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PBI Project: Storybird

### **Lesson Implementation**

This PBI project took about three weeks to implement and publish mainly due to the fact that we needed access and time on the technology tools. Also, it is still early in the school year and I had to make sure to model everything that I wanted the students to work on. We started out working on our bat map where students listed on a sticky note everything they already knew about bats. We then read several nonfiction books and even learned a song from YouTube about echolocation. Students then worked together to create a class tree map: Bats have, Bats are, and Bats can. Once we finished writing three facts in each branch of the tree map, students filled in their own tree map and could add as many bat facts as they wanted to their personal tree map. As a class, the next step was to work on writing complete sentences with these bat facts. Again, it was important to take the time to model how to transition the bat facts on the tree map into complete sentences. Students then worked on writing a rough draft of a nonfiction story about bats and what they have learned. Students were given the choice of choosing the most interesting facts to them. From there the students worked with myself and my student intern on editing their writing. They were then given a special bat paper to publish their final copy on paper. When that was complete, I took the time to teach the students how to log in and start a book of their own on Storybird. Students at this age had trouble putting in their passwords, so things like logging took a little time. Once the students were logged into their student accounts on Storybird, I pulled up my account on the Bright Links projector and walked them through how to start their very own picture book. Students used their published story on paper to help them write their picture book about bats. Students did get frustrated at this point because they

were limited as to which artist and illustration of bats they could use. Most of the students had to use the same picture for each page of their book. Once the students completed their picture book we published it on Storybird. Students were able to share their bat books with the class on the Bright Links in the classroom.

## **TPACK**

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) was integrated throughout the implementation of writer's workshop. This happened through the use of iPads and computers to utilize Storybird, by learning about bats through a variety of resources and through the teacher's scaffolding and instruction. Throughout this lesson students were using technology. They first used technology to view bat videos on YouTube. Then, students were given opportunities to use the computer lab and iPads in the classroom to access and create their bat books on Storybird. As the teacher I used my pedagogical content knowledge to teach the students about bats on the Bright Links document camera, through the use of YouTube and by scaffolding lessons to teach students how to gather information and write about bats and then how to access and use Storybird.

## **Revised Bloom's Taxonomy Model**

The revised Bloom's Taxonomy model was used throughout our PBI project. First, students discussed what nocturnal animals were. The students decided that they would like to learn more about bats since we were close to Halloween. We created a bat map where students listed what they already knew about bats. Students described all the information that they already knew about bats and put that on a sticky note. The sticky note was then placed on the bat map. The class read several different books on bats and then classified the information on a tree may: Bats

Can, Bats Have, and Bats Are. This tree map demonstrates the understanding level of Blooms Taxonomy. Students were then given the opportunity to write about bats in their journals, showing the applying level of Blooms. Students then met with the teachers to analyse their rough draft writing. Students and teachers discussed misspelled words and made sure that the facts about bats were correct. When students reached the evaluating stage, they were given fancy bat paper to write their final draft of their bat stories. Students were given an opportunity to sit in the author's chair and read their story to their classmates. Finally, students reached the creating stage of Bloom's Taxonomy when they used their final copy of their bat story to create a digital story book on Storybird.com.

### **Literacy/Learning Theory**

This PBI project was grounded in Vygotsky's social theory of learning. In the classroom this is known to teachers as scaffolding instruction Vygotsky believed that the teacher should meet the student where he/she is and then scaffold, help and guide instruction, according to the needs of the students. In this project, scaffolding of instruction was used all along the way. First the teacher assessed what the students knew about nocturnal animals and bats specifically in order to gain an understanding of their background knowledge. Scaffolding also took place all along the way through teacher modeling of writing and through the use of Storybird. The class also started using Storybird a little earlier in the year when we created a class book all about playground safety. This laid the foundation and helped to get the students excited about using Storybird again.

## Successes and Challenges

Throughout this project, there were several success and challenges. Time to get the project finished seemed to be the biggest obstacle. There always seemed to be a meeting during my computer lab time and the assistant who took the students didn't know anything about Storybird, so she couldn't help them work on their project. The students also had a little trouble learning that they needed to put their password in exactly as it was typed on their card. Once they got over that hurdle they took off writing. Another big challenge during this project was through the actual use of Storybird. When we typed in the topic, bats, there were several pictures. But when we decided on a picture/artist, students lost all of the other bat pictures and were stuck on only using the one bat picture by that artist. All of the bat books use the same bat picture, but the sentences about bats changed. This was a little frustrating for both the students and I.

The biggest success that I have encountered during this PBI project is that the students really did excited and were motivated to take their writing to another level and publishing on Storybird. There were several students who knew their password on Storybird and worked on their books at home. One of the students went beyond the minimum four pages and actually wrote a great book that was 17 pages long! Also, one of my non-English speaking students accesses Storybird at home and did a great job on his bat book! This is amazing since he speaks very little English. Using scaffolding in the classroom and throughout this project he was able to be guided along the way to produce an amazing bat book that he was so excited to share. Overall, I believe that our goal of getting students motivated to meet the Common Core Standards through the use of Storybird was a success!

## Collaboration

Overall, the collaboration on this project went well. We do not live in the same town, so emailing, texting, using Google Hangout, and meeting after class on Tuesday nights worked out well for us. We were able to narrow down a question, collaborate on which nocturnal animals we would teach our classes about and then discuss how we were both going to use Storybird to motivate our students. We ended up working on very similar projects using Storybird to motivate the students in both of our classes. We just lived too far away to only use one class.