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FOCI 218: OutReach Teach by Design Project
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Bringing History to Life

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Context:

Our proposed solution is for Grade 4 Social Studies curriculum studies being used in Grade 3 and 4 classrooms at Albert College in Belleville, Ontario.

Curriculum:

We focused our proposal on the Heritage and Identity strand in the curriculum, and used the following two specific expectations to inspire our solution.

- **A1.2** compare aspects of the daily lives of different groups within a few early societies, including at least one First Nation and one Inuit society
- **A1.3** describe some of the ways in which their daily life differs from the lives of young people from different backgrounds (e.g., wealthy, poor, slave, urban, rural) in a few early societies

Problem:

The challenge is to make history come to life for a Grade 4 Social Studies class, getting them involved in investigating historical societies and making connections with their lives today.

Solution:

Our solution proposes using ChatGPT to interact with a historical character, fact-checking the information learned using academic resources, and using green-screen technology with iPad

apps like iMovie or Do-Ink to create a video that compares and contrasts life in historical societies with student life today.

The interaction with ChatGPT helps students understand the historical setting through the viewpoint of a person from that time, while also helping them learn how AI can be utilized appropriately for learning. Our [ChatGPT User Guide](#) helps a teacher walk students through learning how generative AI works and how to use it responsibly to “chat” with a historical figure. Fact-checking the information learned from the AI helps reinforce the generative nature of the technology and the need to use critical thinking skills when using new technologies.

The creation of the video with the green screen helps to consolidate the learning and connect it with student experience in modern life while providing an open-ended assignment full of student choice, autonomy and creativity.

How it Works:

Our proposed solution attempts to bring history to life in two primary ways: interacting with AI technology using ChatGPT, and creating videos using iPads and a green screen.

1. Students use ChatGPT to “chat” with a character from the historical society being studied by the class, asking questions that allow them to learn about what daily life looked like in that time and place. The [ChatGPT User Guide](#) provides slides to help a teacher do this with the class and instruct them in responsible use of generative AI.
2. ChatGPT as a Generative AI technology is not always a reliable source of information, so students then use critical thinking and research skills to fact-check what they learn from ChatGPT with academic sources provided by the teacher (physical or digital).
3. Students use an iPad and green screen to create a video that compares and contrasts what life was like in that historical society with what life is like for them today. There is room for creativity and choice in how this is done, but we envision using green-screen technology to enable artistic student expressions of learning overlaid on historical backgrounds or settings.

LINKS:

- ChatGPT User Guide - [ChatGPT User Guide](#)
- ChatGPT - <https://chat.openai.com/>

- Do Ink app - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/green-screen-by-do-ink/id730091131>
- Do Ink green-screen tutorials - <http://www.doink.com/tutorials>
- iMovie green-screen instructions - <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/102308#:~:text=In%20iMovie%20on%20iPhone%2C%20iPad,clip%2C%20photo%20or%20other%20image>

Considerations for enabling this solution to work:

To ensure this solution works as smoothly as possible, the class needs to have some basic familiarity with iPads. The teacher can run an introductory workshop on how to use tablets and iPad OS software if necessary. The teacher should also ensure that there are enough iPads for each group in the class to use, or that there is an appropriate schedule for resource sharing.

Trends in Education:

With Chat GPT and other generative AI platforms becoming more and more popular, educators and students alike have been trying to find a balance between its use and abuse. With the ability to present large chunks of information to a user almost instantly, fears of academic dishonesty are not unfounded. However, it is clear that this technology is here to stay, and worries about it are akin to educators' anxiety over the invention of the calculator or Google in generations passed. Teachers need to be able to educate students on how best to use AI, and how to see AI as a learning tool rather than something to simply copy answers off of. It has been suggested that by encouraging critical thinking, Chat GPT can be used to help prepare students for the real world (Abramson, 2023). This is because the information gathered from AI is not fully reliable. Those doing research still need to think critically about the information presented and fact check it to ensure accuracy. Including a user guide for Chat GPT in this solution allows young learners to get familiar with software that they very well may use for the rest of their academic careers.

The idea of using green screens and student-made videos in projects has been a trend in education lately, because it increases student engagement and thus academic achievement. In a study looking at using green screens to make videos in a grade 11 Biology class, it was found that the experimental group had significantly higher test performance than the comparison

group (Blacer-Bacolod, 2022). The study concluded that incorporating technology in the classroom increased student academic performance, by helping develop higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. Another study found that student-made video projects were useful in supporting the collaborative skills of students (Puspa, 2016). The group members were required to work effectively with each other to get the project finished. They needed to set goals, plan when to meet up, and make decisions on how to divide work. These collaboration skills are pivotal to society today, and collaboration is known as a 21st Century Skill.

Evidence for Success:

The main evidence for research success will come from Chat GPT itself, as logs of chats are kept in the software. These logs can be linked back to Google searches or other traditional research methods to ensure fact-checking has taken place. Additionally, the final deliverable of the project, a video comparing and contrasting modern life with that of early civilizations, can be used as evidence for success. There should be a clear difference between the portrayal of life of the two eras.

Process Account:

1. November 29

Had initial meeting with Albert College teachers Ryan Fraser and Kristy Segedin to discuss problems they are experiencing teaching grade 4 Social Studies. Notes were taken on Jamboard. It was noted that Ryan wanted the solution to have a research component to it.

2. January 3

Brainstormed and developed the problem that we would try to solve. Decided that Ryan was looking for a way to leverage technology to create more engaging lessons in Social Studies, with a focus on fact checking information sourced from AI platforms. Problem was shared with Ryan and Kristy via Richard Reeve. Idea direction was given the green light shortly after.

3. January 10

As an exercise, brainstormed the worst ways we could think of to solve the problem. Concluded that the worst use of technology in this case was to simply upload a textbook onto iPads for students to read. From there, we came up with the idea of using iPads to film green screen footage, as creative endeavors often lead to engagement. We also thought of using AI as a means to have a simulated conversation with a historical figure, using something called hellohistory.ai. Other ideas brainstormed included Google Earth time lapses and VR field trips / museum tours. It was at this point that we decided to focus solely on the History rather than Geography stream of the Social Studies curriculum.

4. January 17

Refined solution to include just a ChatGPT user guide and green screen video editing, after meeting with Ryan on Zoom. Hellohistory was decided against because of the fee involved.

5. January 24

Finalized work on the project, brainstorming how best to present the material. Developed ChatGPT user guide.

References

Abramson, A. (2023). How to use ChatGPT as a learning tool. *American Psychological Association*, 54(4), 67.

Blacer-Bacolod, D. (2022). Student-generated videos using green screen technology in a biology class. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 12(4).

Puspa, A. (2016). STUDENT-MADE VIDEO PROJECT TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCE. *Proceedings of ISELT FBS Universitas Negeri Padang*, 4(1), 69-79.

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Jan 10 version) [Large language model].
<https://chat.openai.com/share/b03f89ed-ba85-4a11-ab11-3aac1e00440a>