Connecting the Past with the Present through the Power of Storytelling

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By Kathleen Green

Introduction

In an effort to build continued collaboration with the DUSD (Dublin Unified School District), the Alameda County Library will create a digital storytelling program that will align with school curriculum. This digital storytelling will utilize the digital resources provided by the living museum of Colonial Williamsburg.

Objective

- The Objective of the Interactive History Series of Alameda County is to build a Digital Storytelling program as a way to teach aspects of history that are not as deeply explored in school education.
- Using multi-media of both the digital and traditional storytelling means, history will be brought to life for school-aged children 4th grade through senior year.
- This program is being created as supplemental material for the local school districts to access

Executive Summary

The [Alameda County Library](#) in collaboration with the [DUSD](#) (Dublin Unified School District) will build a digital storytelling program as supplemental material to coincide with the school's history curriculum. This program's focus will be on bringing history to life for students through means of virtual tours of historical sites, and performers acting as a historical figure to answer questions.

Terminology

- Digital Storytelling
    - A variation on the traditional storytelling method. Instead of what is envisioned as a sit down narrative storytelling, digital takes it to the 21st century. It utilizes computer-based tools and multimedia elements in storytelling. Oftentimes all focused on one cohesive theme (Goek)
    - The method has been around since the popularization of computers in the 1990s and currently is used by "neighborhood community centers, schools, libraries and businesses, by novice technology users to those with advanced skills. In the field of education, teachers and their students, from early childhood classrooms through graduate school, are using digital storytelling in many different content areas and across a wide range of grade levels" (Dogan)

What is Virtual Williamsburg?

- A page of online resources created by the living museum on the East Coast, Colonial Williamsburg

- Resources included:
  - virtual tours of the many important buildings of the town, including a new one focused on the [Randolph Suite](#).
  - Colonial Williamsburg TV where through a Roku subscription, a user can meet Williamsburg characters through their television
  - Recipes
  - Articles
  - Knowledge tests
  - Activities sheets

Explore Virtually

Travel back in time

Discover the 18th-century virtually between visits.

How Does the Site Work?

The general website functions the same as a standard web page does where each icon will open to a separate page on the browser

Because of this, the site is user friendly and there is little barrier to access the materials

- One section of the site that would require extra steps would be accessing Colonial Williamsburg TV as it requires a Roku tv or Amazon Fire tv connection. It is a free service connected to these services

How Can the Technology Successfully be Implemented?

This technology will be successfully implemented by the Alameda County Library through the usage of hosted events.

Planned events include

- Cooking Nights
- Virtual Tours with Additional Historical Context Provided by a Docent
- Historical Trivia Nights
- An Evening With...Colonial Williamsburg TV viewing party

Pros and Cons

Pro

- Unique look at American history
- Connection with one of the top historical preservation destinations in the country
- Several creative activities to be drawn from the resources included from the Virtual Williamsburg

Con

- Website resources being seen as 'too simplistic'
- Current discomfort with the American colonial era

Conclusion

Students should be able to have fun with learning history in a way that brings history to life in an interactive fashion. This digital storytelling program should serve as a community outreach for students of the Dublin Community to meet their needs.

References

Dogan, B. (n.d.). *What is digital storytelling?*. Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling. https://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/page.cfm?id=27&cid=27

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Goek, S. S. (2018, May 16). *Keeping up with... digital storytelling*. Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). https://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/keeping_up_with/storytelling