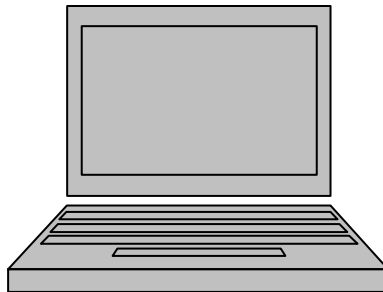TESOL New York City 2008

Pre-Conference Institute

ELLs as Writers in a Digital Age

Technology Recipes

For English Language Learners

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ELL Tech Recipe
BLOGGING: TECHNOLOGY RECIPE FOR CREATING A BLOG

Serves:

English Learners at any level – the content is up to you, so you determine what will be of the most benefit to your students. Better yet, it's interactive, so your students may respond, and it's fun, which helps keep the affective filter at a manageable level.

Ingredients:

To create a blog you will need a computer with access to the Internet. A high-speed Internet connection is optimal. No special software or hardware aside from your basic computer is required. The more tech tools you have, the more things you can add to your blog, but a very nice blog may be created without any extras at all.

A blog is like an interactive, dynamic Web page. You may include images that you want your students to respond to, slide shows, podcasts, online discussions, student writing, create a class publication, let students who were absent know what they missed, make announcements, even links to other sites, such as your online gradebook. Or you can keep it very simple and just have students respond to articles you post, or writing that you or they post.

Directions for Cooking

Go to a blogging website and sign up. You may find that edublogs.org is a particularly good site. Because it is safe for all users it is most likely that your school district's tech department will be willing to open access to it. The website will walk you through creating your own blog.

Other free blogs are listed below. The key is to choose one and get good at using it. They all are slightly different.

Wordpress.com (EduBlogs uses Wordpress as its software, so if you can do one, you can do them both.)
Blogspot.com
Blogger.com
Livejournal.com

.mytypes.com

Basically, the steps are as follows:

1. Go to edublogs.org

2. Sign up for the site.

3. Go to "Start a blog"

    a. Register your domain (your own URL) for this blog.

    b. Give it a title (this can be changed)

    c. Decide on a privacy level

        i. Can search engines find it, or just people you invite?

        ii. You will want to be the Administrator and your students can be contributors or authors, depending on how much control you are willing to share.

4. Click the tab "My Dashboards"

5. First, decide on how you want your blog to look

    a. Click the "Presentation" tab

        i. Shop for a theme and select one. This is easily changed if you decide you don't like it.

        ii. Decide on any widgets or extras you may want to add. (If you have chosen a one-column theme, you won't be able to easily add any widgets or extras.)

            1. Examples of widgets: calendar, search bar, archives (old entries), recent comments, blogroll (links). There are many more available.

        iii. If you have digital photos on your computer you may want to choose a custom image header. The program will walk you through cropping your image to fit the size of the header of whatever theme you chose.

6. Write your first post. You may want to introduce yourself, or the purpose of your blog. It's up to you!

a. Write, and then save.

b. When you are ready, click "Publish" to have the entry appear in your blog.

7. As you use your blog, you will become more adept at modifying it and adding new items. Just play with it a bit before you introduce it to your students, so you know what you can do with this technology and then have fun with it! It is a great way to create classroom community, and increase the connection between your students and their school experience.

ELL Tech Recipe
DIGITAL STORYTELLING USING PHOTO STORY 3

Serves:

Children as young as 6 or 7 have successfully produced digital stories (with assistance). English language learners, at any level, seem motivated and able to produce a simple digital story. Novice-level learners produce a simple script while highly proficient learners produce the digital story as a final project of a longer writing process.

Ingredients:
- Photo Story 3 downloaded on your PC computer
- A computer microphone
- A script, or written material that can be reduced to a script
- A collection of digital images, either your own or from Internet sites.

Directions for Cooking

1. The first step in the process is to download the free software program available from Microsoft for PCs Window-based systems. Click on download and follow the instructions as prompted.

http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx

2. After download is complete, look for the Photo Story icon on your desktop. It is put there automatically. Click on this icon and the program will open up.

3. Click on the option, "Begin a new story."
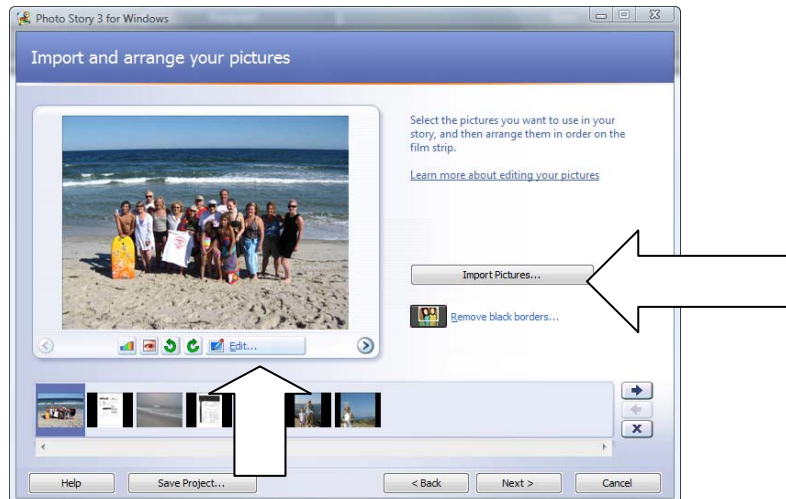
Moving from Action to Action

At the bottom of your screen are the major action buttons. "Back" and "Next" take you to the major action screens. These are the most important buttons.

In the sample story below, I talk about my family's immigrant voyage from Europe to New York City via Ellis Island. My students like hearing that my family, too, immigrated to America.

First Action: Importing Pictures and Editing Pictures

5. Importing Pics

You can import pictures from a variety of sources. You can import pics from your photo file on your computer. You can scan in images from documents using a scanner, save these as files, and import into Photo Story. Or, you can get images from www.images.google.com or Yahoo or Microsoft images. Just do a search of a term, such as "classroom."

5. The TV Screen

Inside the large frame is a TV screen-type frame. In each TV frame, you can manipulate pictures. For example on the "Import Pictures" frame, you can crop or cut your picture by clicking on the "edit" button.

6. Moving Images around

You can move from picture to picture by using the TV screen arrows or by clicking on the images themselves. You can also drag images into different places by clicking and dragging.

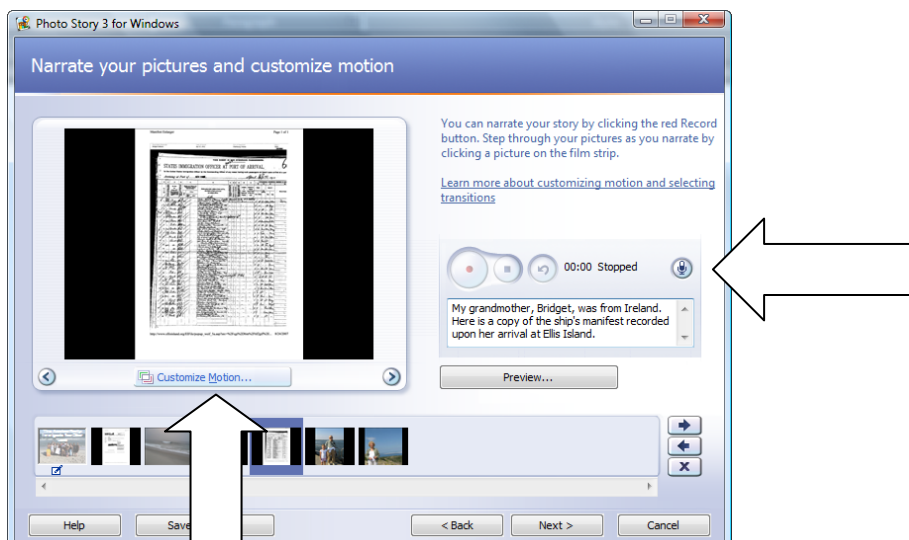**Action Two: Adding Text to Your Images AND Changing Picture Effects**

7. Adding Text

Using the text box on the right, you can add words to your images and change the size, color, and font of your words.

8. Changing Picture Effects

This is the jazzy stuff. You can change your image to sepia, watercolor, diffuse glow and a host of other effects. Just pull down the Effects menu.

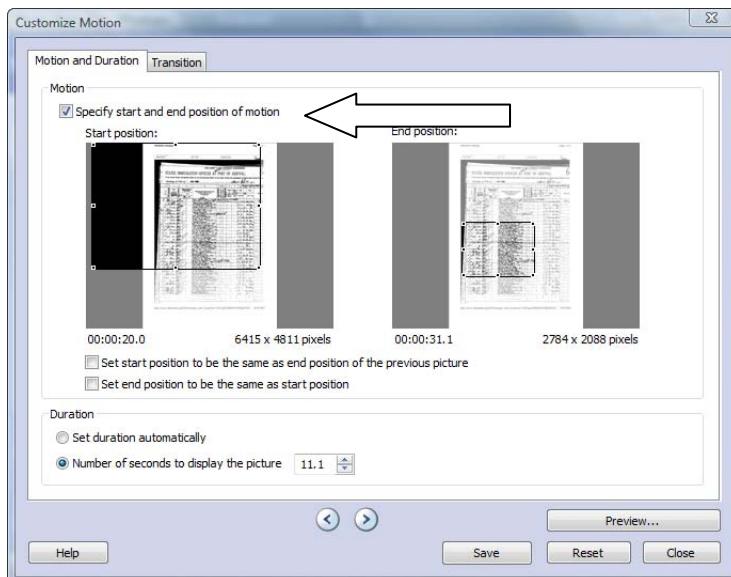## Action Three: Recording Voice and Customizing Motion and Transitions

10. Recording Your Voice

You will first need to make sure that you have a microphone hooked up to your computer (preferred) or that your computer has a microphone

built in. Then, write your script in the text box on the right. When you are satisfied and have practiced a bit, click on the red dot above your script. Read into the microphone. When you are done, click on the smaller "Stop" square. Listen to what you said by clicking on the Preview button. If you like it, fine. If you are not satisfied with your recording, click on the backward arrow and delete the recording. Start over again.
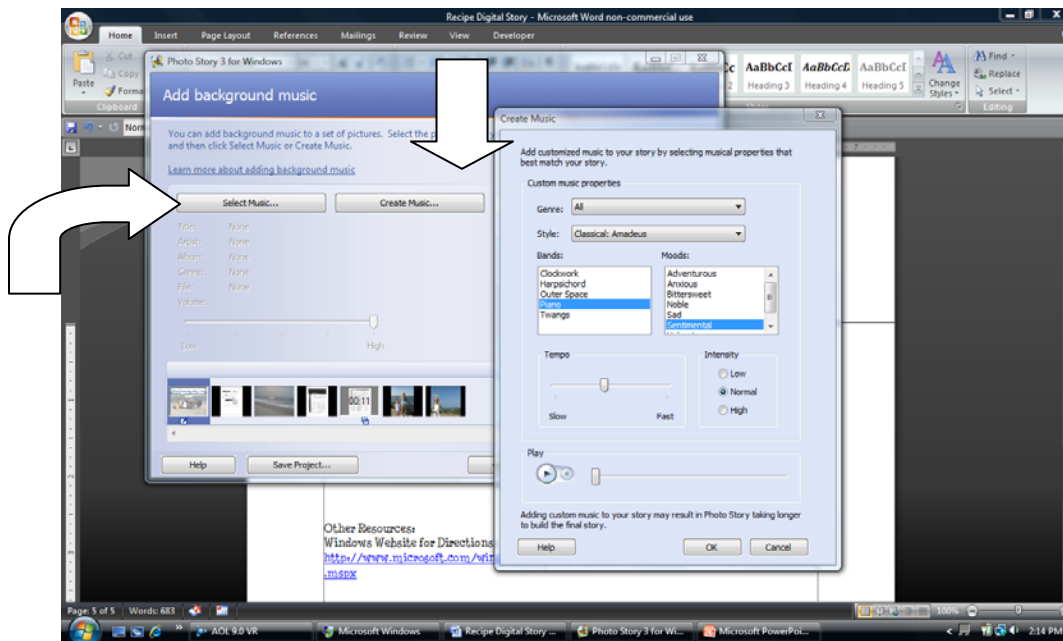
11. Customizing Motion: "Motion and Duration" Tab

This will take a bit of playing around. If you click on "Specify start and end," you will be able to create motion in your story. You can set the duration of time spent on each slide. Again, click on "Preview" to see your creation in progress.

12. Transitions

The other tab on the top of this screen lets you transition from slide to slide using different effects. Play around with this until you get the feeling you want to convey. Note, after you have made the changes, click on "Save" and then "Close" the screen.

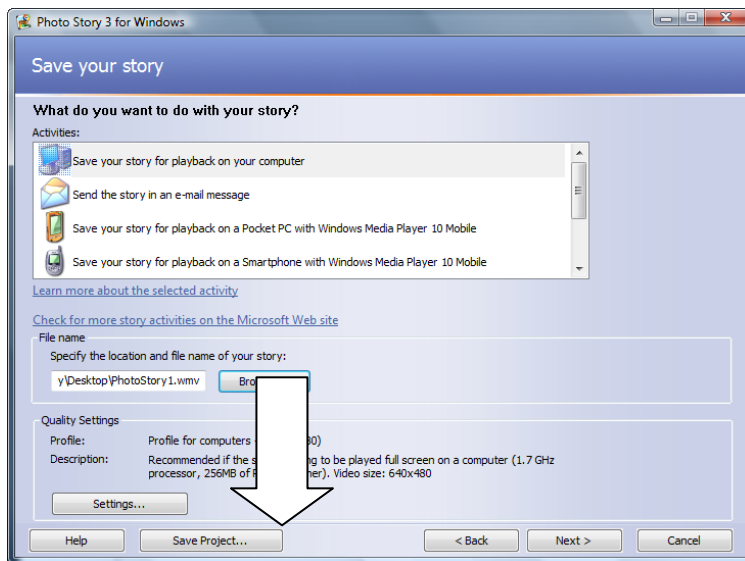**Action Four: Adding Music**

13. Select Music

You can put your favorite music CD in your computer disk player and select the music track to embed in your Photo Story. For example, I have a favorite Beatles instrumental CD that I find works well with many stories I create. There are also some Internet sites that allow you to download free music for use in your stories. Note: iTunes does not download into this program.

14. Create Music

You can also create computer-generated music within this Photo Story program. Students LOVE this function. Click on "Create Music" and have fun with the different sounds and moods available.

Action Five: Finish Your Project and Save It

14. Saving Your Project

I strongly recommend saving your story as a project (can be altered) before you save it as a final story. Saving your project just saves it within the Photo Story program. You can go back and edit, revise, etc. Do this first.

15. Save Your Story for Playback on Computer

When you are fairly satisfied with what you have done, save the story for playback. This allows you to "make the show"—or integrate all of the elements together. Toggle the "Save for Playback on your computer" and then hit "NEXT." This action builds your story and plays it back for you in a movie format. Be patient. You can save the stories to disk or flash drive as well.

Action Six: Enjoy the Show

Digital stories are meant to be shared. Hold a special presentation for your story or email your story to family and friends.

ELL Tech Recipes
PODCASTING RECIPE

Serves:
This technology serves ELL students at all levels. However, Level 1 ("Entering") ELLs who are not over the "silent" phase when discovering a new language and culture may need more guidance and maybe even some cajoling to speak into a microphone.

Ingredients:
The hardware you'll need is a computer with a built-in microphone or a USB microphone. You may also need an Internet connection. The software you'll need will be GarageBand or Audacity for Mac users and Audacity for Windows users. Audacity is a free download. You'll also want to have iTunes, also a free download.

Directions for Cooking

1) Start your software
2) Record your audio
3) Edit the audio (add music or remove unwanted material)
4) Save as MP3 file
5) If you want to publish, upload to a Web server (every school district has their own procedure).

Real quick GarageBand directions:

1) When you open GarageBand click on "new podcast episode" in the opening window.
2) On the top left is a series of five track bars where you'll actually record and mix your tracks. On the bottom left is where you can see a timeline of what you are creating or the "loop browser". To start things off, click on either "male voice" or "female voice."
3) Press the red record icon button in the middle left hand portion of your screen to begin recording. Stop recording by pressing the space bar.
4) Have some fun by adding some music/sound effects to your tracks. Click on the loop browser (eye-shaped icon in the middle left-hand portion of your screen) and to start things off, click "Jingles." You'll see a scrolling menu with lots of options to choose from. If you click on a selection, you can hear the track. Click on it again to stop playing. If you like the music you've chosen, click and drag it into the "Jingles" track in the above portion of your screen. You'll see a little green plus (+) sign indicating it can be put into that track.
5) Mixing tracks in GarageBand is easy. To the left of each track is a shaded area where you'll see five small icons under the name of the track ("male voice," "female voice," etc.). Click on the downward facing triangle (far right icon), which shows the track volume or pan curve. A shaded blue area will appear below the track. Now you can simply raise and lower the small blue circle to adjust the track volume. You can raise it up again farther along in the track in the same fashion. So if you want to bring volume down for one portion, drag the circle down until you want to raise it back up.
6) If that previous step is too much work for you, GarageBand also has a great feature called "ducking" which is easy to use. You'll

notice that each track has two triangular arrows in the right-hand portion of the shaded area to the left of the track. When you click the top arrow (it will turn yellow), that track will be featured (volume will remain high) while other tracks play under it. If you click the bottom arrow (it will turn blue), that track will be "ducked" or reduce in volume when your vocal (or whichever) track plays.

7) Save your work when have finished editing, click "send podcast to iTunes" in the "share" menu. Transfer/upload your online MP3 flies using FTP (File Transfer Protocol) services.

Real quick Audacity directions:

When you open Audacity you will see a toolbar at the very top with buttons very similar to the function buttons of a tape recorder or VCR. To begin recording, click the Record button and speak into the microphone. Hit the Stop button when you are finished, and click the Rewind button, then Play to hear the recording.

1) Editing your podcast is similar to cut-and-paste in a word or excel document. The cursor tool to select portions of your podcast that you would like to edit is in the top left of the screen. The other very useful tool in the editing process is the zoom in the tool located right below the cursor tool.

2) Select any part of your podcast using the cursor tool. When a portion is selected there will be a shadow over the selected portion. You may now cut and paste just like in a word document or formulas on a spreadsheet. Under the Edit Menu, you will use the basic commands.

3) You can also add music to your podcast. Make sure you have a music file to import. Under the Project menu, select Import Audio. A second audio track will appear and you can edit this track to a selected portion of the music, adjust the volume, or any other effect you choose.

4) To save the podcast use the File→Save command and Audacity will save your podcast as an .AUP file. In order for others to listen to your podcast, or to post it on the MyMHCC Portal or iTunes, you must save it as an MP3 file.

ELL Tech Recipes
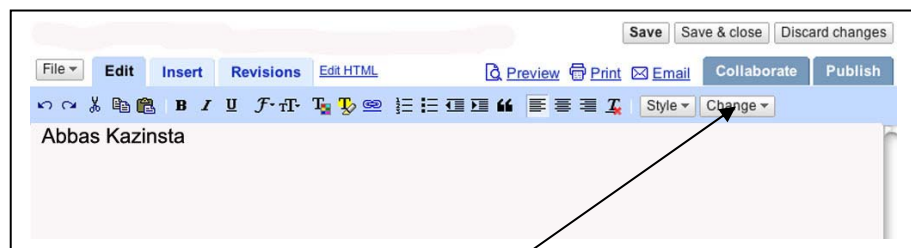## TECHNOLOGY RECIPE: *Google Docs*

Serves:
Students who are writing and responding to text. Wikis are especially helpful for students working on group projects, since they give everyone equal access to the same "documents."
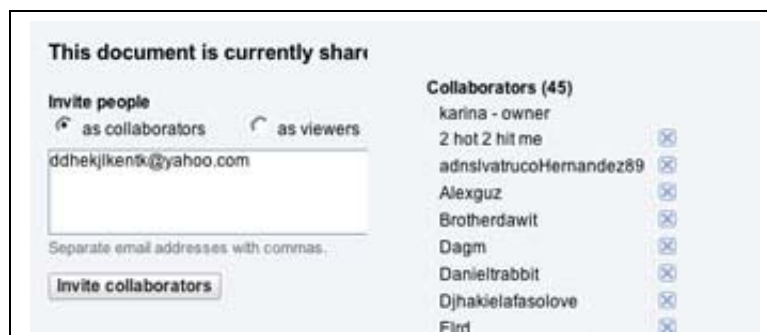
Ingredients:
It works best on PCs or Macs using Firefox. There have been some problems reported with Internet Explorer, but they appear to be resolved. If you are using Safari, Google Docs will tell you if you are using an unsupported version.

Directions for Cooking

- Log in to <docs.google.com> and take a tour. You can create a Google Docs account with any email address. (Google's email, called *gmail*, is not required.)

- When working with classes, it worked best for us when we created the document for each student. We put the student's name on the first line, making that the name of the document.

- Then we invited that student using the "Collaborate" tab.

- When we clicked on the "Invite collaborators" button, it allowed us to send a message to that student giving him or her the link to the document. This was helpful for those who did not have Google Docs accounts because it simplified the process of creating a Google Docs account.

- After we invited the individual student for whom we were creating a document, we pasted the list of all the students in the group into the collaborators' box. After we clicked on the "Invite collaborators" button, we chose not to send messages to all of them.

- For a teacher with multiple classes using Google Docs, grouping documents into class groups is important.
    - First, create a new folder under the "New" pull-down menu.

    - Then select the documents you want to group together.

- Then use the "Add to folder" pull-down menu to select the correct folder.

ELL Tech Recipes
RECIPE FOR *Wikispaces*

Serves:
Students who are writing and responding to text. Wikis are especially helpful for students working on group projects since they give everyone equal access to the same "documents."

Ingredients:
Mac running Firefox (Does not work well in Safari) or PC running Firefox or Internet Explorer

Directions for Cooking
- **Connect to** www.wikispaces.com
- Take a tour. Short videos of how to create and use a wiki will get you started quickly and easily.

- In less than 15 minutes you can have a wiki that your students can easily use to post their writing and get and give feedback.

- To add students, you can invite them by clicking on *Manage Space>Invite People*. You can also send a list of students, their

email addresses, and passwords to the people who run *Wikispaces* and they will add all the students. This allows you to know students' passwords, something that often comes in handy.

- One nice thing about *Wikispaces* is they give free accounts without any ads to schools. School wikis are private, so teachers control who can get into the wiki.