



# User Guide for the Digital Story Project

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## Our Digital Story Experience

First of all, we want to mention that we considered the whole Digital Storytelling Project to be very interesting. Primarily, because it was something different from what we have done before, although we have already dealt with many similar projects, which also contained online produced videos. Considering that it was a much more personal project than others. I bet that many students, including myself, also discovered much more about themselves as well as about their classmates, because these aren't the type of stories that we usually tell each other often.

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### I. How to come up with a good story idea

Coming up with a good story is actually the part that takes the longest, at least for many of us. Some prefer a very personal story; others want to tell something less personal. That completely depends on you. Take your time, and if you can't think of any good family story, tradition or object, just ask your family and go through the old photo albums. The story doesn't have to be full of action, however it should have some kind of twist in it. Always remember, students of completely different countries get to listen to your stories. They surely will be interested in what is important for you.

### II. How to find the right Pictures

The whole point of this project was that everybody tells a personal story of his family or about an object. So surely it is always the best to have personal pictures, because while watching the video you can relate better to the story if you see the original photographs. If you have photos of your family in the video, it's better to ask your family first whether they agree that you use photos of them. If you only have one picture that is fine too, since you can then describe all the details you find of the picture. Finding photographs from the past can be very fun too.



# Audacity and Shotcut

## Advantages of Audacity and Shotcut

The program Audacity is the program we used for recording our voice. Using it was actually pretty easy, but of course we didn't try out everything you can do your voice with that program. The simple things we did with the program, which worked really good, was for example changing the volume or cutting out parts of the recording. That makes the record more appealing to the audience. The quality of the voice of course depends on the microphone you use. Since we used a pretty good microphone the quality of the voice was very good. The program Shotcut is actually very easy to handle as well, once you're told how it works. You only have to upload pictures so you don't have to create a presentation first. There weren't many options to work on the pictures in the program but one could create nice transitions between the different pictures. Also the internet isn't needed for any of the programmes Shotcut and Audacity, so you don't depend on a good internet connection.

## Disadvantages of Audacity and Shotcut

Now we will present you the main disadvantages of the programmes Audacity and Shotcut. First of all, we'd like to mention that these programs don't work on every computer. If it works on a computer, there is still a chance that some problems occur while using it. And secondly as said before, the program Audacity is quite easy to work with, but one disadvantage is that you have to record everything at once so you can't pause while recording. This is not too much of a problem, because you can cut out the parts you don't like later. But still this means more work afterwards. Probably the most problematic point is, that the finished video is taking up a lot of storage. Often you aren't even able to upload the file to a website because of its size. Therefore, the fact that you don't need the internet to produce the video with Shotcut and Audacity can also have a disadvantage. That's because you can only access the video file from one computer, when it's too big to put it on a website. However, uploading the video on Google Drive or putting it on another storage device worked really well. Another disadvantage of Shotcut is that it takes longer to produce the final video because you have a separate audio file, and you have to upload each picture at a time.



# Online Programmes like Knovio

## Advantages of Knovio

In our opinion Knovio is just as good to make a video as Shotcut and Audacity. Of course it depends on how professional it should be. However, for the videos we have to make for school the simple version of Knovio is sufficient. It has nearly the same quality and is very easy to handle. What we specifically like about Knovio is that one can record one slide at a time, which is not possible in every online program. In comparison to Audacity and Shotcut, Knovio is also very practical since it is only one program that immediately puts together your recording as well as your pictures or PowerPoint, which means that the whole progress is much faster. If you want to access your video at any time on the internet, it is probably also easier to record the video on an online program, because you get a link for the video you make. Of course you could also upload the video, which you created on Shotcut to YouTube, but only if you want to have it accessible online.

## Disadvantages of Knovio

Considering the disadvantages of online programs for our digital story we concentrate mostly on the program Knovio, because we mostly used this one. A disadvantage of online programmes in general is that one always depends on an internet connection, because everything is stored there. Furthermore, you need to create a PowerPoint presentation first, which takes much more time than if you upload pictures directly. On Knovio you record each slide at a time, whereas in Shotcut you can create nice transitions between the pictures. If you are done with recording your video, you can only save it on the program directly and not as a mp4 file on your computer. To watch the video one always needs internet connection and the link to the video as it can be seen on the program only.



## Our personal Thoughts about the Project

I specifically liked this project, because it really had to do with one's personal opinions and stories, but also because I could choose the story I would later work on, on my own. And this was actually the hardest part of the whole project: Finding a personal story which is interesting and still not too personal. As a matter of fact for me this wasn't very easy, but as soon as I had an idea that fit, the project became quite simple and also fun, except for a few technical issues you'll read about later...

-Sophia

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I personally really liked this project, and the fact that I like telling stories is not the only reason for that. Coming up with a good story idea was like exploring my memories and going through all these awesome moments I have spent with my family. This was probably the part of the project that took up the most time for me. However, when I finally had some ideas it was quite obvious which of the ideas I would choose to make a good story. I took the story that had most to do with my relation to my family. The story that is very important for me in my life.

-Leonie

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For me it was actually pretty easy to come up with a good story idea, mainly because I already knew a bit about my family history. Of course I tried to think of other possibilities as well, but none was as good as the one I had already picked. Because it was not only a private family story but also a public story, since my ancestors are pretty known in the city I live, especially for the shop they have established, I could take some pictures from the internet as well, and of course some from my family albums. I am very content with the story I chose because it is personal but not too private and also interesting.

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For me it was pretty hard to come up with a good idea for my story. When I first started thinking about what would fit to the topic “family” I thought to write about my grandfather in World War II because it is a very important aspect in my family and I wasn't sure if I had anything else to tell which would be really interesting. Then I realized that it wasn't about a great plot but about something that I could really tell others because I can identify with the story. So I asked my parents for advice and together we came up with an idea for my final story. Finding the right pictures for my story was hard as well and I'm still not quite satisfied with my choice. Mainly I took my own photos of objects that have something to do with my story, because it makes the story more personal if you have your own pictures.

-Anja

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