E-Stories

Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students Language and Technology Use Skills

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WP3

Writing for Digital Storytelling

For Teachers

Necmettin Erbakan University

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Writing for Digital Storytelling

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Writing for Digital Storytelling

1. Introduction

- In today's multimedia world, storytelling has evolved beyond traditional formats.
- But, whether it is a personal video, an advertisement or a social media campaign, **writing** remains at the **heart of any effective digital story**.
- Teaching writing, especially digital storytelling, is a blend of didactic and creative skills. It's about guiding students to structure their ideas, write with voice and purpose, and refine their work through feedback.
- Teachers help students write powerful narratives while developing clarity, tone and audience awareness.
- This module bridges the gap between creativity and structure, supporting teachers to guide this process.

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2. Why a Strong Script is Critical

- A strong script is critical to a good digital story because it shapes the entire narrative.
- A strong script also saves editing time and sharpens the product.
- While visuals and audio enhance the experience, it's the script that provides clarity, coherence, and emotional depth.
- Students often focus on visuals, so teachers should help shift focus to writing.
- Planning the script involves more than just brainstorming—

it's about helping students think intentionally about the **story's purpose, audience, tone,** and **structure.**

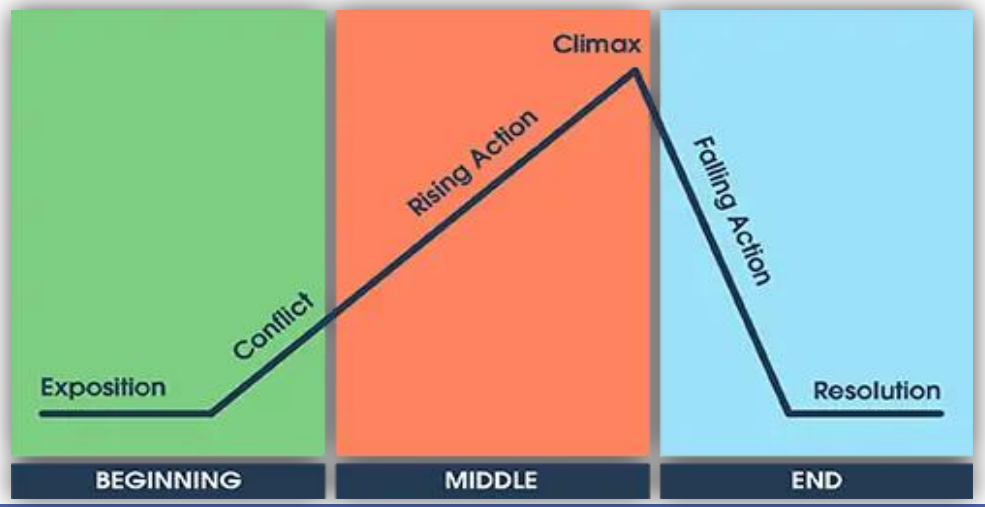


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3. Teaching Narrative Structure

- **Narrative structure** is the backbone of any strong story.
- As teachers, our role is to make the parts of a story visible, relatable, and actionable.
- So start teaching narrative structure with familiar examples from short stories, films, or digital stories students already know.
- Then break them down into the **beginning (setup), middle (development/conflict), and end (resolution)**.
- Ask students guiding questions: *What happened first? What changed? How did it end?*
- Then teach the classic **story arc**:
  - **Exposition**
  - **Conflict**
  - **Rising Action**
  - **Climax**
  - **Falling Action**
  - **Resolution**



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4. Guiding Voice and Tone

- Voice and tone bring personality and emotion to a story. They help students connect with their audience, create meaning and express themselves authentically.
- Teachers can help their students with the development of writer's voice and tone by using such strategies as:
  - **Modelling aloud**: Read the same sentence in different tones (e.g., serious, sarcastic, joyful) to show how tone changes meaning.
  - **Analyzing examples**: Use short excerpts from digital stories to discuss how voice reflects the narrator's personality.
  - **Practising rewriting**: Give students a neutral passage and ask them to rewrite it in different tones (e.g., hopeful, dramatic, humorous).
  - **Encouraging self-expression**: Ask students to describe how they want the audience to feel and adjust their tone accordingly.

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5. Teaching Purpose-Driven Writing

- Understanding ***why*** students are writing helps them choose the right tone, structure, and content. A clear purpose makes their digital stories more focused, meaningful, and engaging.

- Some **common purposes** in digital storytelling:
  - **To inform** – explain a topic clearly (e.g., educational explainer)
  - **To persuade** – convince or inspire action (e.g., social issue awareness)
  - **To reflect** – explore personal growth (e.g., autobiographical)
  - **To entertain** – tell imaginative stories (e.g., fictional or humorous)



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- Teachers can help their students by using such strategies below:
  - **Using sample stories** and asking students '*What was the purpose?' or 'Was it effective?'*
  - **Purpose-matching activity** in which students match short scripts to their intended purpose,
  - **Pre-writing prompts** such as having students complete: *"The message I want to share is…"*

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6. Helping Students Draft and Refine

- During **drafting** and **revising**, ideas take shape and improve. Supporting this process helps students to develop clarity, creativity and confidence in their narratives.
- You can help students with idea development, script drafting, and revision processes with the ideas below:
  - Using prompts and mind maps to help students explore their topic,
  - Asking guiding questions: *What do you want your audience to feel or learn?*,
  - Encouraging students for a rough first draft—focus on flow, not perfection,
  - Using storyboards to combine script and visuals,
  - Using peer reviews and teacher feedback focused on structure, tone, and clarity.
  - Teaching students to read aloud to check pacing and emotional impact.



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7. Tools & Resources for Teachers

Some recommended story planning tools:

- *Storyboards*,
- *Graphic organizers* for narrative structure and idea mapping (e.g., Canva, Padlet),
- Such resourceful websites for plot diagram and narrative arc,
  - https://www.storyboardthat.com/articles/e/plot-diagram
  - https://www.storyboardthat.com/create/worksheet-plot-diagram

Writing & collaboration platforms:

- *Google Docs* – for drafting and peer feedback,
- *Padlet*– for idea sharing and brainstorming,

Scriptwriting tools:

- *Scripto or Celtx* – for simple script formatting,
- *Voice recording tools* – to hear tone and flow,

Assessment Support:

- *Rubrics for writing & storytelling (e.g., https://www.twinkl.ch/search?q=narrative+writing+rubrics)*
- *Checklists for revision, voice, and structure,*

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8. Summary

As teachers, our digital story writing instruction contributes to students' writer identity by promoting their voice, creativity and confidence.

By helping students create powerful texts with the use of strategies and ideas in this presentation, you will absolutely empower them to communicate meaningfully in a digital world.

Through targeted instruction, thoughtful feedback and the use of engaging tools, you're not only teaching writing, you're training storytellers.

With every draft and every revision, you'll help students discover the power of their own stories.

Now, it is time to polish your teaching skills with the use of tools and resources recommended here!

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