



IMPROVING CHILDREN'S IMAGINATION WITH DIGITAL STORYTELLING

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays digital storytelling has deeply emerged as a superpowerful tool for encouraging imagination, literacy and creativity development in young children. By integrating typical storytelling techniques with modern multimedia technologies, digital storytelling develops children's ability to be busy with narratives in innovative ways. This article explores the effectiveness of digital storytelling in early childhood education and focuses on its impact on critical thinking, communication, and imagination. Key theoretical frameworks, such as the SAMR model and Imagineering, are discussed to highlight the transformative role of technology in educational settings. Overall, the study underscores the importance of digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool that prepares children for a technology-rich world while promoting lifelong learning habits.

Keywords: Digital storytelling, literacy development, imagination, SAMR model, Imagineering, early childhood education, critical thinking, communication skills, multimedia tools, creativity.

INTRODUCTION

Storytelling has long been recognized as an essential tool for teaching and learning, particularly in early childhood education. It serves as a medium for children to explore ideas, express emotions, and develop communication skills. With the advent of technology, traditional storytelling methods have evolved into digital storytelling, which integrates multimedia tools such as images, audio, animation, and virtual reality to create engaging and interactive narratives. Digital storytelling, therefore, offers a unique opportunity to not only preserve the essence of traditional storytelling but also to enhance children's imagination and literacy development through innovative practices.

This article examines the role of digital storytelling in improving children's imagination and educational outcomes. Researchers, including Jessica Lantz, Joy Myers, and Reece Wilson, highlight the potential of digital storytelling to transform teaching practices in early childhood classrooms [6,23].

By employing frameworks like the SAMR model, which outlines the stages of technology integration—Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition—educators can effectively utilize digital tools to enrich learning experiences. Furthermore, the concept of Imagineering, which blends imagination with engineering, provides a learner-centered approach that fosters creativity and reflective

thinking. The review discusses various studies and classroom practices that demonstrate the effectiveness of digital storytelling in enhancing children's communication skills, critical thinking, and collaboration. It also explores how technology motivates young learners, allowing them to engage in meaningful, hands-on projects. By synthesizing key findings, this review aims to provide educators and researchers with insights into the benefits and challenges of integrating digital storytelling into early childhood education. Ultimately, the review advocates for the adoption of digital storytelling as a transformative pedagogical tool to prepare children for the demands of a technology-driven future.

Storytelling is more effective way for children to learn from and communicate with each other. Especially digital storytelling is more widely used among young children for enhancing their imagination. Researchers have explored various approaches to effectively improve imagination with using technological storytelling. For example, Jessica Lantz, Joy Myers, and Reece Wilson, explores the integration of digital storytelling in early childhood education. It emphasizes how technology can enhance literacy development among young learners by providing engaging and interactive storytelling experiences. The authors utilize Puentedura's SAMR model to analyze the impact of technology in educational settings, particularly in classrooms for children aged PK-3[3,14].

The authors argue that digital storytelling combines traditional storytelling elements with modern technology, allowing children to engage with narratives in innovative ways. By utilizing multimedia tools, children can express their creativity and develop vital literacy skills. The SAMR model, which stands for Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition, serves as a foundational framework for the authors' discussion. The authors detail how technology can transition from simple substitution of traditional methods to transformative practices that redefine the learning experience. For instance, while using an app like Puppet Pals allows for story creation (modification), creating a virtual reality experience might redefine storytelling entirely[2,33].

Digital storytelling combines traditional narrative techniques with modern multimedia tools, allowing children to express ideas creatively. According to Bernard (2006), digital storytelling enhances learning by transforming how children interact with content, fostering engagement and understanding. Research indicates that storytelling is essential for developing vocabulary and literacy skills in early childhood. The article emphasizes that digital storytelling, particularly when integrated with technology, can motivate young learners and enhance their communication skills.

The concept of Imagineering, which merges imagination and engineering, is pivotal in the proposed model. Nilsook et al. highlight that Imagineering promotes a learner-centered approach, enabling children to harness their creativity while engaging in hands-on projects [9,26].

Overall, these works advocate for educators to embrace digital storytelling as a powerful pedagogical tool that not only enhances learning outcomes but also prepares young children for a technology-rich world. By fostering an environment where imagination and creativity flourish, educators can significantly impact children's development and lifelong learning habits.

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