Have a Teaching Problem?
There’s a Technique for That!

Elizabeth F. Barkley and Claire H. Major
AAC&U General Meeting
1:30-2:30 PM Friday, February 25th, 2019
Introductions
Who We Are
Elizabeth Barkley
Claire Major
Elizabeth’s Story
Sometimes I feel like a partner in an unholy alliance…
The crisis challenged me to transform the way I taught.
Claire’s Story
Multiple institution types
40 sections of introductory English
Cross Academy Background
You have the knowledge. Now have the know-how.
Honor K. Patricia Cross

“Teaching, without learning, is just talking.”

K. Patricia Cross
Help college teachers improve their teaching through research-based, effective teaching techniques.
Logo: “Press play to learn...”
What is it?

A free online library of instructional modules on how to implement effective, research-based teaching techniques.
CrossCurrents

More methods. LESS MADNESS.
The Academy as Teaching Problem Solver
Digital Story

More methods. LESS MADNESS.
Digital Story

Students use computer-based tools, such as video, audio, graphics, and web publishing, to tell personal or academic stories about life experiences relevant to course themes.
Quick Reference
• Activity Type
• Teaching Problem Addressed
• Learning Taxonomic Level
Digital Story

Quick Reference
• Brief Description
• 7 Basic Steps

Digital Story
Students use computer-based tools, such as video, audio, graphics, and Web publishing, to tell personal or academic stories about life experiences relevant to course themes.

1. Clarify your teaching purpose and learning goals for the Digital Story
2. Create a prompt that establishes the content or topic area of the story
3. Set assignment parameters (media, length, etc.)
4. Develop a plan for learning assessment or grading
5. Communicate assignment instructions to students
6. Allow students time to create their Digital Story
7. Reflect upon the activity and evaluate its effectiveness
Digital Story

Step-By-Step Instructions

In this section we provide with guidance on the steps involved as you consider this technique.

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND GOALS
Digital Story is a project and reflection-based technique that can drive the students to solve problems, so think through exactly what you hope to get from this activity. Typically, students find the assignment meaningful as it invest considerable effort. The project also challenges students to write for an audience and its individualized, personal focus reduces both the inclination to cheat. This technique also provides teachers with rich data through multimedia from which to assess student learning and development.

Digital Story may be used to support a variety of learning goals, depending upon your prompt. For example, use Digital Story when you want to provide students with a creative outlet for self-authorship and for curating their lived experiences. Or you can use this technique to help students learn about the lives and experiences of others. As students situate themselves within the context of the course subject area, they can use the digital stories to make connections between course content and other realms of life. Because Digital Story often taps into a student’s emotions, you can also use this assignment to help improve students’ caring about a given topic.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK’S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT
Create an assignment prompt that establishes the content or topic area of the story.

For example:

- "Create a Digital Story that documents your connection with an environmental pollution issue."
- "Create a Digital Story that documents your journey as a student in higher education."

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS
As you set parameters, consider aspects such as:

- Media (video or audio), length, timeframe for completion
- Where students can go for technical support
- Whether students will post their digital stories online or present them in class

STEP 4: SET ASSESSMENT PARAMETERS FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT
It is important to discuss assessment parameters with your students, and they will most likely want it to count toward their grade. You will likely want to assess it, and hence will need to think through your assessment and why. For example, in addition to your own assessment, you may also want to incorporate self-assessment or peer assessment.

Sellers (2009, p. 18) identifies three main approaches for assessing digital stories that may be useful for rubric creation:

I. The Storytelling Approach, which focuses on elements such as Story Finding, Story Telling, Story Expanding, Story Processing, and Story Reconstructing.

II. The “Levels of Reflection” Approach, which draws upon Moun’s Model of Reflective Learning (Moon, 1999) and focuses on aspects such as Noticing, Making Sense, Meaning Making, Working with Meaning, and Transformative Learning.

III. The Use of Multimedia in Reflective Learning Approach, which focuses on student facility with technological tools for story telling, such as Continuity Editing, Audio Editing, Lighting, Graphics, Animation.

We have included additional assessment approaches as well as sample rubrics in the Support Materials section of this document.

STEP 5: COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS TO STUDENTS
Digital Story is a complex project for which it is best to develop an assignment handout. In your handout, include not only standard elements such as instructions and assessment criteria, but you also may want to include guidance about how students should proceed, such as the following suggestions adapted from Lambert (2010):

- Own your insights. Storytellers should find and clarify what their stories are about. We start with the question: “What’s the story you want to tell?” and then ask the follow-up, “What do you think your story means?”

- Own your emotions. Consider the emotions in the story and determine how to convey these to an audience.
Digital Story

Step-By-Step Instructions (CON’T)

- Find the moment in the story. Identify a single moment that can illustrate your insight. What was the moment things changed? Were you aware of the change?
- See the story. How do visuals and sound bring things to life for the audience? How can you use them as part of the story?
- Hear your story. The recorded voice of the storyteller is what makes a project a “digital story,” but you can add music or other sounds. Both those other sounds are an excellent way to convey tone. Consider whether the story would be enhanced by additional layers of sound.
- Assemble the story. What structure will you use? Chronological? Most important to least important? Vice versa? Consider what the necessary parts of the story are and how to order those pieces to engage the audience.
- Share the story. Ask: “Who is your audience? What was your purpose in creating the story? Has the purpose shifted during the process of creating the piece? In what presentation format will the story be viewed? Will the story continue to have life after its presentation?”

We provide further guidance on assessment in the Support Materials section of this document.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE TECHNIQUE

- Announce the activity, distributing your handout and allowing time for questions.
- Provide students with time to work.
- Have students present their digital stories either in class or posted online.
- Collect and assess the digital stories.

STEP 7: REFLECT UPON THE ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

If you are interested in determining course level learning outcomes, use your rubric and add up the total for each rubric trait and enter it in a table or chart. For example, using our adaptation of the AAC&U VALUE rubric provided in the Support Materials section below, we created the following “Sample Display Chart of Assessment Results.” It shows the total number of students who were assessed at the different standards (excellent, very good, good, acceptable) for the various criteria (organization, language, delivery, central message, reflection & self-assessment). You can also add up the individual scores on each trait and determine a class average. These results can then be displayed in a variety of formats, such as the “Sample Graph of Assessment Results” on the following page.

1. SAMPLE DISPLAY CHART OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RUBRIC RESULTS FOR DIGITAL STORY PROJECTS (Number of Students at Each Level for Each Trait)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXCELLENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELIVERY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL MESSAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFLECTION &amp; SELF-ASSESSMENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. SAMPLE GRAPH OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Consider what worked. Consider what could have been better and why and how. Consider whether the activity is something you would like to use in the future. Record your responses so that you can revisit them, when you consider implementing the activity in the future.
The materials in this section are intended to help you with the process of implementing this technique. Because Digital Story yields rich data about student learning, for this technique, we provide additional guidance on assessment.

**ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE**
The Learning Artifact for the technique—the means by which the student’s learning becomes visible and hence assessable—is the Digital Story students create. These stories can be a rich source of assessment data. They can provide evidence of a student’s knowledge of course content, ability to reflect upon their learning, multimedia literacy, and engagement. Moreover, through sharing their own stories with an audience, this technique provides strong evidence of student learning in the Human Dimension of the Significant Learning Taxonomy. Rubrics can be a useful assessment tool, and graphs and charts can be effective for displaying results.

**SAMPLE ASSESSMENT RUBRICS**
The University of Wisconsin Stout (n.d.) provides a great example of a rubric for assessing student video projects. We also include one that is a hybrid of two of the VALUE rubrics (rubrics developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities as part of their Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education Initiative).
## Sample Assessment Rubric 1

### Video Project Rubric

*Adapted from The University of Wisconsin Stout (nd)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Partially Proficient</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of Resources and Citations During Research and Note Taking</td>
<td>12 points</td>
<td>8 points</td>
<td>4 points</td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Resources and Citations During Research and Note Taking</td>
<td>Note cards indicate research questions, sources of information, and identify relevant pros and cons appropriately. (If applicable to the topic). Sources of information and graphics are properly cited using citations.</td>
<td>Note cards show research questions, relevant information from multiple sources of information and evaluate alternative viewpoints. If appropriate for the topic. Most sources of information are clearly identified and cited using citations.</td>
<td>Note cards do not include research questions, sources of information and ignore alternative viewpoints. If not appropriate for the topic. No citations are included.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storyboard</td>
<td>4 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storyboard</td>
<td>The storyboard illustrates the video presentation structure with thumbnails of each scene. Notes of prepared transition, special effects, sound and title tracks include text, background color, placement, font, size, style for titles and highlights. Narration within proposed script is original and relevant.</td>
<td>All sketches are organized and numbered in a logical sequence.</td>
<td>The storyboards are inconsistent in clarity (too loud/hushed) and include irrelevant details.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Video Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Partially Proficient</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>Some scenes are too dark or too light to determine what is happening.</td>
<td>Some scenes are too dark or too light to determine what is happening.</td>
<td>The lighting is off and cannot be seen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>0 points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>Only ambient sound is used. Most scenes are too dark or too light to determine what is happening.</td>
<td>Only ambient sound is used.</td>
<td>The sound is cut off and inconsistent, or overpowering.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Copyright

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copyright</th>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copyright</td>
<td>Copyrighted information for photos, graphics and music is clearly identified by source and nature of permission to reproduce.</td>
<td>Every photo, graphic or music is either original or permission for its use is documented.</td>
<td>Some of the graphics and/or animations do not enhance the content or detract from the content.</td>
<td>There is no reference to copyright information for photos, graphics, and music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Digital Story

#### Sample Assessment Rubric 2

*(VALUE Rubric)*

**Digital Story Assessment Rubric**

Adapted From The AAC&U Oral Communication VALUE Rubrics

This rubric combines elements of the Oral Communication and the Skills for Lifelong Learning VALUE Rubrics created by faculty working with AAC&U. Oral communication is defined as “prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners’ attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.” Lifelong learning is defined as any “purposeful activity undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence.” Evaluators will assign a zero to any assignment that does not meet benchmark/acceptable (cell one) level performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXCELLENT 61-80</th>
<th>VERY GOOD 41-60</th>
<th>GOOD 21-40</th>
<th>ACCEPTABLE 1-20</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORGANIZATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization pattern</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the story, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the digital story cohesive.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LANGUAGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language choices for the story are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the story. Language is appropriate to the audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DELIVERY</strong></td>
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<td>Delivery techniques (visuals, vocal expressiveness) make the presentation compelling, and the speaker appears polished and confident.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CENTRAL MESSAGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The central message is compelling (precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported).</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFLECTION &amp; SELF-ASSESSMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Pre- and Post-Project Reflections, demonstrates a deep sense of self as a learner, building on prior experience.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name ___________________________  Total Points _________ /400 (Potential)

Digital Story

Two Templates
Digital Story

“Model” Based on Real Class

Technique Template

Sample Digital Story Completed Technique Template:
Content from Elizabeth Barkley

Music of Multicultural America

Course Name

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS
What are the situational factors that impact this course? For example, is it on campus or online? How many students? Is it lower division or graduate? Are there student attributes such as attitudes, prior knowledge, reasons for enrolling, and so forth that should be taken into account as you consider this technique?

My course is an on-campus, honors, institute section of a lower division General Education course. The course meets my institution’s United States Cultures & Communities requirement and also the Humanities requirement. It enrolls about 25-35 students. A significant number are international students and we are trying to recruit more first generation students. As enrolled students, they typically have

STEP 1: CLARIFY
Why are you choosing this technique? Describe your goal.

I am looking for an activity that will increase student engagement as well as help students move beyond a surface understanding of the challenges faced by immigrants in the United States. I am also looking for a way to increase students’ self-reflection skills, both in terms of their connections to course content and their insights and understanding of how they learn.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK’S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT
What is the question you want learners to address, or problem you want them to solve?

Create a digital story that documents the experience of becoming “American.” The story can be that of your own (if you are an immigrant), or someone else’s such as a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor, and so forth.

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS
What are the assignment logistics? For example, will this be assigned individually or in a group? Is there a required format? What is the time frame or deadline?

6 weeks to create a video with a maximum of 5 minutes. They will submit them to a drop box. I will grade. I am also going to incorporate a short post-project reflection essay and ask students to describe what they learned about themselves in the process. I also need to create an assessment rubric and the assignment handout.
Digital Story

Technique Template

This template is intended for use when planning to implement Digital Story in your class. Fill in the blanks below, and use the information provided elsewhere in the Instructor's Guide to assist you in your thinking.

Course Name

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS
What are the situational factors that impact this course? For example, is it on campus or online? How many students? Is it lower division or graduate? Are there student attributes such as attitudes, prior knowledge, reasons for enrolling, and so forth that should be taken into account as you consider this technique?

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS
Why are you choosing this technique? What do you hope to accomplish?
References and Resources

PRIMARY SOURCE
Content for this download was drawn primarily from “Learning Assessment Technique 36: Digital Story” in Learning Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty (Barkley & Major, 2016), pp. 303–311. It includes material that was adapted or reproduced with permission. For further information about this technique, including examples in both on-campus and online courses, see the primary source:


CITATIONS AND ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- University of Wisconsin Stout (n.d). Videone project rubric. https://www2.uw stout.edu/content/profiles/rubrics/videonebric.html

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Quotes from Faculty

• “That’s good, that’s really good. That three minutes was more useful than an hour and 45 minutes of professional development today.” Business Professor, Shelton State Community College, Alabama

• “Love the concept of the journals! In my faculty evaluation, my boss and I discussed ways to engage my non-majors biology students—and this seems like it would be a great fit.” Biology Instructor, Southeaster Community College

• “My institution is always pushing me to attend workshops but honestly, I never go because of the commute and because I don’t have the time. These 24/7 online videos would be SO helpful.” Instructor, Media Studies, Foothill College
What is the biggest problem college teachers face today?
Using the Academy

https://kpcrossacademy.org
Where to go from here…
More methods. Less madness.
More Techniques Videos
Videos Focused on Online Teaching
Guidance on How to Use Videos for Faculty Development Workshops
Face-to-Face Institute
Become Part of Larger Framework
Other?
Small Group Brainstorming
What would help you best next?
Please Take Survey
Thank You!