a context, plot, and point of view.
- b. Include sensory details and concrete language to develop the plot and character.
- c. Use a range of narrative devices (e.g., dialogue, tension, or suspense).

- c. Develop an essential (big) question:

1. Research and document a real treasure hunting expedition. (Min. 500 word report)
2. What is your treasure?

Find a treasure on your own, whether it’s “in your own backyard” or from an experience. If stuck, start with a subject you’re interested in, conduct local research, and develop a plan of action. The goal is to find a physical artifact you personally consider a treasure.

Use a variety of both existing and original media to create a MediaWorks presentation on your discovery.

d. Subsidiary questions and activities that go deeper than the big question and help answer the primary question.

1. *What are you hunting for and why?*

Use a variety of maps that define the location of your treasure hunt. Include longitude and latitude coordinates, satellite, and thermographic, regional and topographic maps. (Geography)

2. *Exactly where is it and what is its origin?*

Document the use of a compass to detail the route to the location. (Computational Math, History, Science)

3. *What did you see, hear, and learn during your hunt?*

Take photos or motion video to document the preparation, progress and results. (Visual Literacy, Self-Assessment)

4. *What did you discover?*

Record audio and summarize a narrative of your treasure hunting expedition. Include a bibliography of sources. (Science, Biology, History, Language Arts)

e. Provide keywords and phrases for searching the Internet.

Treasure, Hidden Treasure, Treasure Hunting, Treasure Chest, Mysteries, Secrets, Ancient Treasure, Treasure Stories, Pirates, Pirate Treasure, Pirate Stories, Sea Voyages, Archeology, Geology, Mineralogy, Mining, Gold, Silver, Jewels, and Pearls, ...others?

f. Set a day, time, and place for presenting final projects.

II. The Storyboard Process

a. Research and gather materials.

Internet, books, magazines, photos etc.

b. Document and maintain content sources for a final bibliography/credits scene.

c. Organize digital materials in appropriately named folders.

“TV GAS”: Text, Video, Graphics, Animation, and Sound -or- use folder names that correspond to the project storyboard

d. Organize content folders per individual student(s) or project team(s).

e. Backup content to CD and/or remote server.

f. Develop a Project Storyboard

<http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&ie=UTF8&oe=UTF8&q=storyboard+template>

Organize story elements into three logical parts (Introduction, Development, Climax). Create simple, rough-idea drawings with short descriptions. Use arrows to indicate action or motion. Programs such as *Inspiration*® are great for developing storyboards.

Note: In visual storytelling, cinematic camera views are powerful directions. E.g., Wide shot, (person from afar) Mid shot, (head and shoulders) Close up, (face only), Tight close up (single element - mouth, eye, hand).

g. Grade the documentary reports and storyboards. A key consideration is whether fulfilling the storyboard can be achieved within the time frame provided. It helps in the beginning to show an example storyboard *and* the resulting project, but avoid templates if it all possible. The student is now empowered to build his masterpiece!

III. The Build Process

a. Create a New Project with an appropriate name. Typically, this would be the theme, title or name of the student or project team.

b. Create scenes that correspond to each “segment” of the storyboard. In some cases, a new scene may be needed for each storyboard “slide”. It will depend upon the storyboard, but a general rule is to organize the project in logical “chunks” (Scenes). This will avoid complexity associated with managing several dozens or hundreds of individual elements in a single scene.

c. Take full advantage of the individual MediaWorks' editors: Paint, Animator, Video, and Sound to create project-specific content and/or modify existing content. While you can access these programs in real time from the main application (Author), it can be more productive in a classroom/lab setting to have students use the editing programs separately. Newly created or modified elements can then be saved to their appropriate folders for reuse in not only the current project, but other projects (and other applications) as well.

d. Recording narrations in a quiet environment produces more satisfactory results. Use the highest quality microphone you can afford. Use the Sound tool separately. Record in short segments and save as logically named sound files in the project “sound” or “narration” folder. MediaWorks’ visual sound editing makes it easy to ‘clean up’ narration tracks. It’s usually faster and easier to import and position existing audio segments in the Sequencer. For music, MediaWorks Author can import most any music file type as well as extract from Audio CDs, but if the plan is to share the project, use original or copyright friendly music.

e. In context of visual literacy, it is important for students to consider how and where the story can be told without words. Use graphics, video, animation, or sound to “complete the thought”. Minimize the use of unnecessary words and avoid clichés. When only long passages of text will get the message across, save time by using a word processor and export plain text files that correspond with the storyboard or Scene(s) in which they appear. Numbering the text files “Story 1.txt, Story 2.txt, Story 3.txt...” will allow the files to be dragged into a MediaWorksScene and appear in the Sequencer in the order they are numbered. Save text files as “text only” (Word), TextEdit (Mac) or Notepad (Win) Once imported, text object attributes can be globally set using the Text Format settings.

h. Digital video is extremely powerful for storytelling and important for developing visual literacy. If using iMovie or MovieMaker, remember that 5 minutes of DV formatted video at 720 x 480 takes 1 gigabyte of disk space. These files are most effectively used in MediaWorks after exporting, resizing and compressing to an industry standard format such as QuickTime or AVI.

Apple has a great Tutorial on how to set the Compression Settings when exporting from QuickTime Pro or iMovie:

<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/tutorials/h264.html>

You may also capture video from any analog source with the appropriate hardware.

For a list of affordable video capture products, visit <http://www.mediaworkssoftware.com/links.html>.

i. Include a bibliography and production credits as the final scene. The scrolling text feature is a great way to incorporate credits without having to create multiple scenes to display lots of text. Students should always be held responsible for including content sources.

l. Regularly backup the entire project file and associated scenes.

IV. The Presentation Process

Presenting students' projects is all-important for student, teacher and audience. Just like a major Hollywood production, a movie isn't really finished until an audience experiences it. A student's foreknowledge that their project will be presented is often the prime motivation for completing the project on time. Not presenting a project they worked hard on can have a traumatic effect. To this end, it is important that the project goals and time frame are realistic. Allow as much individual/group creativity and self-direction as possible leading up to presentation day.

If you've stayed on top of the project progress, you will have a good idea which projects are the strongest and weakest. Come presentation day, you'll want to set their presentation order starting with the weakest project first and ending with the strongest. End on a high note and sets the expectations for others next time. Also, starting with the weaker projects, reduces the "hard act to follow" butterflies.

V. Summary

Nothing brings more pleasure to a software company like ours than receiving wonderful student and teacher-created projects and movies. Not only does it bring smiles, but actually helps us design future versions of MediaWorks. Send us your projects and movies and we'll consider publishing them online and on future MediaWorks demo CDs. We look forward to receiving your projects...you just may become a famous MediaWorks author!

Have fun with MediaWorks and should you have any questions, don't hesitate to call or email!

The MediaWorks Team

<http://www.mediaworkssoftware.com>