

Discussion Guide

Storytelling With Purpose: Digital Projects To Ignite Student Curiosity

By [Michael Hernandez](#)

Learn more about the book, including courses, resources, news, and upcoming events at www.storytelling-with-purpose.com

WHAT

- What are some of your most memorable, positive experiences as a student?
- In what ways have you struggled to make assignments that teach your curriculum and are also fun and engaging?
- What makes you most excited about learning? What made you most excited to learn while you were a student?

Creating stories

- What do you think constitutes a “story” today in the digital age? How are stories used by people or organizations for things other than entertainment or distraction?
- What are some surprising and unexpected ways to use multimedia elements (images, video, illustrations, audio, hyperlinks) to enhance teaching and learning?
- What are some of your biggest obstacles to teaching digital storytelling?

WHY

- How do digital story projects allow teachers and administrators to provide transparency around curriculum and student achievement?
- What is our responsibility to prepare students to navigate and succeed in a complicated world that is digital-first?
- What are some ways non-fiction story projects foster a meaningful sense of curiosity in students?

Inquiry

- In what ways can assignments create opportunities for students to explore topics they’re curious about?
- How do you balance the need to cover specific curriculum or skills and at the same time let students have some measure of choice in their learning?
- What are some of the challenges you face when teaching research skills (finding reliable sources, writing bibliographies, conducting interviews with experts, media literacy, etc)?
- What are some ways you’ve found that help students learn to develop good research questions?

- How often do your students get to talk with people beyond your school site as part of their research?
- Asking questions and being curious can sometimes be seen as a weakness, or may even ruffle feathers. How have you managed to make the case to your students that curiosity is a good thing?

Assessment

- How have traditional assessments stymied your flexibility or creativity as an educator?
- What are some reasons why your students struggle with traditional assessments?
- What are some ways we can design assignments and assessments that are equitable and accessible to students of all abilities without sacrificing content or rigor?
- How can we create equitable, meaningful assessments that also satisfy the requirements by state standards and the needs of other stakeholders?
- What are some tools at your disposal that help you provide an equitable and accurate snapshot of individual student achievement?
- What are some concerns you have about cheating and how we can create a school culture that encourages academic integrity?

Writing

- How can we make kids truly excited about writing?
- What are some assignments that provide opportunities for students to connect their writing to real world issues?
- How often do you get the chance to assign writing assignments that use digital platforms like social media, blogs, or podcasts?
- What are some strategies to break down curriculum silos and teach writing across multiple subject areas?
- What are some benefits to having students publish their writing publicly for an audience beyond the classroom?

Math & Science

- What are some reasons why math and science students might want to share their knowledge or talents with people beyond the classroom?
- What are some meaningful ways students can document their learning or findings generated from your class assignments?
- What are some opportunities in your existing curriculum for students to explain concepts or their work visually, such as data visualizations, infographics, photographs or video?

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

- What are some ways our assignments can foster a sense of responsibility and purpose in students?
- How can we create opportunities in our classrooms for students to have a sense of agency and self-determination?

- What are some ways students can learn about how to give and receive constructive feedback?
- How do assignments that emphasize revision and workshopping compare to one-time, high stakes assessments?
- What learning experiences can we design that foster empathy?

HOW

- What are some easy, quick-win digital story projects you can use in your class right away?
- How can students and teachers use what they already have to create digital story projects?
- What are some ways can students use digital portfolios to tell the story of their learning?
- How have you solved the challenges of students working in teams?
- What are some ways to grade digital story projects that are equitable and fair?
- What are some of your favorite digital story projects from the book?

Have more questions or need support using digital story projects in your learning space?
[Contact Michael](#) for more details.