

Digital Storytelling & Multimedia Project Pack

10 Creative Projects Using Free Digital Tools

Grades 5 - 9

Google Slides | Canva | Book Creator | WeVideo

Digital Picture Books | Infographic Explainers
Digital Comic Strips | Video Book Trailers | Audio Documentaries

Project Briefs | Tool How-To Guides | Planning Templates
Peer Feedback Forms | Rubrics | Showcase Guide | Portfolio Template

Table of Contents

Introduction & Teacher Overview

Tool How-To Guides

- Google Slides Overview
- Canva Overview
- Book Creator Overview
- WeVideo Overview

Project 1: Digital Picture Book - Book Creator

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 2: Digital Picture Book - Google Slides

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 3: Infographic Explainer - Canva

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 4: Infographic Explainer - Google Slides

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 5: Digital Comic Strip - Book Creator

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To

- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 6: Digital Comic Strip - Canva

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 7: Video Book Trailer - WeVideo

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 8: Video Book Trailer - Canva

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 9: Audio Documentary - WeVideo

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Project 10: Audio Documentary - Google Slides

- Project Brief
- Tool How-To
- Planning Template
- Peer Feedback Form
- Rubric

Teacher Showcase Guide

Digital Portfolio Template

Review & Credits

Introduction & Teacher Overview

Welcome to the **Digital Storytelling & Multimedia Project Pack** - a comprehensive resource designed for educators working with students in Grades 5 through 9. This pack provides everything you need to guide learners through **10 engaging digital storytelling projects** using free, accessible tools: Google Slides, Canva, Book Creator, and WeVideo.

Digital storytelling empowers students to combine narrative skills with multimedia technology, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and communication. Each project in this pack is carefully scaffolded to support diverse learners while maintaining academic rigor appropriate for upper elementary and middle school classrooms.

What This Pack Includes

Each of the 10 projects contains the following components, ready to print or assign digitally:

Project Brief - A clear overview with learning objectives and deliverables tailored to the project type and tool.

Tool How-To Guide - Step-by-step instructions specific to the project and the digital tool being used.

Student Planning Template - A structured organizer for pre-production planning to guide student thinking before building.

Peer Feedback Form - A structured form for classmates to provide specific, constructive feedback on draft projects.

Project Rubric - A detailed 5-criterion, 4-level rubric (20 points total) aligned to the project type and tool.

Additionally, this pack includes a **Teacher Showcase Guide** for celebrating student work, a **Digital Portfolio Template** for students to curate and reflect on their projects over time, and a **Review & Credits** page.

How to Use This Pack

1. **Choose a project** based on your curriculum goals, available technology, and student interests. Projects can be completed in any order.
2. **Distribute the Project Brief** to introduce the assignment. Review learning objectives and deliverables with your class.
3. **Walk through the Tool How-To Guide** with students, or assign it as independent reading before they begin working in the digital tool.
4. **Require the Planning Template** before production begins. This ensures students think through their narrative and design choices before building.
5. **Implement Peer Feedback** at the draft stage. The structured form keeps feedback constructive, specific, and actionable.
6. **Assess with the Rubric** provided. Each rubric is tailored to the project type and tool, evaluating both content quality and technical skill.
7. **Showcase finished work** using the Teacher Showcase Guide, and encourage students to add projects to their Digital Portfolio.

Technology Requirements

All tools used in this pack offer free versions suitable for classroom use. Below is a summary of what students will need:

Tool	Account Required	Device	Internet
Google Slides	Google account	Chromebook / Laptop / Tablet	Yes
Canva	Free account	Chromebook / Laptop / Tablet	Yes
Book Creator	Free account (1 library)	Chromebook / Laptop / Tablet	Yes
WeVideo	Free account	Chromebook / Laptop	Yes

Tip: Before starting, ensure all students have access to the required accounts and devices. Consider setting up a shared Google Drive folder or class library in Book Creator for easy project submission and collaboration.

Tool How-To Guides

This section provides a general overview of each tool. Project-specific instructions are included within each project section. Share these overviews with students before they select a project so they understand the capabilities of each platform.

Google Slides

Google Slides is a free, cloud-based presentation tool included with every Google account. It is ideal for creating visual stories, infographics, and comic-style layouts using slides as panels.

Key Features for Storytelling

Layouts: Choose from multiple slide layouts or customize your own with text boxes, shapes, and images.

Collaboration: Multiple students can edit the same presentation simultaneously in real time.

Images & Drawing: Insert images from the web, your drive, or use the built-in drawing tool for custom illustrations.

Transitions & Animations: Add slide transitions and animate text or objects for visual interest.

Speaker Notes: Use the notes area below each slide to write scripts or narration prompts.

Export Options: Download as PDF, PowerPoint, or share a view-only link for presentation.

Getting Started

1. Sign in to your Google account and go to **slides.google.com**.
2. Click **Blank** to start a new presentation, or choose a template.
3. Rename your presentation with a descriptive project title.
4. Use the **Insert** menu to add text boxes, images, shapes, or lines.
5. Customize fonts, colors, and backgrounds using the toolbar.
6. When finished, share with your teacher using the **Share** button.

Tip for Students: Use the **Explore** button (star icon, bottom right) to get smart layout suggestions. Press **Ctrl+M** (or **Cmd+M** on Mac) to quickly add a new slide.

Peer Feedback Form

Share your completed project with a classmate. Ask them to fill out this feedback form with constructive comments.

Reviewer Name:	
Project Author:	
Project Title:	

Category	Prompt	Peer Comments
Story Flow	Does the story have a clear beginning, middle, and end?	
Illustrations	Do the images match the text and help tell the story?	
Audio Quality	Is the narration clear, expressive, and easy to understand?	
Audience Fit	Is the language and content appropriate for the target age?	
Strengths	What is the best part of this picture book?	
Suggestion	What is one thing the author could improve?	

Video Book Trailer - WeVideo

Project Type: Video Book Trailer | Primary Tool: WeVideo

Project Brief

Create a captivating 60-90 second video book trailer that persuades viewers to read a novel or informational text. Similar to a movie trailer, your video should build excitement using dynamic visuals, text overlays, and background music without giving away the entire plot.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the core themes and mood of a selected book.
- Sequence media on a timeline to build suspense and interest.
- Combine video clips, images, text, and audio to create a persuasive multimedia message.

Deliverables

- A completed 60-90 second video exported as an MP4.
- At least 4 text overlays introducing the book's title, author, and key hook.
- Background music and/or voiceover that matches the mood of the book.

Tool How-To Guide: WeVideo

Follow these step-by-step instructions to complete your project using **WeVideo**.

1. Log in to WeVideo and click **Create new > Video**. Set your aspect ratio (16:9 for standard video).
2. Import your media by clicking the **Import** tab. Upload images, short video clips, or photos from your device.
3. Drag your media clips from the library down onto the **Video 1** track on the timeline. Trim clips by clicking and dragging their edges.
4. Add text overlays by clicking the **Text** tab. Choose a text style and drag it onto the **Text** track above your video. Type your hook, title, and author.
5. Add background music by clicking the **Audio** tab. Browse the royalty-free library and drag a track onto the **Audio 1** track. Adjust the volume so it doesn't overpower any voiceover.
6. Apply transitions (like Fade to Black) between clips by clicking the **Transitions** tab and dragging them between clips. Click **Finish** to export your MP4.

Pro Tips:

Keep your trailer between 60 and 90 seconds—just long enough to tease the story!

Use the **Volume** slider on your audio track to 'duck' the music (make it quieter) when your text or voiceover appears.

End with a clear call to action, like 'Read it today!' or an image of the book cover.

Audio Documentary - Google Slides

Project Type: Audio Documentary | Primary Tool: Google Slides

Project Brief

Create an interactive 'Visual Radio' documentary using Google Slides. Combine embedded audio narration, sound effects, and curated visual aids on each slide to guide the audience through an informative exploration of a real-world topic. This format blends traditional documentary audio with visual supports.

Learning Objectives

- Research a topic and organize findings into clear, distinct segments.
- Record and embed audio files to create a narrative-driven presentation.
- Select relevant images that support the audio narration without distracting from it.

Deliverables

- A completed 6-8 slide Google Slides presentation.
- Embedded audio narration on every slide (recorded externally and inserted).
- Supporting images or visual aids on every slide that match the narration.

Tool How-To Guide: Google Slides

Follow these step-by-step instructions to complete your project using **Google Slides**.

1. Open a blank Google Slide. Use **File > Page setup** and choose **Standard 4:3** or **Widescreen 16:9**.
2. Record your script for each slide using a free tool like **Vocaroo** (vocaroo.com) or your device's voice recorder. Save the audio files (MP3) to your Drive.
3. On your first slide, add a title and a visual. Then, click **Insert > Audio** and select the narration file for that slide from your Google Drive.
4. Format the audio icon: click it, then click **Format options**. Check **Start playing > Automatically** so the audio plays as soon as the slide appears. Drag the icon to a corner.
5. Add relevant images using **Insert > Image**. Keep text minimal—let your voiceover do the storytelling. Add captions only if needed to identify the image.
6. Repeat for all slides. Use **Present** mode to review the documentary, ensuring audio plays automatically and images match the narration. Share via link.

Pro Tips:

Always set your audio to **Start playing Automatically** in Format Options so the viewer doesn't have to click the tiny speaker icon!

Keep text on the slides to an absolute minimum. The focus should be on your voiceover and the images.

Make sure your Google Drive audio sharing permissions are set to 'Anyone with the link can view,' or the audio won't play for your teacher!

Teacher Showcase Guide

Celebrating student work is a critical part of the digital storytelling process. A public audience motivates students to produce higher-quality work and gives them a sense of pride in their accomplishments. Below are strategies and ideas for showcasing the digital storytelling projects created with this pack.

Why Showcase?

Validation: Shows students their work is valued and worth sharing.

Accountability: Raises the stakes for quality when students know peers and parents will view their work.

Communication Skills: Gives students practice presenting and discussing their creative choices.

Community Building: Brings the classroom community together around shared creative achievements.

Showcase Format Ideas

Choose a format that fits your classroom setup and available technology:

Format	Description	Best For
Film Festival	Reserve a block of time to screen all video trailers and audio documentaries. Dim the lights, use a projector, and pass out "tickets."	Projects 7, 8, 9, 10
Gallery Walk	Set up devices (laptops/tablets) around the room. Students display their picture books, comics, or infographics. Viewers rotate and leave feedback.	Projects 1-6
QR Code Museum	Print QR codes linked to student projects. Hang them in the hallway or classroom. Viewers scan with their devices to view the work.	All Projects
Class Website/Blog	Embed or link student projects on a class website, Google Site, or LMS page. Share the link with parents.	All Projects

Assessment During Showcases

Use the showcase as an opportunity for peer assessment. Hand out copies of the Peer Feedback Forms from the project sections, or ask students to write one "Glow" (a compliment) and one "Grow" (a constructive suggestion) for each project they view. This keeps the audience engaged and provides the creators with valuable input.

Digital Portfolio Template

A digital portfolio allows students to curate, reflect on, and share their multimedia projects over the course of a term or school year. Use this template as a guide for students to set up their own portfolio using Google Slides, Google Sites, or a shared drive folder.

Portfolio Setup Instructions (for Students)

1. Create a new Google Site (or a Google Slides presentation) to serve as your portfolio homepage.
2. Add a title and a brief "About Me" section so viewers know who you are.
3. Create a new page or section for **Digital Storytelling**.
4. Use the log table below to keep track of your projects. For each project, add a link to the final file, a brief reflection, and an image or screenshot.
5. At the end of the term, review your log and write a summary reflection on your growth as a digital storyteller.

Project Log

Project Title	Type	Tool Used	Date	Link / File	Reflection (1-2 sentences)

Reflection Prompts

- What was the biggest challenge you faced during this project, and how did you overcome it?
- Which of your projects are you most proud of, and why?
- How did your skills with digital tools improve from the first project to the last?
- If you could re-do one project, what would you change about your process or final product?

Thank You for Your Purchase!

I truly appreciate your support and hope this **Digital Storytelling & Multimedia Project Pack** brings creativity and engagement into your classroom.

Your Feedback Matters!

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