Title of Session: Next Vista for Learning - Easing Into Projects Using Video
Moderator: Rushton Hurley
Title of File: 20070201nextvista
Date: February 1, 2007

Room: Next Vista Group

BJB2: looks like the crowd's here, Rushton!

RushtonH: Indeed - BJ, could you get us going?

BJB2: Let's start with introductions, please

RushtonH: I'm Rushton Hurley, in Santa Clara (San Francisco Bay Area) California. Welcome!

BJB2: I'm a communications teacher in Pennsylvania

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler. I'm one of the HelpDesk volunteers and I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

FredK: I am a literacy tutor in SE Oklahoma

CarolBe: I'm a high school computer teacher in central Ohio.

CristinGst15: I am an instructor who is interested in gaining skills with video information.

JoseMH: I'm Jose M Heredia, I live in San Antonio, Texas, and I am a graduate student at Texas AM Kingsville - first time visitor

RushtonH: Folks, let's get started

RushtonH: First, everyone give me a quick answer - are you on a PC or a Mac?

CristinGst15: Pc

FredK: PC

CarolBe: PC

JoseMH: PC

RushtonH: No Macs?

DavidWe is on a Mac

RushtonH: I'll gear this more towards PCs then - the concepts apply both ways.

DavidWe smiles

RushtonH: David, I'll get info in for you, too!

DavidWe: But don't worry about me - I use all three

RushtonH: How many of you have made videos before?

MateenD: yes. I've made a basic video once

CarolBe: I have.

JoseMH: Very basic videos

CristinGst15: I've made videos on an old Amiga toaster.

RushtonH: Good stuff. Those of you who have, which program did you use?

MateenD: I used Nero

FredK: Not yet, it hasn't hatched yet--just in the incubator

CristinGst15: I've started playing with Movie Maker.

CarolBe: Both MovieMaker and iMovie

MateenD: oh yea...movie maker

JoseMH: Easy Media Creator 7.5

RushtonH: Some serious variety here - good! There are some standard worries people have,

RushtonH: (see if these sound like what your colleagues say)

FredK: got Movie maker with windows

RushtonH: We don't have much equipment!

RushtonH: - With a PC (running XP) and a $5 microphone, you can do cool stuff! Macs are ready to go as is.

RushtonH: I don't know enough to do this!

RushtonH: - There's complex high-end video editing, and then there's the stuff we'll do to today. Night and day, they are.

RushtonH: I don't have time to do something new!

RushtonH: - You may find that this is something that is as much entertainment for you as it is engaging to students. Additionally, having freely available presentations on the topics you teach will cut your preparation time.

DavidWe has heard those excuses before

RushtonH: It sounds like people are in early stages, so I'll quickly run you through some basics.

RushtonH: How might you use a simple editor (Windows Movie Maker, for example) in class?

RushtonH: A generic lesson plan might ask students to choose some aspect of what they are learning and make a simple statement based on what they experience.

RushtonH: One could do this with PowerPoint, where students would be asked to present something to the class.

RushtonH: Getting students to present their ideas in front of a group, though, means they are dealing with two things at the same time: their understanding of the topic, and their possible fear of speaking to a group.

RushtonH: You as the teacher probably need to be able to focus in on their understanding in order to evaluate them properly.

RushtonH: Let's look at an example.

RushtonH: Start by thinking more traditionally. No matter what topic you are studying, it is often possible to use a few pictures to present one's understanding.

RushtonH: For example, you might ask a student to help introduce the study of seasons by creating a piece to get a question in front of the group. You ask the student why winter happens, so he or she gets some pictures of winter and gets some possible answers from siblings.

RushtonH: Take a look at the following (this will work on PCs and Macs with Windows Media Player):

RushtonH: http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/winter.wmv

RushtonH: Let me know when you have watched it.

FredK: Got it--Media Player

FredK: takes the whole window

RushtonH: I know Mateen and Fred are back - are the others here or still watching?

RushtonH: Hey Cristin - you, too. 8^)

JoseMH: Viewed it

RushtonH: This becomes a tool you can use again and again. One aspect of video that folks new to the medium sometimes miss is that one goal is to SAVE teachers time, over time.

RushtonH: Note that the pictures were taken from a site where the licensing allows use (http://www.morguefile.com/). Another good source is Flickr - do an advanced search (www.flickr.com/search/advanced/) looking for items protected under Creative Commons (you'll need to have an account, I believe).

FredK: a mini-version is playing in it

RushtonH: Does that raise any questions for anyone?

MateenD: u used Nero? was that difficult?

MateenD: was everything created in Nero?

RushtonH: This video was done with Windows Movie Maker. I'll show you one done in another editor soon.

MateenD: voice, etc..

RushtonH: Movie Maker (WMM, I'll call it), is very easy to use, and there are good tutorials out there as well.

RushtonH: Let me know if you want addresses for those, and I'll collect them for you later.

FredK: Please

CristinGst15: Yes, please

JoseMH: Any information and/or ideas would be appreciated

RushtonH: Students can make pieces like the one above asking a question, or by positing an answer for specific reasons. This would have been a 'report' before, but it will be much more easily used in multiple settings as a video.

RushtonH: If you wish, you can assign a grade to the piece based on whether it meets certain standards, such as factual accuracy, logical flow, and/or relevance of pictures to the point addressed.

RushtonH: I'd suggest having students respond to each piece they see with a given set of questions, such as,

RushtonH: "What was strong about the piece you watched?"

RushtonH: "What could be improved?"

RushtonH: "How would we validate the information presented?"

MateenD: the weather pics would relate well to science

RushtonH: "If you were assigned to do the same topic, how might you do it differently?"

RushtonH: These could be graded as written pieces or for completion, simply showing that the writer is genuinely working to interact with the ideas presented.

RushtonH: One key is to keep them short, or the student will end up more focused on process than content.

MateenD: what grade would this be more appropriate?

RushtonH: That depends on the content; personally, I feel kids from 1st grade up would enjoy this.

JoseMH: Is there any time length that you would recommend for a video?

RushtonH: For time length,

RushtonH: I'd suggest that the first things your students create

RushtonH: be no longer than 30 sec to a minute.

MateenD: I did like the length of Rushton's piece...short and 2 the point

RushtonH: That'll help keep them focused.

MateenD: exactly!

RushtonH: Once they're more comfortable with the medium (and proven they will plan!), they can do longer ones.

RushtonH: Can you imagine your students doing pieces like that one? If so, what topic?

MateenD: I can...especially with science and social studies

MateenD: even Writing and Language Arts

RushtonH: Definitely - loads of possibilities with science demonstrations, history vignettes, and pieces as writing prompts.

CristinGst15: My students are Masters and Specialist level and they have fear!

MateenD: my students 4-12 year olds

RushtonH: Fear is natural.

RushtonH: Video, in particular, seems difficult until someone (right in front of you) shows how easy it can be.

RushtonH: I did a presentation at Florida's ed-tech conference last week called,

RushtonH: "Who can make a video in 10 minutes? You can!"

JoseMH: Wildlife videos is something I would be interested because I am a docent for the Audubon

RushtonH: very cheesy title, but lots of people showed up.

RushtonH: Wildlife pieces would be great!

CristinGst15: Yes, and I do not feel confident enough to show them yet. Are you coming to NECC in June?

RushtonH: I will be at NECC doing a presentation.

CristinGst15: Wonderful, I will tell my students about you.

RushtonH: We can also trade some ideas via e-mail ahead of Atlanta.

CristinGst15: Thanks, I like that.

MateenD: what is NECC?

RushtonH: Are there other questions, or would you like to move on?

RushtonH: NECC: National Educational Computing Conference (take a look at www.iste.org).

MateenD: thanks

RushtonH: NECC is GREAT, by the way - loads of energy and great ideas packed into a few days. I recommend going if you can find a way.

RushtonH: How about others? Questions or forward?

CristinGst15: forward, sorry

RushtonH: No problem - getting used to this medium for meetings is a process!

RushtonH: Let's take it a step farther by using more free software (Windows Movie Maker for the PC, iMovie for the Mac).

RushtonH: With a simple camcorder (we'll switch from winter to math), you could also have them do this (now we're using footage):

RushtonH: PCs: http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/Nines.wmv

RushtonH: Macs: http://www.nextvista.org/rhvideos/Nines.mov

CristinGst15: back

MateenD: that was nice

MateenD: back

JoseMH: Back

FredK: Mine is still loading

FredK: go ahead

RushtonH: The .mov files are larger (and of higher quality). PC's with Quicktime player can play them as well.

RushtonH: While this piece isn't perfect, the student had a great time doing it, and - most importantly - shared a cool trick for multiplying by nine.

MateenD: would you recommend mac or pc?

RushtonH: Either is fine, actually.

RushtonH: With a Mac, it's pretty much ready to go as is.

MateenD: is it worth the money?

RushtonH: With a PC, you have to make sure you have a few pieces in place, but it isn't that hard.

MateenD: I was thinking of getting one

RushtonH: I'd guess (others may chime in on this) that the TCO is about the same. (Total Cost of Ownership). Macs tend to require less maintenance.

JoseMH: The video was short but very effective

MateenD: very effective

RushtonH: Ideally, using video would allow students to make sure they've done it right, before it ends up happening in front of everyone in the room (especially important for the shy kid trying to build confidence in relation to peers).

RushtonH: None of this is to say that presenting in front of a group is a bad thing. Rather, that having a way of helping kiddos build their confidence with their presentations can only help.

RushtonH: It also gives you something you can show to the child's parent ("See what a good job your child did?") or an administrator ("This is why I need funds to get another camcorder.")

RushtonH: Don't underestimate the value of the simple editing you can do in a program like Windows Movie Maker - students are much more interested in using such tools to do their work than one might think. As long as you are making sure that the topic is focused, video can be a strong way to get them engaged in what you are teaching.

RushtonH: By the way, for those of you looking for what equipment to buy, stay in touch with me via e-mail, and I can help you out. rh@nextvista.org

JoseMH: Where do you teach at?

RushtonH: I teach Japanese language at a high school, and video production at a middle school.

RushtonH: First time for the middle school.

RushtonH: All y'all pray for me.

RushtonH smiles

BJB2 chuckles

CristinGst15: I USED to teach middle school!

RushtonH laughs

MateenD: I was AP at middle school

MateenD: hated it!!!!!!!!!!

RushtonH: God bless you!

RushtonH: Let's focus in on one of the details for a bit.

RushtonH: A key piece for making videos is having students plan well (a skill that transfers, obviously).

RushtonH: The technical term for the planning is 'storyboarding', and if you want to introduce storyboards to your students, you can find good resources at:

RushtonH: http://www.adobe.com/education/digkids/lessons/storyboards.html

RushtonH: A template is available at: http://ettc.lrhsd.org/archives/storyboard.html

RushtonH: If folks are interested, I could take up planning and storyboards more in a future presentation.

CristinGst15: yes

JoseMH: That would be great

FredK: gook idea

MateenD: great

RushtonH: No Next Vista Tapped In session would be complete without an invitation to share insights on different topics in the nextvista.org library, a free resource for teachers and students everywhere. If you haven't watched any of the pieces in the library before, please consider doing so once we finished (http://www.nextvista.org).

RushtonH: Definitely take a moment to sign up for our newsletter:

RushtonH: http://www.nextvista.org/newsletter/

RushtonH: There are only one or two messages of a month, and we never share the contact information.

FredK: good resource

RushtonH: I've plopped a lot of info in front of everyone. What shall I go into more detail on?

MateenD: thanks...I will check them out

CristinGst15: Let's say that we have the idea and a storyboard done - then what?

MateenD: how well have your students adapted to video?

MateenD: how do you assess its effectiveness?

RushtonH: Next is to assemble your media (photos and or footage).

RushtonH: I'll get to the student bit in a moment - thanks!

MateenD: k

RushtonH: I encourage people to look over audio possibilities.

RushtonH: Every computer (almost) has a free recorder on it.

RushtonH: On a PC, it's 'sound recorder'

RushtonH: You find it at: all programs - accessories - entertainment - sound recorder

RushtonH: Looks like an old cassette player interface, and it is very easy to use.

RushtonH: If your computer doesn't already have a microphone, a cheap (~$5) will do.

RushtonH: The program saves as .wav files, which WMM and most other editors will have no problem with.

RushtonH: For students adapting to video,

JoseMH: How familiar are you with using Interface Audio/MIDI USB for your videos?

MateenD: I'm pretty adept at it

RushtonH: A quite sophisticated program that is free is Audacity.

MateenD: yep...I've got it

RushtonH: The tricky part is finding your way to the free download (they like to sell the upgraded one, apparently).

MateenD: I've used Audacity to create ringtones for my Treo

RushtonH: cool

DavidWe . o O (show-off!)

DavidWe smiles

FredK: url for Audacity?

RushtonH: Go to download.com and search on audacity

RushtonH: For students adapting to video, I find this comes completely natural for them. It's the teachers that have to give it a few minutes!

MateenD: really!!!

MateenD: audacity.sourceforge.net

RushtonH: Perhaps kids could do videos about janitorial work.

DavidWe: http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/

DavidWe: There you go

RushtonH: Thanks David.

MateenD: excellent tool

MateenD: but I'm just wondering how students will take to it

RushtonH: As in the use of video in class?

MateenD: yep

RushtonH: They love it.

RushtonH: Quick story:

RushtonH: As a language teacher, I used to have kids do skits.

MateenD: man....we have laptops too...

MateenD: class sets..

RushtonH: They were okay, but the most common reaction was, "This will be over soon."

RushtonH: Then I started taping them using a video recorder, and because their friends in the other classes would see them, they got better.

RushtonH: Then (drumroll)...

RushtonH: I got some Macs, and learned to use iMovie.

RushtonH: I taught the kids how, and had them do their projects using that program.

RushtonH: And the quality of their work went through the roof.

RushtonH: They loved making the videos!

MateenD: okay. I'm gonna really push it

MateenD: after state testing

RushtonH: A key is not to feel like you have to be the expert - let them know you're learning along with them, and you'll be amazed at how well they respond.

CristinGst15: Do it before state testing on the subject matter of the testing.

RushtonH: Great point, Cristin.

RushtonH: The important thing is to present info in a way that helps them remember the content.

MateenD: u think so?

RushtonH: Later, try watching some of the math videos on our site

RushtonH: www.nextvista.org

RushtonH: and you may see how useful simple pieces can be for helping kids review or get a new take on a topic.

RushtonH: Will any of you be at TCEA in Austin next week?

RushtonH: I'll do a student-created content poster session on Wednesday or Thursday, and a workshop on making videos on Friday.

DavidWe: Do you mind if I bring up a related topic, Rushton?

RushtonH: Please!

DavidWe: Good luck with all that, stuff

JoseMH: I am currently not teaching, I'm working for AT&T, so I will not be there

DavidWe: Have you done much work with people trying to use "Digital Portfolios", Rushton?

RushtonH: Are you involved with (this is to Jose) with any educational efforts at AT&T?

BJB2: A reminder that the next Next Vista discussion will be on March 1

DavidWe: I was at a small conference in the Bronx (New York City) with a friend of mine who works with schools to implement digital portfolios

RushtonH: (for David) I'm more focused on getting kids to do good things with individual pieces.

DavidWe: One teacher, from a high school in the Bronx, was showing a video of student work

DavidWe nods to Rushton

RushtonH: You're welcome! Thanks to everyone for coming!

BJB2: Thanks, Rushton...great discussion!

JoseMH: I just help junior achievements when possible

FredK: Good session tonight

DavidWe: Thanks for leading the discussion, Rushton