

## What's My Story?

### *Capturing Wisdom With Technology: Unit Two*

**Objectives:** Students will create an iMovie about themselves, their families, and the things that are important to them. Developing writing and organizational skills, this project asks students to reflect on who they are, what's important to them, and how they fit into a community. This project validates and reinforces the importance of the cultures of the students and their knowledge of their backgrounds.

**Supporting Resources:** About Myself Worksheet, About Myself Index Cards (optional), "What's My Story?" Storyboard Worksheet, Family Pictures Students Bring from Home

**Note:** This project can be easily adapted for PowerPoint, HyperStudio, or AppleWorks. Please see the Technology Overview section for ideas on adapting this project if iMovie is unavailable.

**Grade Levels:** 3–12

English Language Development	Themes of Culture and Community	Technology
Oral Skills	Reflect on strengths present in our lives.	Use features of iMovie software to import, sequence, and work with digital pictures.
Writing Skills	Validate the importance of family and friends.	Perform searches for relevant information on the Internet. Download pictures from the Internet to use in the project.
Vocabulary Development	Reflect on the elements of one's culture and background that hold value.	Record sound on the computer.
Editing and Revising Skills	Make choices about what to present about oneself.	Use word processing software to type the story (optional).

#### **Community-Building Activity:**

- 1) Form a circle with students and discuss what matters in their lives. Using the questions on the About Myself Worksheet as your guide, discuss with students what they value and who is important to them. List what is important in different cultures, and discuss that some values are universal while some are specific to certain cultures.
- 2) Show an example of a completed project if possible. If the students see a sample story they will get a better idea of what they are preparing to do. Discuss with them why the author of the story chose the pictures in the project.
- 3) Have students complete the About Myself Worksheet individually. You may need to do onewith the whole group before students fill out their own. Have students call out answers so they can get an understanding of how to fill in the blanks.
- 4) Return to the circle and share. Ask for a few volunteers to share the answers on their worksheets.

### **Developing Their Storyboards**

- 1) Have students use the What's My Story? Storyboard Worksheet to organize what they are going to present in their iMovie. They should have at least 6–8 slides—if there is additional time, students can create more slides. (Please See *Narration First: A Variation on This Project* for an alternative way to help students develop their content.)
- 2) Have students write ideas on what to say about their pictures on index cards. The first frame should be a title of their choice; the second frame should introduce them using a picture. Continue on with the rest of the slides.
- 3) Optional: Have students bring in pictures from home. These can be scanned in or photographed with a digital camera. Have them add these pictures to their projects.
- 4) Have students search the Internet for pictures to go with the cards on their storyboard. For this portion, it is often useful to do a short lesson on how to search the Web, including how to determine relevant information sources and how to sift through sites which are less credible. If students have trouble identifying what sorts of pictures to use, remind them of the answers they put on the About Myself Worksheet. They can select pictures related to their cultures and symbols that can be found through Web searches.
- 5) Teach students to download the pictures from the Web. They can download these pictures to a folder you create on the computer or onto a disk.
- 6) Have students write out what they will say for each picture on index cards. Have them refer to the What's My Story? Storyboard Worksheet to help them with what should go on each card. (Alternatively, they can draw boxes similar to the storyboard worksheet on a blank sheet of paper, and fill those out.)
- 7) Have students practice what they will record with each other or with the teacher. (Remind them to use “talking voices” not “reading voices.”)
- 8) NOTE: If students need to work in groups due to a limited number of computers, have them develop their storyboards together.

### **Introducing the iMovie Activity to the Class**

- 9) Demonstrate to the whole group what they are expected to do. If possible, use one computer and a projector to create a story just as the students will be doing.
- 10) Show a project you have made about yourself or another sample project at this point to remind students what their end results will look like.
- 11) Show students how to import pictures into iMovie.
- 12) Show students how to record narration.
- 13) Remind students that each picture or narration should purposefully tell the audience what is meaningful to the author of the movie.

### **As Students Do Their Project in iMovie**

- 14) Have students refer to their storyboards and begin creating their projects on the computer.
- 15) Remind students that they should rehearse their stories before they begin writing. If possible, have them tell their story to a group member or the teacher.
- 16) Assist students in matching up the timing of the audio and video tracks the first time they do this project.
- 17) Review the project once the students have recorded the narration.
- 18) Have students add transitions if desired. (Transitions can affect the matched audio and video times. If there is limited time to complete the project, do not have students do transitions.)

### **Optional Elements for the Projects**

- Take digital pictures of the students and have them import their picture into their project. They can use this picture to make the final credits slide.
- If time permits, have students bring in CDs to put an additional audio track on their project. Students should use instrumental music for the audio track; otherwise, music can drown out their voices.

The following paragraphs describe an experience from a workshop that included special education and ESL students.. This alternative way to do the project was successful for the diverse learning styles of these students.

#### **Narration First: A Variation on This Project**

In a class of very young students with varying abilities (some were in special education and some were ESL students), a variation on this project proved very successful. The teacher identified that these students had anxiety with writing and trouble with structured activities related to writing.

To address this issue and create a situation where students could start with their strengths rather than be faced with their weaknesses, we tried something different. Rather than force the students to fill out the storyboard worksheet in writing, we decided to start with oral communication. We printed the questions from the storyboard worksheets onto index cards. Each storyboard page became one index card. Each group of two students was given a set of index cards. The students read each question on the cards and recorded their answers onto the computers without writing anything out. (It helped to have them practice their answers orally with their partners or a teacher before recording.)

In this way, the audio track in iMovie was created before anything else was done. Students took turns recording the answers to each card. (For instance, Student A would record his or her answer on Card 1 and then Student B would do the same.his or her on Card 1.) When they were done with the complete audio track, they imported the digital pictures of family photos and traditions in their cultures found on the Internet and matched the pictures with the sound track they had already recorded.

This variation was a great success with this class. Some students did choose to write down their answers before recording them, but giving students the option to write or not helped address the many different learning styles in this one classroom.

## About Myself Worksheet

This worksheet is to be used during the Community-Building Group Activity preceding the iMovie activity. Teacher Notes are provided in red below for some concepts and vocabulary that teachers can discuss in a large group before having students fill out the worksheet. Discuss the answers in a group with the students. The questions here will help them develop ideas about how to complete their storyboard.

My full name is \_\_\_\_\_.

My name means (optional) \_\_\_\_\_.

When I was younger, I \_\_\_\_\_.

(Can you remember a story someone told you about yourself when you were younger?)

I come from \_\_\_\_\_.

Some things that remind me of the place I come from are

\_\_\_\_\_.

One thing I know about my culture is

\_\_\_\_\_.

One symbol of my culture is \_\_\_\_\_.

(Teachers: Students often need to discuss the definition of a *symbol* before answering this question.)

An important value in my culture is \_\_\_\_\_.

(Teachers: Students often need to discuss the concept of a *value* before answering this question.)

The people in my family are \_\_\_\_\_.

The quality I like in a person is \_\_\_\_\_.

(Teachers: Students often need to discuss what good qualities are before answering this question.)

Something people do in my culture is \_\_\_\_\_.

(You can name an activity or food or event that is related to your culture.)

In school, I enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.

At home, I enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel happy when \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel strong when \_\_\_\_\_.

## What's My Story? Storyboard Worksheet:

The topics on each card and the related questions can be modified to suit the age and abilities of your students. The simple topics below are often useful prompts for ESL students who are developing vocabulary and comfort with speaking. Using index cards, students can write down their answers and what type of picture they plan to use.

1.

### Title of Your Project Name of Author(s)

*Choose an image that says something about you. You can download this from the Internet or use a picture from home.*

2.

### About Me

*You will use a picture of yourself here.*

- What is your name?
- If your name has a meaning, what is it?
- Do you know a story about something you did when you were a small child or something you remember from when you were younger?

3.

### The Place I Am From

*Find an image of the place you are from using the Internet or a family picture.*

- Where do you come from? (Where were you born?)
- What are some of the things that come from that place?

4.

### My Family and My Culture

*Choose a picture that shows your family, people from your culture, or a symbol that is important to your culture.*

- Who is in your family?
- What do people in your family or culture like to do?  
(You can name events, holidays, or things people do together.)

5.

### Things I Love to Do

*Choose a picture that shows something you like to do or take a picture of some art you have created.*

- What things do you like to do?
- How do you feel when you do things you like?
- What are your favorite subjects in school?
- Why do you like this subject?
- What makes you feel strong?

6.

### Me!

Add a digital picture of yourself and say whatever you want to end your project.