

Digital Storytelling Activity and Extension: Scratch Scratch in the Classroom

Scratch is a simple, visual programming language.

Using a colorful, playful interface, students can easily create their own own interactive stories, animations, games, music, and art and share their creations on the web.

Scratch is designed to help young people (ages 8 and up) develop 21st century learning skills. As they create Scratch projects, young people learn important mathematical and computational ideas, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the process of design.

Scratch is developed by the [Lifelong Kindergarten group](#) at the [MIT Media Lab](#).

Scratch is available for free at <http://scratch.mit.edu>.

Scratch tutorials and how-to-guides
<http://scratch.wik.is/Support>

Scratch for Educators Page.

Include tutorials, Scratch cards, and video tutorials with suggestions on how to introduce Scratch to classes.

<http://scratch.mit.edu/pages/educators>

Scratch can be used as a classroom digital story telling assignment for grade 4-8. Scratch can also be used for gifted students or as an extra credit assignment in addition to the digital story telling assignment.

Students can use their imagination and Scratch to create almost anything in their imagination. Below are some project ideas.

Digital Storytelling in Scratch: Creating an Animated Story

Goal: Students will create a short, animated story in Scratch. Students can use Scratch to draw and animate their own avatars and create costumes that the Maya might have worn. Students can import images of Tikal from CyArk as a background in their animated stories. Students can also draw on top of these images or draw their own background to portray what Tikal might have looked like in the past. The Scratch story can be fictional, but should be based upon research on the Maya and Tikal.

Examples:

Ancient Tikal

Animated story of what ancient Tikal might have looked like in the past.

<http://scratch.mit.edu/projects/namedina/124317>

Virtual Museum or Artifact

Goal: Students will create an interactive art gallery. Students can frame paintings and artifacts in their virtual museum. Using Scratch's simple programming, they can create an interactive environment. When an object is touched, more information and stories about the object can be shown.

Examples:

Virtual Museum

An interactive art gallery. Learn about artifacts and art.

<http://scratch.mit.edu/projects/chalkmarrow/93103>

Mexican Flag

An interactive map that explains the symbolism of the Mexican flag.

<http://scratch.mit.edu/projects/dancingqueen/34721>

Interactive Game

Goal: Using Scratch's simple programming, students will make an interactive, historical game.

Examples:

Rap Nui

Use island resources to build Moai heads on Easter Island to please the gods.

<http://scratch.mit.edu/projects/Wodunne/68498>

Alternatives to Computer Created Digital Storytelling Activities

There are several alternative assignments for students if you would prefer not to have students make computer created digital stories.

1. Scrapbook or Diary

Have students download images from the CyArk media website. Students can use the images to create a scrapbook or a diary entry describing the life of their fictional character living in Tikal. After learning about Tikal and completing the brainstorming section of the Tikal Student Sheets, students will use write a short story about a fictional character from Tikal. Using the images printed from the Cyark website and their own illustrations, students will use these images to convey the life of their fictional character in the form of a scrapbook or diary of that character.

2. Diorama or 3-D Model

Show students 3-D models of Tikal's temples on the CyArk website. Ask students to create their own model of Tikal. Students can create a diorama of the site or create their own 3-D model. Some suggestions for the construction of the models are Legos, sugar cubes and clay.