Snapshots from Life: Enhancing Literacy Students’ Reading and Writing through Digital Photography

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Fairfax County Public Schools, VA

TESOL 2009
Denver, CO
Transitional ESOL High Schools

Fairfax County Public Schools

The Transitional ESOL High Schools (TEHS) in Fairfax County, Virginia provide instruction for older ESOL students (18-up) who wish to earn their high school diploma. Students are in Grades 9-11, depending on their prior educational background. Classes are held from 4:15 p.m. to 9:45 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays and from 4:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Fridays. The Transitional ESOL High Schools provide instruction at four sites, sharing space at Falls Church High School, Robert E. Lee High School, Annandale High School and South Lakes High School. Students provide their own transportation to school.

Transitional ESOL High School students are highly motivated, hardworking self-starters. Many have completed a full day of work before coming to class, yet they arrive brimming with enthusiasm and eager to study.

The instructional program consists of the VDOE Level 1 (Beginning) ESOL curriculum and Mathematics classes (FAST Math, Introduction to Algebra and Algebra 1). Students earn elective credits for graduation for all courses except Algebra 1, which earns them a content (Math) credit. The Transitional High Schools do not offer a diploma, however when students attain the intermediate level of VDOE Level 2, they may continue their studies at Pimmit Hills School, Bryant Alternative High School, Mountain View School, or Woodson Adult High School, earning their high school diploma from one of these locations.

For additional information, contact Dr. Shelley Gutstein, Principal, at (703)876-5264 or Shelley.Gutstein@fcps.edu.
Transitional ESOL High School’s Digital Camera Project

Goals of the Project: Beginning-level ESOL students, many with limited schooling and little experience with technology, will create photo essays to foster a unique connection between school and home. By photographing experiences outside of school and writing about them, students will make personal connections to their ESOL curriculum.

Students will also:

(1) write in an authentic context. Students will compile their photo essays into books for themselves and their classrooms. By publishing their work, students will create a literacy-rich learning environment. Students will also forge connections between school and home by sharing their work with family and friends (Calkins, Cunningham & Allington).

(2) begin to tell stories by discussing and labeling their images (Calkins, Ewald).

(3) use background knowledge to create high-interest texts that are authentic and accessible.

(4) integrate technology into the writing process.

(5) use multiple learning styles as they incorporate opportunities for visual, interpersonal, and oral learning (Gardner).

Steps in making a photo essay book:

(1) Students check out digital cameras to use outside of class. Photos related to curricular themes are also taken in class. For example, we took pictures of students following steps in a recipe during the food unit.

(2) Teacher downloads photos from returned cameras to the classes on-line photo gallery (available to class members only).

(3) Students choose photos to describe in writing. Then they print them out and paste them into their class notebook to label and/or write about.

(4) Teachers give students feedback about their notebook writing.

(5) Teacher assists students in downloading their chosen photos and creating photo albums in PowerPoint.

(6) Students use notebook writing to assist them in writing about each photo in PowerPoint. Depending on students’ proficiency levels, they may copy from their notebook, revise, or expand their notebook writing.
(7) Finished photo essays are printed out for students’ portfolios and used for class books.
(8) Students share their books with classmates during partner reading time. Books are also available during choice reading time. Selected student writing can also be used for shared/whole class reading and reading activities.

Other ways photos from the project have been used in our classrooms:
- All About Me Projects
- Collages
- Cookbooks
- A Day in the Life Writing
- Directions
- Documentation of Field Trips, Class Activities (e.g., experiments), Skits
- Exhibitions (e.g., at local restaurants)
- Language Experience Writings
- Literary Magazines
- Newspapers
- PhotoStory Videos
- Posters
- PowerPoint presentations
- Scrapbooks
- Sequence Writing
- Stories (Fiction and Nonfiction)
- Quilts
- Vocabulary Review
- Yearbooks
- “Wishing Walls”

Hardware and software purchased for the project:

- Digital cameras, color printer, Pixie Imagination Suite, rechargeable batteries and charger, binding machine & coils, color inkjet cartridges.
- Picasa free software and Picasaweb have also been used.
Photo Projects

In this class, we will be taking photos of things we are learning.

For example, when we learn about the weather, we will take photos of the weather outside. When we learn about houses, we will take photos of our houses or apartments.

We will write about our photos in school. We will make books with our photos. We will read the books with other students.

If you have a digital camera, you can use your camera. You can borrow a camera from the school to take photos.

You must take care of the camera. Keep it clean. Do not lose it. Return it to school. Your teacher will tell you when you must return the camera.
Photo Project Agreement

I understand that we will take photos to use in school. We will write about the photos. We will make books.

I understand I can borrow a Transitional High School camera. I understand that I am responsible for the camera. I will return the camera. I will take care of the camera. I understand that if I do not return the camera, I may have to pay for the camera.

I can also use my own digital camera to take pictures.

Name:
________________________________________________________________________

Signature:
________________________________________________________________________

_____ I will use my digital camera.

_____ I want to borrow a camera.
Camera Sign-out forms

Name: _____________________________________________
Date: ___________________ Camera ___________________
Class: ______________________________________________

I am borrowing a Transitional High School camera. I understand that I am responsible for the camera. I will return the camera on _____________________________. I will take care of the camera. I understand that if I do not return the camera, I may have to pay for the camera.

Signed ____________________________

Camera Sign-out form

Name: _____________________________________________
Date: ___________________ Camera ___________________
Class: ______________________________________________

I am borrowing a Transitional High School camera. I understand that I am responsible for the camera. I will return the camera on _____________________________. I will take care of the camera. I understand that if I do not return the camera, I may have to pay for the camera.

Signed ____________________________
**Downloading Pictures from Your Digital Camera**

Adapted from [http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/takeit/transfer.mspx](http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/takeit/transfer.mspx) by Tony Northrup

Here's how to copy your pictures using Windows:

1. First, connect your digital camera to your computer. **Use a USB cable.** Most digital cameras come with a cable that connects the camera to a USB (Universal Serial Bus) port on your computer.

   ![Digital Camera Connected to Computer](image)

2. Once you've connected your camera to your computer, Windows will detect the connection and ask you what you want to do with your pictures. Click **Microsoft Scanner and Camera Wizard**, and then click **OK**.

   ![Device Connected Dialog Box](image)
3. When the Scanner and Camera Wizard appears, click **Next**.
4. All of the pictures on your camera (or in your camera’s memory card) are now displayed on the Choose Pictures to Copy page. By default, Windows XP selects all of the pictures for downloading. If there are pictures that you do not want to download, just clear the check box next to those pictures. At this stage, you can also rotate pictures that you took while holding your camera vertically. To rotate a picture, click it, and then click either the **Rotate clockwise** or **Rotate counterclockwise** button on the lower-left side of the page. When you have reviewed the pictures for downloading and rotated your vertical pictures, click **Next**.

5. On the Picture Name and Destination page, type a name for the group of pictures. (This name, plus a number to differentiate each picture, will be applied to each of the pictures you download; for example, if you name the group “Vacation,” the pictures will be named “Vacation001,” “Vacation002,” and so on.) Click **Browse**, and select a folder in which to save your pictures.

   **You might want to create a new folder for each group of pictures.**

6. If you want to erase the images from your camera’s memory card to make space for new ones, select the **Delete pictures from my device after copying them** check box, and then click **Next**. The Scanner and Camera Wizard copies the pictures from your camera to the folder you specified and then removes the pictures from your camera’s memory card.
7. Click **Next**.

8. On the final page of the wizard, click **Finish**. You should see a small link for the folder where you saved your pictures. Click on the link to open a Windows Explorer window showing the pictures you downloaded from your camera. Your camera's memory card is now clean and ready to store new pictures. If you connected your camera to your computer using a USB cable, disconnect your camera.
Photo Project – Weather Books

Today, we are going to view the photos we took and choose 3 – 5 pictures for our first book.

1. Log onto the computer.

2. Open Internet Explorer (click on the on the bottom of the screen).

3. Go to Picasa. Type picasaweb.google.com in the address box.
4. Log into Picasa. Click **Sign In**.

5. Click on **Photos**.
6. Find 3 – 5 photos to use for your book. Write the number of your photos here (example 9 of 73.)

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

Tomorrow we will practice downloading the pictures onto your computer. You can download photos at home, too. You can have copies of the photos.
Making a PowerPoint Photo Book

1. Open PowerPoint.
2. Click on insert > picture > new photo album.

3. Choose to insert pictures from file (or directly from camera).
4. Find your pictures and choose them. You can select as many as you want by clicking on them. (You can also highlight a group of pictures by dragging a box around them). Then click Insert.

5. Set picture layout to “1 picture with title” so students have a box on top to write about the pictures.
6. Finally, click **Create**.
Grading Rubric for Photo Writing Project

Student’s Name __________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taking the Pictures</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I took 3-5 photographs of _____________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I returned the camera on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing about My Pictures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing about My Pictures</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wrote about a picture. This is my first draft.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shared my first draft with a partner or teacher. We revised my writing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I typed or wrote the final copy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My final writing has correct punctuation and grammar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My final writing was finished on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading Rubric for Photo Writing Project

| Student’s Name __________________________ |

### Taking the Pictures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I took 3-5 photographs of ____________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I returned the camera on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Writing about My Pictures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wrote 3-5 sentences about a picture. This is my first draft.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shared my first draft with a partner or teacher and we revised my writing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I typed or wrote the final copy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My final paragraph has correct punctuation and grammar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My final paragraph was finished on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name____________________
Date____________________

**Student Survey**

| I like taking photos with the digital camera. | Yes | No |
| The photos help me think about what to write. |     |    |
| I like to read other students’ books. |     |    |
| I like to share my books with other students. |     |    |
| My family and friends read my books. |     |    |
| I like to make digital stories. |     |    |
| I like to share digital stories. |     |    |
## Possible Projects with Digital Cameras
### Mini Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation Link</th>
<th>Name of Grant</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Award Amount</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dollar General</strong></td>
<td>Adult Literacy Grants Family Literacy Grants</td>
<td>Funds literacy services for adults, schools, families, and students</td>
<td>Not Specified</td>
<td>March 4, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYTA Youth Foundation</strong></td>
<td>Silver Lining Program</td>
<td>Provides a travel experience for high school students to overcome extreme circumstances, expand awareness, and create a dramatic life change.</td>
<td>All-expenses paid travel experience for a class of up to 50 students</td>
<td>June 1, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)</strong></td>
<td>2009 NCSS Grant for the Enhancement of Geographic Literacy</td>
<td>To promote geography education in schools</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>March 21, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jordan</strong></td>
<td>Jordan Fundamentals Innovation and Inspiration Grants</td>
<td>Innovation: Funds projects that will improve instruction Inspiration: Funds teacher teams to scale up approaches developed with Innovation Grants. At least 50 percent of school must be Free/Reduced Lunch eligible.</td>
<td>Innovation: Up to $2,500 Inspiration: Up to $10,000</td>
<td>April 15, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panasonic</strong></td>
<td>Panasonic National School Change Awards</td>
<td>Must demonstrate change in the school that meets certain stated criteria. Please note: less than 1% of applicants received awards last year.</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>March 4, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ING</strong></td>
<td>Unsung Heroes</td>
<td>Funds unique</td>
<td>$2,000 (top)</td>
<td>April 30, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation/Merchandise</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Classroom Projects</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verizon Foundation</td>
<td>Education and Literacy Grants</td>
<td>To increase literacy and educational achievement</td>
<td>Average grant size: $5,000-$10,000</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra Jack Keats</td>
<td>Ezra Jack Keats Minigrant Program for Public Schools and Public Libraries</td>
<td>To support art and literacy programs</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>September 15, annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Farm Companies</td>
<td>Education Excellence</td>
<td>To fund programs for teacher quality, service learning, and systemic improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burger King Have it</td>
<td>Corporate Contributions</td>
<td>Contributions for youth education and/or other types of community actions or services where BURGER KING® restaurants have a major presence</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Way Foundation</td>
<td>Mix It Up Grant</td>
<td>Youth-directed programs and projects that address social boundaries in schools or communities</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Poverty Law</td>
<td>Charitable website</td>
<td>Register for learning materials from donors</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DonorsChoose.org</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreyer’s Foundation</td>
<td>Small Grants Program</td>
<td>Ice cream donations for events.</td>
<td>Up to $3,000</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt-A-Classroom</td>
<td>Adopt-A-Classroom Grants</td>
<td>Provides credit to purchase enrichment items</td>
<td>$500 Credit</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca-Cola Foundation</td>
<td>Coca-Cola Foundation</td>
<td>Provides support for new solutions</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>for high-quality education</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Poverty Law Center</td>
<td>Teaching Tolerance Grant</td>
<td>To support projects designed to reduce prejudice among youth and improve intergroup relations in schools</td>
<td>$500 - $2500</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnes &amp; Noble</td>
<td>Donations &amp; Sponsorships</td>
<td>To support organizations that focus on literacy, the arts or education (K-12).</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Library Association</td>
<td>Multiple grants</td>
<td>Library grants and awards</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Reading Association</td>
<td>Multiple grants</td>
<td>Literacy grants and awards</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Association</td>
<td>Learning and Leadership</td>
<td>Funds professional development.</td>
<td>$2,000 – Individual $5,000 – Groups $5,000</td>
<td>February 1, June 1, and October 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Achievement</td>
<td>To improve the academic achievement of students, esp. low-income students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay It Forward Foundations</td>
<td>Pay It Forward Mini-grant</td>
<td>To enable classroom educators to initiate community service projects.</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-Source: Fairfax County Public Schools, Department of Professional Learning and Training
List of Resources


Building Literacy through Student-Authored Books
Michelle Campiglia and Sharon Widmayer
TESOL 2009

School District __________________________
State ________________________________

1. How have you incorporated digital photography into your ESOL classroom? What challenges/successes did you and your students experience?

2. Which element(s) of the presentation would you like to use in your classroom?

3. What other topics related to literacy students would you like to see addressed at future conferences?