Where is the forward button?

Writing for digital media in secondary education

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iTell is a digital storytelling project, which has been conceptualised within the framework of the National Year of Reading 2012. It aims to promote reading and literacy in a school context while contributing to the wider national initiative.

iTell has been envisaged as an opportunity to explore reading and writing in our increasingly technological environment. The project aims to explore areas where different literacies meet and blend, hence a focus on issues of transliteracy. The project will also contribute to discussions about the value of technology in learning, which has been often promoted or disputed with little research-based evidence.

iTell has been developed at the Learning Resource Centre at St Vincent’s College, Potts Point. The project involves work with students during a period of two terms. Students will explore techniques of digital storytelling and make their digital stories as a response to fictional and historical texts. The project will have a significant research component aiming to look into issues of transliteracy, students’ engagement and any impact of the project on students’ learning. The project has been developed within a framework of action research. Data-gathering and analysis will combine a range of qualitative and quantitative methods.

iTell will be rolled out during 2012. Data-analysis and publication of results will continue in 2013.
**iTell Vanilla**

Basic project for all schools- participants

**AIMS**
- To promote students’ engagement with a range of oral and written, historical and fictional texts in a variety of genres and media formats
- To promote transliteracy
- To contribute to students’ individual learning
- To promote an investigative and creative learning environment
- To critically evaluate any impact of the project.

**COMPONENTS**
- Students’ interactions with texts & digital tools
- Development of digital stories by students based on their reading
- Research into students’ engagement with different media and an evaluation of any impact of the project on students’ skills and knowledge.

**iTell Strawberry**

Schools can add their own ‘flavour’ to the project.

At SVC the project will be used as an opportunity to invigorate discussions about writing for new media, required skills and roles of a high school in students’ preparation for living and working in increasingly digital environments.
Methodology

Framework of action research.

Research aims – to investigate:

• any development of students’ transliteracy skills during the project
• students’ engagement with text and learning during the project
• any effect of the project on students’ literacy skills.

Transliteracy is ‘the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks’ (Thomas et al, 2007). It is concerned ‘with mapping meaning across different media and not about developing particular literacies about various media’ (Ipri, 2010, 532).

Qualitative and quantitative data-gathering methods

• Surveys of students and parents/caregivers
• Ethnographic data gathering methods (observation, informal interviews and feedback from students and parents, all recorded in notes)
• Work samples
• School reports
• Feedback from teachers.
Are we there yet?
Still the first term of working with stories and experimenting with techniques.

Ice breaker: automatic writing

You can’t say anything at all.
You can’t laugh.
You can’t scream.
You can’t cry. The world has changed forever.
And somehow, you’re not sure if that’s a bad thing, or if maybe, just maybe, the world finally woke up.

ear-splitting
blaring music
loud

There once was a cupcake who was being excluded.
This cupcake only wanted to fit in. This cupcake unlike all the other cupcakes had no sprinkles. The other cupcakes thought it would be fun to tease this cupcake; they called him mean names, play pranks on him all the time.

This cupcake was sad to the point this cupcake
immanently volunteered to be eaten (confined to a
slinky). To live in a slinky.

Storyboards
That's all from us, aaDH!