



HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
National and Kapodistrian  
University of Athens

# English and Digital Literacies

## Unit 3.3:

How to Develop a Digital Story - Procedure and Tools

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# The elements of a digital story

# Elements of Digital Storytelling

- **Seven elements** for creating effective and interesting multimedia stories have been defined.
- Since constructing a story is not a simple process that follows a recipe or a prescribed formula, these elements require consideration for every story and determining the balance each element occupies in the story can take a lot of thinking and re-thinking.



# The 7 Elements of Digital Storytelling

## Point of View

What is the main point of the story and what is the perspective of the author?

## A Dramatic Question

A key question that keeps the viewer's attention and will be answered by the end of the story.

## Emotional Content

Serious issues that come alive in a personal and powerful way and connects the audience to the story.

## The Gift of Your Voice

A way to personalize the story to help the audience understand the context.

## The Power of the Soundtrack

Music or other sounds that support and embellish the story.

## Economy

Using just enough content to tell the story without overloading the viewer.

## Pacing

The rhythm of the story and how slowly or quickly it progresses.



# 1. Point of view

Stories are told to make a point and should not be presented as a recitation of mere facts. We must define the premise of our story so that all parts can serve to make the point. Consider your audience and direct the point to them.

- first person or third person narration
- an underlying theme, lives beyond the story itself
- Whose point of view? The wolf's? the 3 little pigs'?



## 2. Dramatic question

You want to capture your audience's attention at the beginning of the piece and hold their interest throughout. Typically you want to pose the dramatic question in the opening lines and resolve it in the closing lines.

- Does the guy get the girl?
- What is the real story of the 3 little pigs?



# 3. Emotional content

Emotional content can help hold your audiences attention. The **images, effects, music and tone of voice** all lend to contributing emotion to the piece. Try to keep the elements consistent with the emotion of the moment.

- Add depth and meaning, connect with others through emotion



## 4. Voice

If you “read” your script your audience will not know how to react. Take time to practice your script so you can speak in a conversational voice.

- It's you, and it makes it your story...





# 5. Soundtrack

Another way to connect to your audience emotionally. The right music can set the story in time and can convey emotion. Play music behind an image and a specific emotion is generated.

Change the music behind the same image and an entirely different emotion is experienced. Sound effects can add tension and excitement to a piece, but be careful; they can be a distraction too.



# 6. Economy

Remember: small is beautiful. Plan to leave some of your work on the “cutting room floor”.

A compact, fast moving digital story will contain only those elements necessary to move the audience from beginning to end.

We know that our brains are constantly filling in (from our own experiences) details from suggestions made by sights and sounds. Don't give every minute detail to clarify your story, let your audience fill in some of the blanks.



# 7. Pacing

The rhythm of the piece is what keeps your audience's interest in the story. Changing pace within the story can facilitate moving the audience from one emotion to another.

Music tempo, speech rate, image duration, and panning and zooming speed all work to establish pace. Generally pace will be consistent, but once in a while it will pause, accelerate, decelerate, stop or blast-off.



# The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling



Watch the [video](#).



The process of creating a digital story

# Steps in creating a digital story (1/2)

- 1. Script development:** write the story, get feedback from the rest of the group.
- 2. Images:** Process the images to illustrate your story (downloading, capturing) and put them all in one folder.
- 3. Add text** on images to create titles for your story.

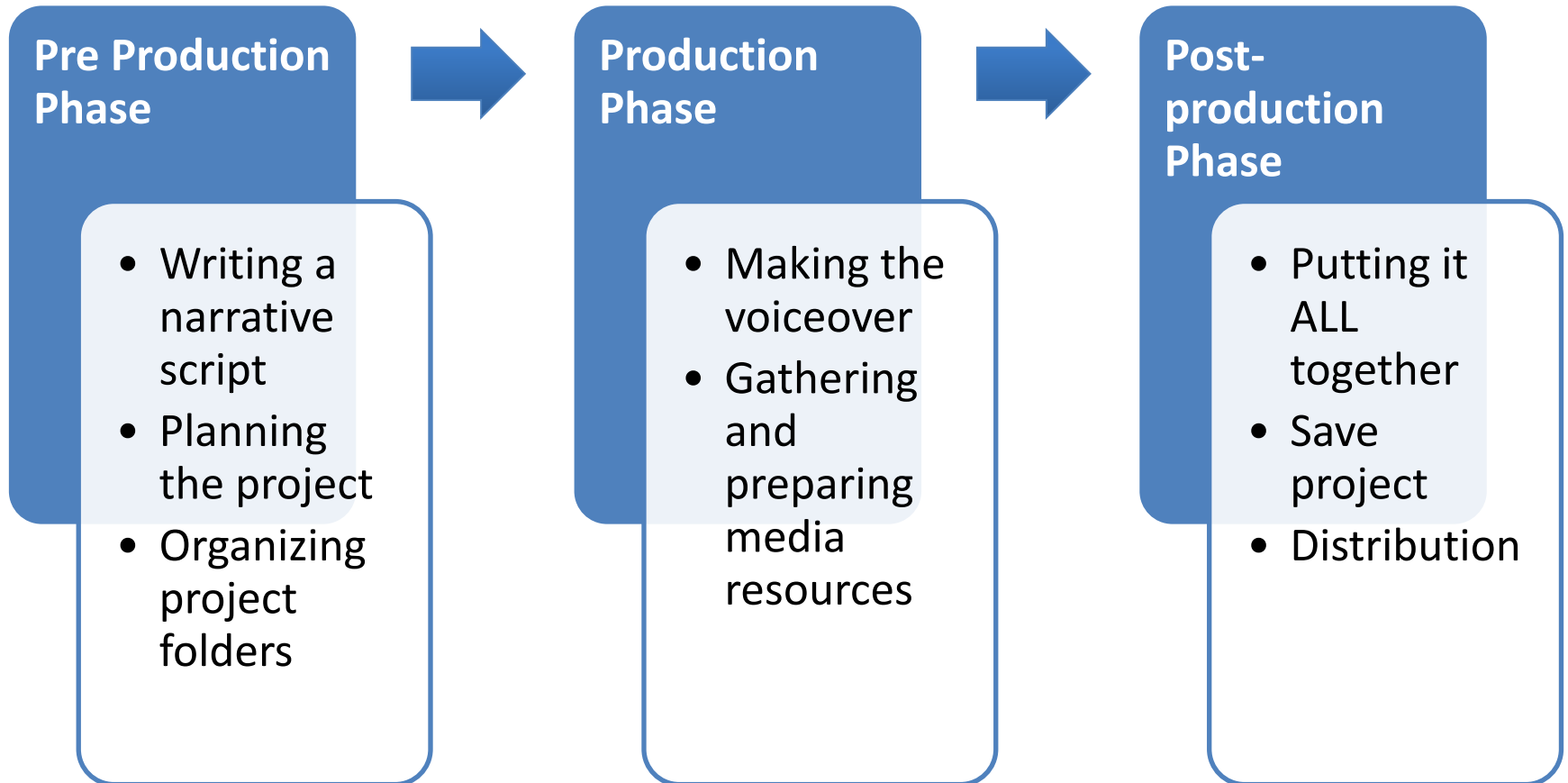


# Steps in creating a digital story (2/2)

- 4. Audio recording and editing:** Narrate your images and customize motion.
- 5. Add Background Music, Titles, Transitions, and Effects.**
- 6. Prepare the credits page.**
- 7. Present or publish finished version of story.**



# The phases of the digital story project





# 1. Write a Script for your Story (1/2)

- This is the most important part of your project. It is meant to organize all the other media elements used and should be completed FIRST!
- A great deal of thinking, planning, and synthesizing takes place during the creation of a script.



# 1. Write a Script for your Story (2/2)

- The written narrative script telling the story in the author's own voice is the heart and soul of digital storytelling.
- Remember that the written script is later captured as a digital voiceover in your digital story.



# Writing your own Script

If you choose a theme from the books and write your own story, keep it less than 400 words. Remember that one of the seven elements of digital storytelling is economy which emphasizes the simplicity of digital stories.

Once you decide on your story, try to answer these questions: Who is your audience? What is your dramatic question?

Write the script in a piece of paper and revise it as many times as possible.



# Adjusting a Script

If you choose a given text from the primary school English textbooks, you will not have to write the script yourself, but you will have to break it down into small pieces.

Read the text aloud. How does it sound?

Most likely this is a text not prepared to be heard aloud.

Are there any changes that need to be made in order for the text to be heard as well?

Trust your ear. If something does not 'sound' right, fix it.



# Get feedback for your script

- Share your script with the other members of the group.
- Think of your story as a multimedia sonnet, with characteristics of poetry.
- Use the Storyboard Template to identify the images that you will want to match with your narration.



# Creating the Storyboard

- The Storyboard template is a graphic organizer that allows you to visualize and detail out all aspects of your story— narration, images, titles, transitions, special effects, music, and sounds —BEFORE actually using any of the technology tools.
- The time spent here increases the quality of the communication among group members and saves a lot of time and frustration during the Production and Post-Production phases.



# Summary:

## What to put in the Storyboard (1/2)

To be added by **scriptwriter**:

- **What is to be heard (narration).**
  - Start the storyboard with the actual text from the script, and break it into small parts. Write a sentence or two in each cell. That would be enough to record about 20 seconds at a time.



# Summary:

## What to put in the Storyboard (2/2)

To be added by **content manager**:

- **Images to use for each chunk of text.**
  - Provide suggestions for the Content manager as to the type of images and sounds each slide should have.
- **Text To Appear On The Screen** when the specific text is heard and the image is shown (if any)
- **Selected Background Music**
  - To be used throughout the slideshow.





## 2. Select and edit the images you will use

You can find images in many places: taken with a **digital camera**, **scanned** with a scanner, or **found on the Internet**. Most mobile phones have cameras that work very well for digital storytelling. You don't need really high quality images.

When searching Google images, though, select only the Large images – scanning from a book use no higher than 200 DPI.

You should use a program to crop your images and fix the colour and contrast. Place your final images into a folder.



# Free public domain photo sites

- [Freefoto](#),
- [Pics4Learning](#),
- [PD Photo.org](#),
- [Public Domain Pictures](#),
- [Flick Free Use Group](#),
- [Pixabay](#),
- [Dreamstime](#),
- [Free Images](#),
- [Open Photo](#),
- [BigFoto](#).



[2]



# 3. Add text on images

Decide whether you would like to emphasize some parts of your story by adding written text to some of your images.



## 4. Create a digital audio clip of your story

You can record the story directly to your computer. You can use:

- microphones built into laptop computers (only use if you have nothing else),
- USB microphones (one that gives studio quality sound),
- standard computer microphone that plugs into a microphone port or sound card.



# How to do the recording

When you are ready to record your script, find a quiet place to record. Record only short sections of your story at one time.



# 5. Add Background Music, Transitions, Effects

## **Background Music:**

- You should use royalty free music
- Music often overwhelms voiceovers. Edit volume on the low end under your narration (> 10%) but you could increase the volume when no voice is present.



# Use copyright-free music

- [MusOpen](#)
- [Sound Bible](#)
- [Free-loops](#)
- [The Freesound Project](#)
- [Jamendo](#)
- [Magna Tune](#)
- [Purple planet](#)
- [Partners in Rhyme](#)



[3]



# Titles, Transitions and Effects

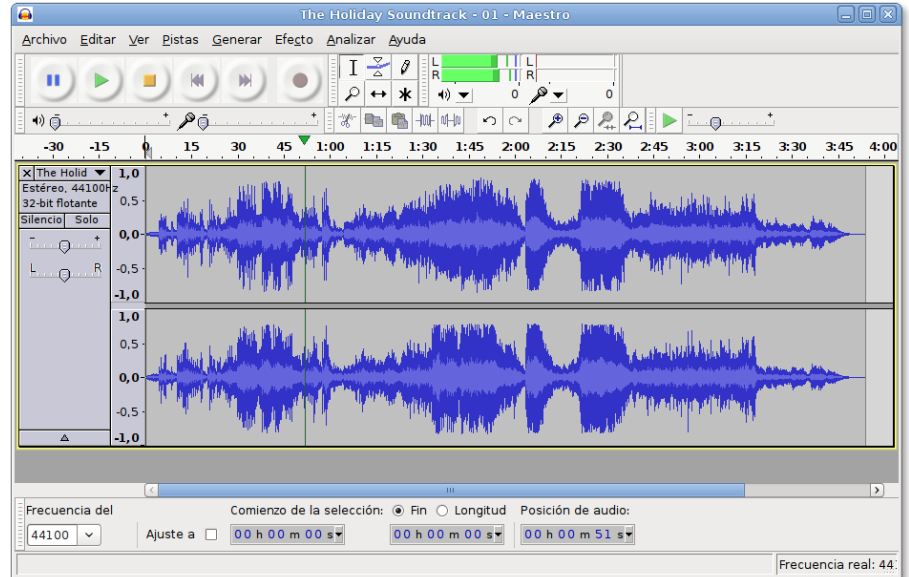
- Fine-tune as you have time (follow the order).
- Many transitions take time out of adjacent clips, so plan image durations to keep alignment with audio.
- Fade Out/Fade In (to/from black screen) or Wash In/Wash Out (from/to white screen) will not shorten your clips.
- You can use different kinds of effects.





# Audio editing program

- You may wish to use an audio editing program to edit the music you wish you use with your story.
- A good open source software package to use is [Audacity](#).



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## 6. Credits

- In the last slide of your story provide complete documentation of all the sources you have used.
- Learn about [Creative Commons Licenses](#).
- Don't forget to include all the names of the people who have worked for the project (group members, people who helped in the creation of the digital story).



# Document and credit resources

- It is highly recommended that students and teachers plan from the beginning for their digital projects to rigorously meet copyright standards that will support wide spread distribution of the student work.
- It will be important for educators to identify and obtain rich resources that students can use without violating copyright laws.
- Many resources are public domain.



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# What is CC0? (1/2)

Copyright and other laws throughout the world automatically extend copyright protection to works of authorship and databases, whether the author or creator wants those rights or not. CC0 gives those who want to give up those rights a way to do so, to the fullest extent allowed by law.



# What is CC0? (2/2)

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# 7. Publishing your story

- After all members have reviewed the digital story, you are ready to publish it (: save your story and export it as a video).
- At the same time, don't forget to save your project so that you can come back and edit it, if you need it, in the future.



# Organizing folders (1/2)

- Managing all the files — text, images, sound, music, and final product — is an important and often overlooked management system needed to ensure everything is where it needs to be for each student's product.
- You need a well-organized system for file management.





# Organizing folders (2/2)

- Keep all the files – text, images, sound, music and final product in different files with descriptive file names.
- Each member of the group should have his or her own folders containing all media elements.



# Financing

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Notes

# Note on History of Published Version

The present work is the edition 1.0.



# Reference Note

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