

Media Making: Orientation and Toolkit

The use of media in the classroom isn't new. Educators have understood its value for many years. What is new is the increasing push to deliver more lessons and curricula that incorporate elements of technology and media. Unfortunately, as of yet there is no widely accepted standard for the structure and procedures for delivering multimedia lessons. This gap between ideology and implementation is what inspired this compendium of practical advice. It will help you get started using media and media-making technologies in your classroom.

These resources offer tips and tools that will help you take advantage of the various media-making technologies available today (many of which are free). You'll gain a solid understanding of the various types of hardware and software available to help you begin to incorporate media-making projects into your science curriculum.

WHAT ARE MEDIA?

Media are means of communication. Media are often characterized as high-tech and sophisticated, and they can be, but books, magazines and newspapers are media, too. These information delivery tools have been around for centuries. No matter what is said about the prevalence of digital media, these older analog media are still used more prominently than their digital counterparts.

What is important to remember (and the focus of this toolkit), is that these media are no longer created with analog processes. Media making has moved almost exclusively into the digital realm. This transition makes it vitally important that both teachers and students be familiar with the tools and techniques of digital media production. Digital storytelling, digital media presenting, moviemaking, photo sharing, digital mapmaking and location-based learning are all media processes that will enhance the teaching and learning of science in your classroom.

WHAT ARE THE TOOLS?

There is one simple answer: whatever is available. There are many sophisticated, powerful and expensive tools on the market, but there are also many less sophisticated yet still powerful hardware and software options, and many are free. Most people end up using a combination of both. For more on this topic, see the "Media Making: Equipment" document.

HOW DO YOU START?

By their very nature, media-making projects inspire students to experiment and explore, and require lots of trial and error. Like most creative projects, they gain momentum during the production process and can take on a life of their own. This makes media projects an ideal element of the learning environment, but sometimes inappropriate for the structure of the school day. Therefore, these resources have been developed with the time-conscious educator in mind. This toolkit emphasizes the importance of process and procedure when learning about the various tools and techniques. For the most part, the media-creation process follows three phases:

- **Planning**
Determining what resources are accessible to students, how much time is available and what students want to illustrate
- **Producing**
Taking photos, shooting video, recording sound, editing clips, plotting map points and working with materials

- **Publishing**

Showing the finished product, uploading content to the Web, exporting media files and demonstrating learning

These three phases are the keys to practical lessons that will integrate easily into any curriculum. Once you're familiar with the basic techniques, you can get more creative. For example, if students created maps using photos, they can try using video the next time. If they created a short video, the next time they can play with different transitions and filters. Mix different media to present the information in the best possible way. Discovering the available options within different programs and applications will help you better define your style and workflow. Over time, creating media pieces will become more efficient and take less time. Soon you'll be fluent in the language of online media tools and technology.

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This resource is a component of the Media-Making Toolkit for Science Education, developed by KQED Education. The Toolkit includes instructions, worksheets and rubrics to assist educators in implementing media-making projects with students.

For a complete listing of the resources in KQED's Media-Making Toolkit, please visit www.kqed.org/education