

Supporting Emergent Writers
Through Digital Storytelling

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Abstract

The purpose of this project is to examine the research on Digital Storytelling (DS) and based on this research create a professional development (PD) workshop for colleagues. Through a comprehensive literature review, I determined that digital storytelling is a valuable tool for supporting emergent writers in their story writing. This project includes three components: 1) a review of the foundational and current research of Digital Storytelling, 2) a review of the literature on effective PD approaches, 3) a guide for an opening session of a professional learning series on DS. This introductory workshop facilitates participants' understanding of DS, a tool that combines words, sounds and images to produce a multimodal text. During the interactive sessions participants work in collaboration with peers to explore applications on the iPad in order to experience the benefits, challenges and effectiveness of creating a digital story.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Making Connections to Digital Storytelling	1
Rationale	2
Significance of Digital Storytelling.....	3
Project Purpose	4
Overview of Project	4
Chapter 2 – Review of the Literature	6
Theoretical Framework	6
Zone of proximal development and gradual release of responsibility	6
Multimodality	8
Exploratory talk and social interaction	8
Defining Storytelling	9
Combining Storytelling with Technology.....	11
Challenges with Implementing Technology.....	12
DS and the BC Curriculum.....	13
DS and Motivation	14
Opportunities for Emergent Writers	16
Expanding our definition of writing	16
Opportunities for exploration of purposeful and authentic writing	17
Opportunities to simplify writing	19
DS and Oral Language	20
Combining Best Teaching Practices with Digital Literacy	24
Learning benefits.....	28
The writing process as a process and a product	29
Effective Professional Development	31
Chapter 3 – A Guide to a PD Series on DS	36
Introduction	36

Design of the Workshops	36
Goals of the Workshops	37
Format of the Sessions	37
Inviting the Participants	38
Descriptions of the Application	39
Rational for the Workshop Model	39
Explanation of PowerPoint Slides	40
Reflections on the First Session of the Series	44
Implications for Future Research	45
References	47
Appendix A: PowerPoint Presentation for Session 1	53
Appendix B: Guiding Format of the Sessions	54
Appendix C: Lesson Plan for Pictello Workshop	55
Appendix D: Handout for Pictello Workshop.....	57
Appendix E: Lesson Plan for Puppet Pals Workshop	59
Appendix F: Participant Feedback Form	61

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Chapter 1

Making Connections To Digital Storytelling

“Very young children are the best writers in the world – except for the writing part of being a writer” (Calkins, 1994, p. 93).

If you were to ask an early primary student to tell you a personal story, their faces light up with joy as they share their stories with great enthusiasm. Their stories are full of voice, passion, details and imagery as they draw you into their world. If you were to ask those same students to write the story using pen and paper, you would see a drastic change in their eagerness. Pen and paper activities for early writers require students to think about ideas, word choice, letters, spelling, sounds, pencil grip, letter formation, spacing and punctuation in order to successfully convey their ideas; a daunting and intimidating task for many young writers. In my experience, some of the best oral story tellers are the ones who become disinterested and frustrated during writing activities, simply because they don't have the necessary skills to be successful in their writing.

In my 22 years of teaching primary students, I strived to create opportunities for my emergent writers to express their ideas and thoughts during writing activities. I searched for ways to access their narratives as well as to advance them along the writing continuum. My quest became to find a way to allow these students to transfer these personal narratives and their joy of storytelling into print.

I began my master's program in *21st Century Literacy and Learning* in order to seek answers to meet the needs of the diverse needs of my writing students. During the first year of my program, I was asked to explore a variety of 21st century writing activities including apps found on the iPad. It was here that I discovered the digital story telling app *Pictello*, which combined voice, text and audio to produce a digital story. This began my journey of implementing digital storytelling into my writing program. I had found a tool that could open the door for my emergent writers to share their creative and detailed stories through multimedia.

My emergent writing students flourished after learning how to use this app! Free of the limits of paper, their stories emerged. Their digital stories were as expressive, engaging and creative as their oral stories. Calkin's (1994) reminds us that it is "adults who have separated writing from art, song, and play; it is adults who have turned writing into an exercise on lined paper, into a matter of rules, lessons, and cautious behaviour" (p. 59). My students were so motivated to write, they spent their free time creating and sharing their unfinished and finished creations. The joy of writing had developed in many students who once saw writing as a daunting and onerous task. This excitement for digital storytelling was so explosive, it broke the walls of the classrooms as students eagerly shared their stories with adults and students outside of the classroom and of the school.

During one of the sharing experiences in another classroom, a teacher recognized how this tool could help one of her students with particularly limited 'writing' skills. In response to queries about the program, I was asked to conduct a few sessions demonstrating how digital stories were created, using the *Pictello* app. The interest for digital storytelling information blossomed in our school to include Educational Assistants working with special needs students, teachers in the primary grades focusing on how to access stories from students who found writing challenging, and intermediate teachers who saw the potential of using digital storytelling to create cross curricular lessons. From these experiences, it was suggested that I expand my teachings and create a workshop series where other teachers can learn how to use digital storytelling to support students with emerging writing skills.

Rationale

"Each of us, as teachers, will constantly need to reinvent our own ways of inviting students to live like writers" (Calkins, p. 31).

Digital storytelling is a way for students to communicate their ideas and thoughts, develop their understanding of stories, and make sense of the world. It is a way to connect the community in which they live to their classroom community. We live in a world where multimedia and stories are used to communicate and participate effectively in society (BC Curriculum Document, 2006). Students are

constantly engaged and exposed to multimedia including texting or emailing friends, looking up information on the Internet, or creating virtual worlds, and yet many classrooms are not reflecting the value of bringing this into the classroom. As teachers of emergent writers we must recognize various ways in which stories can be communicated by inviting and celebrating the diversity in which they can be shared. Writing should not be seen as a linear process, nor should it be taught as a single skill. It changes with society and technological advances (NCTE, 2008, p. 3).

I want to share with teachers the passion and success my students and I have had since integrating DS into my primary classroom. I want them to see the benefits of expanding their views on writing to include technology. I share the view with Lucy Calkins that every child is a writer we just need to provide them with multiple ways to access their writing potential.

Significance of Digital Storytelling

Communication skills are a vital part of our society and primary students are eager to communicate. They want to share their stories and often find creative and imaginative ways to do so long before they are able to create conventional text. As recognized in the English Language Arts K-7 Curriculum Guide (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006), students can communicate through “speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and representing to make meaning of the world and to prepare them to participate effectively in all aspects of society” (p. 2).

The use of technology and media is changing the way people communicate which in turn is changing society’s definition of a literate person. The traditional ideas of literacy must expand as the job force needs citizens to have the abilities to solve problems, think critically, communicate clearly, as well as learn and work both collaboratively and independently (BC LA Curriculum, 2006). These skills are not only necessary for their learning but also will influence their current everyday lives as well as their future careers. With the recognition of the necessity of converging traditional methods to multimodal ways of communicating to meet the needs of my students, my quest became to seek

answers in the research literature to the following question: In what ways does digital storytelling support early writers and how can I support teachers to implement it into their classrooms?

Project Purpose

“You don’t learn a process by talking about it but by doing it” (Murray, 1972, p. 5).

The aim of my project was to review current literature specifically focused on how DS can improve writing for emergent writers and the best practices for PD. From the literature, I create a PD series to inform teachers of the value of DS for emergent writers and guide them to find ways to implement it into their classrooms. This PD series will inform the participants of the current research, including the history and benefits of DS, how it can motivate students, provide opportunities and increase oral language. The hands on, interactive sessions will include multiple chances to question, reflect, discuss, explore, collaborate and experience DS, using a few specific apps that are particularly suited to primary emergent writers. My intention is to have the teachers experience the same learning activities as their students by creating a workshop that would be similar to how DS could be implemented into a primary classroom. I agree with Edwards-Groves (2012), that teachers need to understand what is happening in multimodal practices to experience how students can use digital technologies in their lives.

Overview of Project

In Chapter 1, I discuss my reasons for pursuing DS, how it connects to literacy, language, learning and the curriculum and my intention for a PD series. In Chapter 2, I provide a brief definition of storytelling and DS as well as some of the difficulties that make teachers hesitant to implement it in the classroom. Next, I inform the reader of how DS connects to curricular resources and describe its theoretical foundations. Subsequently, there will be a review of current literature specifically focusing on how DS provides opportunities, motivation, and improves collaboration for emergent writers as well as how best teaching practices in literacy can be combined with DS. Lastly, in this chapter I explain four effective characteristics of PD including a need for it to be: 1) ongoing sessions with

opportunities to clarify and ask questions after implementing the concepts; 2) led by a personable and knowledgeable presenter; 3) of a participatory nature to actively engaged teachers and; 4) connected and relevant to the curricula, school goals, and other PD sessions. In Chapter 3, I describe the introductory session in the PD series for teachers based on the information presented in the literature review. I outline how I will provide teachers the opportunity to explore DS in order to increase their understanding of how technology helps emergent writers' access learning. Although this project will become dated and the apps become obsolete as new technologies arise, the necessary skills and concepts required to create a digital story will remain the same. For my project, I will be focusing on the iPad, specifically using the apps *Pictello* as this is a program that I found most effective and accessible for primary students.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The literature review contributes to the understanding of how DS supports early writers and how I can support teachers to implement it. I will start this section by discussing the theoretical foundations including gradual release of responsibility and the zone of proximal development and concluding with exploratory talk and social interactions. I will then explain storytelling, digital storytelling and some of the challenges teachers face when implementing technology into today's classrooms, followed by an explanation of where and how DS fits into the BC curriculum. The next few sections I will discuss DS in regards to motivation, how it provides opportunities for emergent writers to explore purposeful and authentic writing in a simplified way, and how DS promotes oral language development. This will be followed by a discussion on combining the best teaching practices with digital literacies and the various learning benefits of focusing on process instead of product. Finally, I focus on effective ways to conduct PD. It is through research findings in Chapter 2 that I will create my PD sessions for Chapter 3.

Theoretical Framework

Social constructivists, such as Vygotsky, Halliday and Gee believe language acquisition is a social process and it is through speech and the exchange of ideas with others, change in knowledge can occur. In this section, I will discuss how the basic tenets of social cultural theories of learning, including the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and the gradual release of responsibility (GRR), social interaction and exploratory talk and how they all provide a framework for the underlying theoretical foundation for DS.

The zone of proximal development and gradual release of responsibility. Vygotsky's (1978) foundational work on the ZPD recognizes students have the ability to follow examples given by peers and/or adult and gradually develop their own ability to do the task independently. It is defined as the difference between what the learner can do independently and what the learner can accomplish with

“adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Yelland & Masters, 2007, p. 363).

Vygotsky’s theory inspired the work of Pearson and Gallagher (1993) on the teaching style where responsibility eventually transferring from the teacher to student independence. This style of teaching named the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) provides the foundation on which instructional practices in the classroom are created. Teachers choose instructional activities which are just beyond the students’ independent level (ZPD); using scaffolding and modelling until the student can reach independence. The four phases included in this teaching model include: explaining and demonstrating the purpose and use of a strategy through modelling (focused lesson), supporting students as they work with the strategy (guided instruction), providing opportunities for students to use the strategy (collaborative learning), and observing students as they use the strategy in combination with other strategies they have learned (independent tasks). The goal is for students to recognize how, when and why to use these strategies during speaking, writing, listening, reading, viewing, and representing activities (BC Language Arts Curriculum, 2006).

Digital storytelling is a natural fit for using the GRR model of teaching. The interactive features of digital stories can help bridge the gap between a “student’s existing capabilities and their potential for new understanding” (Forzani & Leu, 2012, p. 422). The activities provide numerous opportunities for peers to interact during the process of story creations, increasing the learning through the four phases. Teachers and peers model how to run the program using step-by-step examples. Then students are guided by the teacher in small groups to reinforce necessary steps, differentiating the instruction to meet the needs of each group. Next, students are released to collaboratively apply the specific skill or strategy to create a digital story by discussing ideas and negotiating with peers. Working with their peers reinforces the teacher’s instruction. Finally, students independently use the learned skills and strategies to create other digital stories. Modelling, scaffolding and peer collaboration play a significant role in the creation of digital stories. It is through these GRR learning opportunities and

honouring a student's ZPD that learning takes place and students recognize their capabilities and deepen their understanding.

Multimodality. The New London Group (1994), a group of ten researchers, looked at how technology influenced society and developed a way to make education more inclusive of technology. They believed that encouraging multimodality (various ways of communicating) for expressing learning encourages cultural, communicative, linguistic, and technological perspectives which in turn will help students prepare for the technological world in which they live (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, Gee, et al., 1996). Gee and his colleagues recognizes that a monomodal teaching style does not recognizes these important aspects of a student and how their Discourses need to be addressed and valued. Tools such as DS, drama and other representations allow for students to express their perspectives in modes other than pen and paper encouraging expression, personal perspectives and creativity. Pahl & Rowsell's (2012) work on multiliteracies encourages teachers to see multicultural differences as a benefit not as a weakness. They note that as educators we must see how current students communicate and make meaning of their world and incorporate it into pedagogy. It is through recognizing and incorporating the way that the world is changing that we can offer a better way for students to learn and become prepared for a life outside of the classroom.

Exploratory talk and social interaction. Rajas-Drummond and Mercer (2003) reflect on Vygotsky's 1978 work, stating that knowledge is owned by the individual and shared by the community members. Knowledge is constructed by all community members through engagements in its culture and its history. Barnes (2008) stated that people create knowledge by taking an old idea and reshaping it into something new through talk; it begins socially and becomes individual. He encouraged the use of 'exploratory talk' in classrooms to enrich conversations and encourage effective interactions. This 'messy' talk allows the students to comfortably talk out ideas that are still being formed. Smagorinsky (2013) concurred and added schools must see the potential of the discovering knowledge through "messy talk". Sadik (2008) argues that in order to achieve meaningful technology

integration, learning must encourage social interaction, develop an ability to solve new problems, create new information, and employ creativity and critical thinking. By allowing access to multimedia such as DS, teachers create these social opportunities to explore and gain knowledge. It is through informal conversations, collaboration and interaction with others that students explore, create and share ideas.

Halliday (1969) believed children learned language, about language and through language and that language serves a multitude of human needs. Teachers must be cognizant that school language may differ from what the child has previously learned and offer chances to explore language in many different forms. DS is an excellent method to develop oracy as it provides opportunities for students to interact with technology, peers and/or with adults to acquire a deeper understanding of writing. These exchanges can solidify understanding, correct misconceptions, and build knowledge, adding to the students' schema. It provides language learning through multiple conversations with peers and adults, researching facts and topics, learning and using technology, asking for clarification and building understanding to acquire new language. Through DS, students can develop new concepts as well as confirm their understanding about their world through word choice, images and producing audio. The functions of language are multifaceted and DS offers experiences for students to play with and learn about language.

Defining Storytelling and Digital Storytelling

Storytelling has been a part of our culture throughout history. It can be defined as a form of communication used by people to share how they live, feel and interact in life, evolving through history as a way to share and teach wisdom, knowledge and values (Papadimitriou, Kapaniaris, Zisiadis & Kalogirou, 2013). It can capture our attention, teach a lesson and inspire us to challenge our thinking. Storytelling traditionally focused on the telling of folktales, fairy tales, myths and legends that were passed down through the generations. It introduced a multitude of genres, while giving us an appreciation for other traditions and cultures.

Becoming good storytellers gives us personal power as we guide, motivate, entertain, educate, inspire, and influence others through the artful use of story (Porter, 2006). Stories that are highly familiar can become modified to suit the interest of the teller and new versions can be created. This can motivate storytellers to experiment with language, word choice, expression, and voice. Because storytelling requires no resources, it is limitless in its possibilities allowing the storyteller to create imaginary worlds, grow the story over time and invite us into their world.

Young students have learned to communicate their thoughts, and express themselves through oral language long before entering school to deepen and make meaning out of their experiences. They naturally create and explore stories, which in turn helps them understand more about the world in which they live, play and work. According to Morgan (2011), every child's ability to tell stories differs according to the experiences they bring to school. Age, gender, cultural and language background(s), spiritual and religious beliefs, proficiency levels in the languages they use, the influence of family, peers and teachers, and access to media can all influence storytelling. This way of communicating helps develop insights into cultures and language use and can be used in classrooms to improving literacy (Morgan, 2011), especially for those with limited experiences.

Wright, Bacigalupa, Black & Burton (2008), spent two and a half years collecting and transcribing over 1000 stories from children between the ages of two and six that had little to no adult intervention. The researchers emphasize the importance of maximizing preschool children's storytelling and dramatization processes. They discuss reflections and processes that encourage storytelling with preschool children, including effective prompts, potential trouble spots, and ways that storytelling can enhance home-school relationships. They found that storytelling and dramatization can enhance early childhood programs such as developing literacy skills, enhancing social skills, increasing creativity, strengthening home-school connections, and teachers gaining insights into students' thinking. Their findings were the result of creating a child-centered environment where children were the directors of

their own learning process. In this way, storytelling is a good example of curriculum that is child-centered, play-based, and highly beneficial.

Storytelling continues to be a highly valued and critical component in our society and culture. Although stories were once only told through visual, written, and/or spoken forms, the range of modes has increased with the introduction of new technologies. By combining storytelling skills with the new technologies, storytelling can expand to incorporate multimedia.

Combining Storytelling with Technology

There are many different definitions of DS, however, they all concur that it is the combination of telling stories with an assortment of digital multimedia, including images, audio, and video on a specific topic with a particular viewpoint (Gregory, Steelman & Caverly, 2009; Papadimitriou, et al., 2013; Robin, 2008; Robin, 2011; Thesen & Kara-Soteriou, 2011). According to the Center for Digital Storytelling (2005), there are seven components to digital stories: a main idea (the perspective the author takes), a dramatic question (that will be answered by the end of the story), emotional content (connecting to us in a personal and powerful way), the gift of ‘voice’ (personalizing the story to help the audience understand the context), the power of background music (to support the story), economy (using just enough content to tell the story) and pace (how slowly or quickly the story moves). The stories themselves may range in length from 2 to 10 minutes and can be based on historical events, personal experience, offer guidance or provide information (Papadimitriou, et al., 2013).

Stories can be produced on a variety of digital devices using basic steps or a multitude of complex levels. For example, primary students, may create stories that are short and contain only pictures, audio and text, whereas, older student may create stories that contain relevant curricular content that may require higher level thinking and advanced skills. The flexibility of DS enables all teachers and students the opportunity to create these multimedia resources; nonetheless, teachers still find some challenges with implementing the necessary technology into the classrooms.

Challenges with Implementing Technology

DS is still in its ‘infancy’ in the classrooms as there are still issues that dissuade teachers from including it in their teaching practice. These issues include ineffective training for the teachers to implement the technology, the technology itself being too difficult to use, and teacher’s perceptions of DS being vastly different from traditional storytelling (Sadik, 2008; Thesen & Kara-Soteriou, 2011).

Sadik conducted a study in two private Basic Education Schools (ages 6-15) in Qena, Egypt. Each of the eight participating teachers, who had some experience using technology, chose one class to participate in the study over the course of the four month project (Feb to May 2006). After attending a personal orientation and group workshop on the integration of DS, teachers introduced and taught the participating classes how to use Microsoft Photo Story 3 for Windows to create a digital story, using specific steps taught at the workshop. The goal of the research was to help teachers develop their teaching and learning of digital technologies through a particular application that could shift how technology is used in the classroom. By encouraging more use of technology in classrooms, the researcher hoped to learn if using DS could help teachers engage students in learning tasks that were authentic, increasing the teacher’s use of technology. The teachers confessed that a lack of training and understanding of the value of using technology to support learning stopped them from implementing technology into their classrooms. Teachers found that time and technical computer difficulties were some of the biggest drawbacks to using technology for DS. They mentioned the issues of having to teach the technology, learning and teaching the software, planning and preparing the lessons as well as a lack of equipment discouraged them from using the technology. Sadik used multiple data collection and analysis tools to observe the process of creating these stories, as well as conducted interviews and surveys. Results showed that students can be engaged in authentic learning tasks with DS as the students were motivated and engaged during the story development project, as well as the observations and interviews discovered that the students’ understanding of the content and their ICT (information and communications technology) skills increased. The teachers in this study

recognized digital technology as a valuable learning tool and were therefore more willing to include this tool in their future teachings. They found that DS enriched the classroom learning environment, the curriculum and student learning experiences (Sadik, 2008).

Sadik recognized that having technology in a classroom does not make it an effective teaching tool; it is how the technology is used that makes it effective and teachers must create an environment that encourages collaboration. Past researchers have found that learner engagement is a key factor to successful learning (Herrington et al., 2003, as cited in Sadik, 2008). Sadik's results demonstrated a correlation between the technological application used and the positive observations and responses. Sadik's contribution to the research field was to demonstrate that technology can be used effectively in classrooms and teaching it is achievable.

DS and the BC Curriculum

“As society and technology change, so does literacy” (NCTE, 2008, p. 1).

As an educator, it is important to see the value of new concepts and ideas, such as DS, and how they fit into the current curriculum. The major aim of the British Columbia Ministry of Education Language Arts (2006) program is to “provide students with opportunities for personal and intellectual growth through speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and representing to make meaning of the world and to prepare them to participate effectively in all aspects of society” (p.2). It recognizes that technology has expanded the definition of a literate person to include being able to process and understand a variety of communications in written, electronic, oral and multi-media forms. Teachers need to support students in the development of writing for life outside school and gear the instruction toward helping them make sense of that life (NCTE, 2004).

Many researchers cited in the BCLA (2006) curriculum recognize oral language as a “key foundation for successful literacy” (Chaney & Burk, 1998; BC Primary Program, 2000; McCormick, 1999; Strickland, Ganske, & Monroe, 2002 as cited in BC Curriculum, p. 20) and during the elementary years, these skills are intertwined with learning to read and write. As communication is a

large part of digital storytelling, students can engage in meaningful and purposeful conversations, increasing their ability to be successful in writing.

The new English Language Arts draft curriculum document (2013) recognizes multimodal ways of learning. The leading sentence used to introduce the learning standards states that “student will be able to develop... curricular competencies using oral, written, visual and digital texts”. The document recognizes the need to address changes in the definition of a literate person and the world in which the students will be entering. The rationale suggests that it is through this curriculum that “students gain a repertoire of communication skills, including the ability to access information from a variety of sources and in many different forms.” Although there seems to be recognition of multimodal ways of thinking and learning, the draft document does not yet contain assessment.

DS and Motivation

Teachers of writing are constantly looking for ways to engage students in writing activities. Emergent writers can find it difficult to be motivated in the task of writing when staring at a blank piece of paper with little to no idea how or where to begin. In this section, I will review the relevant research on how DS may be used as an effective instructional tool that addresses this motivational challenge. Technological approaches such as DS can encourage and motivate emergent writers to explore and create digital stories, teaching invaluable literacy skills. Technology, such as an iPad is a tool that can provide emergent writers a way to access literacy learning as they are more literate in new literacies and can then use these skills to scaffold traditional literacies. Understanding that their work will be shared may motivate writers to create a better quality final product by spending more time on clarifying, editing and reviewing their work. According to the BC Curriculum (2006), emergent learners need to have positive experiences and feel successful in order to be motivated to maintain their involvement in literacy activities. With the introduction of technology, writing has become a more exciting experience in part because even the youngest learners are able to create stories in ways that were never possible before (Husbye, Buchholz, Coggin, Wessel-Powell, & Wohlwend., 2012).

Students are attracted to technology so digital storytelling may be a solution for emergent student writers (Sylvester & Greenidge, 2010).

In my experience, most early writers are generally enthusiastic to collaborate and share during writing time, however, there are still a few who believe they cannot write and are discouraged to the point of withdrawal during this work period. They cannot come up with an idea, have difficulty writing text and generally see themselves as non-writers. Through collaboration, DS provides learning opportunities to improve the social and storytelling skills of students (Di Blas, Paolini, & Sabiescu, 2010). It invites students, no matter what their skill level, academically or with using technology, to be involved in story authoring, social conversation and academic learning. Emergent writers can potentially produce detailed, voice filled stories that demonstrated their understanding of story structure and creativity without being confined to print. These early writers can be happily engaged in the learning process, excitedly contributing to discussions and proudly sharing their work through the freedom that technology can provide.

A quasi-experiment using 117, grade 5 students was done by Hung, Hwang and Huang (2012) to determine whether project-based DS could improve students' learning motivation, problem solving competence and learning achievements. For sixteen weeks, both groups participated in the project based learning tasks however, the control group used DS to perform these tasks. Both groups were given identical tasks except the control group used DS to create their projects. Interviews, tests, and surveys were used to collect data. Scores from the science learning motivation scale and the science learning achievement scale showed that the scores for the experimental group were significantly higher than the control. Also, interviewed students considered the project-based learning with DS as a more interesting way of learning. Therefore, it can be concluded that using DS with project based activities can improve the learning motivation, problem solving competency, attitude, and achievement of the students.

In a study in the same area of motivation, writing and technology, Papadimitriou et al. (2013), conducted a three-week study with a classroom of 19 Kindergarten students. They were given the opportunity to create a digital story to determine the motivation, engagement and interactions (peer/peer and peer/teacher) that take place during digital story creations. Using interviews, observations, notes, and filming to collect data, the researchers found that kindergarten students were motivated, engaged in the activities and DS promoted interactions between teachers and students.

The findings from the two studies above strongly suggest that DS can have positive effects on the motivation of emergent writers. The research endorses DS as an effective and engaging way to encourage young writers to share their ideas and become motivated to write. It is important for teachers to then recognize that the interactive nature of sound, pictures, text and colour found in this multimodal way of creating a story is far more motivating than a blank piece of paper and meets the various needs and preferences of young writers.

Opportunities for Emergent Writers

“...primary writers are hungry to communicate. They want to write and often find creative and imaginative ways to do so long before they are able to create conventional text” (Culham, 2005, p. 9).

Expanding our definition of writing. According to Healy (2008) the definition of writing needs to be widened as it is too simple for what text has become: a creative endeavor that now encompasses multimodal ways of knowing and learning. Everyone has the ability to write however, as a society, we need to recognize that writing can take many forms (Curwood, Magnifico & Lammers, 2013; NCTE 2004) and according to Calkins (1994), we are the ones who have removed art, song and play from writing. By limiting the ways students can demonstrate, create, and display their ideas, we do not tap into their true potential or cognition, creating an inaccurate assessment of a student’s understanding and abilities. With primary students who are still learning letters, letter formation and spelling, it is a difficult task to create a written piece using pen and paper that truly expresses their ideas.

Christianakis' (2011) study focused on how "writing, drawing and pictures function in older students' texts and how further explored classroom writing practices and curricular exceptions shaped classroom texts" (p. 48). She collected 900 writing samples including website data and work samples, conducted interviews, audiotaped student conversations during the writing sessions and took field notes. The researcher explored and compared each student's individual writings to see the development over the course of the year. Her findings suggested that when written language is combined with visual symbols, it can make new meanings to imagined, social and critical worlds (p. 48). She also recognized how visuals could be used to communicate abstract ideas that are difficult to share through orthographic symbols. The students in the study became frustrated with the confinement of curricular limitations on writing and eventually conformed to the curricular expectation which potentially lead to a lack of motivation toward writing. This study added to the research that limiting the definition of 'writing' can lead students to become discouraged and could lead to developmental consequences. Christianakis concluded that: "writing must recognize a wide array of communicative tools that children bring to writing" (p. 22). When we release students from independent, alphabetic, monomodal writings, students are given opportunities to share, access, and negotiate stories (Husbye et al., 2012). By expanding the definition of writing to include multimodal and multimedia, writing can become more inviting and accessible for emergent writers.

Opportunities for exploration of purposeful and authentic writing. Students need to explore and convey their ideas using stories, poems, explanations, procedural directions, and descriptions, using a variety of different tools, so that they become established, experienced writers. Calkins (1994) wrote, that our choices for our teachings demonstrate to students our attitudes toward children and their literacy. If we truly see our students as writers then we must create a space of trust in our classrooms and give them more choice to express their creativity and understandings. Husbye et al (2012), recognized the need to study how using play based curriculum with a variety of tools can allow for children to participate in literacy events.

In a 1 year study by Husbye, et al. (2012), 4 classes including 2 preschool, 1 K-1 and a K-8 elective filmmaking class, used filmmaking to determine how literacy curricula might be expanded and updated in developmentally responsive and meaningful ways. The researchers interacted with the child participants throughout the course of the year as the students explored and collaborated their way through complex play and storying decisions using the variety of tools to produce their own films. By collecting field notes, video-recordings, transcripts and student productions, the researchers determined that by using a play based curriculum (that includes opportunities for students to explore through non-scripted interactions and student-led activities using media literacies), teachers can expand children's participation in literacy events by encouraging their diverse interests and abilities in play and technologies. By offering a variety of choices in roles, teachers open experiences for learners to perform literate identities. When children are offered a curriculum that offers play-based media literacies, they are given ways to think beyond the traditional print –intensive reading/writing workshop.

DS could be thought of as a play-based media literacy approach because it engages students at the developmental level and in a media rich space. DS provides students with more experiences to demonstrate their learning and increase their self-efficacy (their belief in their abilities). Purposeful and authentic writing is changing the way we are communicating and constructing knowledge, creating a classroom atmosphere full of choices.

Andes & Cloaggett (2011) focused on improving the written expression skills of 16 special education and at risk second grade students over the course of a year. Teachers integrated technology through monthly projects, using online spaces such as wiki spaces, email and DS to motivate struggling writers by providing them with authentic reasons to read and write. Through surveys, assessment data, and work samples, the researchers concluded that students were more motivated to read and write as they actively engaged in meaningful projects.

Opportunities to simplify writing. Multiliteracies, such as DS can simplify writing for emergent writers by reducing some of the necessary skills needed during pen and paper storying. It simplifies the mechanics of writing, allowing children to place their focus on the development of the actual story writing. In a study by Kuhn, Quintana, & Soloway (2009), thirteen children ages 7-9, were studied using the app *StoryTime* to determine the benefits and issues pertaining to finger-touch mobile devices to support struggling writers. Prior to this experimental study, writing samples were taken to create a baseline for pen and paper activities similar to the *StoryTime* application. Students were then introduced to the app, shown 3 videos for writing options and asked to write using the mobile finger-touch device. Students were observed and surveyed using a tool that indicated positive and negative aspects of the tool on a continuum. The negative results were then used to create three versions of the *StoryTime* program including reducing the level of child frustration by reducing the difficulty of the tasks. Results indicated that students were more engaged, found the writing mechanics to be simpler, and the writing was more contextualized. According to the authors, “*StoryTime* allows children to write anywhere through the portability mobile devices afford, providing more opportunities to write” (p. 221).

Students who compose stories in a traditional manner are often reluctant to make any type of revision to their work. They have struggled to get through the piece, and the last thing that they want to do is to look at it again. A digital story is meant to be viewed by others, and as such, the writer needs to be accountable for his or her work. Revision is necessary in DS as every picture, sound effect, voice recording, and story element must flow and work together in harmony. “Digital storytelling has the capacity to not only motivate struggling writers as they experience the enjoyment of creating stories enhanced by multimedia, but also to reposition themselves from struggling writers to competent writers” (Sylvester and Greenidge, 2010, p. 291). DS creates many moments of planning, discussion, revisiting, revising, and consulting, necessary elements of the writing process. Students are able to share ideas, ask clarifying questions and voice opinions to improve the product

and clarify thinking. This demonstrates that the stages of writing are just as prevalent in non-traditional writings such as DS as in traditional. DS encourages students to experiment with language through audio, images and text. Emergent digital writers can rehearse their ideas and take multiple attempts to create their work in a mode that is less daunting than pen and paper activities. Written text using pen and paper can be seen as more permanent whereas when using technologies, editing requires less effort as typing and audio recordings can be easily erased and replaced.

Creating digital stories allows students to practice and master a number of specific 21st century skills in a more accessible way than monomodal writing. The process of creating digital stories engages students in technical, communication, collaborative, oral speaking, creativity, visual and sound literacy, and project management skills as well as exposes students to a range of digital communication skills necessary in our digital world (Porter, 2006). If we do not encourage technology in our teachings, we are not optimizing students' chances to share their stories and develop necessary skills to communicate with other members of society.

DS and Oral Language

“Oral language is the foundation on which literacy is built. Throughout their elementary years, students’ oral language abilities are interwoven with learning to read and write” (BC Language Arts Curriculum, 2006, p. 33).

When you walk into a primary classroom, you can hear a buzz of conversations and interactions. Observers can overhear students share about personal stories, opinions on specific topics or plans for future events. Students are enthusiastic to share their stories repeatedly, altering and experimenting with the language, adding dramatic pauses and inflection to create a story that captivates their audience. It is through oral interactions like these, that people develop the ability to understand and express themselves verbally. It appears simple at first glance, but actually require a complex set of skills as well as a multitude of experiences and interactions in order to gain proficiency.

Communication through social interactions ideally is an important component and emphasis in any classroom, as talk is the student's primary means of communicating, significantly more so in the younger grades. It is a way for different views to be shared, stories to be told and learning to occur. Barnes (in Mercer & Hodgkinson, 2008), explains that exploratory talk occurs when a speaker is experimenting and sharing ideas that may not be completely formed. Like a draft copy of a written text, multiple attempts are necessary to gain insight and clarity to create a polished piece. Research discussed in this section all concur that exploratory talk, the messy, experimental type of talk, is not only a benefit in the classroom to improve knowledge, (Littleton et al., 2005; Maine, 2014; Rajala, Hilppo & Lipponen, 2011; Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003; Simpson, Mercer & Majors, 2010), it is also a necessary component of communication and the writing process.

Rojas-Drummond & Mercer (2003) investigate Vygotsky's sociocultural ideas that language can be used to share knowledge; that acquired knowledge will in turn generate new personal understandings. In their review of British and Mexican studies focusing on ways students can be included in communicative and intellectual activities in the classroom, the authors found that by engaging in exploratory talk, students develop a capacity to converse with one another to solve problems. In their evaluation of the research, they noted that social interactions not only benefit collective thinking but also "promotes development of individual reasoning and the advancement of learning and understanding in the curriculum subjects" (p. 110). For emergent writers who have not yet acquired the abilities to share their ideas in written form, digital storytelling affords them the opportunity to use images and add audio to explain their thinking. This provides viewers with information and understanding that cannot be gleaned from the image without the author being present.

As stories are shared, writers come to understand how they fit into the world and are part of a classroom community. According to Dean and Warren (2012), it is through informal writing and sharing that a sense of community can be created in a classroom. In a synthesis of the research and their own classroom experiences, they found that it is through the sharing of writing and the responses

of others that students can deepen their connections with their peers and others with whom they have shared their writings. Although sharing may be intimidating for some students, the willingness and courage to take the risk will help to form bonds and relationships that will induce trust and encourage future experiences to share. Through the collaborative nature of DS, students are afforded the opportunities to share their writing and create this classroom community.

In another study regarding oral language, Maine (2014) researched the modes of talk and how to encourage critical thinking and reasoning through conversations. Maine recorded the conversations of two pairs of students during their first year of school and then five years later to analyze the talk on language use, how they managed the talk and broader themes they brought to the conversation. Her findings concluded there is a need to play and experiment with ideas to co-construct language in a less structured format. Maine agreed with Vygotsky's (1969) view that people construct their world through social interactions and that each individual experiences and interprets their meaning differently. Students need more occasions to share their opinions and ideas with peers. Since young primary students have limited abilities in written communication, talk is their dominant form of Discourse. Multimodal activities encourage peer and teacher conversations and feedback through their collaborative nature.

Peer feedback is a powerful element of any writing process. Students are actively engaged in helping each other, exchanging and sharing ideas, as well as improving their academic skills. As their ideas are shared, clarified, and formed through talk and feedback throughout the writing process, the quality of their writing improves and learning can occur. Although a teacher's input is valuable in order to model new concepts or acquire new skills, peers are an authentic audience because they have similar challenges and experiences. They are a safe and empathetic audience who can provide feedback and build the self-esteem of early writers, as their responses are genuine and have no influence on grades nor do they focus on criteria. An emotional reaction from a peer such as a giggle or a gasp can provide writers with information about their writing impact on an audience. Writers think

through elements and rehearse their stories prior to writing by sharing aloud to an audience (Tunks, 2012). It is through these discussions and peer engagements that writers can create and refine the story they want to tell. As students mature and are more exposed to the perspectives of others, they become more aware of differing opinions and become less egocentric in their thinking. (Tunks, 2012).

According to the Oral Language (Speaking and Listening) section of the BC Curriculum Document (2006), it is through social interactions that young students “learn to consider a variety of perspectives, and to express their own thoughts, ideas, feelings, and values with growing clarity and confidence” (p. 17).

DiBlas, Paoloini & Sabiescu (2010) report on empirical evidence from a case study of hundreds of classes collectively developing multimedia, interactive digital stories focusing their work around 3 key topics: engagement of pupils, integration into curriculum, and educational benefits found when examining the results of the 97 primary classes (students ages 4-10) that completed their stories during the 2008-2009 school year. According to their research, educational leaders recognize that social interactions, peer support and collaboration are necessary in the early socio-cognitive development of children. They believe that the combination of storytelling and cooperative technologies can bring significant learning benefits including story writing, improvement of social skills and fostering balanced socio-cognitive development however, they recognize that these technologies are not being implemented into early childhood classrooms because of costs and the difficulty of integrating them into a traditional classroom. They found that students were highly motivated, engaged and that the most significant curricular benefit produced by DS are communication skills, understanding of the subject and media literacy. Digital stories are an important instrument for learning as the process involved in social interactions around texts can have a more profound effect on learning than the actual curricular content (Littleton et al., 2005). The combination of technologies that encourage cooperation and storytelling can bring significant learning benefits especially in early childhood education, for nurturing socio-cognitive development, social interaction skills and story writing (Di Blas et al., 2010).

We need to focus on providing students with the skills and experiences they need to succeed in an ever increasing media-varied environment (Rajala et al., 2011; Robin, 2008). These skills don't just include interactions with technology, but also the interactions with people both inside and outside of school. DS supports collaboration and co-construction as students learn from each other and construct knowledge together. Students that struggle with developing and exploring writing ideas find it easier to compose when working collaboratively. In such a setting, each student shares his or her thoughts as everyone is working together to co-construct a piece of writing. By adding digital literacies experiences such as DS, teachers release students from independent, paper-and-pencil authorship and provide all students with opportunities to access, share, and negotiate stories which in turn, shifts writing from individual to collective (Husbye et al., 2012).

Combining Best Teaching Practices with Digital Literacy

“Teachers had the unwieldy task of keeping up with new styles of learning, new program changes and new technology. They need to prepare themselves and their students for those changes” (Muir-Herzig, 2004, p. 116).

Emergent writers are in need of learning many skills in order to be successful in literacy and there are many ways that teachers can support these early learners. This section discusses the current research based practices for teaching writing and explains how widening the views on writing to include digital literacies, such as DS, can increase learning for emergent writers. Key researchers (for example, Graham, Harris, MacArthur & Fink, 2002; Edward-Groves, 2012) focused their studies on how teachers can positively impact the writing practices in the classroom. The first study discusses how a teacher's opinion on natural learning and explicit instruction can influence their teachings. The second study discusses how professional conversations can influence change in teaching practices.

Graham, Harris, Fink & MacArthur (2002)'s study focused on three goals. First was to develop an instrument to measure primary grade teachers' orientations to the teaching of writing, second, to provide construct validation for the instrument, and thirdly, to obtain a perspective on teachers' beliefs

about writing instruction. Once the instrument was created and validated, 153 first-through third grade teachers completed the materials. The Writing Orientation Scale assessed primary teacher's beliefs about teaching writing focusing on two basic orientations: a focus on skills and form versus a focus on meaning and process. Participants were also asked to complete a 12 item questionnaire that assessed the frequency of student engagement in specific writing tasks and instructional procedures. Not surprisingly, researchers found that teachers' beliefs or theories about writing instruction are related to their teaching practice. According to the findings, the scores on the time spent teaching grammar, handwriting, and spelling were positively related to the teachers' beliefs about correctness in writing and their classroom practices. Additional findings confirmed that a teachers' beliefs about using natural learning in their classroom practices were supported by the scores related to the use of incidental and informal processes. Graham et al. (2002) noted that although other literacy experts believed that natural learning and explicit instruction are incompatible, the teachers in this valued both of these study orientations. Results from this study explain that unless teachers believe that DS will impact the learning of their students in a natural learning environment, they will not implement the technology into their teaching practices.

Edwards-Groves (2012), did an empirical 12 month participatory action research project in a primary school with five teachers and a system consultant in NSW, Australia. She investigated how "the changed nature of learning has changed writing practices and pedagogies" (p. 99) by observing teaching and learning sessions as well as conducting interviews with teachers, the consultant and a student focus group. Throughout the project, teachers met at least once every 2 weeks to discuss multimodality, digital literacies and technology practices as well as what they were implementing in their own teaching. Results indicated that the professional conversations encouraged change and teachers began to incorporate digital context into their instruction. The combination of interactions, creativity and technology helped to change the teachings: which in turn, changed the learnings of the teachers and the students. Results also indicated that lessons around creating text need to offer more

chances for collaborative learning and this should be built into the lessons to make them relevant and engaging. In conclusion, Edward-Groves stated that “for teachers and students it seemed technology enabled a renewed place for creativity which offered them a broader scope of action. For them it was not the technology alone, but rather what new possibilities it enabled” (Edward-Groves, 2012, p. 109). In order to implement change in teaching with technology such as DS, teachers need opportunities to collaborate with one another to discover the value and uses of digital literacies in contemporary classrooms.

Scaffolding is a strategic approach that can improve students’ emergent writing skills. Wood, Bruner & Ross (1978) refer to scaffolding as “a process that enables a child or a novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts” (as cited in Yelland & Masters, 2007, p. 363). In a review of the research, Yelland and Masters (2007) believe that effective scaffolding involves using a range of procedures and a variety of tasks that provide experiences for children to engage with concepts and higher-order thinking processes in new ways. It begins with selecting an engaging learning task, focused on a skill that the students is just developing. The application of the task can be scaffolded through strategies such as modelling, questioning, explanation, cueing, coaching, corroboration, and feedback. Teachers need to recognize that even when using technology, teaching is still a necessary component to learning. In their own two week exploratory case study with students ranging in age from 7-8 years old, Yelland & Masters (2007) examined how the use of scaffolding can enhance and extend the performance of pairs of children in a computer-based context. Using two different cohorts per year, in the same primary school, the researchers observed and videotaped students in the classroom solving three different problems using a program that incorporated both on and off computer work. During the first year, the researchers only intervened during signs of frustration or when students were stuck. The researchers used the information gleaned from the first cohort to develop scaffolding techniques for the next cohort. Results revealed that when children’s learning is scaffolded by a teacher, they work at a higher

processing level and use more strategies than when they are left unassisted. Teachers need to recognize and decide on the level and type of scaffolding necessary by looking at the needs and interests of the students, the involved concepts and processes, the collaborative opportunities and the task itself.

In a multicultural Kindergarten in Oslo, Sandvik, Smordal & Osterud (2012) studied how scaffolding learning using the iPad with 2 educational apps (one that was stimulus-response based and the other open and creative) could strengthen a child's language and literacy learning. Teaching was scaffolded in order to support students through the learning of the necessary skills and strategies needed to complete the tasks. Through video documentation of students working, interacting and sharing, excerpts were collected and transcribed. Results determined that when teachers moved away from the question and answer style of teacher (referred to as IRE – Initiate, respond, evaluate) and became more of an active participant who facilitates learning through scaffolding the students' understanding of genre capabilities and vocabulary. This in turn increased students' verbal activity as did their positive engagement and interactions with each other and adults. This concurs with results indicated from another study that digital tools can provide opportunities for children to participate in valuable and purposeful language and literacy interactions with both adults and peers (Sandvik, Smordal & Osterud, 2012).

Another study on scaffolding emergent writing with DS, was conducted by Voogt & McKenney (2007). The researchers examined how technology could support the development of emergent reading and writing skills in 4-5 year old children by conducting two small-scale studies using *PictoPal*, a program that uses images and text in reading, writing, and authentic applications (i.e. sharing, publishing and mailing). For the first study, 21 students were chosen randomly for the experimental group and 19 students were randomly chosen for the control group. Students in the experimental group used the *PictoPal* program four times over the course of the five week observation. Results from this first study indicated that students were able to work independently after initial help to

operate the technology and work with the program. In the second study 14 kindergarten students were divided into 2 groups (experimental and control) and the experimental group used the *PictoPal* program once a week for 8 weeks. Pre and post tests were administered and findings concluded that the *PictoPal* intervention improved emergent reading and writing skills.

Digital technologies are fundamentally shifting changes in the writing process and in order to stay relevant, classrooms need to reflect this change. By looking outside the classroom at the many ways students are using technology to communicate – texting, email, and the internet, it is evident that 21st century students are learning “new literacies, new socialites and new technological competencies” (Edward-Groves, 2012, p. 99) to communicate.

Learning benefits. Although technology can be difficult to integrate into the classroom, when teachers recognize the benefits to their students, they may find it worthwhile to implement it. As the designers, creators and organizers of the teaching materials, primary teachers must see a natural fit for multimedia and this can be established through planning, collaboration and leadership. Teachers of emergent literacy students can and should work toward incorporating technology into their lessons to increase learning of their students in order for them to be literate in a digital world (Edwards-Groves, 2012; Muir-Herzig, 2003; Yost, 2003). The results from the following 2 studies by Newman (2014) and McGrail & Davis (2011) support the incorporation of technology into classrooms for increased learning.

According to Neumann (2014), the recent release of the touch screen tablet has impacted the amount of research on the effectiveness of these digital devices on emergent literacy development. Therefore, her study sought to examine this issue by studying preschoolers use of touch screens at home and whether it is related to emergent literacy skills. Data in the form of assessments was collected from one hundred and nine preschoolers from 11 different classes based on their letter name, sound knowledge, numeral identification, name writing, print concepts and word reading. Pre and post testing to determine the participants early literacy skills was conducted by the researcher or a trained

research assistant. Results indicated that children knew a third of the letter names but only a few sounds; they could produce strings of letters in a line for their name, and had some knowledge of pre-reading skills. A home questionnaire consisting of questions regarding family demographics and touch screen tablets was also collected and it was determined that 61% of families had touch screen tablets at home and children used them for about 20 minutes per day. Results showed that access to tablets at home was positively associated with letter sound knowledge and name writing skills however the time spent on tablets and emergent literacy skills suggest that the quality of the interactions needs to be explored further.

A second study demonstrating a link between technology and learning was conducted by McGrail and Davis in 2011. They did a qualitative case study research to determine how blogging influenced student writing and literacy development. Sixteen grade 5 students' pre and post blogging writing samples were explored through qualitative data analysis to examine students' voice, thinking, attitude, craft, content, connections and relationships. Researchers also interviewed the teachers and students as well as videotaped class blogging sessions. Findings revealed that students' who participated in blogging became more aware of their audience, took more ownership of the writing craft and process as well as exercised agency.

As evidence from the previous 2 studies, research reports demonstrate that technology experiences that are supported by teaching and quality programs can improve language comprehension, vocabulary and understanding of language concepts.

The writing process as a process and a product. According to Vacca, Vacca, Gove, Burkey, Lenhart, & McKeon (2008), there are five stages in the writing process. In the first stage, rehearsing/prewriting, the author prepares to begin the writing by exploring ideas. The author makes plans, stimulates thinking, generates ideas and creates a desire to write by talking, drawing, taking notes, or reading. In the second stage, drafting, the author can begin to draft a text with a purpose focusing on a particular audience. During this time, a teacher's job is to monitor the process and ask

leading questions. In the third stage, revising, conferencing with adults or peers takes place to get feedback on the writing. It is necessary in this stage for the teacher to take the role of the listener. During the fourth stage, editing/revision, the writer spends time focused on making necessary changes to the writing marking up their work with cross outs, using carets for insertions and changing positions of text. When this is complete, authors can work individually or collaboratively to proofread their work for conventions. The fifth and final stage of writing, publishing, is when the writing is officially shared with others.

The stages of writing are recursive in that they do not move along a continuum to completion. Writers can move forward and backward through the stages as they create their stories or in some cases never complete the piece. Graham & Sandmel (2011) discuss how students engage in cycles of planning, translating, and reviewing during the writing process, writing for real purposes and audiences. They recognize that writing projects take time and that self-reflection and evaluation helps students take ownership of their work.

Foundational thinker and researcher, Murray (1972), concurs that writing should be seen as a process and not as a product. He shares the view that teaching should include working with language in action. He believes that we should teach “the process of discovery through language..., the process of exploring of what we know and what we feel about what we know through language, the process of using language to learn about our world, to evaluate what we learn about our world, to communicate what we learn about our world” (p. 4).

More time needs to be spent focused on the process of sharing and teaching about the craft of writing rather than the final product that has been created (Ware, 2006), especially with emergent writers. For these writers, much of their exploration of purposes and forms in writing occur during conversations with peers. For this reason, the final product does not demonstrate the learnings that have taken place. Adults need to recognize that the writing process is strongly influenced by these social situations that occur during the writing process (Kissel, 2009).

Technology is a natural fit for the stages of writing with emergent learners as the process can be more fluid, interactive, and malleable because the writings are not fixed entities. Although technology is important, it is just a tool and consideration must be taken to implement the technology into the classroom with purpose. The story must always be the focal point of the process as this is where the true teaching and learning takes place. According to Miller (2010), students experience and learn a variety of skills including: experimenting with vocabulary and story structures, gathering and organizing information, communicating with peers; analyzing information (textual and visual), creating and presenting, explaining their stories for an audience, as well as applying what they know about computers, technology, and storytelling to projects. By changing the focus of writing from the final product to the actual process, students will see writing as a tool for living and learning rather than something teachers use as a tool for evaluation. (Dean & Warren, 2012). This focus then becomes what writing teaches us rather than how the text is produced.

Collectively, these investigations show the importance of how digital literacies can be naturally implemented into the best teaching practices of emergent writers. Teachers must recognize that fundamental writing skills are not exchanged but are extended to address the shift in learning practices that technology demands (Edward-Groves, 2012).

Effective Professional Development

Learning is a lifelong process and teaching is an ever-evolving profession. In order to stay current and 'fresh' in the field, teachers need to learn new ideas and concepts that can improve the teaching environment they are creating. Professional development (PD) provides a chance for teachers to learn more about their beliefs and practices in order to add skills and knowledge to their teaching and to improve student achievement. Budget cuts have made it necessary for many school districts to reduce money and time, making these learning opportunities more precious to teachers. As a PD facilitator, it is necessary to recognize the importance of effectively using this time to provide productive instruction. Before embarking on this educational journey, a facilitator should inquire as to the most

effective way to convey their knowledge through examining the research and their target audience (Papastamatis, Panitsidou, Giavrimis, & Papanis, 2009).

There is a reoccurring theme amongst much of the research in regards to generating the most effective PD sessions. The following section will provide insights into four effective characteristics of PD including how it needs to be ongoing sessions with opportunities to clarify and ask questions after implementing the concepts, led by a personable and knowledgeable presenter, participatory so the audience to actively engaged them and connected and relevant to the curricula, school goals, and other PD sessions.

Researchers have spent a significant amount of time examining the most effective length of time for a PD activity in order for it to be effectively implemented into current teaching practice. Research found that one day workshops are less effective than ongoing workshops as they are too short and do not offer the follow up necessary to help teachers implement ideas into their classrooms (Papastamatis et al., 2009; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi & Gallagher, 2007). In order to be integrated into practice, PD needs to provide experiences that are longer in time span and duration (Penuel et al., 2007), to give participants time to reflect and implement new ideas into their lessons improving the likelihood that teachers may change their teaching practices (Little & Paul, 2009). It needs to offer time to discuss ideas with colleagues, to ask questions and try ideas with the knowledge that there will be feedback to confirm their understanding.

Ingvarson, Meiers, & Beavis' (2005) findings are based on four studies from 2002 -2003 completed by ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) for the Australian Government Quality Teacher Program. They sought to examine the results of the four studies to determine relationships between "process features of PD programs such as active learning and follow up, and outcome measures, such as teacher practice and efficacy" (p. 12). The results indicated that when the emphasis is placed on the subject matter pertinent to the curriculum, particularly on how it is learned and how to teach it, there is an increase in school based professional learning processes. One of the significant

findings recognized the importance of follow up during PD. Teachers in this study reported a feeling of increased knowledge when they were supported and coached through the learning and implementing stages of their new learning. Providing time for teachers to try out new ideas and receive follow up support and coaching as they encountered implementation issues, made learning more significant.

The second effective characteristic is having a facilitator who is personable and knowledgeable. In a study by Ertmer, Richardson, Cramer, Hanson, Huang, Lee, & Um (2005) research was conducted on 31 PD coaches in 18 schools during 2002 to discover critical characteristics and skills that were believed necessary to achieve success in PD. Coaches participated in two, two-week training sessions prior to the start of school then attended weekly sessions every week during the school year. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, audio tapes, interviews and informal observations. Results suggested that there are strong factors in coaching characteristics (people skills, a strong literacy background, the need to be lifelong learners), coaching strategies (being prepared and knowledgeable, treating teachers as peers and learning together) as well as factors impacting coaching (initial and ongoing training and peer support). In the study, 10 coaches noted that ongoing training sessions were valuable in supporting their efforts to apply newly learned skills. Reflection and collaboration after implementation allows teachers to clarify learning, further their knowledge with peers, and take time to reflect on the achievement of implementation and things they can do to improve their teachings.

A third effective characteristic is creating an engaging and participatory series. Effective PD must allow teachers time and experience to try out their new learning in a safe environment. They need opportunities to ask questions, explore and share these new ideas, and reflect on the information in a comfortable learning atmosphere (Little & Paul, 2009; Papastamastis et al., 2009; Quick, Holtzman, & Chaney, 2009). Through research and experience, we recognize that hands-on activities and participant interaction reinforces knowledge much more than a less interactive, lecture type experience. This can also benefit the facilitator to improve upon their teachings in order to reduce misconceptions

before they occur. Musanti & Pence (2010) state that PD must be collaborative where learning opportunities can be created through dialogue, constant challenge and mutual exchange. In this way, learning is reciprocal, supportive and continuous.

PD leaders need to emphasize the importance of sharing and social interactions, also the environment and the presenter themselves need to be assessed. To be an effective coach, PD presenters must understand teachers, students, classrooms and curricula. They need to be well prepared and demonstrate confidence in the subject they are presenting (Ertmer et al., 2005). Coaches need to be well educated in current research to optimize the implementation of these ideas into the classroom as well as have the ability to create a rapport with participants. People skills such as establishing credibility and trust, respecting others and building relationships (Ertmer et al., 2005), were recognized as beneficial traits to the success of a presentation. Coaches need to communicate an understanding that they are trustworthy, can provide feedback in a non-threatening, supportive way and are open to questions and critiques.

The fourth effective characteristic is the necessity of PD being connected and relevant. Teachers need to see the value in the topic and know that they can take away their learning and easily implement it into their existing classroom without much effort. After receiving guidance, support and encouragement, participant teachers should feel confident enough in their knowledge surrounding the subject to use their acquired skills independently (Dadds, 2014). Teachers must be able to recognize how this new information can 'fit' into their professional goals and the goals they have set for their students learning. For this reason, a presenter needs to recognize the diversity of their learners in order to elicit change (Gilley, McMillan, & Gilley, 2009). Activities must be flexible enough to recognize the various skill levels and abilities of the audience as well as provide a starting point where all participants can feel comfortable (Little & Paul, 2009).

Effective PD needs to be connected to the curriculum and other current PD as well as relevant to specific grade levels. In order for PD activities to be effective, there must be a good 'fit' between the

curriculum and the local context (Penuel et al., 2007; Little & Paul, 2009). Program demand can limit a teacher's ability to implement new material and concepts so a facilitator's job is to recognize these challenges and provide examples to demonstrate how it has been implemented in current practice. According to Quick et al. (2009), the most effective PD activities are the ones that connect with other professional development activities as they create a clear program of learning and connect with other aspects of teachers' professional work.

Facilitators need to recognize that teachers do not come to PD as empty vessels needing to be filled. They bring their own perspectives, insight, experiences, practices and even anxiety about the complexity of their work (Dadds, 2014). Learning demands for individuals to be willing to take risks, evaluate understandings and possibly even question their own practice. This should not be taken lightly as it requires a participant to be put themselves in a vulnerable position and become a reflective practitioner (Dadds, 2014). Therefore, the facilitator needs to consider the needs of the audience in regards to current understandings of the topic, providing an environment that encourages collaboration and interaction as well as the addresses the current curriculum.

Effective PD practices revealed that presenters need to find the most effective ways to implement new ideas into existing classrooms in the least intimidating fashion. This includes offering ongoing sessions, having a personable and knowledgeable facilitator, engaging the audience, and connecting to the curriculum and current practices. It is these factors that can contribute to a teacher's knowledge and confidence when implementing new teaching theory (Mundy, Howe, Kupcxynski, 2014). It is through understanding the audience and recognizing their needs that facilitators can encourage learning beyond skill development and create opportunities for enabling teachers' cognitive development, efficacy, career development, collegiality and the improvement of school culture (Papastamatis et al., 2009). This in turn will help achieve the true goal of PD – improving student achievement.

Chapter 3 – A Guide to a PD Workshop for Digital Storytelling

Introduction

My project consists of creating, developing and implementing an introductory workshop for educators in the district to introduce and experience Digital Storytelling (DS) using applications (apps) on the iPad. By using this technology, I hope to convey to teachers the value of using DS with all emergent writers but, especially those who do not yet have the ability to produce text with pen and paper. This chapter is organized as follows: design of the workshops; goals of the workshop; invitation to the participants; format of the sessions; descriptions of the applications; reflections of my learnings; and implications for future research. This is followed by a description of the first workshop, including a PowerPoint presentation, which is based on my own experiences with teaching and learning DS and knowledge I have gained through conducting this literature review.

Design of the Workshops

The design of this introductory workshop is the first in a series to be conducted with my colleagues. It supports the current research that professional development (PD) needs to be ongoing, participatory, led by a knowledgeable instructor and relevant to the curriculum. It will follow the format of a learning series that takes place on separate occasions with reasonable time between sessions in order for teachers to implement their learning into the classroom and then meet again to confirm understanding, solidify knowledge and answer questions with other participants. Future sessions will use similar procedural format but the content will be influenced by the needs and interests of the teachers. These workshops take place on district PD days in order to reduce the cost as well as to encourage teachers from same schools to participate.

It is recommended that each of the sessions follow within a month of the previous session in order to provide enough time for teacher participants to experiment with the app in the classroom but close enough together to clarify understanding and handle any issues that may arise.

Goals of the Workshop

In planning this PD series, I considered my own staff and the diversity of knowledge and comfort levels in using technology such as the iPad. These considerations are very important when creating my plan. The workshops need to be flexible enough to meet the various needs of the participants. The research literature strongly suggests that students learn best through collaboration and co-construction so my workshops take this approach into account.

My goal is to ensure participants achieve four outcomes: 1) have a good understanding of how DS can be used to enhance writing for emergent learners; 2) know how DS fits into the curriculum; 3) know where to find support; and 4) have adequate knowledge and generate enthusiasm to incorporate DS in their classroom. It is also important that the workshops be engaging and fun so as to demonstrate the enjoyment and motivation DS can provide to writing activities. By serving in a facilitator role, I hope to give the participants ample time to share, collaborate, question, and learn through exploration of the technology with teachers of similar grade levels. Through these workshops, I will emphasize the importance of educators providing multimodal ways of learning and teaching.

Format of the Sessions

Each session in the series is created with a similar layout in order to simplify the structure and focus more on the learning. It will allow participants to know what to expect at each workshop and how to prepare for future gatherings. Each session will begin with a brief introduction of the participants including their comfort and knowledge of iPads and DS by holding conversations around the questions found on Slide 3&4. As the sessions progress, it is expected that the participants will share an increase of knowledge and comfort of DS and iPad use. After the introductions, the facilitator will share the objectives, agenda of the workshop and sequence of the day so participants have a focus for the day. This will lead into an open discussion and sharing session of previous sessions or conversations about DS and iPad use. Through these conversations, the facilitator can get a better understanding of the needs of the group and alter the day accordingly.

The next section of the workshop the facilitator shows an example of a digital story using the app. He/she then demonstrates, step by step how to create a story using the app. Participants can follow along using the handout provided or create along with the presenter using the iPad. After confirming understanding and answering any questions, the rest of the workshop is put into the hands of the participants as they explore and create their knowledge with their peers. They are guided in their hands-on work by written instructions as the facilitator circulates through the groups asking and answering questions, guiding learning and recognizing when reteaching of a specific skill is needed. When the facilitator notices that many groups have created a good part of their story and learning has been confirmed, he/she brings the group back together to discuss the process. Groups are asked to voluntarily share their stories and discussions are continued to develop an understanding of the learning. This is the most important section of the day as it solidifies the benefits and learnings that are created through the participants' immersion in creating a digital story. It allows them to be placed in the role of the student and by immersing them in the actual process of developing a digital story, they can see the benefits and motivating factors of using DS during writing activities. From this point, the participants can lead a discussion around the topic of DS and how it could be used in the classroom. This discussion will also help the facilitator to plan for the next session. The session should conclude with a review of the day's objectives and encouraging participants to set a goal to try something they learned from this workshop before the commencement of the next session.

Inviting the participants

In our district, we are given six PD days during the year. During one of those days, our district hosts a PD event where a group of knowledgeable presenters congregate to share their learning. Teachers from the district are encouraged to sign up and attend the sessions with other members of their staff and the district. I will be presenting my first workshop at this event to approximately 25 participants. In order to encourage registration, I was asked to write a short abstract to explain the workshop. It read:

“Every one of us has worked with a child who enters the classroom with amazing storytelling skills. They can capture an audience with their details, imagery and voice. This is the same child who groans at the beginning of every writing session and produces little to nothing on paper. As primary teachers, we recognize that pen and paper activities limit these students from sharing their stories and in fact, discourages them from writing. These PD sessions will introduce you to Digital Storytelling, a tool that combines words, sounds and images to produce a multimodal text. During this fun, hands on session, you will work in collaboration with peers to explore apps on the iPad that will help you experience the rewards and enjoyment of creating a digital story of your own with the hope that you will want to implement this in your own classroom. Ipads will be supplied but participants are welcome to bring their own.”

The benefits of beginning the series during a district workshop is to encourage teachers from same schools or similar grades to partake, which in turn may encourage collaboration and collegiality with participants between workshop sessions.

Description of the Application

The tool used in the first session will be the starting point for the series. In each session, teachers will be introduced to a new app on the iPad that can be used to create a digital story and provided with ample time to work in collaboration with other teachers. The first is called *Pictello*, an app that uses pictures or videos uploaded from the camera roll, emailed from home, or taken during the creation of the digital story itself. Creators then use text and audio recordings to accompany the uploaded image to create pages in the digital book. Once the images, text and audio are complete, the digital story can be shared through a slideshow, uploaded to Dropbox or emailed. I chose *Pictello* over similar apps because of its ease of use and professional design.

Rationale for the Workshop Model

Developing my PD workshop has expanded my knowledge of creating a PD series and using DS in the classroom. Before beginning this project, I was expecting to present a one day workshop to a

variety of my colleagues using a specific outline that was prescribed. The focus would have been on me explaining and demonstrating DS and the apps. It was through my review of the research, that I came to realize that a one day, lecture style approach was not the optimal way to conduct a workshop to effectively engage the audience or to encourage future implementation. Upon reflection, I recognized that the influential workshops I had personally attended and enjoyed, had the characteristics noted in my PD literature review: ongoing, participatory, led by a knowledgeable instructor and relevant to the curriculum. I recognized the connection this type of teaching had to my current teaching practices and how any audience, students and adults alike, need hands on, collaborative opportunities to create a more powerful learning environment. It is through the interactions with peers that critical thinking and reasoning is generated and encouraged, leading to the creation of class community. It was through my literature review that I found the necessary elements to conduct a more effective PD workshop.

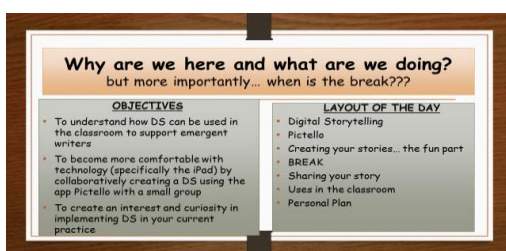
Explanation of PowerPoint Slides (PowerPoint slides can be found in Appendix A)

Slide 1



This slide will be on the screen as participants are welcomed into the room. I chose to enlarge to words “Finding the Story” as the simplicity of this phrase makes it more powerful and I hope to provoke the audience to question its meaning and how this fits with DS.

Slide 2



In Slide 2, I clarify the goal of the workshop and clearly lay out what was expected. By clearly stating the goal of the session, I am able to show my focus and how I expect to achieve it. We will revisit this slide at the end of the day to confirm whether or not this goal has been achieved and enter into a discussion about the value of this goal for future teachings and learnings.

Slide 3 & 4

In which category do you fit?

- 1 = I use an apple product regularly.
- 2 = I have used an apple product enough to know my way around it
- 3 = I have some knowledge with apple products.
- 4 = Isn't an apple a fruit?

I pnone, you tube.

In which category do you fit?

- 1 = I have used Digital Storytelling in my class.
- 2 = I have heard about Digital Storytelling and dabbled a bit.
- 3 = I have heard or seen something about Digital Storytelling but never tried it.
- 4 = I'm still confused about the apple question!

LIFE WAS MUCH EASIER WHEN Apple AND BLACKBERRY WERE JUST FRUITS

Slide 3 & 4 have been added to set the tone for the workshop as well as to provide some useful knowledge regarding the comfort levels and knowledge that the participants have with DS and iPads (apple products). Humour has been added to help create a sense of relaxation and by sharing experiences, participants can connect with the audience, learn names, and find peers who are similar in their comfort and experience level. By this process, I hope to see who may need extra support.

Slide 5

What is Digital Storytelling
A Tale of Two Stories...

- Digital story

Slide 5 is the beginning of the workshop teachings. It provides an example of a child's work demonstrating the difference in final products for a similar activity using two different modalities, pen and paper versus digital storytelling. The examples were created by a child in my class who fits the profile introduced in the abstract. This child was confident when telling stories orally, but when told to write them down, lacked the ability to share his story. This slide gives participants the opportunity to share their stories, see a real child's example, and begin to see for themselves how DS can encourage emergent writers to share.

Slide 6



In Slide 6, I briefly overview the research and state the traditional and modern definitions of storytelling (which includes digital stories). Drawing on my literature review, I will address the benefits DS offers to emergent writers including opportunities, motivation, and increasing oral language development.

Slide 7



In Slide 7, I will be explaining step by step how to use the app *Pictello* using the iPad. First I will show a completed digital story and have the participants spend a few moments looking at some of the examples on the iPads. Next, we will create a *Pictello* digital story together as I lead the group step by

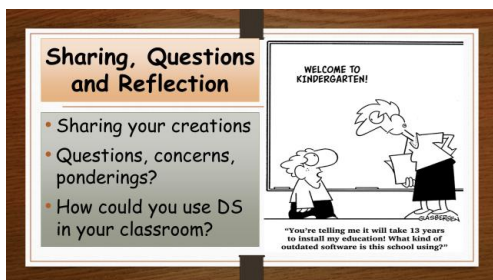
step, answering questions and clarifying understanding. An instructional sheet was provided to teachers and they will be encouraged to make notes to support their learning.

Slide 8



This slide indicates that this is the time for them to collaboratively and cooperatively experiment and create a digital story using *Pictello*. I will explain how groups can use ideas from the stories already created, ideas from the idea bank in the handout, or their own original ideas to create the story. I will be circulating among the teachers to ask and answer questions, keep participants on track, and clarify instructions. I will check in first with the group that has the participants with the least experience to clarify any questions or offer additional teaching.

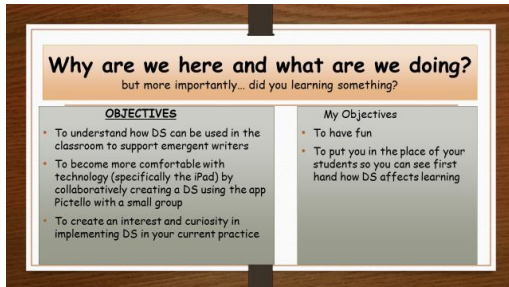
Slide 9



After gathering the group back together, we share the creations and have a discussion surrounding our learning during the break out session. This is an opportunity for the participants to ask questions about their recent learning experiences with the iPad storytelling and for me to do any reteaching necessary. During the discussion, I will note key words that signify indicators of learning to emphasize the number of learning skills uncovered during DS. This should help solidify the participants understanding of how DS creates a number of learning opportunities for emergent writers. This will also be a prelude into the next section, which discusses how DS can fit into the curriculum

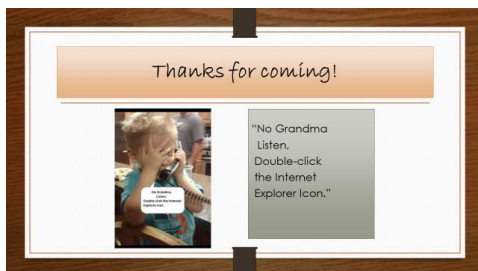
and into the classroom. There will be a small group break out time for participants to share ways they might use the knowledge and understanding of the workshop in their own classrooms.

Slide 10



This is the time when we will reflect on the day, revisiting the objectives set in the morning. I will ask the participants to discuss their learnings in small groups and set one personal written goal to try something they learned in the workshop. I will solicit feedback from the participants regarding their views on the workshop to facilitate future planning.

Slide 11



At the bottom of this slide I will share the date of the next session as well as my contact email so participants can contact me with questions or to set up a support session. I will collect the feedback forms and be available for individual discussion after the session is over.

Reflections on the First Session of the Series

Prior to sending this paper for final submission, I was given the opportunity to facilitate my first workshop in the series. This allowed me to implement and reflect on the layout, timing and content of the day. Participants were greeted as they came in the room and the seating was arranged in a semi-circle to encourage conversation and to increase accountability. This was extremely effective as the conversation was ample and teachers were actively engaged throughout the day. By offering times for

participants to explore DS with their colleagues, participants were engaged in the same type of learning as their students would be if and when this was implemented. The difficulty here is to keep the participants on task during this experiential participant-led time. Giving participants a clearer timeline with periodic reminders and setting more specific expectations, should help keep participants more focused on the task and accountable for their learning.

After gathering the group for reflections, questions and sharing, comments regarding the use of DS and the *Pictello* app were very positive as the teachers found it very user friendly and could see it being used in the classroom. Concerns were raised about the logistics of having only one iPad in the classroom and also in reference to privacy issues. Facilitators should be aware of the policies in the participating districts including how applications are loaded onto the iPads as this can affect the implementation of DS.

Feedback from the first session of the series was very positive and teachers mentioned their enthusiasm for using this type of technology in the classroom. They felt the comfortable atmosphere and time to explore the app were positive attributes that led to the success and enjoyment of the day. Teachers left with a better understanding of how DS could be used in the classroom to enhance their current writing program in manageable ways. By experiencing DS first hand, they could see how DS provides learning opportunities, motivation, and collaboration as well as facilitation oral language development through such writing activities.

Implications for Future Research

As there is very little research to support the understanding of how DS influences writing development of early emergent writers (Forzani & Leu, 2012; Voogt & McKenney, 2007), and technology is becoming more prevalent in young children's lives, it is obvious that further studies need to be conducted to discover the impact of technology on children's learning. Future research could include: longitudinal classroom based studies, case study research conducted to discover how incorporating DS into a primary classroom on a regular bases influences students' successes with

writing in the future grades; researching the effects on integrating DS as a teaching and learning tool for cross curricular teachings. Further research similar to the study done by Neumann (2014) with a larger participant sample in order to understand parent views on digital technologies in order to positively link home and school is also needed; researching how combining best teaching practices with technology affects young students' learnings. With the continuing growth in the field of technology, it is important researchers study the effects of technology on education as well as to find best practices to successfully and effectively implement it into the primary classroom.

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Appendix A - PowerPoint Presentation



Appendix B

Guiding Format of the Session

Each session in the series will use the following outline:

- ✓ Introduction of the group – name, grade level, and technology knowledge (see slide)
- ✓ Objective of the session and layout of the workshop
- ✓ Review of previous session (if this is not session 1) – open discussion and sharing
- ✓ Introduce and explain new material (handouts provided to support new learning)
- ✓ Break out groups using iPad to explore then create a digital story
- ✓ Sharing of digital stories (voluntary)
- ✓ Discussion – including noticeable benefits, questions and difficulties
- ✓ Address questions and difficulties
- ✓ Break out group to discuss application to classroom
- ✓ Full group sharing and discussion
- ✓ Closure - including reviewing day, reflecting on objective and setting goal for homework and next session

Appendix C

Lesson Plan for Session 1

Session 1: Introduction To Digital Storytelling with Pictello

Objectives:

- To develop an understanding of DS and some of its benefits as found in the research
- to explore one type of digital storytelling - Pictello

Materials:

- iPads (number is dependent on participants but should be enough for groups of 4 or less)
- adaptor to project iPad onto screen
- screen (to project images from iPad and PowerPoint)
- computer for PowerPoint (or your iPad)
- handout for session #1
- downloaded apps – Pictello (digital story book)
- PowerPoint presentation for session one

Introduction: (20 mins) – Slide 1 should be up on the screen

- Introduction of presenter and objectives (slide 2)
 - * The facilitator will introduce him/herself, providing information relevant to the workshop. Next, the facilitator will explain the objectives of the day as well as how the day will progress so all participants are aware of the scope and sequence of the workshop.
- Introduction of participants (use slide 3 and 4 to promote discussions)
 - * In order to get an understanding of the knowledge and abilities of the audience, the facilitator will ask the participants to share their understanding of iPads and DS using the categories provided. Humour has been added to create an atmosphere of comfort to encourage discussion.
- Two stories with similar content – one written and one digital (slide 5)
 - *The facilitator will discuss a personal experience similar to the one written in the abstract. This slide was incorporated into the presentation to show an example of how a particular student was able to convey more of his knowledge through his choices of pictures and oral communication. Participants are able to see and hear the information that was not provided when this particular child was asked to share his ideas using pencil and paper.
- PowerPoint presentation on definition and benefits of DS (slide 6)
 - * This slide was incorporated into the presentation to help the audience learn the findings from the research for DS. The facilitator will first discuss that DS is the use of audio, visual, and text to convey a story using technology. Next the facilitator will discuss how DS can increase motivation in students because of its interactive nature and how DS provides opportunities for students to engage in conversations with peers and adults in regards to story structure, information, editing, etc.

Development (20 mins) – Pictello (slide 7)

- ✓ Show an example of a completed Pictello story
- ✓ Explain and model a story together as participants follow steps on handout and/or use the iPad

Work Session (45 mins) – Group Break Out (slide 8)

- Explore DS apps and create your own DS story with group
 - * Facilitator monitors groups and guides the learning.

Break (10 mins)

- * Facilitator stays to answer questions and set up iPads to show stories

Reconnecting (30 mins) (slide 9)

- Group reconvenes to share stories and have group discussion/ question period
 - *Facilitator asks for volunteers to share their story and leads conversations around the learning that took place during the creation of the story. Ask the group to discuss a child that could benefit from it and how it could be implemented in classrooms (i.e. non-fiction, to develop knowledge of story structure through preplanning etc., fieldtrips, to reinforce lessons, to share learning)
- Review of day (slide 10)
 - *Facilitator reviews the objectives that were set for the day and encourages participants to share their thought and learnings
- Assignment/ homework (slide 11)
 - * Facilitator encourages participants to choose one student to work with to create a digital story and set a plan to put into play before the next workshop.

Appendix D

Pictello Handout

(Currently \$22.99 on the app store – the price of one hard cover book!)

Beginning Your Story Creation

Step 1 - Opening the app. Press on the app to open it.

Step 2 - Choosing the Format - Find the **‘+’ button** on the bottom menu, press it and choose **‘wizard mode’** (this step may already be done for you on my iPads).

Creating the Title Page

Step 1 - Choosing a Title - Type in the title of your story and press done on the keyboard. Once the keyboard is off the screen, you can press on the work “Next” or the forward arrow.

Step 2 – Choose a cover picture for your story. Press on the words “choose picture” and you will be given some choices as to where to get your photo. You can choose “Camera roll” if your picture was already taken or you can choose “take picture” if you have not created a photo for your cover. Once you have the picture, you can press use then press the arrow or next to move on to the next step.

Step 3 - Sound – This is when you add the audio for your title. I suggest to my students that they choose the **“make a recording” button** and record themselves saying the title and the name(s) of the authors.

Creating the Story

Step 1 – Add A Page – You will now start to see some repetition in the story creation (hopefully). Press the **“Add a Page”** button to continue your story.

Step 2 – Picture – The program will give you the option to choose an existing photo from the camera roll, or take a picture or video. When you have selected the picture or video you want to embed, press the **“use” button** and move on to the next slide by pressing the **next button or the forward arrow**.

Step 3 – Text / Labels – Press your finger on either of the text boxes to start the cursor. Use the keyboard to type in the desired text then press “done” on the keyboard when you are finished. Press the **“next” button or the forward arrow** to move to the next slide.

Step 4 – Sound – Press the **“make a recording” button** to add audio to your page. You will see red record button and a stop button. Press the record button when you are ready to speak and press the stop button when you are done. You may listen to your recording by pressing the play button and you can rerecord as many times as necessary to get a good quality recording. I tell my students to embellish on their text adding more details for their readers (go beyond the text). When you are happy with your recording press the **“next button or the forward arrow”** to move to the next slide.

Step 5 – Choice Page – This page give you the options: “Change your title”, “Add a page”, “edit your pages” or “done with story”. If you would like to “add a page”, click on that and repeat steps 1-4 until you have complete your story. I recommend 4-5 pages per book to my students.

Saving and Viewing your Story

When you are finished your story, press “done with story” and you will see it on the Library home page. To view it, press on the story. If you choose slideshow mode, the story will play by itself. If you just press the play button, you will need to press on the photo to hear the audio recording.

Editing your Story

If you need to edit your story, press the edit button in the top right corner, click on your story and press edit, press edit pages and then touch on the page you would like to edit. This will take you back to step 2 in the “creating a story” section of this handout.

Sharing Your Story

If you would like to share your story, press the edit button in the top right corner, click on your story and press share. If the person you are sending it to has Pictello, you can share it through Pictello however if they don't, you can only share as a PDF. The downfall of this program is that the audio does not send and in order to share the audio too, you need to record the whole story on another device.

Appendix E

Lesson Plan for Session 2

Session 2: Puppet Pals – An Interactive Puppet Show App

Objectives:

- To increase understanding of DS apps, teachings and implications for implementation
- To learn how the processes of story writing can be taught through DS
- to explore a second type of digital storytelling – Puppet Pals

Materials:

- iPads (number is dependent on participants but should be enough for groups of 4 or less)
- adaptor to project iPad onto screen
- screen (to project images from iPad and PowerPoint)
- computer for PowerPoint (or you could use your iPad)
- handout #2 – Puppet Pals
- downloaded app - Puppet Pals (interactive puppet show)
- PowerPoint presentation for session two

Introduction (20 mins)

- Introduction of presenter and objectives (slide 1 and 2)
- Introduction of participants (use slide 3 and 4 to promote discussions)
- Two stories with similar content – one written and one digital (slide 5)
- PowerPoint presentation on definition and benefits of DS (slide 6 -

Development (45 mins) - Pictello

- ✓ Show an example of a completed digital story (slide **)
- ✓ Explain and model a story together as participants follow steps on handout and use the iPad
- ✓ Guided practice with the app (create help sheet with step by step instructions, create written instructions and criteria)
- Break out work
 - Explore DS apps and create your own DS story with group
 - Group Gathering
 - Share stories and have group discussion/ question period

**** 10 MINUTE BREAK****

Reconnecting

- Discuss 4 points and how participants can see how they applied to their own experiences
 - Discuss one child that could benefit from it and how it could be implemented in own classroom (i.e. non-fiction, to develop knowledge of story structure through preplanning etc., fieldtrips, to reinforce lessons, to share learning)
- Assignment/ homework
 - chose one student to work with to create a digital story (give email and text number for support)
 - remind them they can watch Youtube on how to use app

Appendix F

Participant Feedback Sheet

Did you find that the information you learned today could be used by you in your classroom in the near future? Why or why not?

What worked well?

What would you recommend to change?

What would you remove?

Would you attend another workshop put on by this facilitator on this topic?