

**MULTIMEDIA: TRANSFORMING THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS****Anita Fernandes**Fr Agnel College of Arts and Commerce  
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*The young generation lives in a world that is constantly advancing in all spheres – scientific, technological, political, economical, social and cultural. Creating and sustaining interests among students these days is definitely a challenging task for teachers. As such, there is a constant need to keep striving to find for innovative strategies and methods so as to cater to the ever enthusiastic, creative and exploring young minds and thus making teaching- learning process a pleasant experience for both the teacher and the taught. We are living in a technological era, therefore exploring the use of multimedia in the field of Education makes it all the more important.*

*Now-a-days, many innovative strategies are being employed by the educationists; however, my focus here is on the benefits of two modern and technologically advanced digital methods that have been incorporated for the Second year students of B.Com i.e. Digital Story Telling and Blogging.*

**Key words:** *Creating and sustaining interests, innovative strategies, multimedia, DST and Blogging.*

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## MULTIMEDIA: TRANSFORMING THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

- Anita Fernandes

The world is evolving at an alarming rate. There is a constant need to reinvent just about everything. Whether scientific advances, technology breakthroughs, new political and economic structures, environmental solutions, everything is in a flux—and everything demands innovative, out of the box thinking. The accelerating changing scenario has compelled educationist to redesign and restructure the entire fabric of education so as to engage and engross the inquisitive minds.

There are numerous challenges in the field of education. Preparing the young minds to face the future is definitely one of the most daunting and exciting challenges for educationists. The need of the hour is to rise to the challenges that are being posed today and create learning as a fun and thrill activity for the students. We need to integrate new teaching strategies and methods into classroom education. Moreover, the focus should be on fostering innovation by putting curiosity, critical thinking, deep understanding, the rules and tools of inquiry, and creative brainstorming at the centre of the curriculum. Apart from holistic development, education must prepare students for the future. To achieve these goals of education, the teacher needs to think creatively and sometimes reorganise, reframe and re-imagine the educational process. Inertia and status quo are two powerful forces in this ever changing world; educationists need to be innovative and take a stance of questioning the status quo and disrupting the inertia caused by our own beliefs and habits. If this happens, we can easily drill fresh insight and implement practises that can revolutionize learning. A creative and resourceful teacher can easily break the monotony of learning and teaching process.

### Modern Technology - A Tool for Teaching and Social Transformation

Multimedia is a tool that directly targets the sensory interaction with the help of text, images, audio, video etc. In fact, technology has played a key role in innovative teaching.

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Innovation has always been the essence of education. Right from the olden times when our great ancestors made use of traditional oral instructions, to use of parchments, leaves, inscription on rocks inside caves, to more acceptable forms like blackboards, books and the so called modern technological advances with the introduction of Overhead Projectors to the use of computer-aided presentations in the latter half of the last century, was indeed innovative. Technology has without doubt provided new insight and strategies for teaching students and has promoted creativity. In a generation of cell phones, iPods, video games, and computers, students have wide exposure to digital technology on a daily basis. They possess technological skills and knowledge that go largely underutilized in the classroom. Teachers must take the opportunity to effectively use the media in order to serve the purpose of learning and not just for the purpose of keeping up with the new forms of technology. The teacher needs to effectively incorporate meaningful technological activities into the classroom even if a student is not a computer whiz kid. The encouraging news is that now-a-days, teachers have risen to the occasion in incorporating tools like tablets, computers and mobile devices so as to offer students a more interactive experience.

### **Digital Storytelling**

Experts in the educational field suggest that the process of telling stories helps to enhance imagination, increase vocabulary, improve writing skills and engage in critical thinking. It is fascinating to trace the ways in which mankind's storytelling tastes have evolved alongside technology. Storytelling helps people remember and recall minute details. Those who actively listen and create stories have more expansive and detailed imagery.

Regarding the origin of Digital Story Telling, Joe Lambert is generally credited as the first person to coin the term "Digital Story Telling" in a publication in 2002, although Dana Atchley was an integral contributor to the evolution of this art form. With new forms of multimedia evolving over the last decade, digital storytelling has taken on a number of meanings. But in general, they all revolve around the idea of combining the art of telling stories with a variety of digital multimedia, such as images, audio and video.

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Most children relate to each other through music or graphics. They are regularly bombarded with images and sounds. Most of their awareness comes through the language of moving images and cinema. That is why it is so important that they learn the language of the digital world. Learning how to communicate with graphics, with music, with cinema, is just as important as communicating with words.

Digital stories bring together a combination of digital graphics, text, recorded audio narration, video and music to present information on a specific topic. As is the case with traditional storytelling, digital stories revolve around a chosen theme and often contain a particular viewpoint. The stories are typically just a few minutes long and have a variety of uses, including the telling of personal tales, the recounting of historical events, or as a means to inform or instruct on a particular topic. By using a video camera and simple video editing software, the students narrate a story or discuss a major event in their life or even their own family history. We as educators need to harness the power of the students so that they can create, connect and further inspire others.

### **The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling**

The Centre for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley, California is known for developing and disseminating the Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling.

- 1. Point of View:** What is the main point of the story and what is the perspective of the author?
- 2. A Dramatic Question:** A key question that keeps the viewer's attention and will be answered by the end of the story.
- 3. Emotional Content:** Serious issues that come alive in a personal and powerful way and connect the audience to the story.
- 4. The Gift of Your Voice:** A way to personalize the story to help the audience understand the context.
- 5. The Power of the Soundtrack:** Music or other sounds that support and embellish the story.
- 6. Economy:** Using just enough content to tell the story without overloading the viewer.
- 7. Rhythm: Pacing of the narrative.**

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## Digital Story Telling in Classrooms

The oral tradition of knowledge transfer and exchange has served as the basis for education since humans began teaching one another; digital stories build on this model by incorporating rich, dynamic media. Recent data suggests that a majority of teenagers use various tools to create digital media, and this proportion is growing. The process of creating a digital story forces storytellers to choose a topic that can be appropriately conveyed to a particular audience, with electronic elements, in the time available. This dynamic creates an opportunity to reflect on life and find deep connections with the subject matter of a course or with an out-of-class experience. The topics used in digital storytelling could range from personal tales to the recounting of historical events, from exploring life in one's own community to the search for life in other corners of the universe. Digital stories let students express themselves not only with their own words but also in their own voices, fostering a sense of individuality and of "owning" their creations.

Digital stories can generate interest, attention and motivation for the "digital generation" students in today's classrooms. The process can capitalize on the creative talents of students as they begin to research and tell stories of their own, as they learn to use the library and the Internet to research rich, deep content while analyzing and synthesizing a wide range of content. In addition, students who participate in the creation of digital stories may develop enhanced communications skills by learning to organize their ideas, ask questions, express opinions, and construct narratives. The techniques of digital storytelling have proven popular in classrooms as a means of self-expression. Having these students create and narrate their stories allows them to reflect in the English language and also develops their oral skills to speak the language. It also can help students as they learn to create stories for an audience, and present their ideas and knowledge in an individual and meaningful way. In a nutshell, Digital Story Telling is proving to be an innovative tool of Psychology to bring out the deep embedded feelings of the students.

### Importance of Digital Stories

Researchers of digital storytelling believe that its process encourages problem solving, research, and organization skills. Digital stories can make a powerful positive impact because the

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students feel strongly connected to the stories they present. Digital tools bring a new and vibrant dimension to the stories. Students learn to understand, produce and communicate through visual images. They tend to improve their skills of using software that combines a variety of multimedia tools.

The stories typically take the form of personal narratives in which the author reflects on a life experience. In order to speak one's own story and in order to tell an effective story the speaker must understand their own story and think how it has affected them personally. Thinking through one's experiences offers a chance to respond to personal or world events and experiences thus developing their capacity to read, interpret, respond, and contextualize messages from a global perspective. The audience can be spread across the universe because digital storytelling can be forwarded with just a click on your mobile. Every time you read a story on your mobile laced with images and audio, remember, someone out there is telling a story embedded deep in his heart.

By positioning oneself in the story, the narrative becomes clearer to the teller as well as to the listener. The more reflection that is done over a story, the more power the narrator can exert over the story. Narrators can benefit a lot from telling their stories. These stories can provide healing and transformation. The realization, taken from the reflective process, helps shape one's own natural abilities to become an effective storyteller. Sharing stories enable people to see common goals and common experiences and thus bring people and communities closer. Digital storytelling can be used as a tool for community health reform.

Creating digital stories helps to preserve history for the future generation in an electronic form by using media based tools through modern media techniques. Thus, digital storytelling in a way helps in preserving our ecology by avoiding the use of paper and thereby saving trees. Digital storytelling is now popularly being used in business advertising. Businesses are hiring people to harvest their artefacts in order to create compelling stories and thus promote the products to the public. Those who actively listen and create stories have more expansive and more detailed imagery. Authors have been turning to digital storytelling as a way to reach out to a more tech-savvy audience.

## Blogging

The term *weblog* was coined in 1997, but a few months later, in the spring of 1998, Peter Merholz used the shorter version, “**blog**,” by breaking the word weblog into the phrase “**we blog**.”

The internet has played a key role in communication and one of the ways by which we use it more effectively is by blogging. A **blog** is a publication mechanism, like a journal or bulletin. They are simple web pages, often made up of short, informal, and frequently updated posts. Blogs can promote open dialogue and encourage community building in which both the blogger and the commenter can exchange opinions, ideas, and attitudes.

A blog can be created easily, even by someone who is non-computer savvy. Blogs can be used in the classroom for developing the students’ skill in analysis and critique. It can be used for short, less formal assignments. This platform allows for inclusion and display of multimedia, which may offer an advantage over paper submissions. Blogs can be a place where students reflect on readings. Students can publish their own posts, where they can participate in a discussion that goes on the blog and, overall, a place where to make learning more fun and less stressful.

Assignments that require a certain amount of thought and interaction can be assigned to the entire class wherein he is asked to write his thoughts on the blog. By requiring a certain amount of student participation in the blog comments, the students will be encouraged to interact more with each other. Giving students access to other students’ thoughts on an assignment will show them new perspectives and ways of interpreting the material. Additionally, by monitoring how students talk to each other online, the teacher can have the opportunity to teach them correct online etiquette —an important lesson in the Internet age.

## Conclusion

Rapid and continuing advances in information and communication technologies are changing the way people share, use, develop and process information technology. As technological tools like blogs and social media take on increasing importance in the business

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world, students have more reason than ever to learn some of the basics in using them. Also, there is a growing body of evidence that its use in the classroom can enhance learning. Helping students with their future professional prospects should be a pretty strong argument in favour of bringing Digital Story Telling and blogging into the classroom. It is a powerful tool for enabling new forms of communication and interaction between all the members of the classroom community.

Multimedia promises to offer students a richer palette for communicating their ideas. It acts as an outlet for creativity, fosters ownership and discovery, and promotes engagement and motivation to do better. It aims at making creative, capable Internet citizens, able to consciously shape their own identities and narratives.

A primary motive of innovative teaching is encouraging students to engage more in the learning process. When students interact with teachers and peers, they gain more practical experience and retain more information from a class. We need to be passionate, engaged and always think of innovative ways to bring large scale change. Persistence and motivation can help improve the present state of affairs.

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