

Jill

Title of Project: Life's Personal Lessons

Grade Level: 6th Grade

Content Area(s): Reading/Language Arts, Music

Description of Project:

Within my 6th grade classroom, my students are introduced to personal narrative writing through our McGraw Hill reading series unit entitled, "Pathways: Reflecting on life's experiences can lead to new understandings." The basal is supplemented with the whole-class read-aloud book, *Bud, Not Buddy*, and literature circle tradebooks, like *Because of Winn Dixie*. As students discover the technique of personal narrative, they begin to make connections between the characters in the texts and their own life lessons.

Students choose an experience in their own life in which they have learned a valuable lesson. This lesson and experience will become the focus of a digital personal narrative. After selecting the theme for their story, students then brainstorm about the series of events that led to the lesson. Students are guided to select an initial event that lays out a problem followed by a series of events that lead up to the resolution and lesson. These events, portrayed as "snapshots" in the author's mind, are sketched on a storyboard script.

After laying out 5-8 "snapshots," students then begin to write brief commentary on the storyboard next to each event. Students are encouraged to practice using voice in their writing that is personal and clearly describes the chain of events that lead to the lesson. At this point, the storyboard is complete. Students conduct two peer conferences in which they provide feedback on their use of voice and their selection of "snapshots" to clearly show the story. Revisions are completed.

In the final planning stages, students brainstorm instruments and a musical style that would best fit their story. They then select instruments and percussion, a musical style, and a pace that they plan to use in the background music for their story.

With the initial planning concluded, students then use a mobile lab of laptops to compose their digital stories. They begin by collecting images that portray the storyboard's "snapshots" and save them to their personal documents folder on the school server. Images may be collected from the Internet with a website citation, or drawn using Kidpik. When all images are collected, they are imported into iMovie and laid out in sequential order. Students then record their commentary for each individual "snapshot" using Audio Recorder, also saving them on the server. These files are then imported into iMovie and laid out with the corresponding images. After calculating the total length of their digital story, students finally use Garage Band to compose the appropriate length of background music, save their composition as an mp3, and import this in iMovie as well.

Each individual story is exported to Quick Time and shared with classmates. In order to share all work with a broader audience, the final stories are also compiled and exported to Quick Time. The entire project is then displayed on a laptop just outside the classroom for those waiting during parent teacher conferences.

Outcomes:

After completing this project, students will be able to:

- Make connections between works of literature and their personal lives.
- Select a series of plot events that introduce, build, and conclude a personal story.
- Utilize the writing trait of voice in personal narrative style.
- Fluently read a short story with accurate pronunciations, pacing, and expression.

These outcomes correspond with the following 6th grade standards and benchmarks of the XXXX Community School District:

- Reading Comprehension: Relates stories to personal experiences.
Makes connections between characters or simple events in a literary work and people or events in his or her own life.
Understands the basic concepts of plot.
- Reading Strategies: Reads aloud familiar stories, poems, and passages with attention to rhythm, flow, and meter.
- Language Arts Writing: Writes stories or essays that convey an intended purpose.
- Music Composition: Create and arrange short songs and instrumental pieces using a variety of sound sources.

Technology Skills:

After completing this project, students will be able to:

- Create original pictures using Kidpix and/or save pictures and web addresses from the Internet.
- Use Audio Recorder to record their narration.
- Use Garage Band to compose an original work of music.
- Use iMovie to import image and audio files, create and edit a digital story using images, audio narration, and audio music, and export their story to Quick Time format.

These outcomes correspond with the following 6th grade standards and benchmarks of the United Community School District:

- Technology Operation: Import material from one application to another.
- Technology Integration: Operate a graphic application including capturing screens and importing.
Use multimedia to develop a presentation.
- Tech. Problem-Solving: Maneuver from one application to another.
- Tech. Research Skills: Operate research applications to find information.

Assessment Suggestions:

A rubric assessing story content, use of voice, reading fluency, and technology usage will be used to assess the project.

In addition, a digital copy of each student's story could be added to the students' portfolios.

Tools and Resources:

For Students

- **Books:**
 - Curtis, C.P. (1999). *Bud, Not Buddy*. New York: Laurel-Leaf Books.
 - Dicamillo, Kate. (2000). *Because of Winn Dixie*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press.
 - Avi. "S.O.R. Losers." from *McGraw Hill Reading, Grade 6*. (2003). New York: McMillan McGraw Hill.
 - Namioka, Lensey. "The All-American Slurp." from *McGraw Hill Reading, Grade 6*. (2003). New York: McMillan McGraw Hill.
 - Asimov, Isaac. "Rain, Rain, Go Away." from *McGraw Hill Reading, Grade 6*. (2003). New York: McMillan McGraw Hill.
- **Internet:**
 - McGraw Hill Reading Series: <http://www.macmillanmh.com/reading/2005/student/>
 - iMovie How-To Guides: <http://www.apple.com/education/ilife/howto/>
 - Google Images: <http://www.google.com/imghp?hl=en&tab=wi&q=>
- **Tools:**
 - Macintosh laptop computers with built-in microphone
 - Internet and server connection
 - KidPix
 - Audio Recorder
 - Garage Band
 - iMovie
 - Quick Time

For Teacher Sample:

- **Music Sources:**
 - Jean Knight, "Mr. Big Stuff." From *Mr. Big Stuff*. Stax, 1991, compact disc.
 - Shania Twain, "That Don't Impress Me Much." From *Shania Twain: Greatest Hits*. Mercury Records, 2004, compact disc.
 - Dave Matthews Band, "Crash Into You." From *Crash*. RCA, 1996, compact disc.
 - Counting Crows, "Hangin' Around." From *Films About Ghosts: The Best of Counting Crows*. Geffen Records Inc., 2004, compact disc.
 - Travis Tritt, "It's A Great Day to Be Alive." From *Down the Road I Go*. Sony, 2000, compact disc.
 - Sarah MacLachlan, "I Will Remember You." From *Mirrorball*. Arista, 2002, compact disc.
 - Green Day, "Good Riddance." From *Nimrod*. Reprise, 1997, compact disc.
- **Internet:**
 - iTunes: www.itunes.com
- **Tools:**
 - Gateway computer with external microphone
 - Adobe Photoshop
 - Adobe Premiere
 - Sound Forge
 - Quick Time