

Educational level: Primary, Secondary | **Age:** 6 to 19

Author: Hermann Morgenbesser, Future Learning Lab Vienna



LEARNING OBJECTIVES/ ASPIRATIONS

Sharing stories can be powerful and bring positive change. Digital Storytelling (DST) is a multimodal approach for meaning-making that can support tackling digital and specific competences. The focus of digital storytelling is on engaging students' individual perspectives and creativity. It can be a powerful tool to ignite students' interest in a subject matter. Digital stories invite students to become creators of content.

They can be created in all content areas and at all educational levels while incorporating the 21st century skills of creating, communicating, and collaborating. The present learning scenario 'Dialogue with the Ghost' is developed for a modern language project to engage students with the syllabus materials in a playful and meaningful way.



NARRATIVE OVERVIEW

Telling stories is a skill like anything else. Storytelling excellently works for language lessons, but it can also be used to describe the process of a STEM experiment, mathematics and bring disciplinary crossover.

DST aims to engage students with content. For instance, ethics in research is a topic that could be dry and boring, but telling a story on ethical dilemmas brings them to life and shows the real long-term consequences of decisions. The very first words in a storytelling video could be "It was a bad day." You can also set up a scenario where learners have to make decisions following a policy. Use the story to give them motivation to look up the relevant rules of a given process.

Indeed, there is a range of options for storytelling available: creating personal stories, stories that inform, and stories that retell historical events. DST pedagogy can be also used to explore social issues and empower students in making educated, healthy choices since telling stories brings awareness.

DST teaches students to plan and organize. Indeed, organization is very important. Mind-mapping can be helpful as a starting point. Then, it is compulsory to develop a storyboard, for making clear, which steps are to work out, to decide on the media. Podcasts can be very helpful to feedback or transfer the output of a flipped learning sequence, even if video sessions make things more transparent. The initial decision is not which technology students use, but to discuss and decide, before students start the journey of telling a story.

Leveraging the power of storytelling in eLearning can prove to be a highly effective tactic for engaging learners and increasing comprehension. Being able to relate to a story helps students remember. The focus of digital storytelling is on engaging students' individual perspectives and creativity. It can be a powerful tool to ignite students' interest in a subject matter. Digital stories invite students to become creators of content. They can be created in all content areas and at all educational levels while incorporating the 21st century skills of creating, communicating, and collaborating. The present learning scenario 'Dialogue with the Ghost' is developed for a modern language project, and is used as a mini-project to be assessed.



APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Project-based

Collaborative learning

ASSESSMENT

Rubrics can be used for assessment.

Assessing specific artefacts, such as setting clear goals; the students' ability to present an orderly narrative; assessing students' planning; the presentation of content.

Peer-feedback and self-assessment.



ROLES

TEACHERS: Controlling the prepared solutions from the home - work time. Interventions in case of correcting content, giving expertise or redesigning the storyboards. Coaching strategies for rethinking or remaking the solutions.

LEARNERS: Students work on prepared storyboard templates. In all cycles of investigation, development and creation, students are in the role of active learning.

OTHERS: If available, an external expert can lead the students in technology and software issues.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The students are actively involved in **creation**: A greenscreen with fully equipped studio can be used, otherwise 'Greenscreen' apps, that are available on Tablets / iPhones / Smartphones / or PC stations; if available digital cameras and studio equipment can be part of the set-up create zone. Students usually **develop** their works in groups of 3 to 6 students.

The teacher **interacts** with the students by instructing and guiding the students in their preparation of the storyboards. Individually students need to prepare to work with the materials for their stories. At the end, the students **present** their stories.



POSSIBLE CHALLENGES

There is the need to pay attention to ethical considerations and fair use of materials. Also, it is important to choose development appropriate software and materials to work with. Teachers' role is essential at all stages of DST development.



RESOURCES

- Individual laptops/tablets for students to ensure equal access to resources; Wi-fi access.
- Note taking and mind-mapping apps;
- Digital camera, complete film studio or mobile camera
- Learning management system and Cloud space for the prototypes.
- Fotostudio or Greenscreen Apps
- Storyboard software



LEARNING SCENARIO VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= PtHrehLems>



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Activities vary depending on the nature of the subjects, the educational goals and the levels of cognitive development of students. A rigorous approach to planning and a clear idea of the goals to be achieved are compulsory.

In the present simple scenario, students can use the suggested template to tell a story on a theme they choose. Animated video is created.

Students are presented with the context: You stay at a Scottish castle and you are visited by the ghost of the castle at midnight. Students are asked to write the dialogue down in the following "storyboard template" on a theme they choose within the studied topic.

Students in groups of 3-4 develop their storyboards using the template. Students make a cartoon film. They choose an appropriate setting (background and sky) and two characters. Copy and paste the text passages for the dialogues into the boxes provided and select a background music (e.g. space sounds). They give their movie a title and type the film-director's name into the correct box. They present their movie: after the preview of the film (and possible changes), send an email to students' peers/ teacher/ etc. The groups of students get feedback and votes for their videos.



LITERATURE TO SUPPORT

- [StoryCenter](#) – a lot of examples and workshops on DST
- Steps for DST development - [8 Steps To Great Digital Storytelling – Transform Learning ~ written by Samantha Morra](#)
- Rubrics for assessment: <https://samanthamorra.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/digital-storytelling- - rubric.pdf>
- Ethical Considerations: [Charts and Tools - Stanford Copyright and Fair Use Center](#)

