

# PRACTICAL USES OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING

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## **Abstract**

Digital storytelling is a good way to engage students in both traditional and innovative ways of telling a story. The students learn how to combine some basic multimedia tools such as graphics, animation, with skills such as research, writing, presentation, technology, interview, interpersonal, problem-solving, and assessment skills (Robin 2005, Barrett 2005). The purpose of this talk is threefold: first, I will briefly describe some of the educational uses of digital storytelling and its applicability in the new context of the Bologna Accord. Secondly, I will be showing some examples of specific instructions as to how to use Digital Storytelling in the classroom. Thirdly, I will talk about the outcomes of my own experience with digital storytelling with students from the Universitat de València.

**Keywords: digital storytelling, multimedia, technology, literacy, English as a Foreign Language**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

There are many definitions of what a digital story is, but they all coincide in pointing out that digital stories combine traditional means of telling a story with different types of digital multimedia: images, audio, and video (graphics, text, recorded audio narration, video and music to present information on a specific topic). As stated by Robin (2006) [24] "the stories are typically just a few minutes long and have a variety of uses, including the telling of personal tales, the recounting of historical events, or as a means to inform or instruct on a particular topic", and also as online marketing that has been used by *Coca-Cola*, *Oxygen Media*, *Long Haymes Carr* (cf. *Bussinesweek* online 2000: 13) [26]. Although it seems that digital storytelling is now at its peak, in particular for educational purposes, it has been present since the 1990s when the Center for Digital Storytelling (Lambert & CDS 2005) [10] started to organise workshops with people interested in telling their own personal stories.

In Europe, the Bologna Accord is promoting innovation in teaching with great emphasis on technology. Technology is forcing faculty to rethink the curriculum in most academic disciplines in terms of content and teaching, and digital storytelling is one genre that seems to fit these demands. Digital storytelling is a flexible and adaptable tool which can fit most purposes and can be used in almost all the subjects we teach. Its flexibility comes from the fact that, in order to elaborate a digital story writers can use a range of tools from the simplest (e.g. digital images and Photostory) to more complicated ones (e.g. Flash to create their own animations etc.), depending on the purpose of the activity, and the level of computer literacy of the students. The same can be applied to the linguistic or literary means used to elaborate the story itself. Digital storytelling is a very interesting tool that helps restore established concepts of literacy and that can be combined with more traditional methods of teaching (Brown, J., Bryan, J., & Brown, T. (2005) [8]. Thus if we are teaching, for example, the structure of spoken storytelling in Conversation Analysis, the student will be asked to concentrate more on the elaboration of a good script (including good grammar, good pronunciation etc.) than on the multimedia presentation, since technology would be secondary to the activity. At the same time, a student of communication studies dealing with the manipulation of digital images, could be asked to do

the opposite, thus concentrating on the manipulation of images and the creation of original visual effects. Evaluation will therefore be given according to the context and circumstances in which we use the digital storytelling..

In this article I will first discuss, very briefly, some of the characteristics of digital storytelling comparing it to more traditional types of narrative. I will then proceed to describe different types of digital narratives, and how these can be used for teaching. Due to my professional background the examples will be applied to EFL, although as it will be observed they can be useful for other disciplines.

## 2. CHARACTERISTICS AND ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Although the spread of new technologies is at its height in schools now, digital storytelling already existed in the 1990s when the Center for Digital Storytelling started to offer workshops for those who were interested in telling their own stories. Digital storytelling owes its structure and elements to traditional storytelling; although it has considerably enriched its format, presentation and distribution modes with the inclusion of the newest multimedia technology, which obviously has enlarged its pragmatic dimension. Can we talk about a new genre? As Handler-Miller (2008) [17] explains, there are many genres embedded in digital storytelling: the video game, interactive cinema, virtual reality, web-based narratives, interactive TV, and a number of totally new genres of writing. On the one hand, they all share characteristics that are unique to the genre itself such as the medium of publication as well as the multimedia elements used in building the stories. On the other, however, digital storytelling can also be considered as fitting the profile of a subgenre that lies somewhere between a TV documentary, a report or personal videos and the more traditional modes of oral and written narratives. As Rodriguez Ruiz (2007) [28] points out, "la narrativa digital ha alterado los elementos de la narración verbal tradicional (como el sentido de los personajes, de la acción y de los escenarios) y ha innovado el conjunto de normas y criterios que configuraban hasta ahora la pragmática de la imagen narrativa".

In turn, Handler Miller (2008) [17] talks about some basic characteristics of digital storytelling and how they may affect the relationship between the audience, the story and the medium itself. Digital storytelling Handler-Miller (2008) [17] argues, a) breaks the Fourth Wall, i.e., characters may speak directly to audience members, relating to them like old friends; or audience members may actually enter the story, interact with its fictional characters, and play a pivotal role in the drama; b) it blurs the distinction between fiction and reality by introducing contemporary communication devices to further the plot line or reveal character- things like phone calls, faxes, emails, and authentic looking websites; c) it vastly expands the story universe by using a number of different media, all tied together to serve the core story; and d) it offers deeply immersed experiences: seeing and hearing vs. seeing, hearing, touching or even smelling. Apart from all those, Handler-Miller adds that e) characters are provided with artificial intelligence, a fact that makes them almost believable; f) digital stories contribute to make make-believe real by using for example the Alternative Reality Game (e.g. *Rachel's Room*, *Push Nevada*); and g) they include the possibility of using the "distributed" narrative technique which scatters the story across different web-pages; h) they create immersive worlds using different techniques (e.g. using smell necklaces), and i) they make us rethink our relationship with the screen .

Consequently, the main difference between traditional storytelling in the mass media, for example and digital storytelling lies in the medium itself and the possibilities that its digital aesthetics offers compared to others. Rodriguez (2007) [28] lists some of the characteristics of digital aesthetics introduced by Holtzman (1997) [18], who argues that nonlinearity, discontinuity, and autonomy are the key differentiators of digital media from the physical, analog world, which can also be said of all storytelling techniques. Along the same lines, Handler Miller (2008) [17] affirms: "While traditional stories are told via a single medium - the spoken word, the printed page for example - digital storytelling encourages the use of a number of different media, all tied together to serve the core story."

The Center for Digital Storytelling has identified 7 elements (cf. Lambert 2007: 9) [19] that should be present in all digital stories, the three first inherited no doubt from Labov's model (cf. Labov and Waletzky 1967) for oral narratives of personal experience: point of view, a dramatic question,

emotional content, the gist of your voice, the power of soundtrack, economy, and pacing. Apart from those elements, Paul and Fiebich (2005) describe in detail 5 elements that are shared by all digital stories: a) The combination of different media used to create them, b) the type of action (content and user), c) the open or closed relationship between the user and the digital story, d) the limitless context through linking to related, relevant information and, e) the presence of multimodal communication.

In sum, in view of the above, it is clear that digital storytelling is the result of a good combination between more traditional techniques of telling stories and the most innovative multimedia resources. The most radical difference between them, nevertheless is interactivity (cf. Berenguer 1998 [6]; Handler-Miller 2008 [17]), and the digital medium which certainly makes of digital storytelling a unique genre. Whether it is a genre or a subgenre is not, however, a matter of interest here. What is worth considering is that digital storytelling has opened new ways of working both with discourse and with new technologies which no doubt can generate all sorts of activities that can be useful, attractive and motivating for students.

### 3. TYPES OF DIGITAL NARRATIVES

The term digital narrative/storytelling can itself be applied to a wide range of genres (interactive vs. non interactive narrative) and can be of many different types as illustrated by fig. 1 below

Narrative		Information/Expository	Persuasive	Environment(s)
1. Personal Expression	4. Summary Reports	8. Advertisements	14. Participatory Environment	
2. Myths/folk tales	5. Book reports	9. Describe/conclude		
3. Short story	6. How-to directions	10. Analyze/conclude		
	7. Biographies	11. analyze/persuade		
		12. Compare/contrast		
		13. Cause/effect		

Fig. 1. Types of digital narratives (Robin 2006)[24].

Robin (2005) [23] differentiates between three main groups of narrative: i) Personal Narratives which are one of the most popular genres ii) Digital Stories that Examine Historical Events;ii) Stories that inform or instruct In what follows we will refer to these categories in order to propose digital storytelling as an effective tool for EFL instruction.

### 4. DIGITAL STORYTELLING: AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL

As argued by some researchers and educators- mainly from primary and secondary schools- who have been analysing the impact of digital storytelling in the classroom; the real effects or results deriving from using digital storytelling as an instructional tool can not yet be fully evaluated (cf. Robin 2005 [23]; Barrett 2005 [1]). Barrett proposes some research questions that she plans to answer through surveys, on-site observations, online discussions, and journals, as well as the aggregation of student performance-based assessment data. These would include:

- How do digital stories provide evidence of deep learning?
- Under what conditions can digital stories be successfully used to support assessment for learning?
- Under what conditions do students take ownership of their digital stories?
- What are the benefits of developing digital stories as perceived by students, teachers, administrators, and/or parents?
- What are perceived obstacles to implementing digital storytelling with P-12 students and how can they be overcome?
- How does the quality of paper-based reflection differ from digital stories?

The general feeling that one gets, however, is that digital storytelling is being welcomed by many educators, overall in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia. Conferences entirely dedicated to the subject are taking place, lots of different associations, groups, workshops are being proposed worldwide, all of them easily accessible through the WWW. So, all in all, they coincide in that digital storytelling is a satisfactory activity that succeeds in motivating students and promoting learning through self-reflection.

Its uses and applications are many, as can be guessed from the many different types mentioned above. However, due to space restrictions, I will mention only some of the possible applications and uses of digital storytelling and provide a brief illustration of why digital stories are a good asset that should become part of the curriculum. Where possible I will indicate a type of activity related with skill development for EFL. A more detailed explanation would surpass the limits set by this publication.

#### **4.1. Providing Instruction in different literacy skills**

Steven Holtzman talks about creating digital worlds that are, according to him, unique because they offer possibilities that other genres do not. Among these, the possibility of sharing them instantly with the rest of the community, i.e., in particular with the other students who may be interested in seeing their peers work. According to Brown Bryan and Brown (2005) [8] digital storytelling is associated with the development of multiple skills, which are described as combining different types of literacy. Robin (2006) [24] summarises those as follows:

- Digital Literacy– the ability to communicate with an ever-expanding community to discuss issues, gather information, and seek help;
- Global Literacy - the capacity to read, interpret, respond, and contextualize messages from a global perspective
- Technology Literacy - the ability to use computers and other technology to improve learning, productivity, and performance;
- Visual Literacy - the ability to understand, produce and communicate through visual images;
- Information Literacy - the ability to find, evaluate and synthesize information.

In turn, digital stories combine new techniques of teaching with more traditional ways of teaching and provide instruction in a series of literacy skills as summarised by Robin (2006)[24]:

- Research Skills: Documenting the story, finding and analyzing pertinent information;
- Writing Skills: Formulating a point of view and developing a script;
- Organization Skills: Managing the scope of the project, the materials used and the time it takes to complete the task;
- Technology Skills: learning to use a variety of tools, such as digital cameras, scanners, microphones and multimedia authoring software;
- Presentation Skills: Deciding how to best present the story to an audience;
- Interview Skills: Finding sources to interview and determining questions to ask;
- Interpersonal Skills: Working within a group and determining individual roles for group members;
- Problem-Solving Skills: Learning to make decisions and overcome obstacles at all stages of the project, from inception to completion; and
- Assessment Skills: Gaining expertise critiquing their own and others' work.

#### **4. 2. Elaborating an ePortfolio**

Barret (2006) [3] argues in favour of introducing digital storytelling as part of the ePortfolio for several reasons:

a) the *voice* is often missing from electronic portfolios, both literally and rhetorically. A digital story provides that voice: listening to the author, we hear a real person, and get a sense of their unique personality;

b) *Legacy*: personal narratives in EFL leave a legacy of who we are and what we do in the classroom. For example, we can build a digital story of a presentation of a group of students and then use it for analysis in the subject Second Language Acquisition, for instance;

c) *Memoirs & Biographies* are usually narrated in the first person. The student will be practising self-presentation, which can be useful training for future job-interviews and oral tests;

d) *Reflection*: why do we do a particular action/s: why do you want to study English Philology? Why did you go on the Erasmus Programme and what did you get out of that experience? The students reconsider their own actions at the same time that they use English to tell about experiences that have marked their lives (why English and not maths?);

e) *Transition, direction and reflection*: as in Barret's example, the students could be asked to read (part of) a literary work: a poem, a play, or a book and tell us how and why they have been impacted by them; In this case they would put in practice techniques that they are learning through online instruction (cf. Pennock and Gregori 2007)[22].

f) *Benchmarking development and change over time*: the students could be asked to elaborate an instructional digital story, similar to an object of learning, illustrating some changes in the English Language that could be used for the subject History of the English Language. Another activity, which would suit the students who are now studying English at Universitat de València would be to tell us about the changes they are going through because of the implementation of the Bologna Accord (cf. Gregori and Pennock 2007 [15]);

g) *Artifacts*. In the recollection of image, videos, animations etc., the students will improve their technological and visual literacy, a first step towards the new education system;

g) *Documentary*. Digital stories can be used as a consequent activity after formal instruction on the characteristics of documentaries or any other genre. They can be asked to choose an event and follow a framework in order to give their personal interpretation of the event itself. They will be contrasting different information sources about the event itself and then give their own point of view.

h) *Record of experience*. Our degree includes a practical subject in which students go on a job placement in the real world and do some training with different types of companies and schools etc., Digital storytelling would provide a look inside the workplace and would allow the teacher to grasp what the student has been doing better, the atmosphere, the workplace etc.

### 4.3. Integrating the old and the new

As explained by Handler-Miller (2008) `17]:

The "digital" part of the name refers to the fact that it is supported by a diverse array of digital devices and media, including computers, digital video, the Web, wireless devices, and DVDs, just to name a few examples. And the "storytelling" part of the name refers to the fact that these new forms of fiction are narratives, too, just like the older forms. They depict characters in a series of compelling events, following the action from the inception of the drama to the conclusion.

The combination of more traditional and new technologies is clearly envisaged if we consider the process followed in elaborating a digital story, as developed by the Center for Digital Storytelling (Stephenson, 2006 [25], Barrett 2006 [3]). The creators of a digital story have to follow a number of steps in order to create a satisfactory product. At the same time that they conform the story, these steps are seen as promoting skill development in EFL. The steps are described as follows:

a) *Script development*: they write the story, often with a group called a story circle to provide feedback and story development ideas. Here linguistic and literary instruction is necessary (e.g. on genre characteristics) while at the same time collaborative work is fostered. EFL students will be asked to focus mainly on the production of a good script which implies consulting and reviewing academic articles on genre production, genre impact and the linguistic and literary devices which turn a text into an example of a particular genre; a task which demands a lot of effort on the part of the students. If they do it in groups, they can split the work up and come to conclusions about how to develop the

script. The research previous to the script design will make them more self-critical about the product they are designing.

b) *Record the author* reading the story (audio recording and editing). Previously, we would work with the students reviewing intonation patterns and the correct pronunciation of for example function vs. content words to avoid incorrect stress placement; which is one of the major causes of intelligibility for foreign learners (Roach 1983, 1991:91) [30]. Reading out loud, recording one's voice and publishing it on the internet can be very intimidating, thus one can safely predict that the student will increase his/her effort. Dewey (1913) [12] already pointed out the relationship between effort and interest and how these interacted in producing good results. Digital storytelling has the advantage of being a new genre for most students, it raises interest, and therefore it is probably a good way of promoting student effort.

c) *Capture and process*. Images are captured and processed to further illustrate the story. The student will be practicing with image scanning and editing, working therefore towards improving his/her visual and technological literacy;

d) *Combining different types of media such as* audio and images (and any additional video) onto a timeline, add music tracks (video editing, so developing their visual literacy. Visual literacy is the capacity that someone possesses to be able to evaluate, apply or create visual concepts and meaning. This is even more necessary for business and engineering students who will necessarily need to develop these skills to be competent in their work, since they are often asked to present their ideas with images rather than words;

e) *Present or publish the finished version of the story*. This is the final step which obviously gathers together all the previous ones and at the same time demands good knowledge of presentation skills. Reviewing some pragmatic and rhetorical concepts, intonation and pronunciation would certainly help them to do a good job. This part certainly invites a review of certain pragmatic functions of utterances in spoken and written texts as well as a formal introduction to the grammar of spoken English (discourse markers, tails, heads, word order etc.). A possibility would be to work on the first draft of the digital story and correct the possible mistakes so as to improve the final version, an exercise that would certainly enrich the students.

#### **4.4. Developing new teaching/learning material**

As argued by Robin (2005) [23] "one of the first decisions to be made when using this tool in the curriculum is whether an instructor will create the digital stories or have their students do it. A number of researchers support the use of anticipatory sets at the beginning of a lesson to help engage students in the learning process (Burmark, 2004; Ormrod, 2004 which can serve as a bridge between existing knowledge and new material (Ausbel, 1978)" cited in [23]. Teachers can use digital stories to introduce a particular topic or to prompt students to carry out research on a particular topic, or "as a way to facilitate discussion about the topics presented a story and as a way of making abstract or conceptual content more understandable" (Robin 2005) [23].

Using other people's materials is also an option that should be considered. Since digital stories published on the internet are in the public domain, they can be used as teaching/self-study materials in or outside the classroom (e.g. <http://www.coe.uh.edu/digitalstorytelling/gettysburg.htm>)

#### **4.5. Learner's motivation and deep learning**

Barrett (2005) [1] argues that digital storytelling fosters reflection and reflection helps to enhance learning effectiveness and deep learning. Digital Storytelling, Barrett affirms, "facilitates the convergence of four student-centered learning strategies: student engagement, reflection for deep learning, project-based learning, and the effective integration of technology into instruction". Along the

same lines, Bendt and Bowe (2000) [5] draw up a list of ten reasons why storytelling should be paid more attention: it inspires dedication, encourages creativity to work, promotes problem solving, embraces diversity, captivates attention, piques interest in writing, fosters group dynamics, addresses different learning styles, creates a positive classroom climate, incorporates the multiple intelligences. What is certain is that many schools have implemented storytelling as part of their curriculum and that it has generated a lot of material and positive evaluations. The emphasis is on writing a good story and at the same time applying the principle of Economy, i.e.: as argued by the Center for Digital Storytelling "storytelling with images means consciously economizing language in relationship to the narrative that is provided by the juxtaposition of images." This implies that the student will have to make decisions in relation to what s/he thinks is essential and what can be left out.

#### **4.7. Self-assessment and team-work**

Digital storytelling helps develop autonomous learning, since the student will, after a brief period of instruction, have become comfortable with writing the story and using the software to create a digital version of it. Since students have the chance to create stories in groups, a lot of discussion and different points of view will appear. The student will have to come to mutual understanding before they deliver the final version of the story. Additionally, it is not only the teacher who reads the student's work, but other students too.

### **5. A PILOT PROJECT UNIVERSITAT DE VALENCIA: PERSONAL DIGITAL NARRATIVES**

As illustrated by the discussion above, there are many types of digital storytelling. However for the pilot project I chose personal narratives, i.e. narratives of personal reflection and personal development (Robin 2005) with educational purposes. At this stage the students are still creating their own digital stories on personal topics of their choice which will be published on a web site designed for these purposes ([http://www.uv.es/gregoric/DIGITALSTORYTELLING/DIGITAL\\_STORY\\_INDEX](http://www.uv.es/gregoric/DIGITALSTORYTELLING/DIGITAL_STORY_INDEX)).

Before becoming engaged in this project, None of the students had had any contact with digital storytelling. During the first workshop they watched some examples and were introduced to its characteristics for the first time. Additionally, I provided them with more references of stories published on the web so that they could watch more examples at home. Since the students are doing English Studies, I started by explaining Labov's (1972) model of narratives of personal experience in conversation exemplifying types of linguistic devices that are used in different parts of conversational stories. Then compared those to the seven elements listed by the Center for Digital Storytelling and pointed out the difference between more traditional ways of telling a story with the new possibilities offered by the digital medium [cf. Gregori Signes 2007] [13]. This comparison helped them understand the structure of digital storytelling better.

They were also introduced to personal narratives as this is the type chosen for this pilot project. Thus, the students choose among a variety of topics (cf. Robin 2005) [23] that would belong to narratives of personal experience such as memorial stories, experiences, adventures, accomplishment, events, actions, places in our lives, memories, love, recovery stories, discovery stories. And/or narratives of personal development (e.g. your favourite book, poem, novel, etc). For each case the students would be provided with a detailed description of the genre itself (e.g. traditional lecturing, formal instruction, powerpoint presentations, discussions, reading articles etc.) which they would be asked to apply when elaborating the digital story itself. With this information, the students will then choose among a series of multimedia tools – depending on their degree of computer literacy and elaborate the storyboard (that is script, images, music and any other effects that they want to use in the final version).

The second part of the introduction provided them with information about software, making it clear that technology is always secondary to storytelling. I chose software which was simple to learn: I focused on Photostory 3, Windows Movie maker; and Audacity for sound manipulation; although some other possibilities such as powerpoint, imovie etc were also mentioned. The students seemed to be

comfortable with the idea of learning how to use these programmes. The third part of the instruction consisted of introducing them to the storyboard. By seeing an example of how a storyboard was to be developed, they finally understand the concept and form a mental picture of how to start working on creating their own digital stories. Since it is a new activity for all of them, creating a good atmosphere was necessary. Thus, in addition, story coaching was offered to the students who could consult me at any point during the process of creating a story. I estimated that (cf. Banaszewski) writing the story, illustrating and collecting images, and selecting music could all be completed in a month and a half so I gave them a month to hand in the first draft of the storyboard in order for me to review it and make suggestions.

I also created an email community within the Aula Virtual (our course management system) so that I could make instructions easily accessible for all of them. One of the first steps taken towards story coaching was to provide them with Lambert's (2007) [19] *Digital Storytelling Cookbook*, directing them first towards the section on "kinds of Personal Stories", so that they could get an idea of what type of story they wanted to develop and how to turn it into an example of personal reflection. The descriptions provided by Lambert (2007) [19] provide a definition of the type of story and some question guidelines that make it easier for the student to develop a good script and storyboard. For example, these are the questions included in "*The story about what I do*" follow: "What is your profession or ongoing interest?; What experiences, interests, knowledge in your previous life prepared you for this activity?; was there an event that most affected your decision to pursue the interest?; Who influenced or assisted you in shaping your career, interest, skill in this area?; How has your profession or interest affected your life as a whole (family, friends, where you live); What has been the highlight of your vocational/ avocational life?"

Since the students were new to the genre itself and most of them are not familiar with digital storytelling, they were given the opportunity of working on their own or in groups. Thirty-two students divided into thirteen groups (some students chose to work individually) put their name down for the project. The topics selected include: *How did we become friends?*, *Our University*, *Using the tube to get to class*, *Learning experiences: studying English abroad*, *Helping Erasmus students to adapt to our life in Valencia*, *Living abroad*, *Local festivals in small villages*, *Helping out people*, *The way we were*. At the moment of writing this article, I am waiting for the students to hand in their first draft of the storyboard. Later on, and before publication on the web I mean to use the digital stories as the focus of a class activity, where all the students will make suggestions as to how to improve the digital story.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

In this article I reviewed the characteristics of digital storytelling and argued in favour of using it as an instructional tool in teaching EFL. I first provided a description of the characteristics and elements that form the structure of digital stories, and then proceeded to illustrate some of the possible uses of digital storytelling in the classroom. The last part of the article included a description of a digital personal project that is currently under development and that involves the creation of personal narratives by students of EFL at the *Facultat de Filologia, Universitat de València*.

The research carried out and my own experience seem to indicate that digital storytelling, as reported by many educators and students who have worked with it, can be a rewarding and satisfactory type of activity which usually succeeds in enhancing students motivation and engagement (cf. Barret 2005) [1]. So far, we can affirm that digital storytelling may be used effectively to introduce new concepts or emphasise new ones. With regard to learning, digital stories help students to improve time management, learn about problem solving, communication skills and develop interpersonal qualities such as teamwork, critical thought, information collection and interpretation of data, analysis of texts and images, synthesis and self-evaluation. And as a practical tool for learning/ teaching, digital stories are the result of students work and by including them in an ePortfolio, they offer a personal dimension that more traditional tasks do not. The final product reflects the student's inner reflections about learning (both in personal narratives and in historical and educational ones) and may serve as a first step to bridge the gap between teacher and student; because in designing information through digital stories the student has to make choices in order to make the story feasible for a 4-5 minute presentation, thus being forced to include only what is essential for him/her.



Notwithstanding the impact of the use of digital storytelling as an instructional tool, digital storytelling is still under survey and a lot of work needs to be done until both students and teachers become familiar with the genre itself. But, although there may be some negative outcomes when using digital storytelling as an instructional tool, so far I have seen more the positive aspects and I would therefore give digital storytelling the benefit of the doubt (Gregori Signes 2007) [13]. It's a good way to design information and a pedagogical tool that is worth looking into.

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Digital storytelling is a short form of digital media production that allows everyday people to share aspects of their story. The media used may include the digital equivalent of film techniques, stills, audio only, or any of the other forms of non-physical media (material that exists only as electronic files as opposed to actual paintings or photographs on paper, sounds stored on tape or disc, movies stored on film) which individuals can use to tell a story or present an idea. Digital storytelling is used as an embodiment of multimedia production for education purposes. Therefore, this is becoming a part of our lives, and is on the threshold of becoming an important part of teaching and learning as well. All of this is being facilitated by ready access to hardware, such as digital cameras and scanners, in conjunction with easy to use software. Today people still tell stories, but now we have new media tools with which to share them. A digital story can hence be seen as a merger between the old storytelling tradition and the use of new technology (Normann [2011]). To some extent, traditional storytelling and the application of computer technology in education have followed different paths to date (Banaszewski [2005]). Digital Storytelling MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). Powerful Tools for Teaching and Learning: Digital Storytelling is a free 5-week MOOC that introduces educators to digital storytelling and explores ways that educators might use this technology tool to enhance their students' learning experience. The MOOC will provide a solid foundation in the basic components of digital storytelling with tutorials, example stories and links to additional readings. The MOOC will also provide hands-on opportunities for learners to create their own digital stories. The MOOC Practical uses of digital storytelling. Carmen Gregori Signes. Universitat de València València. Carmen.gregori@uv.es. Abstract. Digital storytelling is a good way to engage students in both traditional and innovative ways of telling a story. The students learn how to combine some basic multimedia tools such as graphics, animation, with skills such as research, writing, presentation, technology, interview, interpersonal, problem-solving, and assessment skills (Robin 2005, Barrett 2005). The purpose of this talk is threefold: first, I will briefly describe some of the educational uses of digita...