REVIEW OF *EXPANDING LITERACY: BRINGING DIGITAL STORYTELLING INTO YOUR CLASSROOM*

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Abstract
Brett Pierce's recent book *Expanding Literacy: Bringing Digital Storytelling into Your Classroom* (Heinemann, 2022) provides accessible, research-based instructional strategies and assessment for integrating digital literacy practices in classrooms, while honoring students' existing literacy expertise and creating more equitable classroom spaces.

Keywords: literacies, digital literacies, digital storytelling, equity

While definitions of literacy have expanded over the past several decades to include digital spaces and practices, teachers still seek concrete methods of integrating digital practices into K-12 classrooms amidst a steadfast testing culture privileging print-based literacies. Digital literacies open a world of possibilities as they allow the integration of multimodal systems of meaning, thereby increasing the range of what teachers can (and arguably should) take up with students in literacy classrooms. Brett Pierce's book *Expanding Literacy: Bringing Digital Storytelling into Your Classroom* (Heinemann, 2022) offers concrete methods for critically engaging students in multimodal practices.

Pierce frames the book within equity and participatory culture. In short, students already participate in digital spaces through various activities such as, but not limited to, social media and content creation, video gaming, and fan fiction. Curating digital literacy practices in the classroom affords students the skills to participate and interact in communities beyond the classroom walls; it offers opportunities to broaden the conversation, not just as a consumer and curator of information but as a creator. Digital compositions arguably have their own rhetorical structures and grammatical moves that teachers can leverage to teach students in digital spaces while connecting to the structures and language of more traditional curricula and standards.

At the core of Pierce's framing for this work is the argument that change is omnipresent. We cannot avoid it, and digital modalities are part of that. Teachers experience anxiety around integrating digital learning because they feel they don't have a firm handle on the tools and technologies themselves. Yet, because students are already participating in digital spaces, they bring technical knowledge and expertise that teachers can position them to share in the classroom while remaining focused on the content of which they are already masters. We can also use this type of

work to create spaces of play and risk-taking in classrooms for students as they problem-solve through their use of technology, which changes almost daily.

The central strength of this book for teachers looking to take up this work is its accessibility through offering concrete activities and projects to try in the classroom. The book is structured with a clear arc to support students in creating digital stories focusing on rhetorical aspects of digital storytelling such as sound, imagery, words, and music. It also connects the process to traditional curricular processes such as research, creativity, development, and production (think of this as the final "paper" in a writing process). It exposes students to varying genres they encounter in the real world (I mean, no one ever goes on to take standardized tests as an assessment in the work force) such as television, radio, and the Internet. In addition to the 24 activities offered in the book, Pierce also offers how-to guides and tutorials for these genres.

At the end of the day, the question of assessment always looms over students and teachers. Pierce does not ignore this component of learning and teaching. He offers a model for assessing students' skills that breaks the learning into four categories for mastery: content, storytelling, digital, and human skills. Pierce then offers criteria for each category with descriptors to support it. This model makes the assessment of a learning process and product that can feel nebulous to teachers more concrete. It also grounds assessment in criteria typically encountered in the English language arts classroom such as scene, story style and elements, characters, and dialogue. Notably, these criteria can be tweaked to fit specific assignments, but the groundwork is laid.

Expanding Literacy: Bringing Digital Storytelling into Your Classroom assists teachers seeking concrete ideas for integrating digital literacy practices in their classrooms. It supports them in honoring students' existing literacy expertise and creating more equitable classroom spaces that do not privilege singular types of knowledge.

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Jennifer S. Dail is a professor of English Education at Kennesaw State University where she also directs the Kennesaw Mountain Writing Project, a National Writing Project site. She also serves as the president of the Georgia Council of Teachers of English. Her work focuses on young adult literature and the integration of digital technology in the classroom. She also explores issues of assessment and grading to create more equitable classroom spaces for all students. Jennifer can be reached at jdail1@kennesaw.edu.