



mysty

# The Possible Application of Digital Storytelling in Schools



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## About the project

The MYSTY - MyStory: Digital Storytelling Toolbox for Diversity Training in Schools project provides tools for teachers to share and embed innovative teaching practice to enhance awareness of cultural diversity. At the same time it increases pupils' cultural awareness and expression and enhance their social and civic competences. MYSTY also supports teachers' and pupils' digital competences. MYSTY involves the collection, the editing and the uploading of digital stories to the MYSTY Digital Storytelling Toolbox website. These stories focus on 'food', 'family' and 'festival' and act as a platform for diversity awareness and digital upskilling.

Our international project includes 8 organizations from four EU countries: Austria, UK, Hungary and Italy. One of MSYTY's main aims is the enhancement of schools' cultural activity, raising (inter)cultural awareness and the introduction of the thinking about diversity. And our main tools are digital stories, the methods and techniques of digital storytelling.

MYSTY is a two-years-long project with the idea of giving children complex tools and encourage them to tell us their stories about food, family and festivals. Our goal is to give them (and their teachers, youth workers) a tool, and develop training materials which will help them achieving greater competence in cultural and intercultural awareness, civics, digital upscaling and in the field of critical thinking. We are also developing course materials, hand-to-hand with our pupils to help disadvantaged children telling their stories too.

The current context of rapid migration into Europe associated with the international tensions, have revealed growing distances between different cultures and communities, including in educational setting, and involving intolerant attitudes and behaviours. In order to help children and young people become responsible, open-minded members of our diverse society the MYSTY Project provides a means for teachers to share and embed innovative teaching practice to enhance awareness of cultural diversity. The Paris Declaration 2015, acknowledges the major role of education in promoting inclusion and ownership of Europe's fundamental values and digital storytelling is a simple yet very effective means of fostering diversity awareness and intercultural competencies in both pupils and teachers. Using digital storytelling in peer to peer learning scenarios in the classroom enables students and teachers to engage with politically current and pressing issues in ways that are engaging and inclusive, whilst also dynamic and instructional.

## MYSTY in different contexts

Everyone has a story to tell and telling them across locations enables an understanding of the complex interplay of commonality and difference. MYSTY has shown how the method of digital storytelling has enabled young people to voice personal stories that would not be articulated otherwise. It has also allowed teachers to get to know their pupils through the sharing of narratives not usually aired in the classroom.

Upskilling students and teachers by supportive digital and creative education techniques and allowing a sharing space means that the MYSTY method can be used elsewhere, with different participants. With this in mind, the University of Gloucestershire is now working on a project involving local armed service veterans on a digital storytelling project called 'Across the Ages'. In collaboration with Age UK (Gloucestershire) students will be working with the veterans over a period of 2 years, to produce 3-5-minute audio-visual stories that will be archived on a dedicated website. The veterans will tell and records stories about their time in service and their life after service. The aim of the project is to offer a model of life-long learning and opportunity for the veterans, building their self-esteem and giving them a creative platform where the opportunity for sharing memories and personal experiences can be facilitated.

Digital storytelling allows personal stories to be shared, it offers a glimpse into the lives of others and it allows those whose voices may never be heard otherwise, to be the narrators of their own stories. It is a powerful tool for use in education, therapy and in social care.

*Abigail Gardner  
University of Gloucestershire*

At St Edwards School we have been working to create Digital Stories with 12-14 year old school pupils in Cheltenham, UK.

From the outset the project has had a strong extra-curricular theme, the staff working on the stories have been Humanities, ICT and Art specialists so we have incorporated DS work into the fabric of our lessons.

The outcomes support the idea that DS has a wide range of applications. The brief was to create stories that would investigate Diversity around the themes of Family, Food and Festivals. Many children interpreted this brief very loosely and created stories that were intensely personal about life challenges, holidays, family and friendship. Key issues that emerged from the stories and the pupils themselves were;

- The younger pupils were the most honest and created the least contrived and most revealing stories. At times they were too personal and some have been withdrawn.
- The 14 year olds were very concerned about how the stories would be presented to their peers and the most self-conscious about the use of their voices.
- The lowest ability pupils gained a huge amount from the project and engaged with it in the most enthusiasm due to the low written content. This allowed them to compete on a more level playing field with their more able peers. Many of their stories were particularly dramatic and entertaining. We feel that DS are a very learning valuable tool for children with Special Educational Needs and could be widely used as a non-written medium for engaging these children through Learning Support in the education system.
- Some pupils told personal stories about overcoming challenges such as grief and adoption. They were able to reflect on these issues and make decisions with their parents about what to share and what to keep private. DS would have a very useful application in the wider fields of pupil counselling, safeguarding and as a discussion point for grief/trauma/anxiety/stress/self esteem building and general psychological support. In a more private forum DS could have enormous benefit to a generation of young people who seem increasingly troubled.

*Lorna Lythgoe*  
*St Edwards School*

# HOW TO EMBED DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN DIFFERENT SCHOOL SETTINGS TO ENHANCE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES?

## DURING LESSONS

## Family and festival stories

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

11-13

**Time:**

1-2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

History (Yr 7&8)

**Topic:**

Sharing ideas and stories of family festivals including many with historical roots eg Bonfire Night.

**Curriculum:**

- Family identity and heritage.
- The tradition of storytelling through the ages.
- The impact of technology (photography, newspapers and the internet) on storytelling.
- Stories can be fact or fiction.
- Sharing ideas, application of language, communication.

**Circumstances:**

Hand written or word processed.

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

MYSTY

School newsletter



## Examining Testimony from the Holocaust

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

13-14

**Time:**

6 lessons

**Subject(s):**

History (Yr 9)

**Topic:**

- Examining the history of anti-Semitism.
- Studying the holocaust through the story of Anne Frank, Oscar Schindler and other witnesses.
- Looking for patterns in world events that lead to episodes of persecution.
- Examining the events in Germany in the 1920's that led to the rise of Hitler.
- The descent to genocide.

**Curriculum:**

Witness testimonies.

The Holocaust

**Circumstances:**

Written work, film, use of PowerPoint, discussion, group work.

We teach the Holocaust at this stage as Year 9 have the emotional maturity to fully understand the concept. We also believe it is essential that all students study this topic. 60% of students will not take History at GCSE.

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

MYSTY

Will inform parents of task and the importance of witness testimonies

## Capturing a story

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

11-13

**Time:**

3 lessons for initial stories.

4 lessons editing.

**Subject(s):**

ICT

**Topic:**

Digital stories

**Curriculum:**

Working with new media, exchanging ideas.

**Circumstances:**

Word processed. Verbal sharing of stories and ideas. Video editing.

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

MYSTY

## A memorial to holocaust victims

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

13-14

**Time:**

1 lesson and homework

**Subject(s):**

Art

**Topic:**

Telling the story of the Holocaust through a piece of artwork or alternatively through poetry

**Curriculum:**

Holocaust memorials to make a personal story of awareness of the Holocaust

**Circumstances:**

Poetry or creative drawing, podcasts to be displayed during Storytelling workshop

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

Share work on St Edward's newsletter or website

## Worship through stories

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

11-13

**Time:**

1-2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

RS

**Topic:**

- Storytelling linked to human evolution, cave paintings.
- Shared by all cultures, aboriginal journey sticks, sand, art and dance.
- African and German folk stories.
- Jesus Christ as storyteller.
- Children tell the nativity story in a circle.

**Curriculum:**

Awareness of the spiritual significance of storytelling. Storytelling and its role within worship in different cultures

**Circumstances:**

Using PowerPoint images and group discussion. Sharing a well-known story in a circle (the Nativity). Discussing personal memories of nativity plays

Goal: preparing a story bank of individual stories about Christmas and other festivals.

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

MYSTY

St Edward's news letter

## Diversity lessons after summer exams

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

11-16

**Time:**

Summer half term after exams

**Subject(s):**

Music, Drama, Art, English, ICT, Tech, Science, RS, History, PSHE, Careers

**Topic:**

Celebrating cultural diversity during lessons after the Summer Exams

**Curriculum:**

Developing an appreciation of other cultures during a range of lessons

**Circumstances:**

Staff have indicated their interest in delivering lessons in their individual subjects with a diversity theme

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

website, local newspaper, social media

## The Development Gap

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

13-14

**Time:**

17 lessons

**Subject(s):**

Geography

**Topic:**

- Witnessing the stories of migrants and residents of Low Income Countries. Eg. Red Cross resource bank.
- Sharing class and teacher experiences of living, travelling and working in LIC's.
- Consequences of under development to include migration and a study of migration

**Curriculum:**

- GCSE level topic to be covered early to allow access to whole year group.
- Lessons on the Development Gap.
- Introducing the concept of development indicators and the causes and consequences of uneven development

**Circumstances:**

Varied work. PowerPoint aided discussion. Written answers. Interpretation of population pyramids. Group work. Presentations.

Covering topic early to allow access to the whole year group. 60% of Year 9 will not study Geography or GCSE.

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

St Edward's newsletter informing parents of aims of topic and link to MYSTY project.

## Spooky stories

**Country:**

Austria

**Age:**

11-12

**Time:**

6-8 lessons

**Subject(s):**

English

**Topic:**

Spooky stories

**Curriculum:**

language improvement, grammar (describing settings and story backgrounds), creating an atmosphere)

**Circumstances:**

see link

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

see: [http://eep.at/?page\\_id=2490](http://eep.at/?page_id=2490)

## Christmas Stories

**Country:**

Austria

**Age:**

12-13

**Time:**

2-3 lessons

**Subject(s):**

English

**Topic:**

Christmas Stories

**Curriculum:**

writing stories with a moral message of tolerance, acceptance, generosity etc.

**Circumstances:**

see link

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

see: [http://readingiscool.xyz/rc/?page\\_id=380](http://readingiscool.xyz/rc/?page_id=380)



## Personification stories

**Country:**

Austria

**Age:**

14-15

**Time:**

2-3 lessons

**Subject(s):**

English

**Topic:**

Personification stories

**Curriculum:**

changing perspective, narrative writing

**Circumstances:**

see link

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

see: [http://epep.at/?page\\_id=3841](http://epep.at/?page_id=3841)

## Immigration and the Media

**Country:**

Austria

**Age:**

17-18

**Time:**

6x 90min

**Subject(s):**

History

**Topic:**

Immigration and the Media

**Curriculum:**

Language improvement, working with new media, interviewing

**Circumstances:**

see link

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

[http://www.schule-mehrsprachig.at/index.php?id=55&no\\_cache=1](http://www.schule-mehrsprachig.at/index.php?id=55&no_cache=1)

## My grandparents/ great grandparents told me

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

14-18

**Time:**

4 lessons

**Subject(s):**

History

**Topic:**

family stories

**Curriculum:**

20th century history

- laws and their effects on families,
- role of religions,
- geographical state and effects of purveyance

**Circumstances:**

- workshop, research, report
- at home and at school

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

other class, parents

## Tale of the Moon and Sun

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

8-12

**Time:**

2-3 lessons

**Subject(s):**

Literature and Hungarian grammar

**Topic:**

tales of peoples

**Curriculum:**

elaborate tales

- develop cultural awareness
- develop reading

**Circumstances:**

group work or individually

- drafting
- drama play – still pictures

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

in grades, among classes

## Our Christmas

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

10-14

**Time:**

2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

ethics

**Topic:**

customs

**Curriculum:**

family celebrations

- comparing families with different backgrounds
- accepting different cultures and traditions

**Circumstances:**

individual work

- mind map
- peer interview

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

in class, school website

## My parents' wedding

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

10-14

**Time:**

2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

ethics

**Topic:**

festive occasions

**Curriculum:**

specialty of nationalities

- developing critical thinking
- developing cultural awareness

**Circumstances:**

individual work, workshop, discussion, debate

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

in class, school website

## We dance to this

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

12-16

**Time:**

2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

music

**Topic:**

folk songs, dances

**Curriculum:**

music of nationalities

**Circumstances:**

group work

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

at school occasions

## My family

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

10-16

**Time:**

2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

lesson with the form teacher

**Topic:**

introducing family and identity

**Curriculum:**

building community

**Circumstances:**

individual work

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

in class



## We are similar

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

10-18

**Time:**

2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

lesson with the form teacher

**Topic:**

peer identity

**Curriculum:**

building community

**Circumstances:**

group work

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

other classes, class website

**Country:**

Italy

**Age:**

14-16

**Time:**

10 lessons (1 hour per lesson)

**Subject(s):**

Law, English, Economy, Philosophy

**Topic:**

Cultural awareness

**Curriculum:**

- Developing linguistic skills
- Introducing notions about laws on immigration
- Establishing link with other cultures
- Eliciting debate and discussion
- Understanding a narrative digital text

**Circumstances:**

- Research
- activity
- Workshops
- Peer education
- Case study
- Mind maps

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

- videos
- Brochures
- PP
- Meetings, debates and conferences

## Tell me what you eat

**Country:**

Italy

**Age:**

14-16

**Time:**

6 lessons (1 hour per lesson)

**Subject(s):**

History, Economy, English, Geography, Sociology

**Topic:**

Food and culture

**Curriculum:**

- Developing linguistic skills
- Introducing notions about laws on food production
- Stressing the link among food, culture, geography and religion
- Enhancing cultural awareness
- Understanding a narrative digital text

**Circumstances:**

- Research activity
- Workshops
- Peer education
- Mind maps

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

- Videos
- Brochures
- Pp
- Meetings, debates and conferences

## The pink line

**Country:**

Italy

**Age:**

14-16

**Time:**

8 lessons (1 hour per lesson)

**Subject(s):**

Law, Economy, English, Philosophy, History, Sociology, Religion

**Topic:**

Women and the family

**Curriculum:**

- Developing linguistic skills
- Introducing notions about family rights
- Comparing family in different cultures
- Understanding a narrative digital text

**Circumstances:**

- Research activity
- Workshops
- Peer education
- Case study
- Mind maps

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

- Making videos
- Brochures
- PP
- Meetings, debates and conferences

## Someone to watch over me

**Country:**

Italy

**Age:**

16-18

**Time:**

8 lessons (1 hour per lesson)

**Subject(s):**

Religion

Art

History

Law

Sociology

**Topic:**

Religion through art

**Curriculum:**

- Improving linguistic skills
- Developing critical skills
- Eliciting debate and discussion
- Enhancing cultural awareness
- Understanding a narrative digital text

**Circumstances:**

- Research activity
- Workshops
- Peer education
- Mind maps

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

- Making videos
- Brochures
- PP
- Meetings, debates and conferences

## DURING OUT OF CLASS ACTIVITIES

## DTS Workshop

**Country:**

United Kingdom

**Age:**

Key Stage 3&4 (11-16)

**Time:**

1 day

**Subject(s):**

ICT, Geography, History, English, Drama

**Topic:**

Digital Storytelling Workshop

**Curriculum:**

As part of their Humanities and ICT work pupils will display and/ or discuss digital stories that they have created on a range of topics

**Circumstances:**

Primary schools to participate in a workshop of digital storytelling skills

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

website, local newspaper, social media

## Do you have a story? Tell me!

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

10-18

**Time:**

12 lessons

**Subject(s):**

clubs

**Topic:**

own stories

„Who am I?“

„My favorites“

**Curriculum:**

- individual
- story circle
- writing
- talking
- interview

**Circumstances:**

- individual
- story circle
- writing
- talking
- interview

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

school occasions, among parents, local communities; local teachers and students



## Celebrate!

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

8-14

**Time:**

1-1 lesson

**Subject(s):**

holidays in class

**Topic:**

holidays of the year

**Curriculum:**

**Circumstances:**

group work

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

parents

## Festive menu

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

8-14

**Time:**

4 lessons

**Subject(s):**

family day

**Topic:**

food and dishes

**Curriculum:**

**Circumstances:**

individual / family work

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

school, class

## National holiday

**Country:**

Hungary

**Age:**

8-14

**Time:**

2 lessons

**Subject(s):**

project

**Topic:**

holidays

**Curriculum:**

**Circumstances:**

group work

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

school

## Life is a celebration

**Country:**

Italy

**Age:**

14-16

**Time:**

6 lessons (2 hours per lesson)

**Subject(s):**

English, History, Religion

**Topic:**

Festivals

**Curriculum:**

- Improving linguistic skills
- Developing critical skills
- Eliciting debate and discussion
- Enhancing cultural awareness
- Comparing and accepting different traditions

**Circumstances:**

- Interviews;
- Territorial mapping;
- Guided tours

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

- Making videos
- Brochures
- Pp
- Meetings, debates and conferences

## Let's play!

**Country:**

Italy

**Age:**

14-16

**Time:**

6 lessons (2 hours per lesson)

**Subject(s):**

Law, PE, English, Sociology

**Topic:**

Recreational activities and sports

**Curriculum:**

- Improving linguistic skills
- Developing critical skills
- Eliciting debate and discussion
- Enhancing cultural awareness

**Circumstances:**

- Interviews;
- Territorial mapping;
- Guided tours

**Publicity, form of sharing:**

- Making videos
- Brochures
- PP
- Meetings, debates and conferences