

I See Dead People (and So Much More)

Digital Stories

Grade Levels 5-8

Objectives: In order to understand the essential question of, “How has our community changed over time?” students study the physical, cultural, and ecological landscape. Students predict, use text and media resources, reflect on initial predictions, make hypotheses, and find evidence to support their hypotheses. Students create digital stories with integrated images and recorded narration, and share their learning about community. *Time Needed: 7 hours*

Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities:

5.13: Responding to Text (Analysis and Interpretation of Informational Text/Citing Evidence)

1.19: Research (Use organizational skills to obtain information from various sources)

Grade Level Expectations:

W8: 8 In reports, students organize information/concepts by...

- Drawing a conclusion by synthesizing information
- Obtaining information from multiple locations or sources when appropriate

H&SS7-8:2 Students develop a hypothesis, thesis or research statement by ...

- Predicting results, or exploring relationships

IT1-2:4 Students demonstrate the use of a variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences

Materials & Resources:

Landscape Change Program Archive, www.uvm.edu/landscape

Anticipation Guide (below)

“Your Task” checklist (below)

Microsoft Photo Story software or similar, such as *iMovie* or *Microsoft Movie Maker* (see example digital story link below)

Activities:

<p style="text-align: center;">1. Hook Your Students</p> <p>Students view a digital story that poses and answers one question from the <i>Anticipation Guide</i> (below). The story serves as a model and a hook.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4. Culminating Activity</p> <p>Students share digital stories with classmates. <i>Option:</i> Students write essays to reflect upon their learning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Introduce Concepts</p> <p>Students complete an <i>Anticipation Guide</i> designed to elicit prior knowledge and inspire further inquiry (below).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5. Assessment</p> <p>Digital Story Rubric (below) and all students return to their <i>Anticipation Guides</i> to revise their answers to reflect new learning from the work of classmates.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Apply Skills</p> <p>Students explore assigned readings and PowerPoints, make informed predictions, select one strand for further study, explore the <i>Landscape Change Program</i> archive for 3 to 5 images and create a 2-minute digital story with narration.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6. Extensions</p> <p>Class selects most effective digital stories to be shared out to the community. This could include posting on the <i>Landscape Change Program</i> website.</p>

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Lesson Plan Details

Detailed summary of curricular format:

Overview: Students will view images of people (many of whom are now long dead) and landscapes to make hypotheses about how the landscape and culture in their community has changed over time. Each pair of students will select an aspect of change to investigate. Then, after exploring the archive, students will tell the story of change as seen through a small collection of images. The purpose is to effectively communicate how physical, cultural and ecological changes impact each other and the community as a whole.

1. Day One: The Hook (One 45 minute class)

Prior to any discussion, have students complete the *Anticipation Guide*. Clarify what your class will consider “Our part of Vermont” (town, county or region). Direct them to write either A (agree) or D (disagree) after each statement in the appropriate column. (10 minutes)

Have each student write a constructed response paragraph to explain why they chose to agree or disagree with the first statement on the guide: “The coming of the highway dramatically altered the landscape in our part of Vermont.” (15 minutes)

Show the class the digital story created to support the statement (see example attached). Discuss both the content of the story and its design. Introduce the rubric (see below) and have students use it to assess the digital story example as you show it a second time. (15 minutes)

Ask students to mark two or three statements on the *Anticipation Guide* that interest them most, ones which they would most like to investigate. Collect.

Homework: Revisit and revise the paragraph you wrote using evidence from the digital story viewed in class today.

2. Day Two: Understanding the Task (One 45 minute class)

Prior to class, examine the choices students made on the *Anticipation Guide*, so you can pair them by interest and other factors as relevant to your class.

In class, inform students about their pairings and focus topics. Explain the task and introduce the resources. You may want to create links from a webpage to make this easier. (see *Your Task* sheet)

Teach students how to use the **advanced search** functions on the *Landscape Change Program* website.

Give them an *overview* of the in-depth tutorials (students will visit these sites on Day 3):

How People and Geology Shape the Landscape and Vermont Geology and Landscapes

http://www.uvm.edu/landscape_new/learn/Downloads/units/mod3/mod3.html

http://www.uvm.edu/landscape_new/learn/Downloads/units/mod2/mod2.html

Show them the “Learn” page of the *Landscape Change Program* website and associated links

Homework: Clarify the focus of your research.

3. Days Three – Five: Ongoing research and digital story production

If students are unfamiliar with digital story software, give them a lesson in how to assemble a project. Find your resident student experts and encourage students to ask them for help if needed.

Set pairs to work searching for pictures that are relevant to their selected topics. Another resource which may be of use is *Place-based Landscape Analysis & Community Education* <http://www.uvm.edu/place/>

Give students time to view the informational text and online slide shows introduced in day two.

Homework: Continue research, write your script, compile your story.

4. Day Six – Sharing and assessment

Students upload digital stories to a shared website where classmates can view them. Students can use the rubric to peer assess and self assess. As an extension, the class may select the most effective digital stories to be shared out to the greater community either by uploading to the *Landscape Change Program* website or at a community event such as Town Meeting Day.

5. Day Seven – Reflection

All students return to their *Anticipation Guides* one more time to determine the answers as supported by the work of classmates. Finish with a discussion of how their initial views were deepened by their research and through viewing the work of their peers. As an extension, ask students to write a paragraph about three statements for which their initial hypothesis was wrong or unsupported by evidence.

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Anticipation Guide

Name _____

Answer *A* for agree or *D* for disagree for each statement

	Before Study	After Study	Strand
The coming of the highway dramatically altered the landscape in our part of Vermont.			transportation
The landscape in our county included more forest one hundred years ago than today.			forests
You can find pictures that show how clear-cutting hillsides in our county prevented erosion.			environment
Utility lines did not reach our part of Vermont until after 1920.			energy
There is evidence of glaciers having been in our part of Vermont.			geology
People who lived in our part of Vermont about 100 years ago were wealthy.			economics
People who lived in our part of Vermont about 50 years ago were wealthy.			economics
Mining was an important part of the economy in our part of Vermont and has left its mark.			geology
The types of trees found in our part of Vermont have changed over time.			forests
The important ways people make a living in our town have changed a lot over time.			economics
There is evidence that the climate in our part of Vermont has changed significantly in the last 150 years.			climate
The waterways in our part of Vermont have changed paths and locations over the last 150 years.			waterways
There is evidence of plate tectonic activity in our part of Vermont.			geology
The animals in our part of Vermont have decreased in variety over the past 100 years.			wildlife

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Your Task

Name _____ *Check off each step as you complete it.*

Your task is to create a short digital story with a clear focus on one aspect of how our community has changed over time.

You and your partner have been assigned to become experts on one strand.

Study the tutorials and PowerPoint presentations:

How People and Geology Shape the Landscape

<http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/learn/Downloads/units/mod3/mod3.html>

Vermont Geology and Landscapes

<http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/learn/Downloads/units/mod2/mod2.html>

Create a digital story of about 2 minutes in length to share your new knowledge. To do so you will need to:

Select your images – be sure they fit your theme

Explore the archive <http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/menu.php> for 3 to 5 images to illustrate and explain one of the guide statements.

Interpret what you see in the images.

Use links from the learn page <http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/learn/> to help you interpret the images and explain them to others.

Write a script to describe what you found and what it shows about how the landscape has changed and why.

Rehearse your reading of the script before you record it. Coordinate narration with slides in movie.

Use effects to highlight the details in the images that connect to your theme. Pan in and out of the images to enhance your information.

Self-assess and revise to be sure you have met expectations as spelled out in the rubric.

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Digital Story Rubric

Grade	A Meets Expectations	B Approaches Expectations	C Falls Short of Expectations	D Far From Expectations
Focus	Digital story remains focused on one theme. Each image supports that theme. The story teaches others about the theme.	Digital story is mostly focused on one theme. Each image supports that theme. The story teaches others about the theme.	Digital story is somewhat focused on one theme. Some images support that theme. The story attempts to teach others about the theme.	Digital story is not focused on one theme or includes images that do not connect closely to the theme. The story has little to teach others about the theme.
Information	Information clearly relates to the focus. It includes several supporting details and/or examples. All information is accurate and reflects research.	Information clearly relates to the focus. It provides 2-3 supporting details and/or examples. All information is accurate.	Information relates to the focus. Few details and/or examples are given. Some information may not be accurate. There is little evidence of research.	Information and examples have little or nothing to do with the focus. Information is not accurate. There is no evidence of research.
Visuals	Makes excellent use of pictures and effects to enhance the presentation.	Makes good use of pictures to enhance the presentation.	Use of pictures and/or effects occasionally detracts from the presentation.	Pictures and effects often detract from the presentation.
Voice Quality and Sound	Interesting, well-rehearsed with smooth delivery that holds audience attention. All sounds enhance presentation.	Relatively interesting, rehearsed with a fairly smooth delivery that usually holds audience attention.	Delivery not smooth, but able to hold audience attention most of the time.	Delivery not smooth and audience attention lost.