

# **Fostering Collaboration and Engagement during Writing Workshop through the Integration of Storybird, a Web 2.0 Tool**



Caitlin Tucker  
Instructional Technology  
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[YouTube URL](#)

## Problem/Need

Student achievement is a focus for the school improvement plan. Specifically in the area of narrative writing

Promote collaboration and engagement in the area of writing using the web 2.0 tool, Storybird.

# Project Plan

## What really happened?

- ❑ Digital Library & Peer feedback/collaboration
- ❑ Model lessons & Student Writing Survey Discussion during conferences
- ❑ Sharing StoryBird with grade level team, Practice and Q&A, and Teacher Survey
- ❑ Share and reflect on TKES Writing Goal and Capstone with Principal

Table 1

*Project Activities Alignment*

PSC Standard	Project Activity /Objectives	Deliverables
2.1 Content Standards & Student Technology Standards 2.6 Instructional Design 6.1 Continuous Learning	Teaching how to use Story bird: expectations and requirements for writing.  By November 2018, students will be able to use Storybird to publish writing works.	1. Students will post a collection of stories for the class library in the platform. 2. Students will post one writing assignment in the platform for collaborative revisions.
2.2 Research-Based Learner-Centered Strategies 2.3 Authentic Learning 3.1 Classroom Management & Collaborative Learning 5.1 Needs Assessment	Teaching how to engage in collaborative “talk” for peer editing and collaborative revisions.  By the end of November 2018, students will make corrections to their assigned writing works and discuss these changes during one-on-one conferences with the instructor.	1. Students will provide documentation on revisions. 2. Writing engagement inventory to monitor student progress.
1.1 Shared Vision 3.1 Classroom Management & Collaborative Learning 5.2 Professional Learning 5.3 Program Evaluation 6.3 Field Experiences	Provide professional learning opportunity for teachers to explore Storybird.  By the end of March 2019, meet with grade level representatives to discuss how Storybird supports collaboration for the ideas and revision processes.	1. Agenda for Professional Learning session to discuss engagement and collaboration 2. A survey for participants on their likelihood of using Storybird in their classroom.
1.1 Shared Vision 1.2 Strategic Planning 1.3 Diffusion of Innovations and Change 5.1 Needs Assessment 6.1 Continuous Learning 5.3 Program Evaluation 6.3 Field Experiences	Complete data collection for engagement.  By May 2018, data collected from the project shared with key stakeholders.	1. Provide agenda for sessions. (one with grade level and one with administrators) 2. Provide a survey of completion.

# Evaluation Plan



## Initial Plan

- ❑ Build up digital classroom library and submit one narrative writing piece for peer review
- ❑ Student writing engagement survey
- ❑ Professional learning and teacher evaluation
- ❑ Present capstone to stakeholders and receive instructional writing feedback based on capstone experience

## Reality

- ❑ Students worked to build digital classroom library, write collaborative stories, respond and peer edit within the platform
- ❑ Student inventory completed one-on-one through student interviews and conferring
- ❑ Teacher led Professional Learning, practice and questions & answer using Storybird to promote student engagement and collaboration.
- ❑ Met with Principal to discuss writing TKES goal and Castone

# Phase 1 Description

- ❑ Priority: aware of the technology tool, StoryBird.
- ❑ Focus: creating an environment where students wrote at their leisure during independent small group rotations as a choice and during writing workshop to practice daily skills.
- ❑ Encouragement: post daily writing creations helped engage students in the beginning stages of this project.
- ❑ Model how to log into the platform, how to post stories, how to comment and most importantly, how to engage in conversation about these stories.
- ❑ Genre during this portion of the project was narrative writing.
- ❑ Storytelling and narrative writing lessons supported student learning and StoryBird serves as a digital writing platform for students to share narrative writing.
- ❑ Student choice and building a digital classroom library
- ❑ The challenge was getting students to go back and review their posts. Students began to post and then move to the next story without engaging in dialogue or reviewing their story.
- ❑ The typed stories allowed the teacher and student to have meaningful one-on-one conferences.

# Phase 2 Description

- ❑ Strategic planning and thought. Each lesson had a specific intention to highlight communication among students and directly reflect the focus of this project, collaboration in the writing process.
- ❑ StoryBird served as a digital library for students to access their peer's work for review and inspiration. The digital library allowed students to connect and take ownership in their writing.

**One consideration in the future is the use of the survey anonymously through Google. This would provide some tangible data from the student's perspective. By making the survey in a Google Form, the teacher could assess the data more critically in respect to the project's goal. Assessment of this data would also provide more insight on student's thoughts on the use of StoryBird as a digital writing tool to support peer collaboration and communication.**

# **Student Engagement Survey**

## **1. What do you enjoy most about using StoryBird?**

Students expressed the joy of being able to view their peers work online. Selecting pictures to go with their stories helped with ideas and made this process fun.

## **2. How has StoryBird help you connect with other students?**

Students emphasized the love of having a digital library and how this is different than your typical classroom library. The stories were real and made by students in the class. The conclusions were that students felt more connected to their peers.

## **3. In what way could writing workshop be better for you?**

*Students expressed desires to sit in a place of their spot, changing writing partners to keep things interesting and being able to work with their peers as much as possible.*

## **4. What is your favorite part about writing workshop?**

*Students liked working with their peers, pulling rubrics parts out of bags and the music.*

# Phase 3 Description

- ❑ Sharing this technology tool with a team of teachers.
- ❑ The fourth grade team participated in this professional learning session.
- ❑ The session was not as formal as initially anticipated. This was due to the relatively small size of the professional learning session.
- ❑ A team agenda for the session and teacher survey provided a structured conversation for the teacher's involved in this professional learning session.
- ❑ The teacher presented the tool using a projector while the collaborating teachers followed along. Each teacher created an account and class for their writing blocks.
- ❑ The teachers practiced creating writing drafts as their students would in the StoryBird platform.
- ❑ The teacher provided a story for the team to read and discuss with a partner.
- ❑ The use of dialogue and collaboration serves as an instructional tool for the teachers to take back to their classrooms.
- ❑ At the end of the session, teachers asked questions and participated in a StoryBird questionnaire discussion. This discussion determined the likelihood of teachers taking this back to their classrooms and general feedback about the session for the future



## **Teacher Survey Questionnaire**

### **1. Can you see yourself adapting StoryBird to fit into your writing workshop model?**

*Teachers reflected on how the tool supports student writing objectives. The technology tool is in compliance with the school's technology infrastructure. The platform is easy to access and use. Students can easily upload their writing and manage digital stories.*

### **2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of using this technology tool?**

Teachers commented that the platform promotes student engagement, collaboration as well as creativity. The weakness was the ability to check and ensure students are writing responsibly and this may be time consuming for teachers. Suggestions were for teacher approval for comments and posts.

### **3. What improvements would make this professional learning session more successful?**

*Detailed lesson structures for introducing this tool would be helpful for new teachers. Training with other grade levels and increased professional learning to incorporate technology into writing instruction.*

# Phase 4 Description

- ❑ Initial goal was to present the project to a group of key stakeholders.
- ❑ The Principal was the audience for the project presentation. In the beginning phase, the principal played a major role in the design of this project.
- ❑ The discussion of this project occurred during the teacher's annual conference. The discussion involved looking at the end of the year assessment data. Milestones writing assessments and individual conference notes on student progression, goal setting and work samples provided the necessary data for conversations about the digital library tool.
- ❑ After the conference follow-up, the conclusions were that teacher knowledge improved significantly based on intentional lesson design and reflection, writing scores showed improvements and individual student data was easily accessible for review and planning writing lessons.

## **Reflection**

- ❑ The teacher grew in the knowledge of the technology tool by practicing within the platform and ensuring students understood how to utilize the digital library. The teacher ensures accessibility and endurance from the students. The intentional focus on communication ensures students are practicing real life skills, while building technology and writing capacity simultaneously.
- ❑ The teacher develops and implements a technology vision with respect to technology-enhanced experiences for students to address content standards in the area of writing through this project. The project focuses on engaging writers using a digital library to house student exemplars.
- ❑ Considering this, the most powerful takeaway from this project is the disposition of using technology to promote the “how” to engage writers through collaboration. The answer or project solution is a digital library for students to reflect and publish works.
- ❑ Basic troubleshooting and evaluation of technology tools ensures the technologies will work within the school infrastructure. This is critical when deciding on what tools to integrate into daily instructional practice. The only recommendation for others studying the use of digital tools to support peer collaboration and engagement is to provide students with a variety of tools to explore in regards to digital works.
- ❑ The implementation of the project in the classroom and the professional learning session was the most successful components. However, the teacher realizes that improvements in implementation and professional learning sessions improve with time and practice. Technology integration takes time.



Through **consistent implementation** of this tool, students are able to **grow** in their **writing skills**.

Sheninger (2014) suggests, “By focusing on how specific technologies can be used to engage students, digital leaders are establishing a foundation for learning that will lead to eventual increases in student achievement (p. 135). This project explores ways to **engage learners** in the writing process **through a digital library** that encourages **collaboration** and **communication**.

# References

Sheninger, E. C., & Zhao, Y. (2014). *Digital leadership: Changing paradigms for changing times*. Thousand Oaks (CA): Corwin.