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# USER GUIDE – DIGITAL STORY TELLING

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The last project that we did in our English class was a digital story-telling project. Never heard of it? For us it was new too, but the name pretty much says it all. You produce a story, which is not done by hand, but digitally, and then you tell it. Our digital story was going to be a very personal one, but the quality should still be at a high level. And now we will tell you the 3 steps how to produce your digital stories yourself.

## Step 1: finding the right story

Obviously finding the story is the first step. It took us a lot of time to think of a story that was right for this specific project. What helped a lot in this case was exchanging ideas and thoughts with the others. The brainstorming in groups was a great possibility to come up with an idea. What could also help you is looking through photo albums or talk with your family if they can help you to come up with a good story.

## Step 2: finding the right pictures

Once you have a story you have to find fitting pictures. That was not as difficult as finding a story because just looking through old photo albums or old pictures on your computer is the best and easiest way. Maybe you can also still remember some pictures you soon that would fit to the story. It is very important that you try to use as many of your own pictures and not too many pictures from the internet because this makes your story more personal and real.

## Step 3: recording the story

There are lots of different programs and apps to edit a digital story and in our project we used Audacity and Shotcut. You can record your audio very well with Audacity and it easily lets you edit your audio and you can perfectly polish your recordings. Shotcut is the program that you can use to combine your Audio and your pictures, but some problems occurred with this program because it crashed quite often.

Another way you can produce your video is just use a free online program for example present me or knovio. This is easier and not as complicated and technical and works perfectly well especially if you use a good microphone with these programs you can probably hardly see a difference to the video produced with Shotcut and Audacity.

## Our personal views...

Sophie:

I think this project was very different to everything we've ever done before, but it was a great new experience. I really liked the idea behind this project because I think as the point was to share a personal story you could relate to really well which is definitely interesting.

Finding the right story to tell was extremely difficult for me. I tried to come up with some ideas with a kind of brainstorming, but it took me quite some while to find a story I would like to share. I always thought that my story is maybe not interesting enough or that the stories of the others are much cooler and that my life is too boring to talk about it. It was probably the hardest step for me to find a story and this is why I would like to give you some tips that could help you. I think the most helpful thing you could do is to read or listen to other digital stories. There are quite a few stories to watch online that give you an inspiration for your own story. Another tip is to talk with your family if they have an idea.

Overall I liked this project very much, although it was quite tough and time consuming to produce the stories. Additionally, I think you can also learn quite a lot about your classmates because these are stories you wouldn't just talk about in school.

Anna:

A few weeks ago I produced my own digital story.

First, I have to say that we as a class have done many different projects, but the digital story project was a great new experience. I think it was the first activity where I really had to think about what I want to share with other people and what is too personal to share.

I generally liked the idea of the project because we had to make videos about personal stories. However, the first thing you have to do before you start with your video, is to find a story which was personally very hard and difficult for me.

Afterwards, you have to record your video. We used the program "Audacity" for recording the video. We also used a different program (Shotcut) for editing our videos. I think these programs were a bit too hard for us/me because I am not a real expert and it was one of the first times that I edited my own video.

Dora:

In my opinion, the hardest part of the project was to actually find a story. Especially in our class, because no one had ever done this before, so we didn't have a clear picture of what it should look like yet. Exchanging stories with others helped me a lot with finding my perfect story to tell and without it, it probably would have taken me hours to find the perfect story.

Finding pictures was a bit harder for me, because I couldn't find good personal pictures and none of the copyright pictures on the internet seemed right for my story. So, what I just did was drawing the pictures by myself. It worked out pretty well and I think it's better than having some non-personal pictures from the internet.

Personally, I think that Audacity is very nice. Shotcut on the other hand didn't convince me. The first time I tried it out the program it didn't work at all. The second time was better, but had still too many little inconveniences. A program I can recommend for producing your digital story or any video in general is Knovio. It works perfectly and it is easy to record and to handle.

All in all, I think it's a great idea to produce such a digital story and I think all of you will enjoy doing it.

Jakob:

When we did the digital storytelling project in class we already had produced a lot of book review videos so we were experienced with this, but we never used any program like Shotcut, so that was a whole new experience.

Personally, I didn't like Shotcut but I will probably use a similar program that works better and doesn't crash three times in a row. Audacity was also a whole new experience that I will certainly use in my other videos. It was a lot to do but it certainly paid off and I would always say yes if I was asked to do it another time.

Finding a good story was not so difficult because in my family we have lots of photo albums that I looked through and the moment I saw the pictures of the whale I knew that I would use this story.

All though it was a lot of work in class and at home, I kind of enjoyed it.