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COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION & MEDIA

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Using Transmedia in the Classroom

Or, how to get your students more engaged in
their arts education

By: School of Communication and Media Transmedia students

2019

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INTRODUCTION

This E-book is the culmination – and showcase – of the work produced by a Spring 2019 Transmedia Projects course taught at Montclair State University. The examples shown in the book were produced by those students, and their names appear in the sections they created.

Transmedia Projects is one of the core courses in the university's School of Communication and Media. It reflects the school's belief that media today is increasingly interconnected, and the operative word to describe this dynamic world of is "convergence."

The genesis of the book began more than six years ago when the Metropolitan Opera Guild in New York adopted a number of the transmedia techniques presented to them by a previous Transmedia Projects class.

The worlds of television, film, marketing and nonfiction have begun to integrate the use of social media platforms to build audience awareness, participation and loyalty, and, ultimately, sales.

As you will see in this book, the use of transmedia can also become part of the new century's template for education.

WHAT IS TRANSMEDIA?

Wikipedia has a good definition of Transmedia:

“[It is]telling a single story or story experience across multiple platforms and formats including, but not limited to, games, books, events, cinema and television. The purpose being to not only reach a wider audience by expanding the target market pool, but to expand the narrative itself.”

Transmedia author Robert Pratten puts it this way in his book, “Getting Started in Transmedia.”

“Transmedia storytelling is telling a story across multiple media and preferably, although it doesn’t always happen, with a degree of audience participation, interaction or collaboration.

In transmedia storytelling, engagement with each successive media heightens the audience’s understanding, enjoyment and affection for the story. To do this successfully, the embodiment of the story in each media needs to be satisfying in its own right while enjoyment from all the media should be greater than the sum of the parts.”

Transmedia producer Max Giovagnoli expands on the definition. This is an excerpt from his book, “Transmedia Storytelling: Imagery, Shapes and Techniques”

- 1) Doing transmedia means to involve multiple media in a publishing project.
- 2) Doing transmedia means to make the project’s contents available on different technological platforms without causing any overlaps or interferences, while managing the story experienced by different audiences.
- 3) Doing transmedia means to allow the multiple media to tell different stories but all exploring a common theme...
- 4) Doing transmedia means to agree to give a part of the authorship and responsibility of the tale to the audience...

“Convergence Culture” author Henry Jenkins defines “convergence” in ways that sound decidedly like “transmedia.”

“By convergence I mean the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want.”

WHY USE TRANSMEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM?

“Hansel and Gretel” was a popular fairy tale from the Grimm Brothers published in 1812. It was then adapted for the world of opera in 1893 by Englebert Humperdinck (not the singer).

You know the story. Hansel and Gretel are a young brother and sister whose lives are threatened by a 19th century female Hannibal Lecter type who loved to eat children. They save themselves by outwitting the witch. Along the way, there’s a gingerbread house and bread crumbs, a harried stepmother and a woodcutter father.

Like most linear stories, there’s a beginning, middle and end. But, ask yourselves this: Haven’t you wondered what the characters in your favorite movie or book did after the movie ended, or what they did before the story began, or simply what they were thinking or doing when the cameras weren’t on them during the story. Transmedia allows those things to occur, and the best part of all –

Your students can create those added story dimensions!

According to Andrea Philips, “Transmedia Storytelling can provide more engagement...” and that pretty much says it all.

You and/or your students can use transmedia to:

- Develop the story’s characters more fully
- Learn about the historical context in which the story takes place. This can include things like music, fashion, food, architecture, etc.
- Learn about story development
- ***Make your students part of the story!***
- ***Make your students co-creators of the story!***

SEVEN PRINCIPLES

The Seven Principles of Educational Use of Transmedia

By Henry Jenkins

Author of “Convergence Culture”

Scholar Henry Jenkins is considered one of the media industry’s leading authorities in the field of transmedia.

1) Spreadability vs. Drillability

Spreadability: Can the story be “spread” across many media or social landscapes? Can students look at many different platforms and find relevant material?

Drillability: This word refers to the student’s ability to dig deeper into something that interests us.

So, the question is, do we want our transmedia to be spread out among many platforms or focus on fewer elements that allow us get deeper into those subjects. According to Jenkins, “A good educational practice, then, encompasses both, allowing students to search out information related to their interests across the broadest possible terrain, while also allowing students to drill deep into something which matters to them. This requires us as educators to think more about motivation – what motivates students to drill deeper – as well as classroom management – how can we facilitate their capacity to dig into something that matters to them.

2) Continuity vs. Multiplicity

Continuity: Viewing a story in it’s traditional, accepted view. The continued retelling of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s version of “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere,” in which the silversmith and amateur dentist Paul Revere rode through Concord alerting the citizenry that “The British are coming; the British are coming” when, in fact, he didn’t

Multiplicity: Create “what if” scenarios. What if the witch in “Hansel and Gretel” never really wanted to eat the two but was misunderstood. She was really a kindly, but eccentric old woman who simply wanted to fatten up the children.

3) Immersion vs. Extraction

Immersion: Jumping into the world. In Verdi’s “Un Ballo Un Maschera,” do we let students become part of the story, become a character in it? Do the students become the Basis Hallward, Dorian Gray’s portrait artist?

Extraction: Are their meaningful artifacts or props we can take out of the story. Can we make use of the Green Hornet’s ring as part of an educational application in our transmedia exercise? How about some gingerbread cookies from “Hansel and

Gretel?”

4) World Building

According to Jenkins, “World Building comes out of thinking of the space of a story as a fictional geography.” In a film, poem, musical or opera, the world as created by the originator is linear and flat. Transmedia gives students a chance to make the world more three-dimensional.

“Many traditional school activities encourage students to cook and eat meals, to make and wear costumes, to engage in various rituals, associated with other historical periods. If we develop ways of mapping these worlds as integrated systems, we can push beyond these local insights towards a fuller, richer understanding of past societies.”

5) Seriality:

...Can we break the story down into bite sized chunks, in which those chunks can stand on their own regardless of the media platform upon which their housed. All those little chunks comprise the storyworld or mythology.

6) Subjectivity:

...Looks at the story from multiple points of view. Jenkins mentions telling the story of “Little Red Riding Hood” from the wolf’s perspective. How do you think the “Wizard of Oz” might be told if the wicked witch were the central character? She’d probably come off a little more sympathetic. One could, of course, argue that “Wicked” does indeed look much more sympathetically on the ill-fated witch.

7) Performance

What are you asking your students to do with what you teach them? How are they able to adapt it in a timely and meaningful fashion from knowledge to skill? And tied to this is the idea of adaptation and improvisation. So, how do we create a space where every student can perform the content of the class in ways which are meaningful to them?

The Four Creative Purposes for Transmedia Storytelling

From Andrea Philips' book, "A Creator's Guide To Transmedia Storytelling"

According to Philips, the four purposes, or elements, listed below are the most creative ways for expanding a single story medium into a fully developed transmedia project.

- 1) **Worldbuilding** – conveying information about time, place, and mood...creating a small piece of the world – either by you the teacher, or your students – and give it to your students to play in.
- 2) **Characterization** – Using social media and other platforms to give your students the opportunity to give characters greater depth and dimension.
- 3) **Backstory and Exposition** – Social media and other platforms provide students with the opportunity to create a story that can take place (within the world) either before or after the work of art you're studying.
- 4) **Native Transmedia** (we will cover this in the chapter titled "Native Transmedia")

Transmedia in Literature

Information: Matilda is a book by British writer Roald Dahl. It was published in 1988 by Jonathan Cape in London, with 232 pages and illustrations by Quentin Blake.

Synopsis: Matilda Wormwood is an exquisite and intelligent little girl. Unfortunately, Matilda is misunderstood by her family because she is very different from their ways of life. As time passes, Matilda finally starts school that has a kindly teacher (Miss Honey), loyal friends and a sadistic principal (Agatha Trunchbull). As she gets fed up with the constant cruelty, Matilda begins to realize that she has a gift of telekinetic powers. After some days of practice, Matilda suddenly turns the tables to stand up to her parents and outwits the principal.

Transmedia Applications

Rationale: Why using transmedia in the classroom is an effective approach:

As new technology is developed, transmedia storytelling continues to evolve. New emerging technologies can change the way we create, interact with, and contribute to stories. A good story, such as Matilda, can act as a spine from which infinite new narratives can be created, all fitting into the stories world. By allowing the students to develop their own stories in Matilda's world, we enable them to engage with the content in new ways, to understand it more deeply, and to create and manage their own platforms.

The skills students gain from this can help not only in their understanding of the book in front of them, but they can also be transferred into future creative endeavours. Utilizing technological tools will make students technically literate, which is vital in current times. They will also develop critical thinking skills and communication skills as they work on various types of projects.

Transmedia learning involves using a wide variety of techniques and technologies, such as video editing and game developing, to more accessible writing and drawing. In our examples we have stuck to using widely available social media platforms, and classroom materials, in hopes that we can provide ideas that are manageable with varying resource availability.

What if the cook at Matilda's school had a Pinterest account where she found her recipes? If Miss Honey had a blog, what would she be sharing? As you will see in our examples, we are getting into the minds of the books characters, and sharing their perspectives to develop the storyworld.

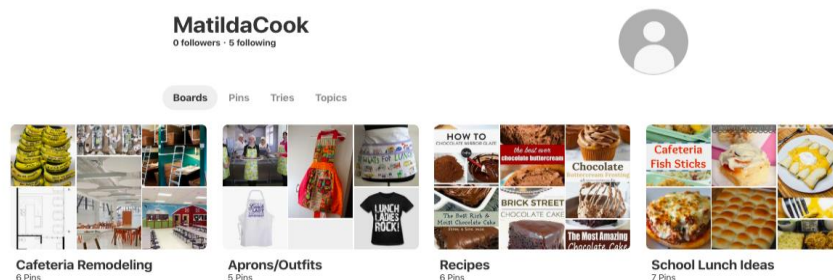
Platforms Being Used:

- Pinterest
- Instagram
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- Traditional Classroom Activity

Pinterest:

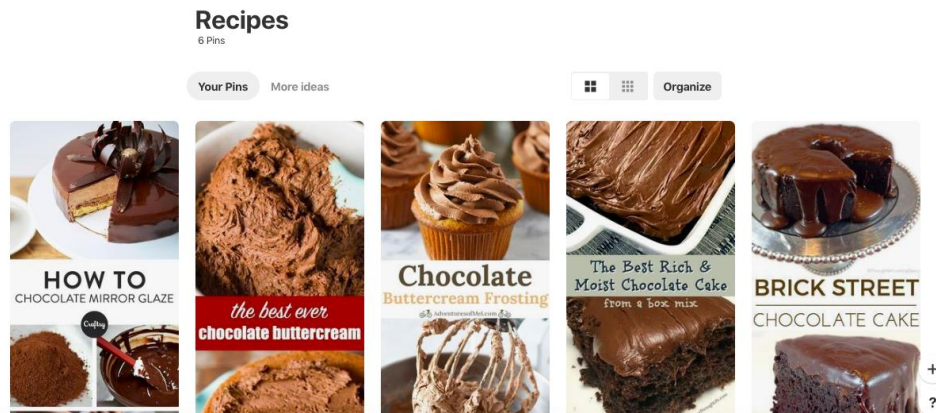
We're using Pinterest as a way to get students more engaged in the book. Pinterest is a great tool to generate creativity and get into the minds of characters. The website/app is an innovative "mood board" that can capture one's ideas, wishes, and wants. For instance, many can find recipes, workout routines, drawing ideas, or at-home remedies to name a few.. With this in mind, a student can use the app to dig into the imagination of a specific character.

Below is a mock Pinterest account for the school cook's Pinterest account.



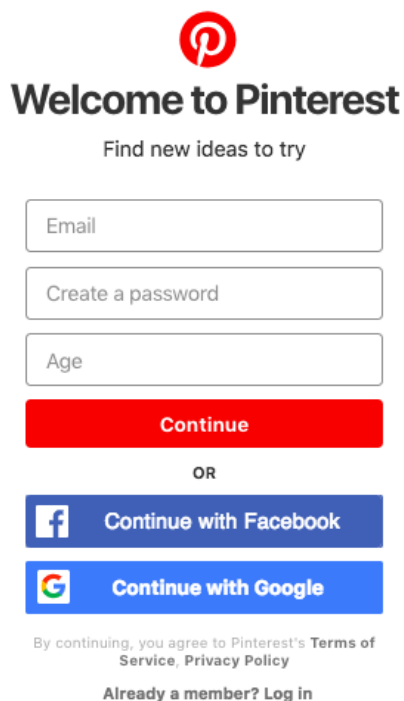
These are the cook's boards, or categories to put it more simply for non-Pinterest users. These boards let the user separate groups so everything isn't all combined together. Inside the boards are pins, which are individual ideas and sub-categories. Let's take a look inside 'recipes.'

These are some of the pins inside recipes. The cook is very much focused on just baking a chocolate cake and some frosting in the near future, which is a clear plot point in 'Matilda.' If unfamiliar with this famous story, the vicious teacher has the school cook make a delicious chocolate cake for Bruce but forces him to eat the entire thing in front of the whole school.



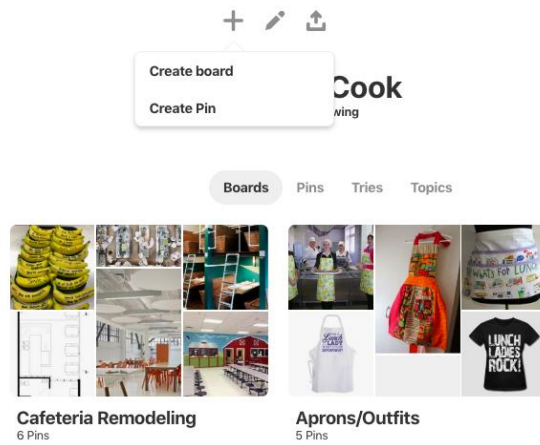
This specific activity helps to give even a small, minor character a well-developed imagination and storyline outside what is written for them. A student can dig into the cook’s mind and picture them scrolling on their phone or computer after a long day of working in the kitchen.

How To

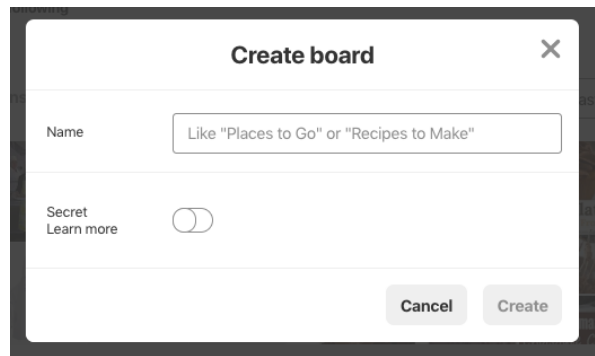


First, one must know how to make an account. In signing up, the student should use their school email or even a made up email to fit the story. When logged in, the website is immediately going to ask about interests and generate what pins are going to show up on the home page. Depending on the character, the student can begin choosing categories that can help shape the Pinterest. For instance, for the cook I chose recipes, easy recipes, healthy recipes, etc. After, the creation of boards and “pinning” can begin!

It’s good to have the student create boards to begin. Making a board appears on their own page, which one can get to by clicking their username on the top right. Once there, it’s time to fill the page. There is a little plus sign above the username that lets one add to their page. Here one can find “Create board.”



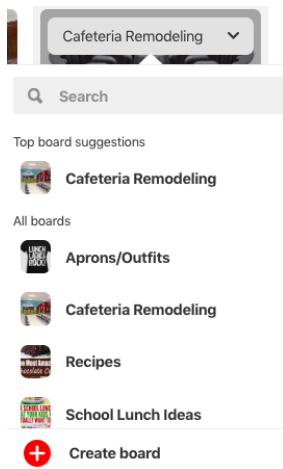
Here, one can create the name of the grouping or category. Also, there is a mode to let the board be secret if the teacher wants it to be private.



Once created, one can search for what they want and 'pin' it to the board. When the post is highlighted, this pops up.



One then can use the little arrow to scroll through their boards, or create one, to save the post to the specified board.




The pin is then saved! The student can continue doing this process until they feel satisfied.

Instagram:

We're using Instagram to influence student's creativity and allow them to further-develop the world within a story. Instagram is a platform that makes creativity effortless. It will allow students to post their own photos, save their favorite content and organize it into folders, interact with followers, and share what they're doing on an everyday basis through Instagram stories.



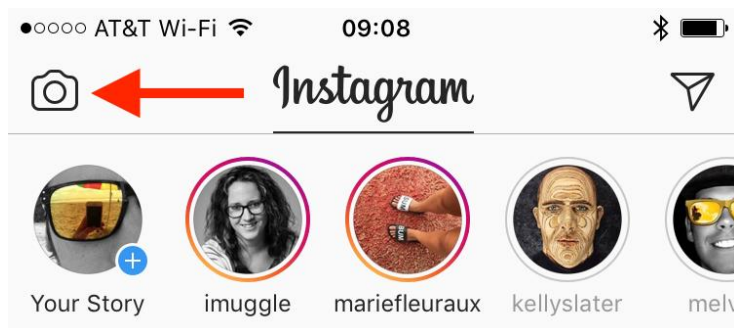
How to Sign up:

1. Download the Instagram app from the [App Store](#) (iPhone) or [Google Play Store](#) (Android).
2. Once the app is installed, tap  to open it.
3. Tap Sign Up With Email or Phone Number (Android) or Create New Account (iPhone), then enter your email address or phone number (which will require a confirmation code) and tap Next. You can also tap Log in with Facebook to sign up with your Facebook account.
4. If you register with your email or phone number, create a [username](#) and password, fill out your profile info and then tap Done. If you register with Facebook, you'll be prompted to log into your Facebook account if you're currently logged out.

To create an Instagram account from a computer:

1. Go to [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com).
2. Enter your email address, create a [username](#) and password or click Log in with Facebook to sign up with your Facebook account.
3. If you register with an email, click Sign up. If you register with Facebook, you'll be prompted to log into your Facebook account if you're currently logged out.

Create an Instagram Story:



After clicking the camera directed by the arrow, students have the opportunity to post their own photo, video, or boomerang (a moving photo) to their story. They can also add music, text, filters, “stickers,” and more. There are more interactive elements such as polls,

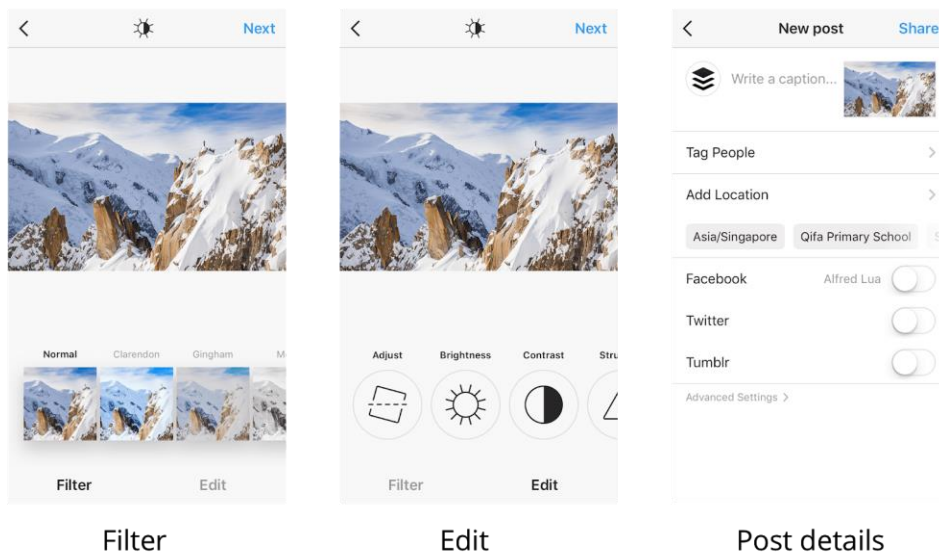
questions, and quizzes. One can attach these to their main post in order to engage with other followers or other people if the profile is open to the public.

Students can create small video and picture posts to aid in further-developing the lives of the characters.

Create an Instagram Post:

When creating a post, students will experience the art of photo/video editing. First, students can edit the picture by changing the contrast, saturation, shadows, and selecting from a list of filters to change the overall color. Right before sharing the photo or video, students can tag other characters' pages, add the location of where the post took place, and link it to other social media platforms so that the content is further disseminated.

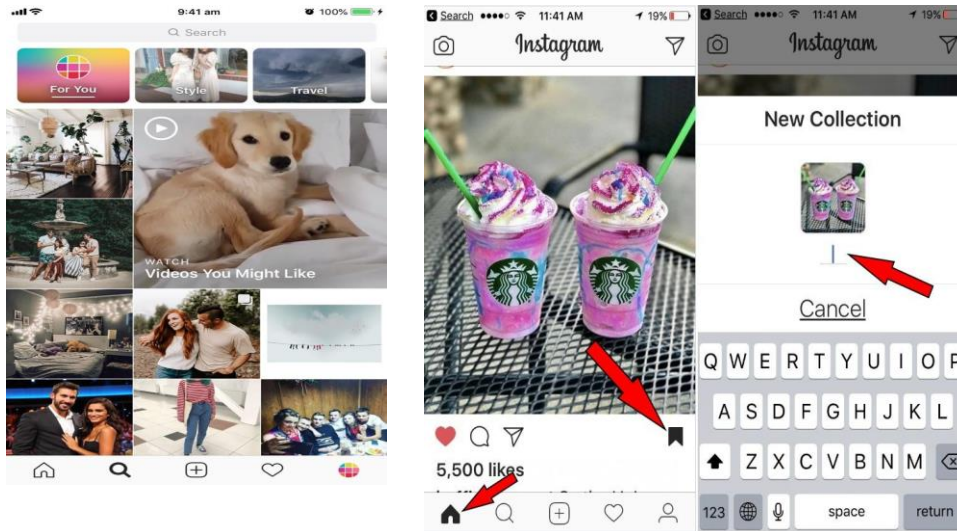
This creative aspect will be useful in many other areas of their academic and professional careers. Academically, this element will provide insight into what the character's value and enjoy sharing with their peers. Professionally, simple graphic design skills can help to elevate a student's future experience or even get them into wanting to do graphic design.



Save Pictures and Create Collections:

Collections, similar to Pinterest Boards, allow for students to save and organize their favorite content. Content is found through accounts and people that the students follow or that's found on the explore page, which is all public content and is split up into categories to tailor

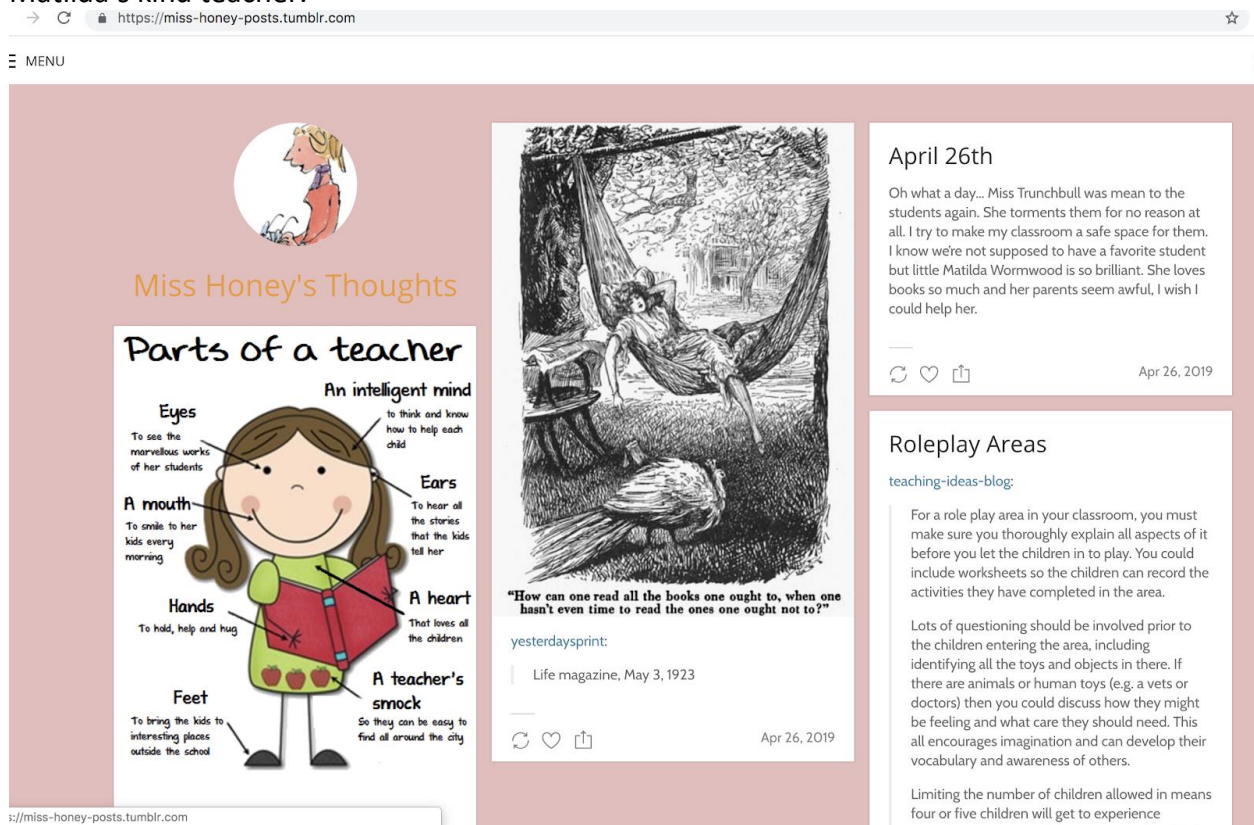
to all interests. Students can search through these options as well as hashtags in order to find more content.



Tumblr

Tumblr is an automated microblogging platform that allows you to share videos, photos, or text content on your individual blog. It also allows you to “repost” content others have posted. The idea of using tumblr came from wanting to allow students to get further into the characters mind, and think critically about who they are. You may also use blogger.com for this, or any other blog hosting website.

In the example below, we created a tumblr page from the point of view of Miss Honey, Matilda's kind teacher.

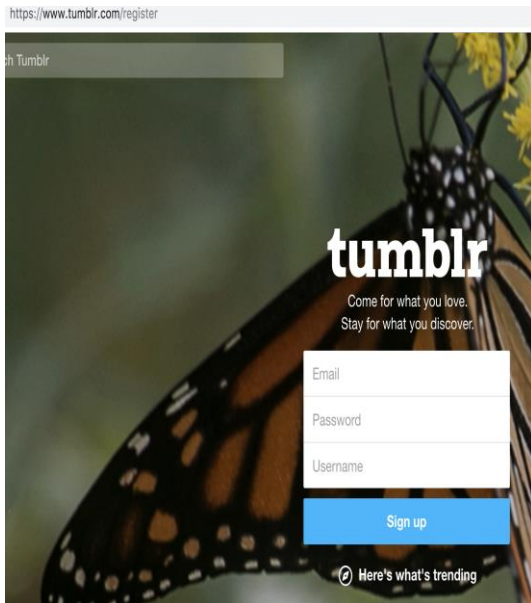


Miss Honey is using her blog as an online journal of sorts. She is reposting content that is relevant to her as a teacher, such as ideas for teaching methods, and writing entries about her daily life. What would Miss Honey talk about? As she adopts Matilda at the end of the book, perhaps she would be talking about how much she would love to have her own children. She is a passionate teacher, so surely she would be looking into ways of improving her students experiences in the classroom.

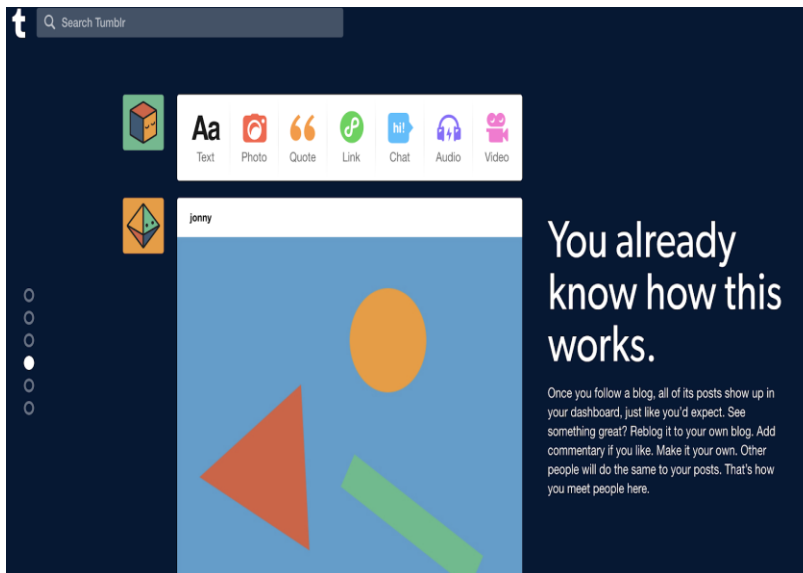
As the students read the book, perhaps they could write blog entries from different characters perspectives at different points in the story. This works in two ways: it furthers the students understanding of the characters and the story, and it allows them to use their creativity and imagination to go beyond the story and expand the world they are reading about.

How To

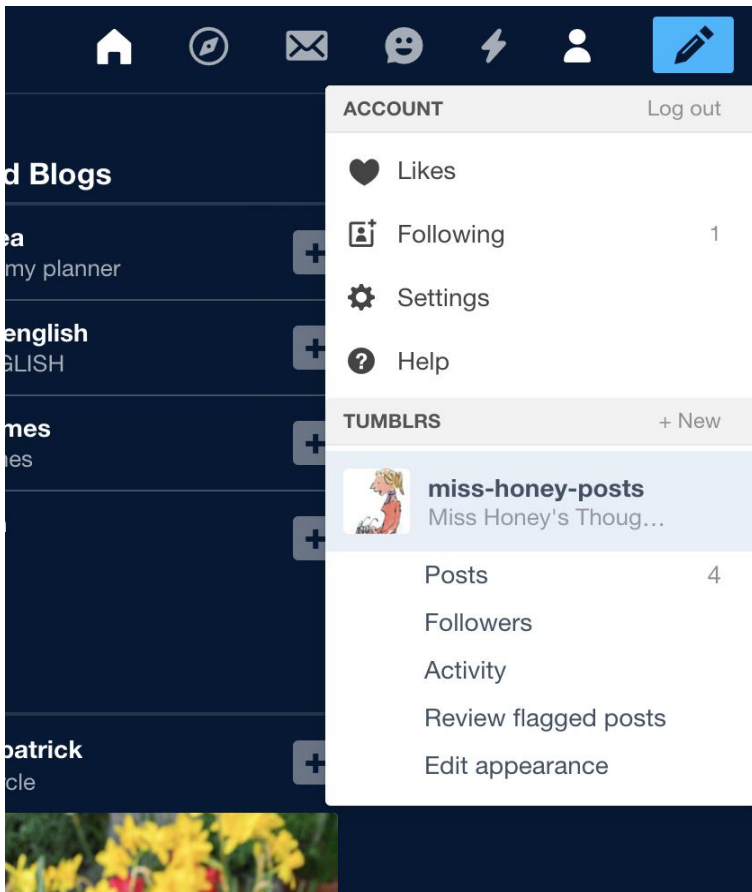
To create a tumblr account, one must go to tumblr.com/register and sign up with an email address, username, and password.



If you scroll down on this sign up page, there is an explanation of what tumblr is, how it works, and how to use it.



You use the buttons on the right of your user photo to post new content.



Once you have an account you can view your blog, edit its appearance and much more on the top right under the user tab. You can also explore content from others blogs tailored to your interests through the compass icon on the right of the home icon.

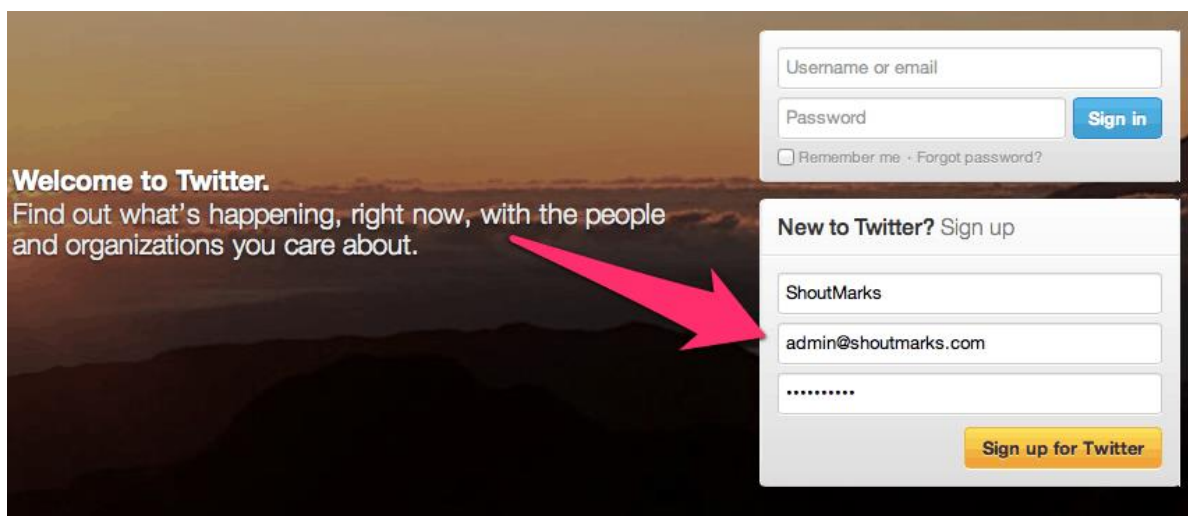
Twitter

Students will get the chance to interact with Matilda and ask her questions about anything and everything! It becomes more interactive for the students to get involved with someone they can truly connect with. Matilda is present on twitter by connecting an ask.fm page that will allow others to submit their questions and Matilda would answer them through twitter. Matilda would be able to show photos of her day-to-day to life, constantly updating with all that is new

and exciting.



How To:



You can use your computer or phone to start a twitter account. You will need a username, password, and email.

Join Twitter today.

ShoutMarks ✓ Name looks great.

admin@shoutmarks.com ✓ We will email you a confirmation.

..... ✓ Password is okay.

ShoutMarks ✓ Username is available.
You can change it later.

Suggestions: MarksShout · marks_shout · shout_marks

Keep me signed-in on this computer.

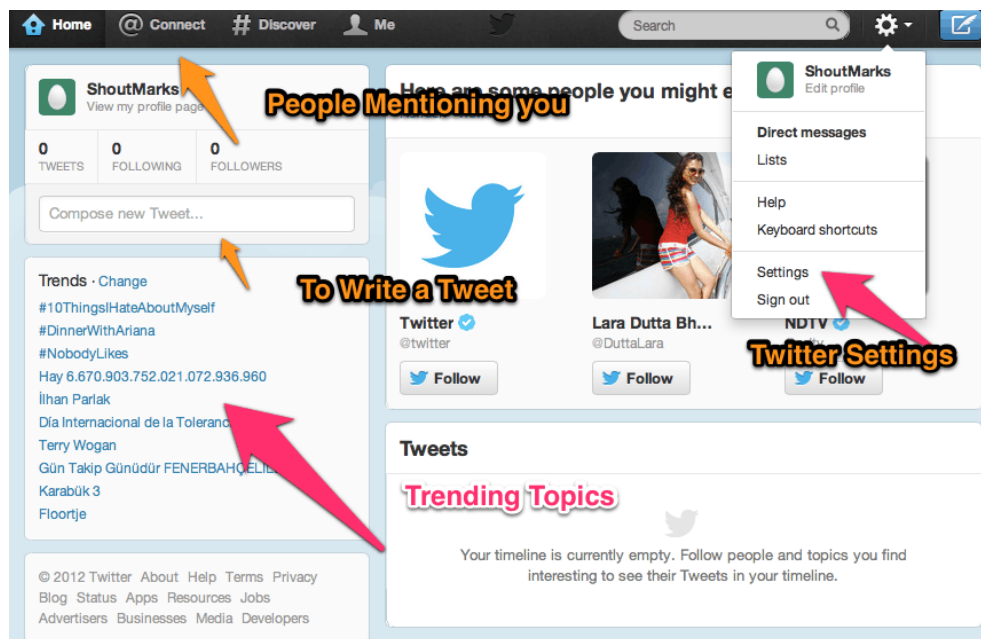
Tailor Twitter based on my recent website visits. [Learn more.](#)

By clicking the button, you agree to the terms below: [Privacy Policy](#) [Terms of Service](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

These Terms of Service ("Terms") govern your access to and use of the services, including our various websites, SMS, APIs, email notifications,

Create my account

Once the account is created, you are free to use twitter to tweet, retweet, like, reply, etc. You get the opportunity to engage completely.



You are kept up to date with the latest trends and get to connect with other individuals throughout the platform.

Twitter will allow students to engage with Matilda in an interactive space, while also being able to express their own ideas and interests, continuing with the transmedia experience.

Traditional Classroom Activity:

Matilda is an avid reader but is judged for being "bookish." However, she secretly has a superpower! Everyone is more than meets the eye, and Matilda proves that if we give each other a chance before judging, we can have a better world with more empathy and understanding.

This "don't judge a book by its cover" activity would be great for the first day of class so that students could express their ideas and get to know each other.

Materials:

- Construction/scrapbook paper
- Printer paper
- Computer equipped with printer (optional)
- Stapler and staples
- Markers, crayons or colored pencils
- Stickers
- Magazines
- Scissors
- Glue

To prepare books for decoration, students should select the construction paper that corresponds with their favorite color.

The construction paper will then be stacked with 3 sheets of white paper before being stapled down the center, creating a booklet with a construction paper cover. Students should write their initials inside the back cover.

At this point, supplies should be easily accessible to students. Consider providing markers, crayons or colored pencils for students as well as stickers and glue. For older students allow them to search the internet for images and print copies for their covers. Others may want to use scissors to cut out images from magazines. Keep your class' interests in mind when choosing supplies.

Students should have the freedom to decorate their book cover in any way they want. This should be an individual activity but everyone should feel welcome and accepted. All ideas should be encouraged.

Once students are happy with their cover designs, they will begin writing inside and follow prompts geared to Matilda.

Here are some suggested prompts:

1. If you were Matilda, what would you do with your superpowers?
2. If you were a character in Matilda's school, how would you stop bullying?
3. If you were Miss Honey, what would you want to teach in your classroom?

After all the students have written their "stories," books should be displayed in a gallery style viewing arrangement so that all students book covers are visible. Students will take turn picking books and guessing whose they are.

Once they finish reading their classmates books, they'll have more understanding about who they are. They should return the book to the classmate it belongs to and have a conversation with them.

Then in a group discussion students can talk about if they were surprised by anything inside the book compared to the cover. This would be a great opportunity to reinforce the importance of empathy and acceptance in the classroom, as well as giving students tools to deal with conflict resolution.

After this activity students can post images through social media to share their stories and book cover designs with a shared hashtag #bookcoverchallenge.

Transmedia in Film

Example: “Willie Wonka’s Chocolate Factory”

Background: Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory is a 1971 American musical fantasy film directed by Mel Stuart and produced by David L. Wolper as well as Stan Margulies. This film is an adaptation of the 1964 novel Charlie and The Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl.

Synopsis: In a small town, Charlie Bucket, a poor paperboy, watches a group of kids visit a candy shop. Walking home, he passes Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. A mysterious tinker recites the first lines of William Allingham's poem "The Fairies", and tells Charlie that nobody ever goes in, and nobody ever comes out. Wonka locked the factory because other candy makers, including rival Arthur Slugworth, sent in spies to steal his recipes. The next day, Wonka announces that he has hidden five "Golden Tickets" in chocolate Wonka Bars. Finders of the tickets will receive a factory tour and a lifetime supply of chocolate. The tickets are found by 4 children around the world. Charlie opens the Wonka Bar and finds the fifth golden ticket, quickly catching the attention of everyone around him. The next day, Wonka greets the ticket winners and leads them inside where each signs a contract before the tour. The factory includes a candy land with a river of chocolate, edible mushrooms, gummy bears, candy canes, chocolate, and more sweets. As the visitors sample these, they see Wonka's workers, small men known as Oompa-Loompas. Along the way, the four other children fall for Wonka’s gimmicks and physically change. All of them except Charlie fell for the gimmicks. As the tour ends, Charlie, the only visitor left, asks about the fate of the other four kids, and Wonka assures him that they will be restored to normal, and retreats to his office, without awarding them the promised lifetime supply of chocolate. Wonka declares Charlie as the winner. Wonka reveals that his actual prize is the factory; Wonka created the contest to find an heir worthy enough, and so Charlie and his family can immediately move in.

Students who created this section:

Stephen J. Kwiecien, Monica Morgan, Jonathan Padilla

Object of the project (in the Montclair students’ words): Our purpose is to help you, help your students creatively flourish using transmedia applications based off of a film. This includes utilizing multiple mediums across our chosen platforms. Creativity is greatly important in arts education and promoting this helps students become more acculturated to the world around them. The use of the film, “Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory” is an interesting example of transmedia applications because of the characters involved in the film and the depth to their stories that can be created.

Transmedia Elements Used:

1) Twitter

We're using Twitter to help develop character and movie interaction more fully and also to get students engaged in the story. Twitter is also great to forever continue on the stories of Willy Wonka. Twitter is great for scanning the internet for useful information through the use of hashtags (spreadability) and it's also a great place for the memory of the story to live on. The internet is forever (continuity).

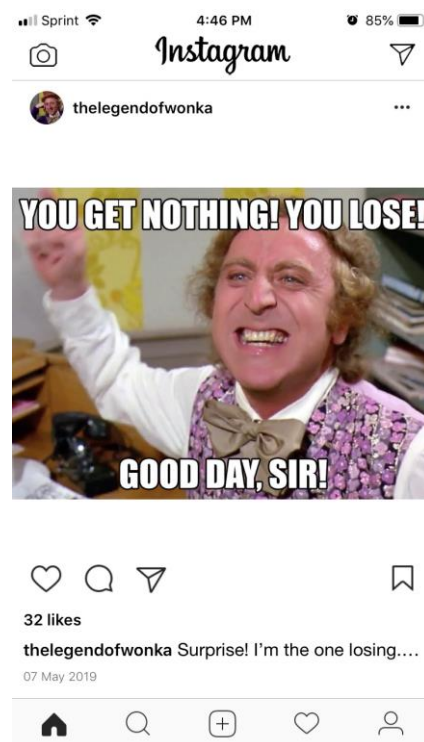
Example: Have students create and search for a #WillyWonkaChocolateFactory hashtag and have discussions with your students to enrich their appreciation of the film. Students can use the hashtag to communicate with you and each other so everyone is included in the discussions. The class could make an account and post as "Charlie" after taking over the factory. You can encourage your students to have fun and be creative. Examples of discussion tweets are shown below...



3) Instagram

We're using Instagram to show how to look at the same events and characters from multiple points of view (*subjectivity*). Instagram is great for showing how the personalities of the different characters can affect a story and the students understanding of it. This can help students look at the story from different angles, which makes the subject matter much more interesting.

Example: Students can create a profile based off of different individuals in the story. They can get creative with the profiles by posting pictures, videos and memes that exemplify the characters personalities, as well as draw out their physical appearances. They can use captions creatively, through humor or storytelling to connect with others in the class as they all become part of the story in their own way. This helps students become immersed in the different characters perspectives within the story. A possible Instagram profile could be from Willy Wonka's perspective by posting memes with captions dealing with life in the factory. Examples are shown below...



3) Youtube

We're using YouTube to show the power of content producing, which is a skill that many young people use today to enrich their lives. Content producers can build a world based off a story or any subject matter, and create a performance to influence others. Classmates influencing each other by producing their own content about the story promotes involvement and facilitates the creative process. It has everyone become part of the story in their own way.

Example: Have students craft a scene based off of characters in the film. For instance, what would Charlie's daily routine look like? Or what's a story about Mike Tee-vee and his love of television that they can create? How about creating a scene about Violet Beauregarde and her daily quest to find some gum? Then have them shoot these scenes with their smartphone or device. They can edit them with basic editing software available on most computers (Windows Movie Maker, iMovie). Then they can post the videos on YouTube, share them with their classmates, post comments and like each other's work to get more immersed in the film.



Why I Love TV (A Retrospective)

32 views



Mike Teevee
32 subscribers



Comments



Add a public comment...



TV is cool, but running a factory is better tbh.

Charlie • 07 May 2019



From Rags To Riches: The World Of King Bucket

32 views



Charlie
32 subscribers



Comments



Add a public comment...



The Man, The Myth, The Legend...

Violet Beauregarde • 07 May 2019



****Privacy settings are accessible across all platforms. Youtube accounts can be adjusted to have videos only be available through link or password. Instagram and Twitter allow privacy settings to only allow the account owner to accept or deny who follows their account to see their posts.****

Transmedia in Poetry

Example: “The Road Not Taken,” by Robert Frost

Background: “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost was published in 1916 as the first poem in the collection *Mountain Interval*. It is a famous poem that is included in most English curriculums. The poem reads as follows:

*“Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.”*

Synopsis: Poetry is an art form that most people either grow to love or hate. On one hand, it can be fun to teach and engage with, as many poems share deep meanings that encourage students to dive deeply into what they are reading. On the other hand, it can also be frustrating to students, as they may have a difficult time understanding it. However, this should not stand in the way of students getting an immersive and educational experience. It should also not stop educators from bestowing valuable knowledge about this art form in the classroom. When presented with this sort of challenge, it is important that educators step outside of their comfort zone and get students to think outside the box. This chapter will demonstrate different ways this can be done using Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken.”

Students who created this section:

Cynthia Lucey, Peter Chapman, Adam Grassani, Hashem Zidan

Object of the project (in the Montclair students' words): Transmedia is the key to making poetry an immersive, educational experience. By using various platforms, students will feel like more than just passive readers. They will, essentially, be a part of the poem.

Transmedia Elements Used:

- 1) Instagram
- 2) Twitter
- 3) The Stage

World Building

In any creative format, from filmmaking to theater, and in this case, poetry, we as the audience have the ability to build our own world around the creative material we are supplied with. World building is a more elaborate way of going about exercising our imagination. In the realm of early childhood education it is important we encourage imagination. Imagination helps to build the foundation for so many tools we use in our adult life. Imagination helps us construct coping mechanisms, social skills, the ability to be resourceful. A lot of times adults find imagination to be wasteful and not related to education, where in reality they go hand and hand. To be imaginative is to open your mind and be more receptive to other ideas both socially and educationally.

The most conducive and productive outlet of exercising our imaginations and “building worlds” is through art, especially poetry. Poetry is based on the foundation of metaphors and language to express emotions. Many times the way a poem is constructed is very abstract and leaves the viewer having to dig deep into their mind and imagination to decode the metaphor and idea behind the sentence. This is very useful to teach at a young age.

The fact is we are all apart of this world, and to develop the skill at a young age on how to live in this world in a more open minded perspective is helpful to everyone.

Performance: Students can place themselves in the poem. They can act out the different “paths” presented in the poem. Different paths ultimately lead to different scenarios unfolding. With a teacher’s supervision, they can put on a play or performance which allows them to act out the rest of the story. The best part is students can get as creative as they want; the possibilities of where the two divergent paths lead is endless. This will also fit in perfectly with the title of the poem “The Road Not Taken” as this will be a major theme that plays throughout the story.

~Example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrvS7rUrCVs>

Subjectivity

Looking at this poem from two points of view can really help the reader dictate what direction they feel like their path will be. Often in life we are faced with hard decisions that

need a lot of brainstorming and thinking in order to come up with the best decision for us. In this case students may pick the two roads that they are debating between and with the power of social media, have a poll for close friends and family to vote on to help them in making the correct decision for their path. Our stories often come from just our perspective, a lot of times we struggle to make the correct decision and seek advice. In this case we would have our trusted friends and family help us in choosing our path.

Multiplicity

As previously mentioned, since the poem is dubbed “The Road Not Taken,” students will be able to choose many different roads and paths throughout the transmedia. At the end of the transmedia, students will be able to see the result of the paths they took. And with how endless the possibilities are for different students, the odds of two students coming away with the exact same result are slim to none. Going along with subjectivity, the students choice of what paths they choose will ultimately come down to their own personal preference as will ultimately the result they end up getting. Last but not least, the end result will have very much to do with the ending of the poem itself where Frost says “*I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.*” Ultimately, the students who choose the roads less traveled by will get a much different result than the rest.

Social Media: Most students either have or are familiar with how social media works. In this case, students will be able to share their results on different social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Instagram is very useful platform as it allows images to be the center of attention. One thing teacher’s might want to try is to create an Instagram page and create a hashtag such as #WhatDoesYourPathLookLike. This will give students the option to create a visual interpretation of what the path they choose looks like. They can either upload a drawing or photograph of what they want their path to look like. They will include the hashtag in their post as well as short description of what their path depicts.

~Example:



Photo



winxmewgirl



winxmewgirl STUDENTS! Now it's time to get creative. Which path will you choose? Upload a photo of what your path looks and use the hashtag **#WhatDoesYourPathLookLike**

11 SECONDS AGO



Transmedia in Art

Example: “American Gothic” painting by Grant Wood

Background: “American Gothic” is a 1930 oil painting by Grant Wood. The two individuals represented in the painting are known as “the kind of people [Grant Wood] fancied should live in that house,” - a farmer standing beside a woman who has been interpreted to be his sister.

Students who created this section:

Samantha Easterday, Dominique Rodriguez, Megan Schultheis, Emily Smith

Object of the project (in the Montclair students’ words): Using the idea of Transmedia makes students dive deep into their imagination. It lets them become the storyteller and allows them to add details to already existing stories that make the facts seem more realistic in the human world. We as a group are using a painting as a way to deep dive into the world of transmedia. Our painting is “American Gothic.” In this painting there are two individuals posed. We will ask our students to use transmedia to explain who these two individuals are, what their personalities are, where they came from, where they are going, what they are , and many many more details that young minds can think of that can make a simple painting of two people come to life. The students will be using social media platforms to create their characters and the stories behind them.

Transmedia Elements Used:

1) Email

- a. 50 people 25 men and 25 women from the ages of 20-40 who are residents of some small town were randomly selected to pose for a famous painter in their new project. The painter wanted one male and one female, and in order to be chosen, there was a couple of steps to be considered. Step one was to receive an **EMAIL** from the painter's manager, step two was to agree to be a part of the process, step three you must submit a **YOUTUBE** video as an interview/audition tape.

ATTENTION/OPPORTUNITY OF A
LIFETIME



Wayne Smith <starvingartist404@gmail.com>
to bcc: me

9:24 PM (0 minutes ago) ☆ ↶ ⋮

Hello all,

Do not ask how I received your personal email, but I would like to introduce myself. My name is Wayne (last name not important), and I am the manager of Grant Wood.

If you do not already know, Mr. Wood is a painter and is looking for two models - one male and one female - for his new and upcoming painting.

If you are interested in being a part of this special project, please create a YouTube video of yourself (blog style) and email me back with the link. We want to know who you are and what makes you good enough to be featured in Mr. Wood's painting.

Also, I do not know what any of you look like; if you are not attractive to the human eye, please disregard this email.

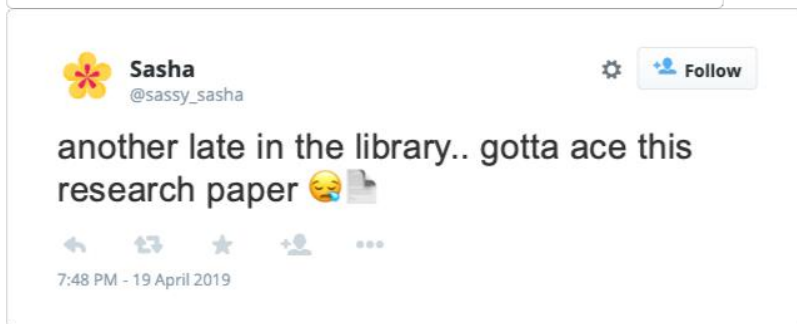
Thanks,
Wayne

2) YouTube

- a. Out of the 50 people who received the EMAIL only 17 decided to make a **YOUTUBE** video and send it in for a chance to be in the painting.

3) Twitter

- a. Once the two models were chosen for Grant Wood's painting, Wayne the Manager did a little investigation on who the two winners were. What a better way to see how a person feels and thinks? By looking at their **TWITTER**.



 **Sasha**
@sassy_sasha

  Follow

please please PLEASE let me get this modeling position for Grant Wood 😭

10:40 AM - 20 April 2019

 **Sasha**
@sassy_sasha

  Follow

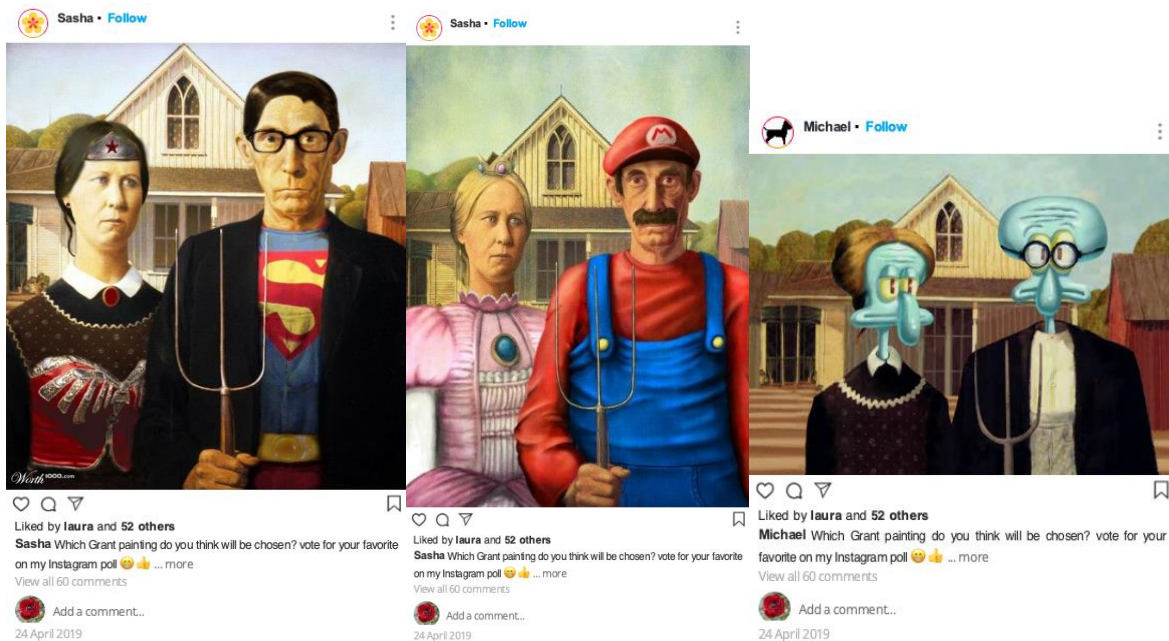
GUYS 😭😭 I GOT THE MODELING POSITION. I HAVEN'T STOPPED CRYING SINCE I GOT THE NEWS

6:15 PM - 22 April 2019

4) Instagram

- a. Once the painting was completed Grant Wood refused to share his painting with the models. Wayne the manager sent pictures of the possible painting that could be Grant's final painting that would become well-known worldwide. The two models received proofs that they both shared on their **INSTAGRAM** stories to see which ones their followers thought would be Grant's final painting. Little did they know that none of their favorites were chosen to be the final painting.



5) FaceBook

- a. The final (original) painting will be posted on Grant Wood's **FACEBOOK**. His post will be a picture of the original painting along with a caption along the lines of "I tried to give regular citizens a chance to be featured in one of my paintings, and this is what I end up with. Please like and share this post, I am begging you, please, I'm behind on rent and really need someone, maybe someone blind with a lot of money to buy this painting."



Transmedia in Non Fiction

Example: The Salem Witch Trials

Background: Beginning in February 1692

Students who created this section:

Samuel Carliner, Brielle Forbes, Victoria Krzynowek, Abigail Ricks

Object of the project (in the Montclair students' words):

Ask any middle school or high school student if they do reading assignments for class, most of them will probably say no. For this reason, it can be hard to teach subjects that are typically covered through textbooks. One particularly textbook-heavy subject is history.

As young people grow less and less interested in traditional, textbook-style learning, transmedia can serve as an important tool for keeping students engaged and conveying information in a way that feels less intensive.

To demonstrate the how transmedia can be used to teach history lessons, this chapter will lay out a strategy to thoroughly cover a well known historical event: The Salem Witch Trials.

Since younger generations are largely defined by their use of social media, this chapter will primarily look at various social media platforms to demonstrate the power of transmedia. However, teachers should feel welcome to get creative and try new ideas for adding transmedia to the classroom.

Transmedia Elements Used:

[Blog-wix.com](#)

The blog will be in the point of view of Joseph Glanvill who claims that he could prove the existence of witches. Posts will be about how to spot a witch, what makes a witch, what to do when you encounter a witch.

[Instagram](#)

At this point, the blog should have given students a rough idea of what the Salem Witch Trials were about. Now it's time to give students a better sense of specific events. It will also benefit to give students a break from text based interaction. Instagram serves as a good means to use *immersion*, a transmedia strategy in which

audience members can place themselves in the world they're exploring to feel like they're part of the media.

As an example of a transmedia Instagram account, an account called `witchwatch_salem` has been included in images below this text. The account is themed as if it's being run by a townspeople in Salem who is documenting important events to expose and rid the witches in their town.

As you can see, the account is not particularly word heavy, but it conveys the necessary information for giving students a timeline of events. It also benefits from being visually engaging.



Here is the fake account which will convey information about

important events during the Salem Witch Trials through a social media format that students are used to.



One of the first big events during the Salem Witch Trials

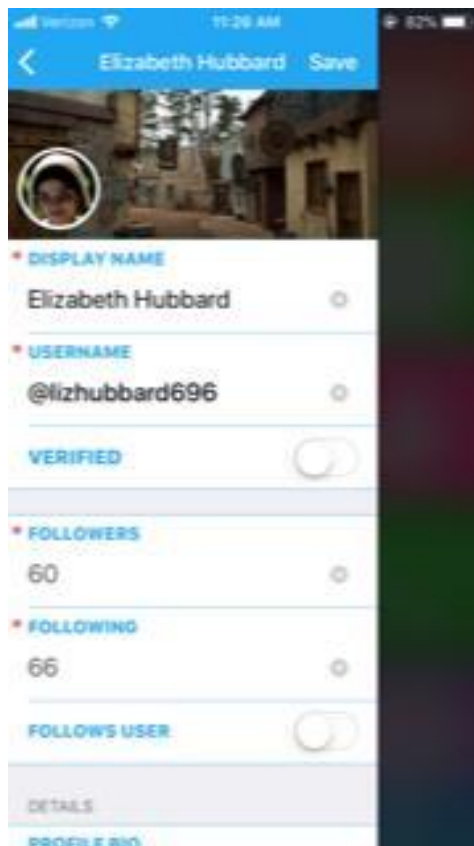
was the arrest of three accused women, Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne. A post showing Tituba captioned with the information of the arrests conveys information quickly through a platform students are used to.

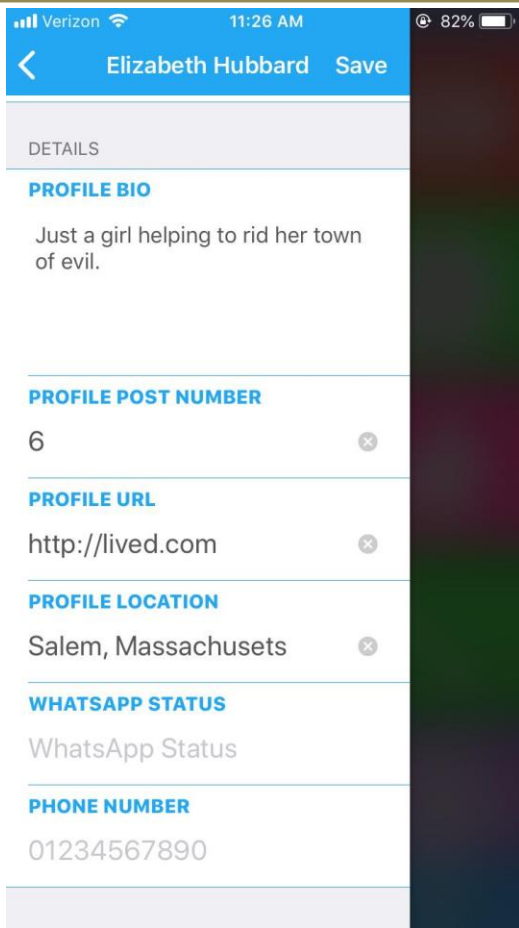
Facebook

Given students know the basis of the trials I am going to teach them about Elizabeth Hubbard. Since the Instagram account is primarily based on how to spot a witch, learning about Hubbard will help because she was one of the first girls to accuse people of witchcraft. She was a leading accuser throughout the summer and fall of 1692. She was very aggressive in the way she wanted to accuse people so badly.

However, she was reported by several people that she had an obsession and herself claimed she had a relationship with the Devil. She was eager to condemn people for committing witchcraft and conspiring with the Devil.

There is no report of what happened to Elizabeth after the trials. Since there is no record of her I would have the students create a story of what happened after the trials.





Going Native

Going native simply refers to creating original transmedia properties. The examples we've shown in this book are not native transmedia; they're adaptive transmedia. While you may primarily involve your class in adaptive transmedia, you may have an opportunity to give them a chance to go native. Instead of asking students to develop an idea for their own book, poem, movie, a comic book superhero, even something from the nonfiction world, why not ask them to develop a transmedia project that includes a book, but also includes Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Wikipedia, website, you name it. Give them the creative flexibility to create a story that spans numerous platforms. Their projects will become more multi-dimensional, certainly more immersive, and you just may be helping cultivate the next transmedia star.

Transmedia Advanced: Alternate Reality Gaming

Picture this...Imagine you're an English teacher, and one of your learning objectives may be to increase student understanding of the elements of a good story – plot, conflict, character – by a certain percentage.

You inform your class that next week you'll be having a Skype interview with a famous, 21st century muckraking author, Jonathan Levy, whose long awaited expose on the oil industry promises to reveal secrets the industry has tried to protect for decades. As preparation for the interview, you show the class Levy's website, which lists all his previous novels, even has a video interview with him on the site. There are also ways of contacting the author if a school is interested in having him come in for interviews.

The day of the interview arrives. You've set up your computer, which is hooked to a larger screen to provide students with a better view. You dial in the Levy, and, voila, he appears on screen and greets the class. He talks about his work for a few minutes, and then the teacher asks a number of questions, promising to give the students their chance in a little while. In the middle of the teacher/author Q & A session, there's the loud, shattering noise, as though a door was being forced open. Jonathan looks up; he becomes anxious. He says to the teacher, "I knew this day might come. I may have to cut this interview short." Panicked, he types something into his keyboard. The screen goes blank.

Because your computer screen is projected, you get a notice an incoming email from JLevy@gmail.com. Some students might notice it, and plead with you to open it. So, you do. In the body of the text is a number – 386. What does it mean?

What's going on here? It's an example of Alternate Reality Gaming, or an ARG. It's a game you've completely set up, all to teach your class about story, perhaps a lesson about research, you name it. How far you want to go is up to you and your schedule. In the example above, it would have required getting an actor to portray author Jonathan Levy, a fake website and gmail account, sound effects, etc.

Dave Szulborski, author of "Through the Rabbit Hole," and "This is Not a Game," defines Alternate Reality Gaming as "...an interactive online experience that combines gaming and storytelling, using real world communication methods – email, instant messaging, telephone calls, etc. - to create a realistic and immersive narrative. A typical ARG plays out in real time and encompasses multiple fictional websites, online and real world interactions with the main characters of the story, and cleverly disguised puzzles."

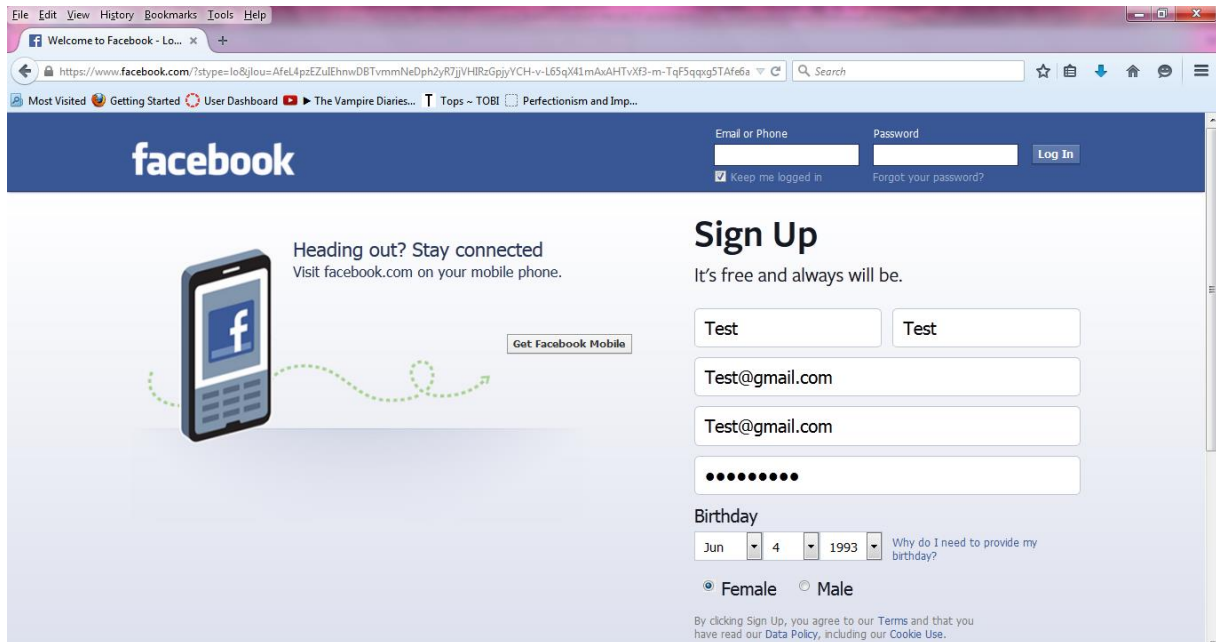
How far you want to go with your game depends upon what gamers say, how far "down the rabbit hole" do you want to go. But as a learning experience, it will capture the attention and fascination of your students, and I suspect other teacher will want to know what you do to excite such passion in your students.

By the way, here's a link to Dave Szulborski's most famous (or infamous) ARG, called, ["Art of the Heist."](#)

SETTING UP POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Facebook

- Fill in the fields under set up on the home page of *facebook.com*



Heading out? Stay connected
Visit facebook.com on your mobile phone.

Get Facebook Mobile

facebook

Email or Phone: Test
Password: Test
Keep me logged in
Forgot your password? Log In

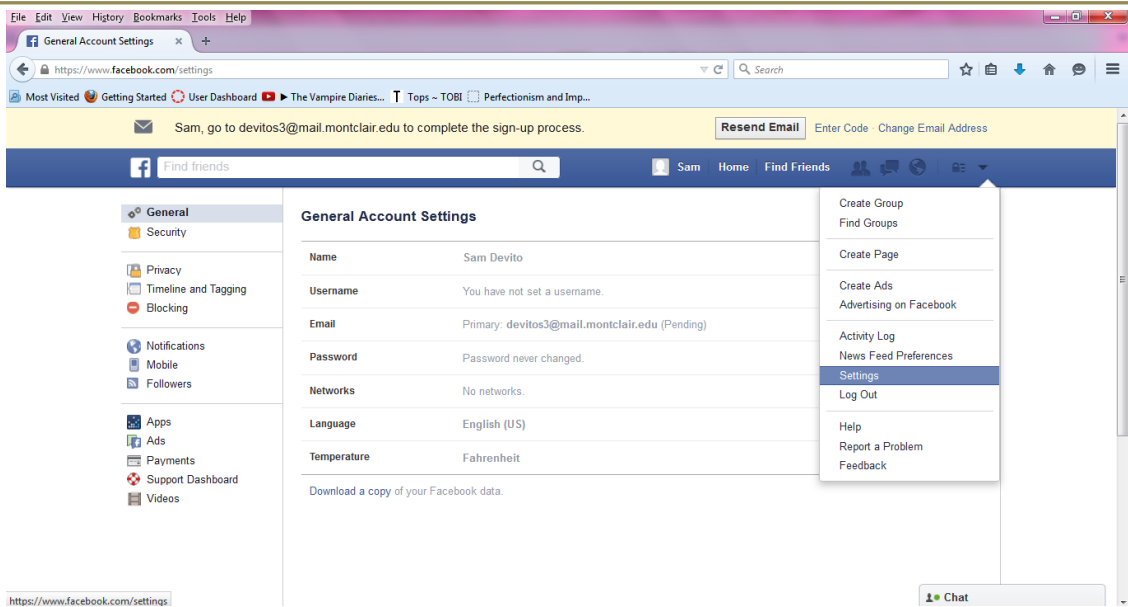
Sign Up
It's free and always will be.

Test@gmail.com
Test@gmail.com
••••••••

Birthday
Jun 4 1993 Why do I need to provide my birthday?
 Female Male

By clicking Sign Up, you agree to our Terms and that you have read our Data Policy, including our Cookie Use.

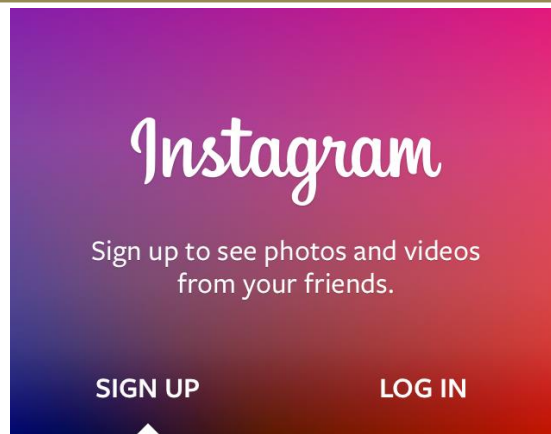
- The email address you use will be your account log in
- Your default page is your news feed where you will see things your friends post and share
- Select your name on the top left or top right hand corner to see your profile
- Review and customize privacy settings by clicking on the arrow in the top right hand corner, choosing Settings, and then clicking on Privacy on the left



- Choosing public means that anyone can see your posts whether you know them or not, choosing friends means that only people who you allow to be your friends can see the post, and only me allows only you to be able to view it, even though it may appear public
- You can limit the number of things facebook emails you about or else you will receive a separate email for any action done to your page (new friends, new comments, new posts, suggestions...)

Instagram

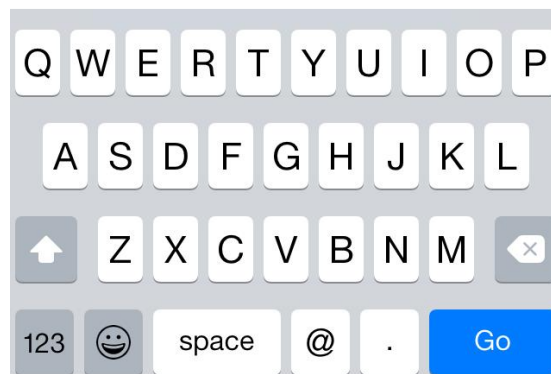
- You can either log in with your facebook account or an email address
- Your home page will be empty and instagram will have a tutorial on how to use instagram when you first sign up



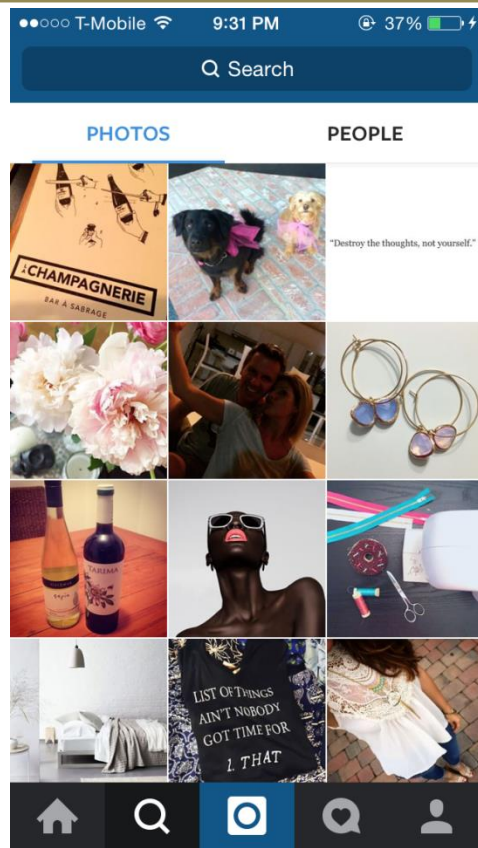
Enter your email

OR

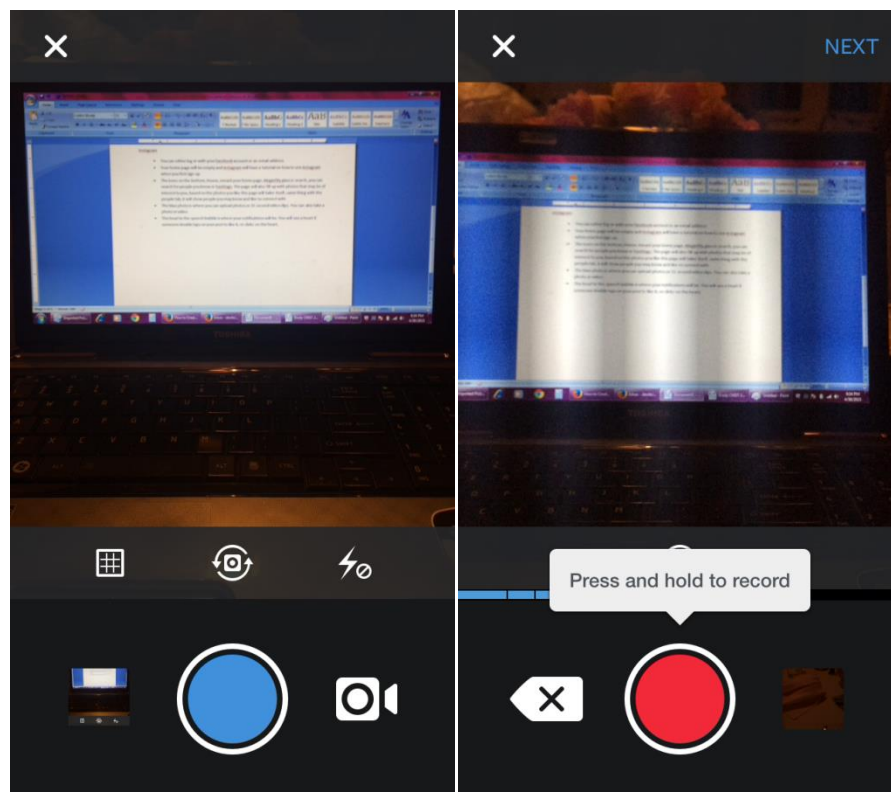
 Log In with Facebook



- The icons on the bottom, Home, means your home page, Magnifying glass is search, you can search for people you know or hashtags. The page will also fill up with photos that may be of interest to you, based on the photos you like this page will tailor itself, same thing with the people tab, it will show people you may know and like to connect with



- The blue photo is where you can upload photos or 15 second video clips. You can also take a photo or video by clicking the blue button or holding the red button. For the video you can hold the red button for 15 seconds or hold and release to shoot at different angles.



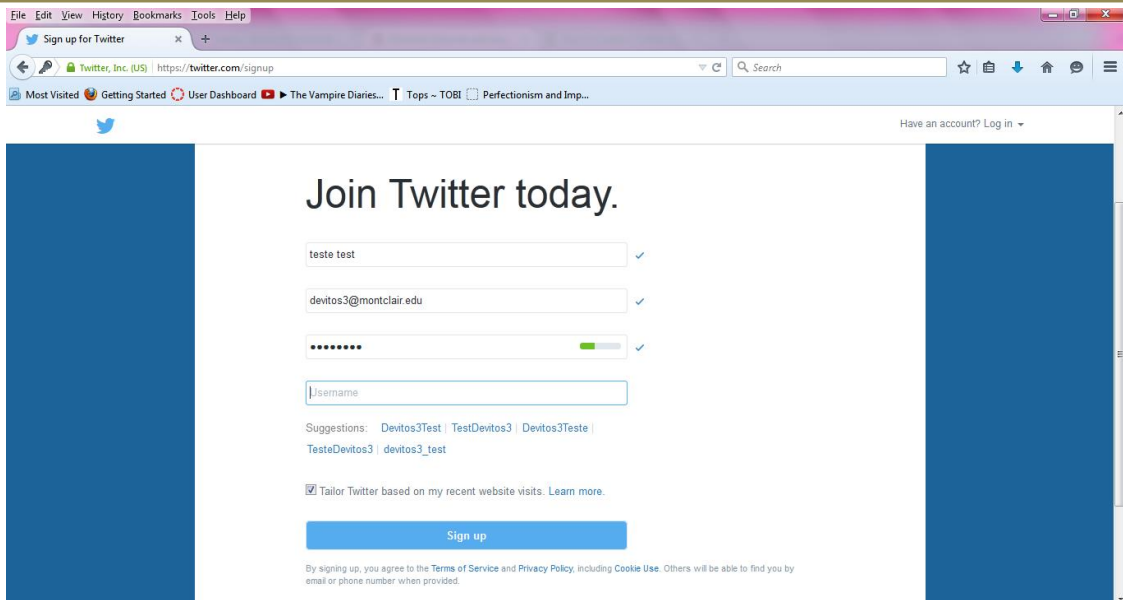
- The heart in the speech bubble is where your notifications will be. You will see a heart if someone double taps on your post to like it, or clicks on the heart underneath the photo, a person outline if someone follows you, or a speech bubble if someone tags you in a comment or writes a comment on a post you have put up.



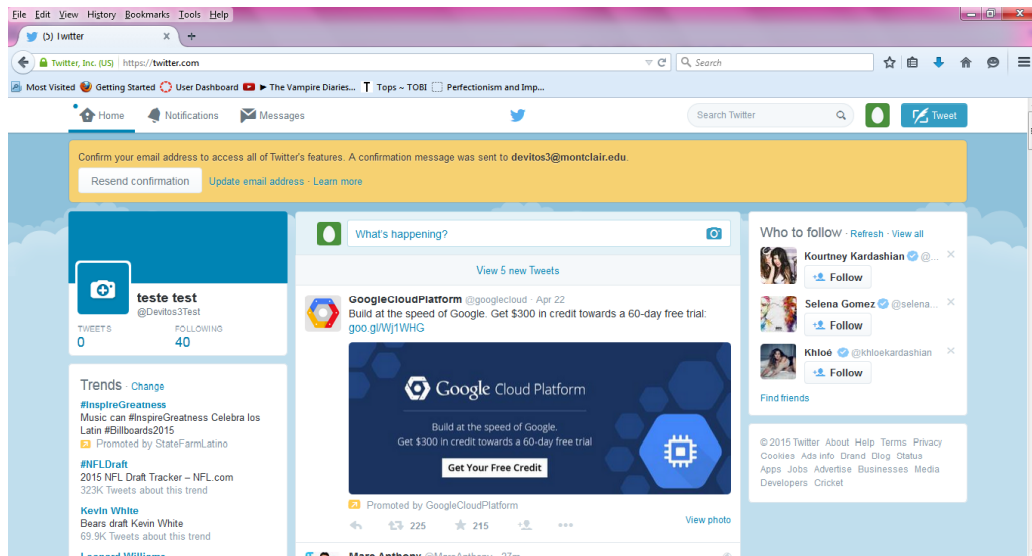
- The person outline is your Instagram page, how it is visible to others. In the top right corner there is a gear symbol for settings. In Settings you can make your account private, where people will have to request to follow you, or public where anyone can see and follow you.

Twitter

- Enter your full name email and password on the startup page
- The twitter home page will be a bit overwhelming, the mobile app is a little simpler to use



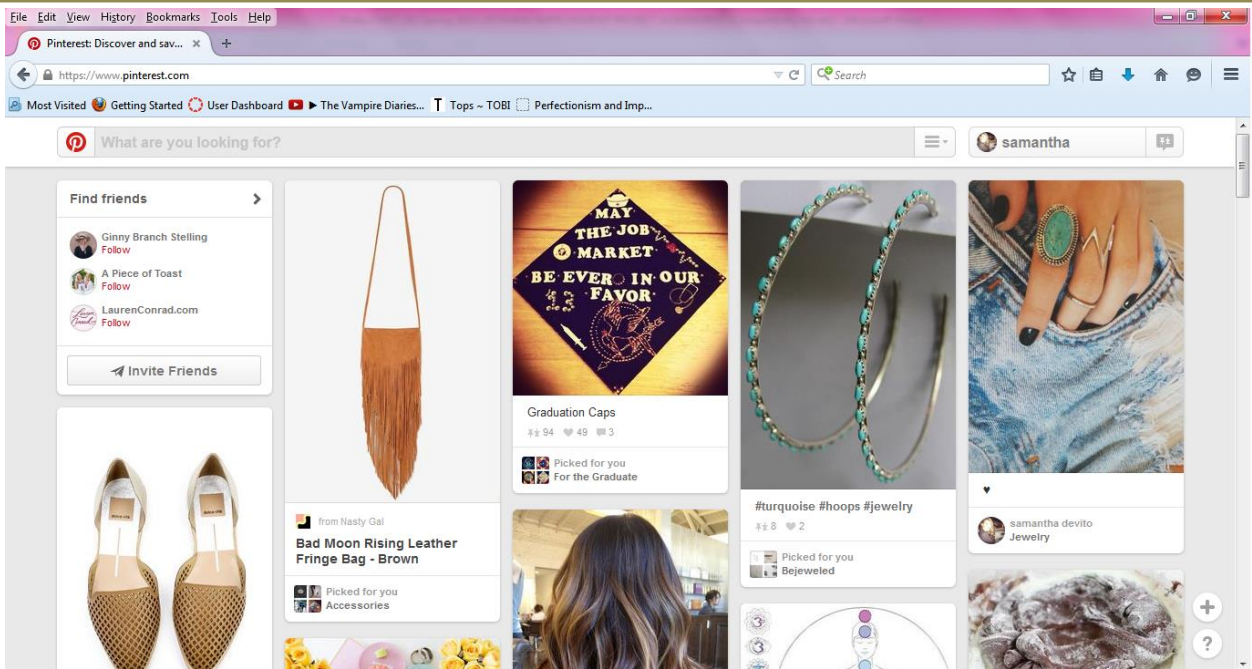
- Your photo which is an egg by default, is where the Settings are located.
- Click your photo or the egg and go to settings



- Open up security and privacy on the left hand side
- Scroll down to check private account and modify the settings

Pinterest

- Pinterest allows you to sign up with an email, through facebook, twitter or google plus
- Your pinterest home page will have photos (pins) of pictures that may interest you.
- At the top you can search for pins and repin them to a board that you create for your home page.



- Click your name on the top right to get to your home page
- From there you can see a gear settings menu and choose account settings to make your profile private to google so people cannot search you
- You can also create secret boards that are invite only, you can see this on the bottom of your home page

