



Content Area Literacy Task Force



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Collaborative Digital Writing

Rhonda Orttenburger, Social Studies/Language Arts

This whole class writing activity combines the art of writing together and technology. These complex projects take weeks of short, but frequent writing. You can publish these narratives or scripts by printing the final copy or distributing them digitally. The additional steps to turn these pieces into a podcast, digital story, or video increase “the opportunities for students to recognize the need for revision.”

There are two steps to this collaborative project. The first step involves the whole class. We brainstorm ideas for writing using Social Studies content as a focus. When we have our idea and the form, I begin by projecting the writing on a screen so all students can see it. I do the actual keyboarding. As I type, I am able to show students how to format a document and how to center a title, as well as other technology techniques. I am also able to coach students through important steps of the writing process, especially revision. During this whole class ac-

tivity, students pitch ideas, engage in leap frogging (one student makes a suggestion with another student building on it), make friendly amendments (retain the spirit of the original line, but extend or refine it), meet deadlines, develop patience, polish the story or script, and complete a project.

As the teacher, it is my role to model and encourage revision, provide and model organization, model rereading, play Devil’s advocate, model word processing formatting, direct, merge ideas, establish the phases of the project, and wrap up. This is an excellent beginning of the year activity so students become familiar with technology techniques and revision. A class can use this to collaborate with another classroom. After one class has written a sentence or paragraph (your choice), the writing is then sent to another classroom. They add to the narrative or script. Then they send it back to the other classroom. This continues until the story or script ends.

During step two, students work in small groups to

make choices about how to present their writing. During this small group work, students may record audio of the writing as a podcast or digital story, add photos or drawings, or tape their script.

You can use any word processing program, such as Microsoft Word. If you are writing a script, you might want to download the OmniOutliner app for your iPad. However, it is not free. At last look, it was \$19.95.

To read more about this strategy and other ways to teach 21st century style, read [Teaching the New Writing Technology, Change, and Assessment in the 21st-Century Classroom](#) edited by Anne Herrington, Kevin Hodgson, and Charles Moran.

Coming In Future Editions:

February: Text Complexity
March: On-Demand
March Madness
April/May: End of Year Reflective Writing

Text Complexity – Students Respond to Text Sets

Jennifer Bernhard, Clark County Schools

*This is a monthly column provided to CALTF that will focus on the issue of
TEXT COMPLEXITY as it relates to literacy.*

As I am sure you will remember from last month, we all agreed that the *be all and end all* of specific content knowledge couldn't be one single text, right? And we probably all still agree that putting together interrelated sets of texts can be somewhat of a chore. Well, I'm not sure we'll all be jumping up and down at this news, but at least our Social Studies colleagues should be happy.

The Vermont Writing Collaborative, with Student Achievement Partners and the CCSSO have put together a valuable collection of student on demand written responses to sets of texts to give us excellent *proof of the pudding*. For example, in grades 6-8, students read three texts about the Great Depression: a memoir called *Digging In* by Robert Hastings, a poem, "Debts" by Karen Hesse, and a short text about the programs of the New Deal of President Roosevelt. As students independently read these texts closely, they are asked to think about what they reveal about

how the Great Depression seems to have affected the individual people who lived through it. They are then given three 45 sessions to plan, write and proofread an on demand essay response to the following prompt: According to these texts, what effect did the Great Depression have on people who lived through it? Be sure to use evidence from the texts to support and develop your thinking.

Similarly, another prompt requires students to read three texts about the Dust Bowl and write a narrative from the perspective of someone living through a Dust Bowl showing how a particular small moment during the experience affected one person. Our eighth grade ELA teachers in Clark County recognized how these texts could fit into their curriculum and took this narrative prompt for a test run. Their results were amazing – they report that all students were engaged and they have since shared this resource with their social studies colleagues. Incidentally, I had the pleasure of scoring some of the work and want to share the beginning of a successful

narrative:

Hopeless. That's what we were. I didn't know what was to come, but I knew what already had. And it swept throughout lives harder, and left more damage than the dust storms we were running from.

"Mom," I heard my eldest son say. "Mom," he repeated, staying calm. Always calm. Terrance was holding Lilly, my five-month little girl, in his arms and the hand of Aviary, his 7-year-old brother.

"Yes?" I asked, coming out of my reverie. I looked over at my black-haired, blue-eyed dirty son. Since his father died, he was forced to take on the role as the head of the family.

"The should be a stopping place up the road. We should stop for the night," he said in an authoritative tone, just like his father. . ."

Yes, a female student wrote this, but I hasten to add that I read the work of several male students that was equally successful.

Additional Resources:

For K-5 Narrative Writing: [Achieve the Core Narrative](#)

For K-5 Informative Writing: [Achieve the Core Informative](#)

For K-5 Opinion Writing: [Achieve the Core Argument/Opinion](#)

For Texts/Prompts for all Three Writing Types go to: [Achieve the Core](#)

Digital Literacy—Music

Sandy Allen, Music

In the book, *(Re)Imagining Content-Area Literacy Instruction*, Roni Jo Draper makes the argument that “without specialized literacies in content areas, students are relegated to the position of reading and writing about what others are doing, rather than participating in the activities of creation, inquiry, expression, and problem-solving.” (Draper, et al, p. 2) Students in all content areas are required to master a variety of texts and retain an enormous amount of information.

How can we use music and digital technology to help our students learn and retain what we teach?

1. YouTube/SchoolTube videos: A quick search yields videos for every content area that are appropriate to use in the classroom.
2. philtulga.com: This site has great activities for incorporating music and math, science, and language arts, as well as general music lessons
3. Soomo Publishing channel on YouTube: Soomo Publishing is a webtext company, but they have made their videos available on YouTube. There are music videos as well as interviews, documentaries, and people on the street interviews.

These are just a few internet sites that you can use to find videos for use in your classroom.

Digital Literacy Mathematics

Amanda Pasley Terry, Mathematics

Digital literacy is a vital part of being a 21st Century learner. In my math intervention classroom the use of technology is strategically placed to enhance student learning as well as to bring some excitement to the area of mathematics. One way this is achieved in my classroom is through the use of the app Show Me. Show Me allows for a digital and/or vocal presentation created by writing on the tablet and talking as the work is happening. My intervention students use this app to explain both in words and visually how they completed the problem or task at hand. This was helpful not only for the students to express knowledge but also to allow students to teach each other through sharing different ways of thinking or solving problems.

Digital Literacy Resources

Collected by Katie McClain, Library Media Specialist

Literacies, the Arts, and Multimodality by Peggy Albers and Jennifer Sanders

Teaching the New Writing: Technology, Change, and Assessment in the 21st-Century Classroom by Anne Herrington, Kevin Hodgson, and Charles Moran

The Digital Writing Workshop by Troy Hicks

Digital and Media Literacy: Connecting Culture and Classroom by Renee R. Hobbs

Adolescents and Digital Literacies: Learning Alongside Our Students by Sara Kajder

Because Digital Writing Matters: Improving Student Writing in Online and Multimedia Environments by the National Writing Project, Danielle DeVoss, Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, and Troy Hicks

Literacy in the New Media Age by Gunther Kress

Agency in the Age of Peer Production by Quentin D. Viregge, Kyle Stedman, Taylor Mitchell, and Joseph Moxley

Lesson Plans for Developing Digital Literacies by Scott Sullivan and Mary T. Christel

Transforming Writing Instruction in the Digital Age: Techniques for Grades 5-12 by Thomas DeVere Wolsey and Dana L. Grisham

Digital Literacy: Authentic Assessments of Mathematical Knowledge

Lee Alan H. Roher, Ed.D.

In designing performance based assessments for transformations, I used Grant Wiggins' Understanding by Design to create the unit. In the training, I was told that performance based assessments should give students individual choice in the final performance task. In this article I will discuss digital literacy regarding the design of the culminating performance assessment.

Since students have different comfort levels and interests regarding technology they are given a choice in their final assessment to either use technology in the design or to hand draw a design. In transformations the enduring knowledge is that students will understand that the movement present throughout our lives can be mathematically modeled. The High School Common Core State Standard for transformations is that given a figure a student can perform a translation rotation or reflection on that figure (Council of Chief State School Officers and The NGA Center for Best Practices, 2012). The ACT Quality Core standard states that a student could identify and draw transformations using figures (ACT QualityCore Geometry, 2011). The America Diploma Project (ADP) states "...technology is an important tool for visualization and for deepening understanding of ... transformations (Achieve, Inc,

2008)."

The essential questions asked to see if students could demonstrate understanding included: How do video games work mathematically? Where is the mathematics in art? Does the vanishing point really vanish? How do quilts piece together mathematically? To answer these questions I gave students the choice of the following digital performance tasks: Transformation Art Exhibit, Transformation Texas Instrument (TI) Calculator Game, Transformation Wall Paper Border, and Transformation Art Project. If a student came up with an alternate performance task it was accepted if it met the standards for transformation.

The Assessments

Transformation of Art Exhibit: Your job is to create art exhibit with artwork representing the various transformations. You are the curator of an art gallery. Your audience for the gallery is your school's student body. You need to collect or make artwork with and without transformations. Write a caption or personal reflection for each piece. Your art exhibit can be in any format; online electronic or print. Make sure copyright laws are followed. Your art exhibit must be accessible to the student body of the school. You will need to make arrangements with the school to display your exhibit. (e.g. a link on the school webpage, schedule space and time with the administration, or if appropriate for

school art teacher.) Your product must meet the following standards: multiple pieces of artwork (containing transformations and some without transformations), each art work must have a corresponding caption or reflection, and the exhibit must be accessible to the student body.

Transformation Texas Instrument (TI) Calculator Game: Your goal is to write a TI-calculator game showing movement. You are the programmer. Your target audience is your student peers and possibly a Texas Instruments programming competition. The challenge involves creating a game that shows movement on the calculator screen using multiple transformations. You will create a TI calculator game (with a printout of the type program). Your game must be available to the student body. A successful result will be a functioning game. The game must have identifiable transformations.

Transformation Wall Paper Border: Your task is to create a selection of Wallpaper Borders. You are a textile designer. Your clients are new homeowners looking to decorate using wallpaper borders. The challenge involves creating borders with different transformations on each design. There are only seven different possible transformation patterns for

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Tumblr as Authentic Student Digital Publication

Pete Edwards, Arts and Humanities

Presenting oneself, and by extension one's work, digitally is a concept that the majority of high school students understand well. However, the skills necessary to present this information in an appropriate and skillful way are often lacking. In an effort to help my Advanced Art students sharpen those skills, they created Tumblr sites. This was the first time that I used the Tumblr sites in the classroom, and my hope was that in addition to gaining experience presenting their work acceptably in a digital format, students would have many opportunities to understand their own artistic processes and those of their peers in a new and more in depth way.

Tumblr is a blog site where students can upload images, post written pieces, and respond to peers' work. Students spent two days in the computer lab at the beginning of the school year setting up accounts, designing the look of their site and writing their first post about what they hoped to gain from the semester. Additionally, I set up a class site

that the students were required to follow. This allowed me to post sketchbook assignments, upcoming due dates and other important class information.

The Tumblr sites have a number of advantages. If students are concerned about privacy, accounts with restricted access can be set up. Accounts have a dashboard page that allows you to chronologically view posts of every other Tumblr site you are following. This was especially helpful when grading students' posts. I was able to scroll through my dashboard and easily check assignments that had been completed. Students followed each other's blogs and commented on peer work and posted images of interest.

Using these sites was an experiment that required students to post images of their artwork. Students posted both in-progress and completed pieces. The focus here was to be able to present your work in a clear and flattering way. This meant posting in-focus, well cropped images that gave an accurate portrayal of the work. We discussed in class that often the online view of

work is the only view that most people see. I showed examples of how beautiful work could be ruined by a bad photo, but mediocre images could be saved with good lighting and cropping.

This was the first attempt at digital publication in class and there were areas that I will address in the future. Some students used formatting themes that were difficult to navigate. A few students did not realize that the weekly grades would have such a large effect on their semester grade, something I need to communicate more clearly at the start of the semester. Some students only followed certain classmates, rather than all of them thus limiting opportunities for interaction.

The Tumblr format allowed students to work with both imagery and text and challenged them to present their work in a professional, coherent manner. I will continue to use and refine these procedures for the classroom because the sites allowed students an authentic experience of presenting their work digitally.

This newsletter is a publication of the Eastern Kentucky University Writing Project, Dr. Sally Martin, Director
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wallpaper border. See the list below:

T= Translation; H= Horizontal reflection; V= Vertical reflection; R= Rotation

*T

*TH

*T V

*T R (ex60°)

*TH R 180°

*T VR 180°

*THVR 90°

You will create seven different designs. Each pattern must be represented and each design must contain three repeats of the design. Your designs must be made available to the student body in some form of presentation.

Transformation Art Project: Your task is to create an artwork containing one or more transformations. You are the artist. The target audience is your peers. You will create an artwork containing a minimum of two transformations. You may use a computer or medium of your choice. Your artwork must be available to the student body with a caption and artist reflection included.

Note that the wording is similar in each performance task even though the technology varies and the product is dependent on students' choice.

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