



NHSTE
Bow Brook Place
46 Donovan Street
Suite 3
Concord, NH 03301

Toll free:
866.753.4479
Phone:
603.225.3230
Fax:
603.225.3225

office@nhste.org
www.nhste.org

A Newsletter for
Technology Using
Educators

IN THIS ISSUE

NHSTE and the New Hampshire Department of Education
– Office of Educational Technology
are partnering to collect exciting examples of effective uses
of educational technologies in New Hampshire classrooms.

Enter a case study by March 15th at
<http://www.nheon.org/oet/index.htm>
and you will be included in a raffle to
Win a Digital Camera for your Classroom!
10 Digital Cameras will be awarded
by a random drawing in the end of March.

WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Digital Storytelling

by Meghan McPhaul, m_mcphaul@verizon.net

For as long as there have been words to use, people have been telling stories. Now there's a new kind of storytelling – digital storytelling – and it is popping up in schools everywhere. The Digital Storytelling Association defines digital storytelling as “the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling” and notes, “Stories have been adapted to each successive medium that has emerged, from the circle of the campfire to the silver screen and now the computer screen.”

So what, you may ask, IS digital storytelling? Put simply, digital storytelling is a way to share stories using words, pictures, video and audio, according to Dr. Arnie Abrams, an author and educator who gives workshops on digital storytelling and other educational technology to schools around the country. Digital stories are generally a few minutes in length and may include narration as well as photographs, clip art or video, and music. Often they are shared on the internet. “You can make it as simple or as complex as you want,” he says. “The basic concept is to be able to first write a narrative, find or create some pictures to illustrate that, and then record the narration and maybe add some music.”

For teachers, digital storytelling is a way to get students excited about learning and allow them to use the technology tools with which they're already familiar. It's a way to apply technology into the curriculum, Abrams says, and to move “beyond just words.”

“Especially teenagers today are used to communicating with technology... They're used to communicating with more than just writing about something,” he says. “Not only does digital storytelling enhance the tools that they use, but it also is a way to reach them.”

Both Abrams and digital storytelling guru Jason Ohler say digital storytelling helps students, who spend much of their time watching television or on the Internet, to become media literate.

“If you want to be truly literate, it means being able to read and write the media forms that are in your life,” Ohler says. “If all you're doing is watching television or watching YouTube, then you're only half literate.”

As any teacher knows, reaching students starts with getting them excited about something, and digital storytelling provides a spark for learning. “Kids who don't like to write will script. It's purely attitudinal,” Ohler says. “Engagement is way up [when digital storytelling is introduced]. They love it. They love the media. This is their world – they're digital native.” Like any good story, one told through digital storytelling the strength of the story and not on the power of the technology used to tell it.

