

Digital Storytelling in a Place-Based Composition Course

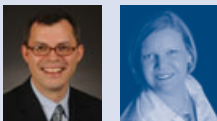
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Digital storytelling about place extends the meaning-making modes available to composition students and provides robust opportunities for personal expression and rigorous learning.

“It’s not down on any map; true places never are.”

—Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*

Although the study of place in the fields of composition and education has a long and compelling history, the concept has taken on increased importance in today’s digital landscape. As perceptions of virtual and “true” places shift and perceived distances between places shrink, we’re compelled to discover how and which places shape who we are. Because of the potential power to leverage student choice, personal experience, and reflections on identity *and* to meet the curricular and assessment demands of the current educational policy, we designed a 10th-grade composition course around the concept of place. In this case study, we describe how one high school student—Riley (a pseudonym)—engaged with



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the concept of place throughout a trimester-long course in which place was centralized.

Drawing on studies of digital composition from new literacies research, we use a multimodal lens to analyze, specifically, Riley’s culminating project for this course: a digital story entitled “Sigh, Realize, Family, Home.” Based on analyses of Riley’s multimodal compositions over the trimester, her reflections on her composing processes, and an end-of-trimester interview, we argue that Riley’s thinking and writing about place mediated the creative and critical thinking evidenced by her digital story. This argument has implications for the meditational role of new literacy practices as they promote learning that “counts” both inside and outside formal learning environments.

Multimodality in New Literacies Research

Recent research on the literacy practices in which adolescents engage has demonstrated the multimodal essence of students’ out-of-school literacy practices (Alvermann & McLean, 2007). Scholars have been equally engrossed in the potential of multimodality—the combination of different modes (e.g., the visual mode and the linguistic mode)—to advance our understanding of how adolescents create meanings in both formal and informal learning environments (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005). Mills (2010a) cites, for

example, 49 studies that reference “the multimodal nature of new literacies” (p. 255) in her review of 90 peer-reviewed articles published between 1999 and 2009, which examines the “digital turn” in new literacy studies. Studies of adolescents’ engagement in massive multiplayer online video games (Gee, 2003; Steinkuehler, 2006, 2010), reading and writing instant messages (Lewis & Fabos, 2005), and digital video composing (Miller, 2007, 2010) make up just a surface-level survey of some of the most compelling theoretical and empirical investigations of adolescents’ multimodal literacy practices in the last decade. Not only do the aforementioned studies highlight the creativity and skill with which adolescents engage and create new texts, but they also demonstrate how these multimodal “literacies call us to generate and communicate meanings and to invite others to make meaning from our text in turn” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007, p. 4).

Although not all adolescents engage in such practices with fluency and/or frequency (Mills, 2010b), and much of this research has focused on students’ engagement in these activities outside the classroom (Hull and Schultz, 2002), researchers have documented the potential of digital and multimodal literacy practices to enhance—in fact, to reinvent—current curricula in diverse classroom contexts (Chun, 2012; Jewitt, 2008; Mills, 2010a; Turner, 2011). Indeed, given the demands of the 21st century, scholars have argued that schools have the obligation to prepare students to develop competencies in new literacies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Mills, 2010b), including the ability to recast meanings across sign systems (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Siegel, 1995) in order to “promote flexible ways of knowing through literacy practices that work to foster such epistemologies” (Lewis & Fabos, 2005, p. 476). This study examines how one student, Riley, leveraged her multiple ways of knowing to expand the meaning-making potential of her extended composition about place.

Place in the ELA Classroom

Recent classroom-based studies of place have highlighted useful ways in which the concept can be used

Digital storytelling mediates students’ learning of traditional literacy skills.

as a motif around which to design English language arts (ELA) instruction to promote students’ (a) personal writing, (b) reflections on relationships, and (c) use of democratic virtues (Jacobs, 2011); and to develop the “habits of mind necessary to being a critical, creative, [and] engaged student” (Lundahl, 2011, p. 48). Esposito (2012) described how writing about place challenged her students to rethink the attitudes that people held toward particular places. The students in her place-based composition course demonstrated their understandings of how places were inextricably connected to the identities of persons and communities, and they used this knowledge to create multimodal public service announcements for authentic audiences in other communities in order to complicate widely held assumptions about urban and suburban places.

Although the aforementioned work highlights the powerful literacy learning opportunities generated by place-based and multimodal composition, and despite the inclusion of language in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that guides precisely this type of work (e.g., “Students in grades 9–10 write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences” [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3] and “use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing project, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically” [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.6]), the literature has not made the case for how such practices can help students and teachers engage in robust multimodal and individual literacy practices *and* meet the demands of standardized assessments that pervade classroom environments across the country. To undertake this investigation, we ground our study in a sociocultural perspective on new literacies (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007) to account for the multimodal tools (e.g., digital stories) that students used to mediate their understanding of the concept of place.

Narratives in the Digital Age

Digital storytelling provides students with multiple tools that they can use to mediate their thinking about concepts that are central to and extend beyond the curriculum. Not only does the multimodal nature of this tool afford adolescents the opportunity to express themselves and their understandings in nonredundant ways (Short & Kaufmann, 2000) that promote agency and the fostering of author identities (Hull

& Katz, 2006), but multimodal composition also engages students in authentic disciplinary practices. Students draft and revise; access, identify, and reproduce genres; and publish their work for authentic audiences (Curwood & Cowell, 2011). Recognizing such compositional capacities among students in out of school settings has the potential to improve engagement in traditional literacy contexts (Brass, 2008).

The learning opportunities related to the use of digital video composing (DVC) in formal educational settings has been documented by Suzanne Miller and her colleagues in the New Literacies Group at the University at Buffalo (Miller & McVee, 2012). Miller's (2010) research has demonstrated how DVC has helped learners explore and orchestrate meanings among print and nonprint literacies, participate in authentic literacy practices, acquire social capital related to the presentation and reception of their digital videos, and consider themselves as authors.

Literacy researchers working in school settings have also demonstrated how digital storytelling mediates students' learning of traditional literacy skills including decoding, comprehending, and engaging in the writing process (Skinner & Hagood, 2008) as they "allow the writer to experience the power of personal expression" (Bull & Kajder, 2004, p. 48). Our project builds on this previous work to examine how one student leveraged the affordances of the modes between which she was composing to produce a multilayered narrative about place that showed her capacity to engage in both traditional and new literacy practices. Like Hull and Nelson (2005), we recognize that "the visual nature of digital stories invites authors to situate themselves in places" (p. 233). This realization encourages us to better understand the possibilities for literacies learning that are afforded by the coupling of digital storytelling and place-based composition instruction.

Methods

Instructional Context

Brandie (second author) taught in a midsize county high school in rural Appalachia. The school was identified as a persistently low achieving institution; on standardized assessments, it was ranked in the lowest-performing 5% of all high schools in the state. Most of the students in the high school identified as "white," and 62% of the students qualified for free or reduced-price lunches. Almost 10% of the students in the high


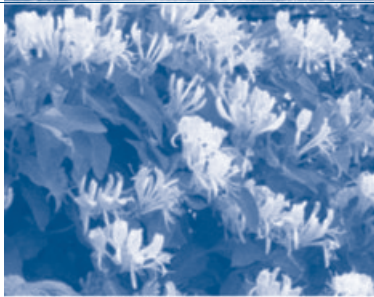

school qualified for special education services. To accommodate the needs of these students, a special education resource teacher worked closely with Brandie and approximately one out of every four of Brandie's students during the year.

Throughout the 12-week trimester, students read a range of texts that included Lee Smith's *Fair and Tender Ladies* and E.B. White's "Once More to the Lake." Students used George Ella Lyon's poem "Where I'm From" as a mentor text to create their own autobiographical poems, which were then combined during a choral reading activity later in the year. Students also read "Raised by Women" and "Inventory" by Kelly Norman Ellis. These texts and related activities and events provided students with different doorways to the same place that they were considering in their own work. Students were able to hear how established writers such as Lyon and Smith weaved their concepts of identity seamlessly throughout their descriptions of places and elevated the importance of places in shaping the identities featured in their work. Students experimented with writing like these authors, which promoted their capacities to see the places they were writing about from newly imagined perspectives.

Students completed two written compositions during the first two weeks of the trimester (The Letter from the Unfamiliar World assignment [Humble & Humble, 1999] and the 15-sentence paragraph assignment [A. Movitz, personal communication, May 17, 2011]), whose contents led many students to realize the particular places they would consider in their writing. The Letter from the Unfamiliar World assignment included the following directions:

Write a letter addressed to your "reader" describing an experience that has had a strong impact on you. Use Etty Hillesum's letter [from *An Interrupted Life: The Diaries of Etty Hillesum*] as a model. Convey the nature of your response, rather than categorizing it. The reader should FEEL and not just KNOW the impact of the experience on you.





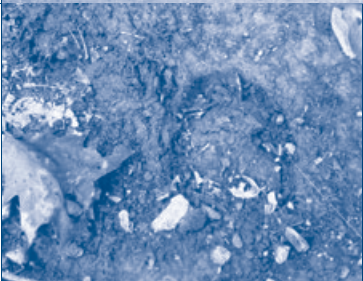

The 15-sentence paragraph assignment used a template to guide students' writing. For example, each sentence required the use of a literary device, specific syntactical structures, and other guidelines for linguistic choices. Students used this formula to begin crafting the compositions that would become, for Riley, the culminating project for the course: the digital story.

#	Image	Utterance	Time Lapse	Description	Code
1		Deep down a long, dusty dirt road. Trees swinging overhead like a hundred arms reaching out. . .		<i>Color image of a dirt path leading into a forest. Trees shade the path, along which wild grasses grow.</i>	Story Element: Setting Visual Composition: Metaphor
2		The smell of honeysuckle in the breeze brings me to peace.		<i>Color image of a patch of wild, yellow honeysuckle.</i>	Story Element: Setting
3		I walk over with a long stride to a big oak tree, and place my hand on the bumpy bark. It feels as if I am touching the rough callouses on my dad's hard working hands.		<i>Color image of Riley in a field placing her hand on tree bark. Her hand is pressed firmly against the rough bark as she looks pensively at the tree</i>	Story Element: Initiating Event Visual Composition: Space

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FIGURE 1 Riley's DST: "Sigh, Realize, Family, Home"

7		I hear slight horse whinnies in the background, which brings a smile to my face.	0:45–0:49	<i>Color image of two bay horses grazing in a wild-looking field. Trees ring the horizon behind them.</i>	Visual Composition: Space
8		Then, I see a robin, he had heard my sigh. Looks...	0:50–0:54	<i>Color image of a bright red-breasted robin sitting in grass.</i>	Story Element: Attempt
9		then soars.	0:55–0:57	<i>Color image of a flying robin.</i>	Story Element: Attempt
10		I glance to my left as I smell the fresh cut hay, which is a cologne for the luscious fields.	1:00–1:05	<i>Color image of a large stand of oak trees at the end of a field. Near the corner of the pane, a lone hay bale sits in the grass.</i>	
11		I admire the things around me: the old oak tree, hoof prints in the mud.	1:07–1:11	<i>Color image of a lone hoof print in soft brown mud, surrounded by leaves.</i>	
12		The carvings in the bark of the trees. They all hold so many memories.	1:12–1:16	<i>Black and white image of a beech tree with "I love you" carved in the bark.</i>	Visual Composition: Color

(continued)

Institution’s exhibition *Journey Stories*, and at the Student Technology Leadership Program state-level competition.

Data Sources and Analysis

The primary data source for this study was Riley’s DST, “Sigh, Realize, Family, Home.” We conducted a multimodal analysis of Riley’s DST with “a desire to acknowledge the permeable boundaries among sign systems in the contemporary semiotic landscape” (Siegel & Panofsky, 2009, p. 99). That is, we read across the ways in which Riley combined both linguistic and visual signs to construct meaning in her DST (see Figure 1). To accomplish this, we examined the DST in terms of the following concepts and their corresponding inquiry questions: (a) story elements (How does language create meaning?) and (b) visual composition (How do visual elements embody meaning and combine with story elements to create new meanings?). We drew on the following secondary data sources to triangulate our findings from the multimodal analysis: Riley’s response to the Letter from the Unfamiliar World assignment, her written reflections on the unit, and her end-of-trimester interview with James.

Composing Place Across Sign Systems

Researchers have demonstrated how students who recast their interpretations of texts across modes expand their perspectives and extend the meaning-making potential of texts (Berghoff, Egawa, Harste, & Hoonan, 2000; Siegel, 1995; Zoss, 2009). The multimodal nature of the DST provided Riley with the interpretive space to engage in such meaning making. We’ve identified 16 frames in Riley’s DST that illustrate how she leveraged meaning across sign systems to develop a compelling narrative about place, which explores such robust concepts as identity, home, and symbolism. As Riley noted in her interview response to a question that asked her why she selected home as her place to explore throughout the unit: “I want people to know *I am country*” (Interview, 10/6/11). Riley’s equation of herself with a popular characterization of life in her rural hometown illustrated the complex identity work that was evoked by her reflection.

As we will demonstrate in our analysis, Riley’s DST leveraged the modal affordances of both the linguistic and visual semiotic systems to enhance her narrative composition in ways that couldn’t be

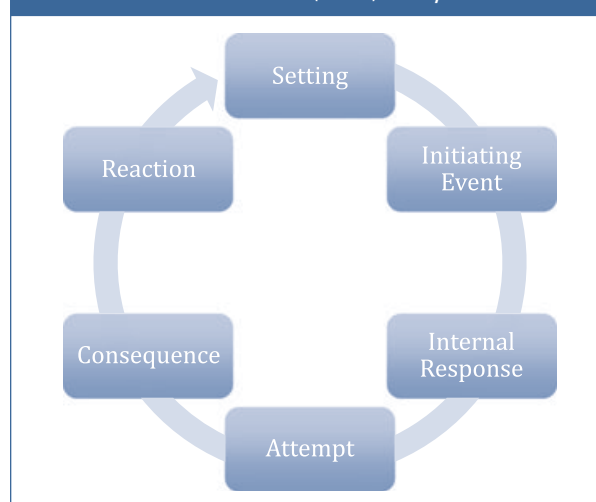
accomplished unimodally; that is, by using only the linguistic mode, for example. We argue that Riley combined linguistic and visual compositional elements to add layers of meaning to her narrative by introducing compelling relationships between the language and the images in her DST.

Story Elements

We identified story elements in Riley’s DST to determine the ways in which Riley used language in patterned, logical, and identifiable ways to produce particular meanings. We use the term *element* to connect Riley’s use of language with the systematic rhetorical devices used by storytellers in the oral and written traditions; that is, the *setting*, *initiating event*, *internal response*, *attempt*, *consequence*, and *reaction* that can be found as compositionally inherent to many stories across time and space (Stein & Glenn, 1979; see Figure 2).

Riley establishes the *setting* of her story over the first two frames of her DST: “Deep down a long, dusty dirt road. Trees swinging overhead like a hundred arms reaching out...The smell of honeysuckle in the breeze brings me to peace.” In the next line, we are introduced to the main character of the story and the natural elements that move and comfort the narrator (trees, honeysuckle, breeze). The *initiating event*, or problem that establishes the conflict in the story, arises in Frame 3, when the narrator connects her experiences in nature with her father: “I walk over with a long stride to a big oak tree, and place my hand on the bumpy bark. It feels as if I am touching the rough callouses on my dad’s hard working hands.” The physical contact with the tree sparks the

FIGURE 2 Stein & Glenn’s (1979) Story Elements



narrator's memory, which creates the tension in the story between nostalgia and an uncertain future.

In Frame 6, the reader learns how the narrator feels (*internal response*) about the initiating event, which led to a sequence of fond memories with her father: "I sigh, as I wish those days had never come to a standstill." The narrator *attempts* to address this internal response in Frame 8, in which she identifies with a robin who "had heard my sigh" and "then soars" into nature, where sensory images and details reveal the ways in which her memories are tied to the place described in the *setting*. The *consequence* of this soaring is revealed in Frame 14: "All of a sudden, I see the stunning red robin appear again. Only this time, he is not startled. He is perched proudly on a small, twig-like branch, admiring a small bundle of twigs and grass, encasing three chirping baby birds."

Our initial reading of the narrator's *attempt* at resolution was complicated by what seems to be the clear connection the narrator makes between the bird who takes care of its family and the narrator's father. We read this ambiguity as compelling evidence for Riley's capacity to develop "real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9–10.3). We can then read the soaring and returning bird as the narrator, who has escaped to nature, learned from what she found there, and returned to support her family. Alternatively, we can interpret the story with the narrator's father as the bird who has left the nest, only to return "proudly" and "not startled." (Frame 14). This reading was problematized later in the trimester when James asked Riley during her interview how she decided to include some of the elements in her DST, to which she replied:

When I think of home, I think of the log cabin I live in and the woods, 'cause it's pretty much all that surrounds us. It's nothing but woods. And that's where I ride my horses and that's where, that's where I get away from everybody and... 'cause I can talk to them and they don't talk back. They just listen. (Interview, 10/6/11)

Digital storytelling provided Riley with the opportunity to learn deeply about narrative composition.

Riley's identification of the vast natural environment surrounding her house as a place that she can escape to and sound off further supports our reading of the narrator as the soaring bird in the DST.

The final story element in Riley's DST involves the main character's *reaction* to the *consequence* that is the returning bird: "It reminds me of my own family, and how we used to be. I let a drawn out sigh, and realize...I am home" (Frames 15 & 16). Again, Riley flavors her story with Frost-like ambiguity—the reader is left to wonder whether the narrator's "sigh" is one of dismay or relief.

Visual Composition

Although it could be argued that the language of Riley's DST alone provides evidence for her learning to write in the narrative form, we devote this section of analysis to the elaboration, extension, and transformation of meaning afforded to her story by Riley's compositional choices as she constructed meaning in the visual mode. In this section, we point out three elements of visual composition that Riley used "to display information flexibly and dynamically" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9–10.6). The visual elements we recognize as adding new layers of meaning to Riley's story are metaphor, color, and space.

Metaphor. Frames 1, 4, 14, and 16 include visual metaphors that enhance the meaning of Riley's DST. In Frame 1, Riley draws on a familiar metaphor for storytelling: a long road. The viewer is invited on a story's journey; one's eye is drawn down the road to see where it might continue. Riley's choice to situate this road surrounded by nature is equally meaningful—the road/journey takes place in and through nature.

As the narrator begins to recount her memories with her father, Frame 6 introduces the viewer to a father figure in a manner that is visually compelling. The father's gesture as he leans down toward his daughter is mirrored by the "sturdy tree" whose massive branches arch over the pair as they sit in its shade. The mirroring of the tree and the father and the visible damage that has taken hold of the tree despite its healthy outward appearance suggest a relationship between the tree and the father that is not found in the story alone.

The metaphor of the father (or the narrator) as the bird is emphasized particularly by the sequencing of Frames 14 and 15. Immediately following the image of the bird in its nest with its young, we see an image of a family. Again, the father's body language and gesturing mirrors the bird in the nest in the immediately preceding frame. For example, both the

bird and the father are depicted above and to the right of the three other entities in Frames 14 and 15.

In the final frame of the DST, the viewer sees a house behind which the sun is setting or rising, which creates a large shadow in the foreground. The setting/rising sun also creates the effect of a darkened facade. The viewer is invited to consider the meaning of the sun as it could represent the past behind the narrator or the bright future ahead. In any event, Riley's choice added another layer of ambiguous meaning that can be said to characterize some of the most compelling stories that have been written.

Color. Riley also used black and white and color to extend meanings in her DST. In Frames 5, 6, 12, and 15, Riley deviates from her use of color images. In fact, in Frame 5, she blends both color and black and white to transform the meaning of the lines "After a long horseback ride through the never ending trails, sharing stories of his childhood." The circle of color can be interpreted as representing life, or the present time, because it envelops the father and daughter in Frame 5. As the narrator recalls the sharing of "stories of his childhood," we are invited to consider the use of black and white to represent the past. In the subsequent black and white frame, two crustless peanut butter and blackberry jelly sandwiches sit on a counter, uneaten, as the narrator sighs to say, "I wish those days had never come to a standstill."

The use of black and white to represent the past is further supported in Frame 12, when the narrator notes, "The carvings in the bark of the trees. They all hold so many memories." This compositional choice also serves to increase the contrast between the bark in the tree that is depicted and the carvings that have been engraved on the surface of the tree. In Frame 15, a black and white image of a family and the words "how we used to be" establish Riley's use of color to combine visual elements meaningfully.

Space. Riley's use of space throughout her visual composition proved to expand the meaning making that was available to her. Although we focus on only two frames that seem to demonstrate the use of space most profoundly, we found that these two compositional choices shaped the way we read many other frames in her DST. For example, as the narrator considers the similar ways in which the bark of the tree feels like the "rough callouses on my dad's hard working hands" in Frame 3, we see an image of Riley as she leans her hand against a tree, collapsing

the space between her and the symbol of her father. In the next frame, Riley sits quite close to her father, but there is now an identifiable distance between the two figures. In Frame 5, as the father and daughter figures turn back to the camera, the distance between them is emphasized by Riley's use of color to surround them—only their feet are close to each other. In Frame 6 we see two separate sandwiches, and in Frame 7 two horses flank the edges of the frame—the horses couldn't be farther apart. By the end of the DST, however, the bird figures in Frame 14 and the family figures in Frame 15 could not be positioned more closely. Riley's use of space as a narrative element to compose meaning exceeds the capacity for linguistic-only composition and takes "advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9–10.6).

Learning About Place Through the DST

In her Letter from the Unfamiliar World at the beginning of the trimester, Riley considered both her local, immediate place as well as the generalized perceptions that people might hold of her place: "I have lived in the same house my whole life. We live next to the [town's] wildlife management area. So it's very mountainous and wooded where I'm from. Where I'm from we are known very well for covered bridges" (8/17/11). The seeds for Riley's DST were sown already at this early stage in which consistency, home, and nature play such prominent roles.

During Riley's interview with James, she provided a description of how her learning about place developed over the trimester:

Yeah, like at the beginning, I thought that place was like, okay, this library is a place, outside is a place, you know. Everything is...you're just there. Your place. That's where you are. But now, after [Ms. Trent] taught me about place, I realize that it is what's connected to you at the heart, not just any random spot in the world. (Interview, 10/6/11)

As shown in our analysis of Riley's meaning making across semiotic systems, we have good reason to believe that digital storytelling provided Riley with the opportunity to learn deeply about narrative composition; to author her story, experiment with notions of identity, home, stability, change, and memory; and, finally, to connect these intellectual insights with the emotion that connects these concepts with place.

As she wrote in her final reflection on the unit, Riley emphasized both her intellectual and emotional investment in the project:

I loved it! I think that it really showed the feeling of the writings. It makes the writing have more meaning and symbolism. Technology skills, interpreting skills, listening skills, and also social skills. This presentation really got people into it and more interested than just a boring assignment. I really hope we get to do this again in the near future! ☺

Riley's work throughout the trimester demonstrated clearly how the concept of place and digital storytelling about place afforded her opportunities to better understand both her thinking and her feeling. Unfortunately, "the power of personal expression" (Bull & Kajder, 2004, p. 48) seems to be too infrequently realized in modern composition instruction. Our description and analysis of Riley's work offer a glimpse of the classroom affordances for teachers and students alike who seek compelling and rigorous composition instruction. When James asked Riley during her interview what stood out most to her about the DST, she replied: "What stands out the most is me and my dad. 'Cause that was pretty much the whole [point]. Like, it was about place, but I kind of lingered into spending time with my father. 'Cause he means everything to me" (Interview, 10/6/11).

Instructional Implications

Place is a robust concept that has been explored for some time and from a variety of perspectives in the composition classroom. After reflecting on this concept for 12 weeks, Riley was prepared to tell her story about her place. The DST provided her with the opportunity to explore the meaning-making potential inherent in a multimodal literacy practice such as digital storytelling. Riley illustrated her unique process of authorship while meeting—in fact, exceeding—standardized assessments of proficiency for narrative writing.

In reading Riley's DST from multiple perspectives and with a particular sensitivity toward the elements of story and visual composition reflected in her work, we recognized the interpretive value in our own process. By pointing out and encouraging student authors to control such compositional devices deliberately, teachers can promote students' metacognition as well as their interpretive reading practices. Reading students' DSTs along with other stories in the

curriculum can empower students as creative authors and critical readers. We would encourage teachers to prompt students to reflect on the ways in which they are using visual and linguistic elements, in addition to their voices (e.g., rhythm, intonation patterns, pace), to compose meaning through their digital stories.

Digital stories extend the meaning-making modes through which students can develop concepts such as place in the composition curriculum. This development has implications for students as they engage in 21st-century literacy practices that demand their fluency beyond reading and writing print texts so that they can consider, in the case of digital storytelling, how multiple layers of meaning are conveyed and recast across linguistic, visual, and aural semiotic modes.

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Take Action

STEPS FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION

Steps for Immediate Implementation

- ✓ Engage your students with the concept of place. Brainstorm places that they could write about over time. Ask questions such as “What is a place?” and “When is a place important or worthy of notice or discussion?”
- ✓ Ask students to read George Ella Lyon’s “Where I’m From.” Consider how place is conceptualized in Lyon’s poem. Ask students to compose their own “Where I’m From” poems. After workshopping these poems, complete a choral reading. Engage your students in an inquiry-based discussion about the similarities and differences present in students’ poems about place.
- ✓ Encourage students to think critically about the differences between places and spaces. How is place different from space and why might that difference matter?
- ✓ After brainstorming different places, ask students to select one place they would want to explore even more.
- ✓ Write! Ask students to tell a story about one visit they made to their respective places.
- ✓ Incorporate multimodal activities into your instruction. Have students construct a place map in which they depict in visual form a new perspective on their chosen places.
- ✓ Guide students in constructing an extended narrative about this place by using the 15-sentence paragraph detailed in this article.
- ✓ Use PhotoStory 3, Storybird, or an app such as Splice to encourage students’ multimodal development of their places in the form of a digital story.
- ✓ Celebrate your students’ compositions during a film festival at your school! Facilitate the wide distribution of your students’ work; encourage students to submit their work to both local and national publication outlets.

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More to Explore

CONNECTED CONTENT-BASED RESOURCES

- Beach, R., Anson, C., Breuch, L.A., & Swiss, T. (2008). *Teaching writing using blogs, wikis, and other digital tools*. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.
- Hicks, T. (2009). *The digital writing workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

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- The Center for Digital Storytelling: www.storycenter.org

Supporting Information

Additional Supporting Information may be found in the online version of this article:

Video S1: Matthew DST

Video S2: Nate DST

Video S3: Riley DST