

MAISA and the REMC Association of Michigan Best Practices in Technology Integration Plan

Title: Photo Stories and Class Newsletters

Subject(s): English Language Arts and Technology

Intended Grade Level(s): 5th

Description:

The students, divided into teams, do photo stories for the Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten classes and for the school as a whole, and class newsletters for their own classes. They research events or classrooms to cover, decide what kind of photos they want to take to illustrate their stories/newsletters, take the photos, manipulate the images as necessary and lay them out with appropriate text in a page layout program.

Curriculum Benchmarks:

[MI.ELA.3.LE.3](#). Read fluently, speak confidently, and listen and interact appropriately in situations, such as in working in cooperative groups, presenting reports and interviewing family and friends.

[MI.ELA.1.LE.3](#). Use a variety of models and strategies to construct meaning when composing text.

[MI.ELA.6.LE.1](#). Practice using elements of effective communication to enhance their relationships in their school and communities.

[MI.ELA.6.EE.2](#) Experiment with the various voices they use when they speak and write for different purposes and audiences.

[MI.ELA.6.EE.3](#) Explore through multimedia, authors' power to persuade, inform, entertain, enlighten, or move audiences through voice.

MI.ELA.8.LE.1. Identify and use writing mechanics that enhance and clarify understanding, such as quotation marks, commas, semicolons, grammatical constructions, and grammatical conventional constructions, spellings,ect.

MI.ELA.8.LE.5. Describe and use elements of informative texts, such as captions for illustrations, graphs, charts, chapter headings, and organizational frameworks for specialized reference texts (e.g., atlases, encyclopedias, indexes, etc.)

MI.ELA.8.LE.3. Create text to inform others about school/community issues and problems.

MI.T.4.LE.2. Use information technologies as tools for creative self expression.

MI.T.4.LE.3 Design,implement, evaluate a strategy for using technology to communicate information.

MI.T.5.LE.5 Demonstrate the ability to complete a decision making process using appropriate technology.

Materials/Hardware/Software:

- 1 Computers, more if possible to allow more than one team to work at a time. Power Macintosh preferred, especially if using a page layout program. Considerable RAM (min. 16 if using virtual memory) and the speed of these machines makes the project easier to do.
- 1 Digital camera. There are several brands and the quality and features are continuing to improve while the price drops. The Sony Mavica, MVC-FD7, was the camera used for this project because of the quality of features and because it uses a floppy disk, making it easy for the students to utilize the photos. It saves the photos in jpeg, a format easily placed in PageMaker.
- 1 Ink jet printer. An Epson 600 or 800 are good choices for quality, speed and cost.
- 1 Page layout program (per computer) that allows insertion and manipulation of photos/text. Although Microsoft Works and

other similar programs allow the insertion of photos within text, Adobe PageMaker or Quark Express allows greater flexibility. They are more complicated programs.

- 1 Image manipulation software. It usually comes with the digital camera. This is useful software but may not be needed if using a page layout program that allows cropping and resizing and if the students can keep the quality of their photos good enough.

Color Ink jet cartridges (unless B&W is chosen)

Paper

- 1 e-Mate, optional. If you have one, students can use it to record interviews or take notes.

Activities/Procedures:

1. Divide the class into teams of 2-5 students, depending on how many computers are available to work on, and how the project is organized. Teams of 2 works the best when it can be done as there is less down time and more work for each student. Teams of 4 are also workable. In terms of organization, if a lab is used, then all teams can work at once; if a computer in a classroom is used, the teams need to be rotated through their time on the computer. For the purpose of this lesson plan, the students are in a lab setting.
2. Hand out worksheets to the students to guide them through the decision making process. The following are examples:

Photo Stories:

- Pick a topic to illustrate and tell a story about.
- Decide what kind of photos are needed to tell this story.
- Schedule a time and place to take these photos. This may mean contacting another teacher and arranging a time suitable for all involved.

Newsletters:

- Pick a name for the newsletter.
- Select topics. Ideas might include:
 - student sports stories
 - special class projects or activities

riddle of the week
student profiles

- Decide who is going to do what stories and schedule times to gather the information.
 - Decide what photos, if any, could be used to illustrate a story.
 - Decide who does what. For example, who takes photos, does an interview, types in material, lays out the newsletter.
3. Demonstrate how to use the digital camera. Include suggestions such as:
 - Keep window light or sunlight behind the photographer
 - Hold the camera steady
 - Try to get close ups of 1-3 people instead of large groups
 - Try to capture kids doing something, avoid static shots.
 - Watch for “junk” in front, behind or to the side of the subject that will distract from the photo
 4. Let the students gather information, and take photos. If an e-Mate is available, they should use it to take notes, conduct interviews, etc.
 5. Demonstrate PageMaker (or other layout program) to the students.
 6. After they have gathered their material and photos, they can start laying out their newspaper. They will need help remembering how to set up columns, work with text blocks, headlines and placing photos. For the photo stories, they will need help in cropping and resizing the photos. They should lay out the photos so that they are interesting, tell a story, and are graphically pleasing. They should add text, like captions, headlines, and credits, where necessary.
 7. After it's “done”, have them print it out and go over the newsletter again, looking for errors, but also ways they could improve the arrangement of graphics and text for appearance and effectiveness.
 8. Print a final hard copy and photocopy and distribute it.

Assessment/Evaluation:

One of the purposes of this project is to promote teamwork, so the team can be evaluated on how well they are working together with the following rubric:

1= Excellent & outstanding. Your entire group was on task the entire time and getting along. Decision making was done as an entire group.

2= Above average. Most (at least 3 out of 4-5 members) of your group were working hard, and on task most of the time. Most of your group was getting along.

3= Satisfactory. Some (at least 2 members) of your group were working hard, and on task some of the time. Some of your group members were getting along. There is room for your group to improve.

4= Unsatisfactory. One member of your group was working hard. The remainder of the group was unfocused, talking, arguing, and not working. Your group **MUST** improve!

The following check list rubric could be filled out by students and/or teachers:

Photo stories:

1. The photos told a story.
2. The captions and headlines added information and interest to the story.
3. The layout of the photos and text contributed to the clarity, information, and interest of the photo story.
4. The story was interesting.
5. The work was checked and corrected.
6. The photos were cropped or resized, or otherwise manipulated as necessary.
7. The story was researched and the facts correct.
8. The students worked enthusiastically on the project.
9. All requirements of the project were completed on time.
10. The students were proud of their project.

Class Newsletters:

1. The newsletter contained several different stories, including ones requiring interviews.
2. The newsletter was illustrated with graphics, captions and headlines that added information and interest to the story.
3. The layout of the text and graphics contributed to the clarity, information, and interest of the newsletter.
4. The newsletter was interesting.
5. The work was checked and corrected.
6. The graphics were cropped or resized, or otherwise manipulated as necessary.
7. The stories in the newsletter were researched and the facts correct.
8. The students worked enthusiastically on the project.
9. All requirements of the project were completed on time.
10. The students were proud of their project.

Follow-up Activities:

If the photo stories are done throughout the year, the students could use the photos taken to compile a yearbook. They would use the same software and hardware. This activity would reinforce what they had learned doing the lessons.

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