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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.”

# STUDENTS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE CREATION OF THIS BOOK

## **LITERATURE CHAPTERS**

“Mathilda” -- Lindsay Slaff, Kristin Peretti, Camila Piza, Alexa Spear

“The Gitt of the Magi” -- Anna Fallon, Juan Hurtado, Sydney Parsley

## **POETRY CHAPTER**

Mary Grater, Patrick Eksay, Nicholas Jachim

## **ART CHAPTER**

Benjamin Berube, Sunah Choudhry, Madalyn Rupprecht

## **NONFICTION (HISTORY) CHAPTER**

Katelyn Woebse, Jael Mino, Kayla Dilworth, Anthony Rivera

## **OPERA CHAPTER**

Andrea Ruiz, Mandonnah Mahallati, Christopher McGovern, Diana Ortiz

# 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 principals.

## **Transmedia Applications /Educational Purpose(s):**

**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 book’s characters, and sharing their perspectives to develop the storyworld.

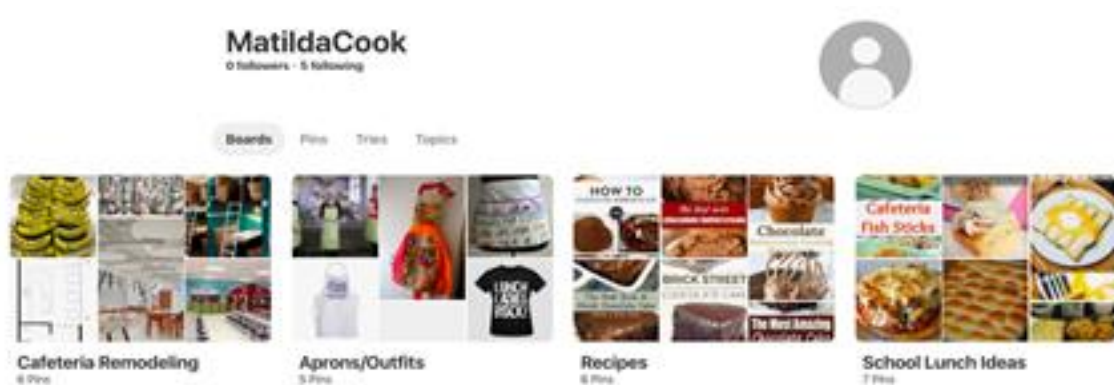
Platforms Being Used:

- 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.

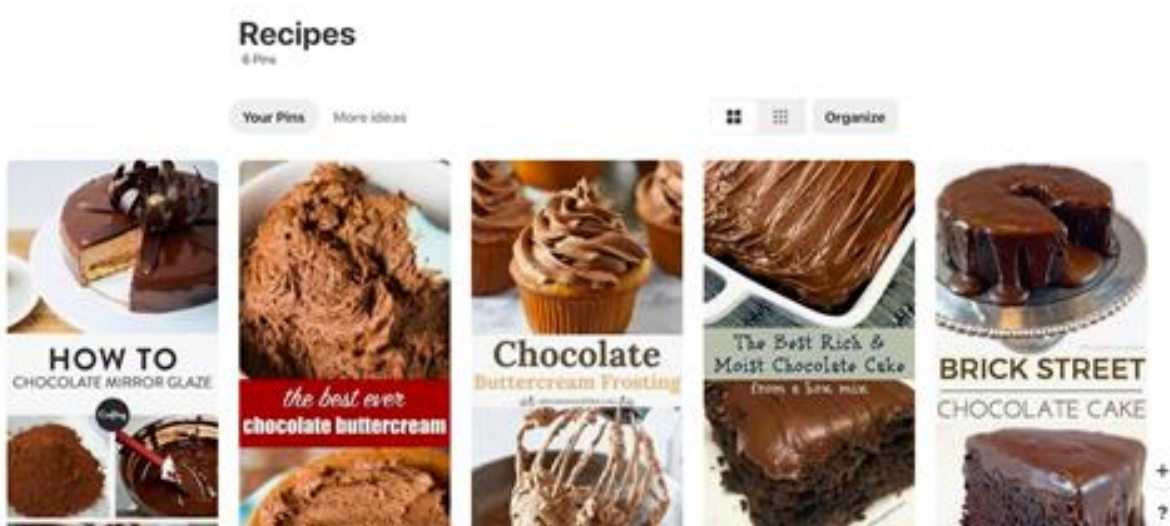


## Platforms Being Used:

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 Create an Account

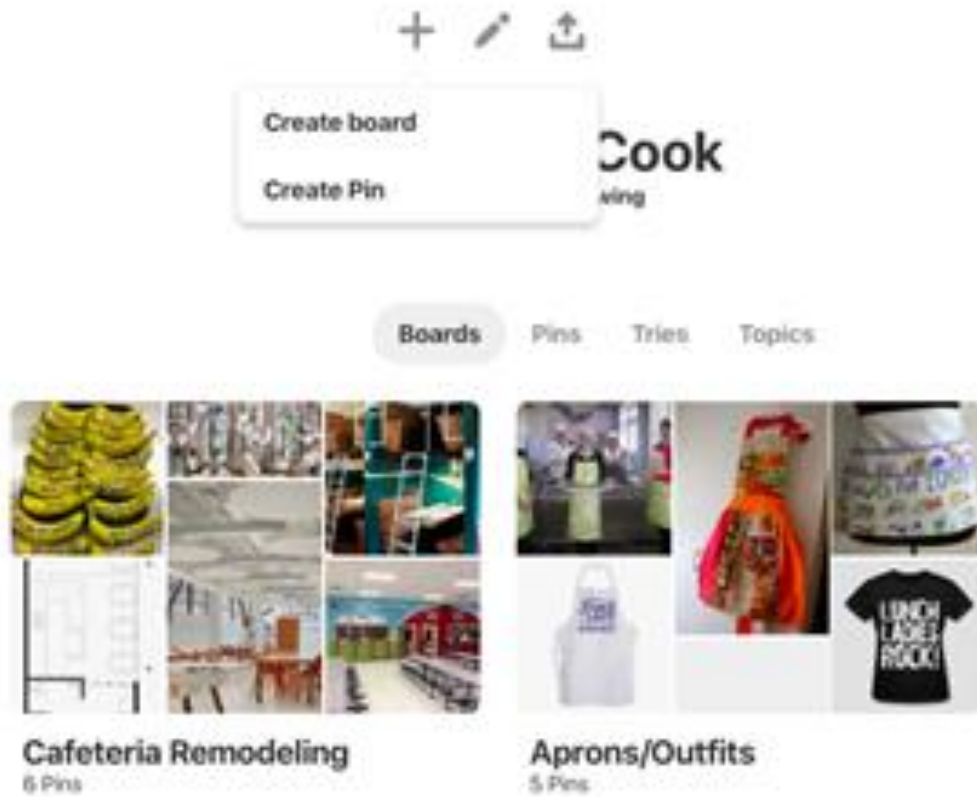


The image shows the Pinterest account creation interface. At the top is the Pinterest logo (a red circle with a white 'P'). Below it, the text reads "Welcome to Pinterest" in a large, bold, black font, followed by the tagline "Find new ideas to try" in a smaller font. The form consists of three input fields: "Email", "Create a password", and "Age". Below these fields is a prominent red button labeled "Continue". Underneath the red button is the word "OR" in a small, black font. Below "OR" are two blue buttons: "Continue with Facebook" (with the Facebook 'f' logo) and "Continue with Google" (with the Google 'G' logo). At the bottom of the form, there is a line of small text: "By continuing, you agree to Pinterest's Terms of Service, Privacy Policy". Below that is a link: "Already a member? Log in".

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.”



**Create board** ✕

Name

Secret  [Learn more](#)

Cancel Create

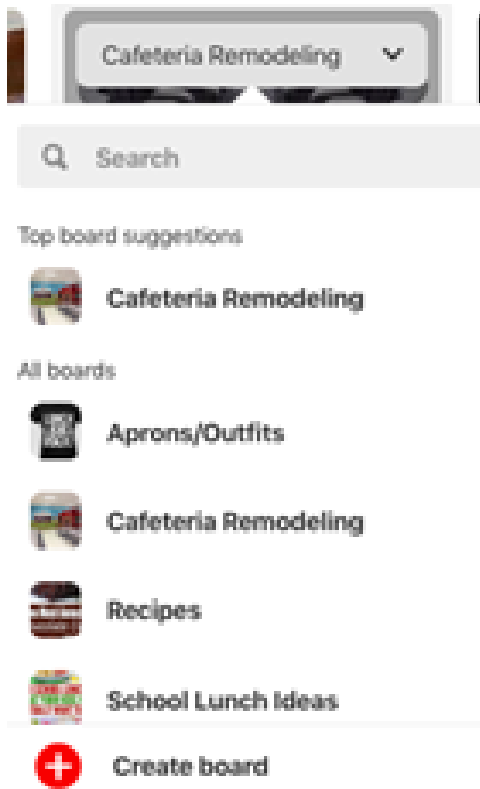
Here, one can create the name of the grouping or category. Also, there is a mode to let the board be secret if the teacher wants it to be private.





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.



matilda • Following  
Admont, Austria



Liked by lavender and 53 others

matilda They'll need their own suitcase! I don't think the wagon will make it through customs... #bookgoals ... more

View all 7 Comments



Add a comment...

6 September



matilda • Following



Liked by lavender and 88 others

matilda Took some practice, but I finally got it down! 🤖 ... more

View all 17 Comments



Add a comment...

24 September

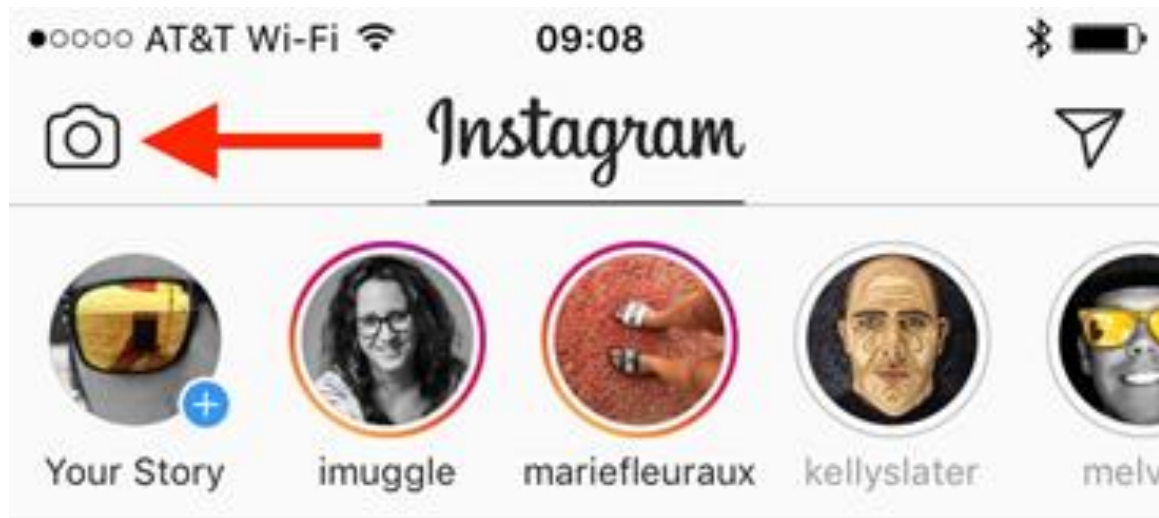
## **How to Sign up:**

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:



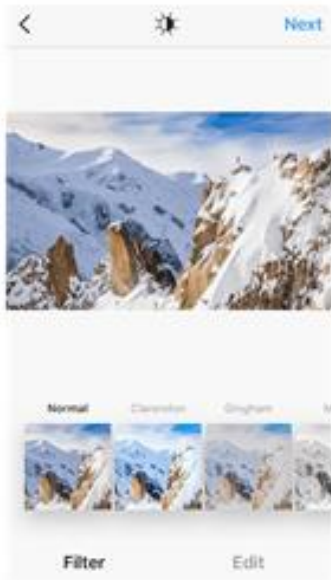
After clicking the camera directed by the arrow, students have the opportunity to post their own photo, video, or boomerang (a moving photo) to their story. They can also add music, text, filters, “stickers,” and more. There are more interactive elements such as polls, questions, and quizzes. One can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

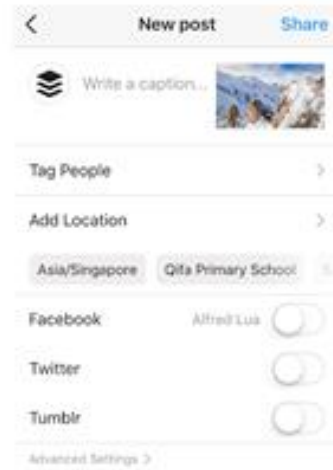
This creative aspect will be useful in many other areas of their academic and professional careers. Academically, this element will provide insight into what the character’s value and enjoy sharing with their peers. Professionally, simple graphic design skills can help to elevate a student’s future experience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



Filter



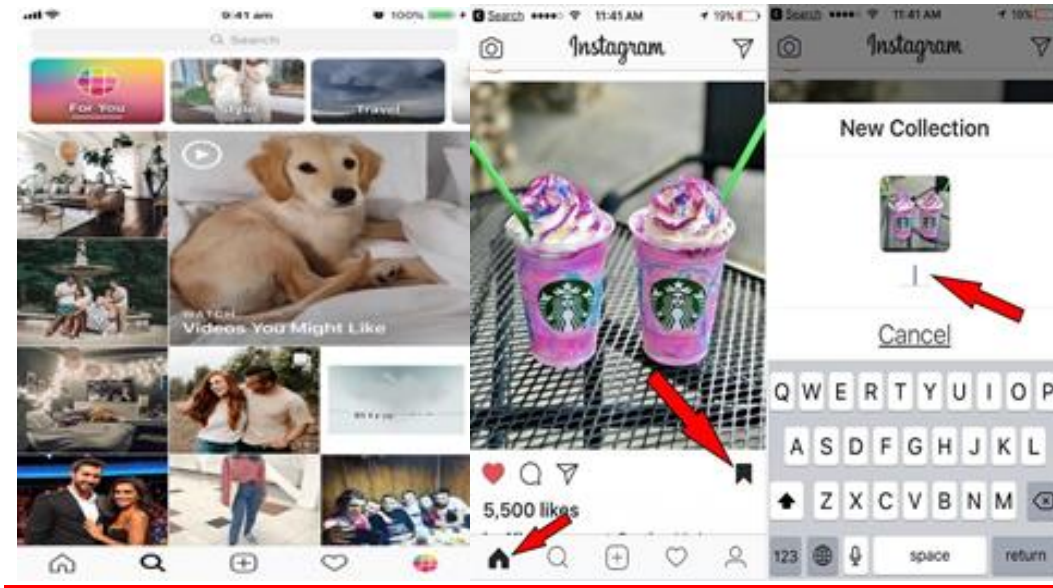
Edit



Post details

### 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.


→ <https://miss-honey-posts.tumblr.com> ☆

MENU



### Miss Honey's Thoughts





**April 26th**

Oh what a day... Miss Trunchbull was mean to the students again. She torments them for no reason at all. I try to make my classroom a safe space for them. I know we're not supposed to have a favorite student but little Matilda Wormwood is so brilliant. She loves books so much and her parents seem awful, I wish I could help her.

Apr 26, 2019

### Roleplay Areas

teaching-ideas-blog

For a role play area in your classroom, you must make sure you thoroughly explain all aspects of it before you let the children in to play. You could include worksheets so the children can record the activities they have completed in the area.

Lots of questioning should be involved prior to the children entering the area, including identifying all the toys and objects in there. If there are animals or human toys (e.g. a vets or doctors) then you could discuss how they might be feeling and what care they should need. This all encourages imagination and can develop their vocabulary and awareness of others.

Limiting the number of children allowed in means four or five children will get to experience

miss-honey-posts.tumblr.com

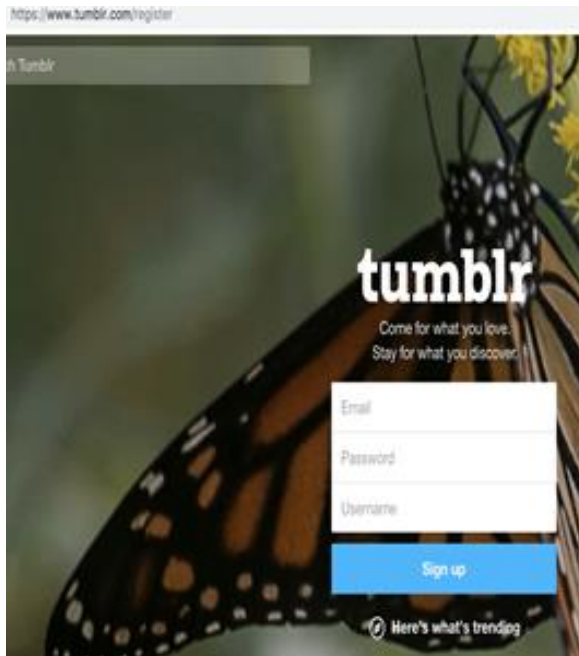
Miss Honey is using her blog as an online journal of sorts. She is reposting content that is relevant to her as a teacher, such as ideas for teaching methods, and writing entries about her daily life. What would Miss Honey talk about? As she adopts Matilda at the end of the book, perhaps she would be 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.

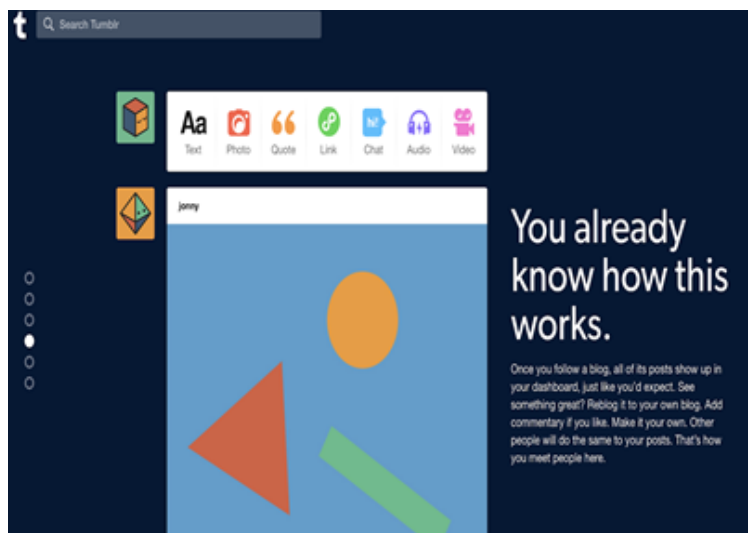


## How To

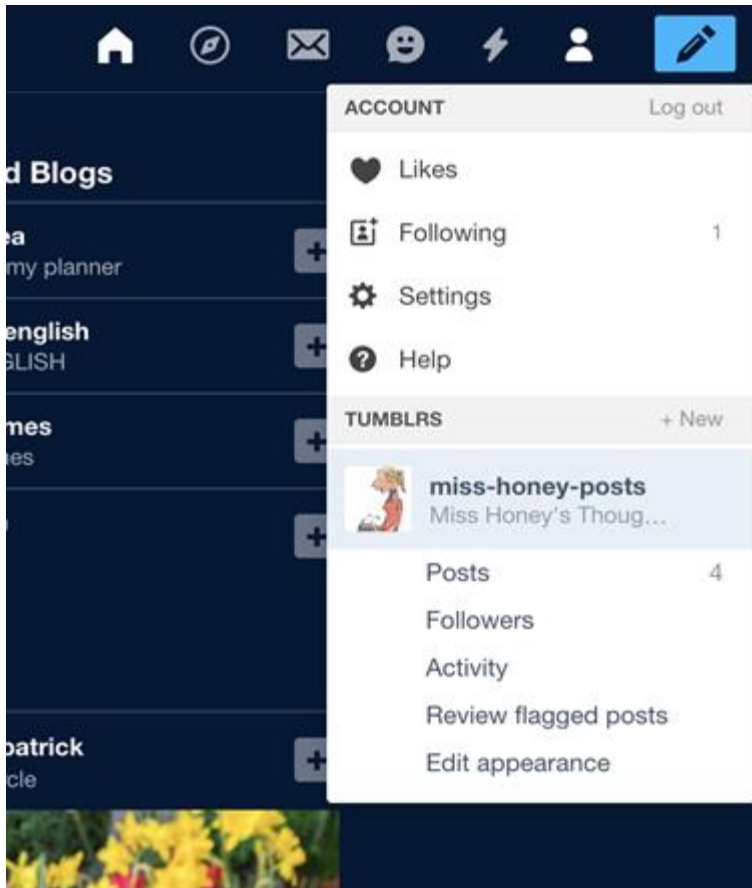
To create a tumblr account, one must go to [tumblr.com/register](https://www.tumblr.com/register) and sign up with an email address, username, and password.



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.



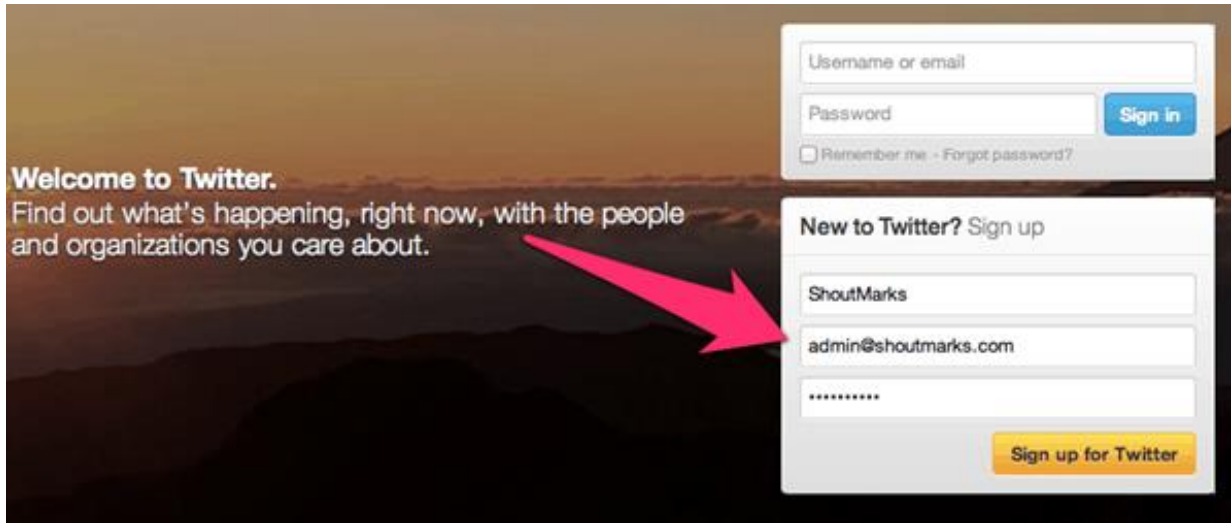
Once you have an account you can view your blog, edit it's appearance and much more on the top right under the user tab. You can also explore content from others blogs tailored to your interests through the compass icon on the right of the home icon.

## Twitter:

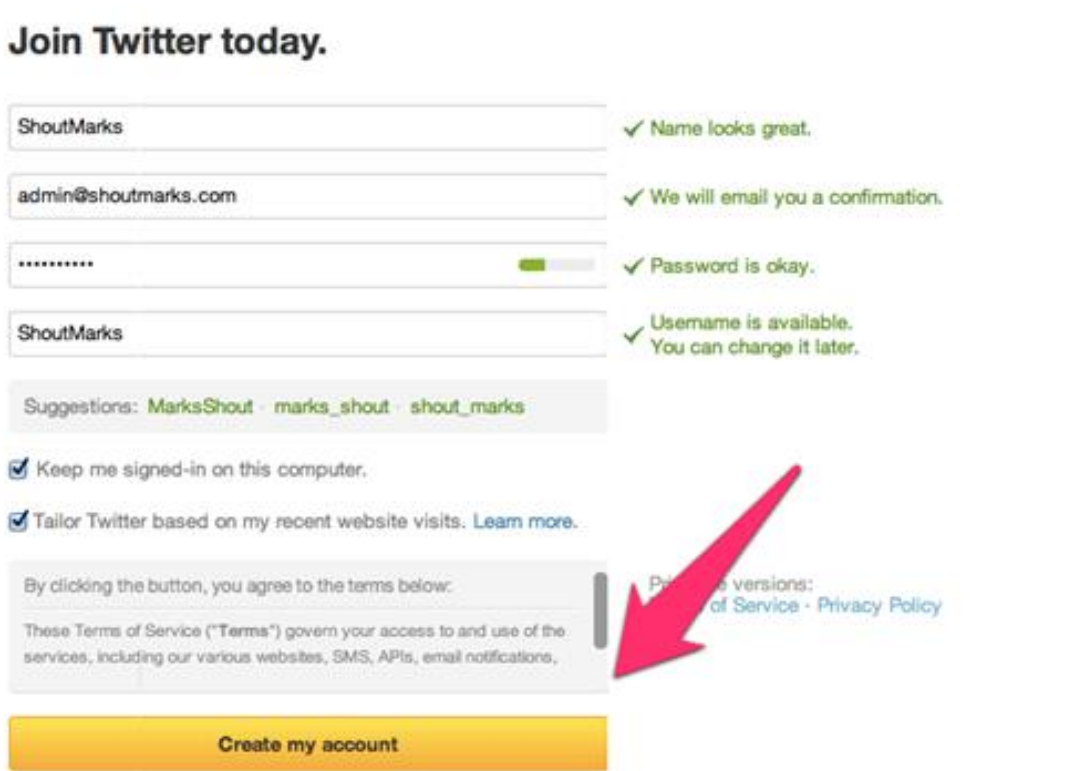
Students will get the chance to interact with Matilda and ask her questions about anything and everything! It becomes more interactive for the students to get involved with someone they can truly connect with. Matilda is present on twitter by connecting an ask.fm page that will allow others to submit 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.



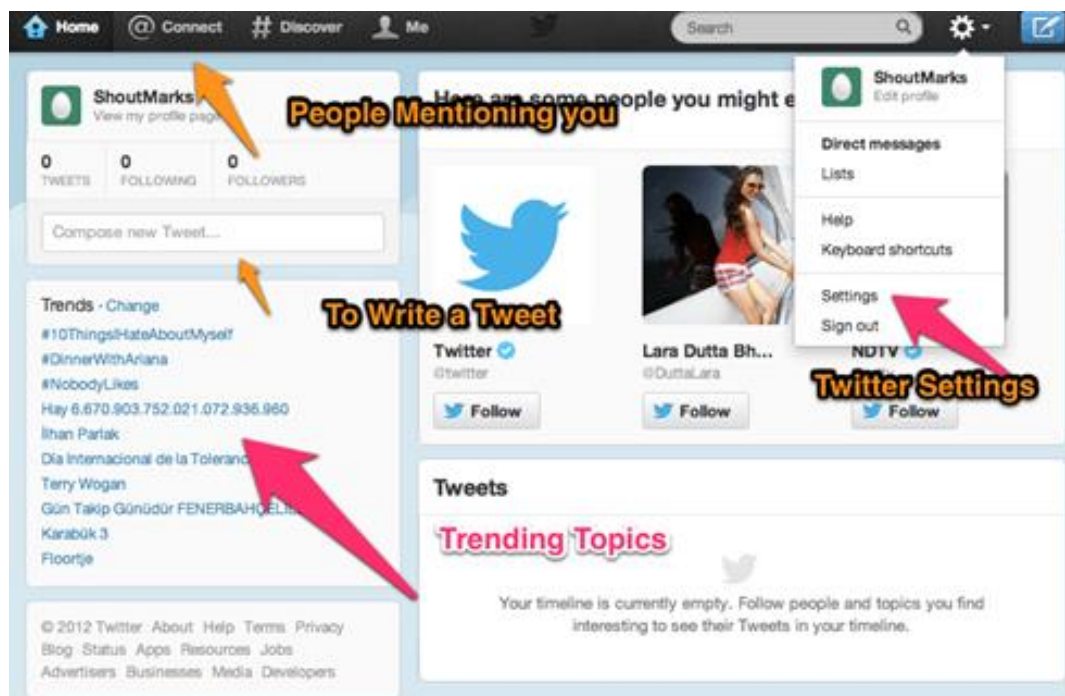
## How To:



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



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 turns 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 Literature

## (Example Two)

**Students who created this section:** Anna Fallon, Sydney Parsley, Juan Hurtado

**Example:** “The Gift of the Magi,” the literature by American short story writer William Sydney Porter, known best by his pen name O. Henry

**Synopsis:** The Gift of the Magi is about Jim and Della Dillingham Young, a poor married couple living in New York. Their only treasured possessions are Jim’s gold pocket watch that was passed down from his grandfather, and Della’s luscious long hair. On Christmas Eve, they sacrifice in order to purchase gifts for each other. With only \$1.87 in her pocket, Della decides to cut her hair and sells it in order to buy a watch chain for Jim’s watch. When Jim comes home that night he reveals that he’s sold his watch in order to buy Della a new pair of beautiful combs to brush her hair. In the end, the narrator compares Jim and Della to the three wise men, and that of all gift givers, these two are the wisest.

**Objective:** To create a different approach to a classic tale of sacrifice and subjective value. For instance, what would have happened if Jim and Della hadn’t sold their belongings? We can do this using a variety of social media platforms; it takes the story to another level that readers don’t see on the surface. In this chapter, we will demonstrate ways to expand the story on The Gift of the Magi using three of the seven principles from Jenkins.

### **1. Continuity vs. Multiplicity**

- **Continuity:** Nobody knows what happened to Jim and Della after the initial story of the gift exchange. So what happens after they sell their belongings and realize their love for each other is a gift in itself? Is there a possibility that Jim ends up changing his mind about Della’s short hair, and that he was just caught in the heat of the moment? Could Della have decided that she didn’t want to live a life of a poor woman anymore and run off with a rich man? Who knows! We could continue the story of the two using Pixton comics to show Della’s life after the initial story.



- **Multiplicity:** The addition of social media to this story could change the whole course of it! With transmedia, we can change the entire outcome of a story, not matter what it is! For example, what would have happened if Della had posted on Twitter that she was looking for a place that sells good watch chains, and John saw that she posted it?

The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter conversation. On the left, Della (@DelleBella) asks for help finding a good watch chain for her man. On the right, Jim (@JimboKing) replies, saying he has already sold his watch. Below the tweets are three numbered panels: Panel 1 shows Della standing by a trailer; Panel 2 shows her walking through a dark, misty forest; Panel 3 shows her dancing with a man in a formal setting.

**Della** @DelleBella  
Does anyone know where I can find a good watch chain for my man? #help!  
5:57 AM - 9 May 20 · Embed this Tweet

**Jim** @JimboKing  
@DellaBella If it's for me, don't bother... I definitely just sold my watch for reasons I will disclose later on! #besthusband  
5:57 AM - 9 May 20 · Embed this Tweet

1  
2  
3

## 2. Subjectivity and Performance

- **Subjectivity:** If the story was told from Jim, there could have been more of an understanding. We'd be able to see that he was stressing just as much and going through the same thing Della was. The students could have used Instagram as a platform posting a story saying that he got his wife a pair of beautiful combs for her to brush her hair. The class could also be able to make their own little spinoff of the story from Jim's perspective using story posts!
- **Performance:** For performance the class can make a small reenactment of the story. Several students can partner up, dress the part and create the story the way they see it! Instagram live could be a way of showing other classmates how the students perform and at the end, have them learn the lesson that selflessness and love are the greatest gifts of all!



## 3. Spreadability vs Drillability

- Employing the concept of drillability to uncover the symbolism and irony within the story is one way to show the students how this literature can be applied to their life. The best approach to this principle is to utilize both Twitter and Instagram, so students have the opportunity to dig deeper with dialogue and images. With spreadability, they can scan the internet to come up with ideas on how to develop a meaningful story about what motivates them, such as themes of sacrifice and/or love. Constructed through social media, students can visualize the literature and get a better idea of how to form their own stories. They might also want to focus on the full interpretation and understanding of the Gift of the Magi since it holds a lot of symbolism. The combination of both elements from drillability and spreadability in conjunction with social media, set the tone for the types of valuable media they'll create.

# Transmedia in Poetry

Example: "Where The Sidewalk Ends," by Shel Silverstein

**Background:** "Where The Sidewalk Ends," by Shel Silverstein was published in 1974 and is the title poem of the collection of the same name. Both the poem and the book gained instant fame and were deemed classics of children's literature.

**Synopsis:** In the poem Where the Sidewalk Ends, author Shel Silverstein suggests that there is a magical place that children know of "where the sidewalk ends." That place represents childhood, its innocence, and a different way of looking at the world (as opposed to the way that adults view it). There have been several analyses of Silverstein's Where the Sidewalk Ends, but among them all, a general conclusion has been drawn. Silverstein is famous for being a children's poet, yet many of the ideas tucked in the corner of Where the Sidewalk Ends are made for adults. Silverstein argues that adults live in a world that is dreary, and that children live in a world full of life and joy. Silverstein suggests that adults need to go to the place that children know; to be able to find happiness and actually live life like a child does.

"There is a place where the sidewalk ends  
And before the street begins,  
And there the grass grows soft and white,  
And there the sun burns crimson bright,  
And there the moon-bird rests from his flight  
To cool in the peppermint wind.

Let us leave this place where the smoke blows black  
And the dark street winds and bends.  
Past the pits where the asphalt flowers grow  
We shall walk with a walk that is measured and slow,  
And watch where the chalk-white arrows go  
To the place where the sidewalk ends.

Yes we'll walk with a walk that is measured and slow,  
And we'll go where the chalk-white arrows go,  
For the children, they mark, and the children, they know  
The place where the sidewalk ends".

## **Students who created this section:**

Mary Grater, Patrick Eksay, Nicholas Jachim

## **Transmedia Applications /Educational Purpose(s):**

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

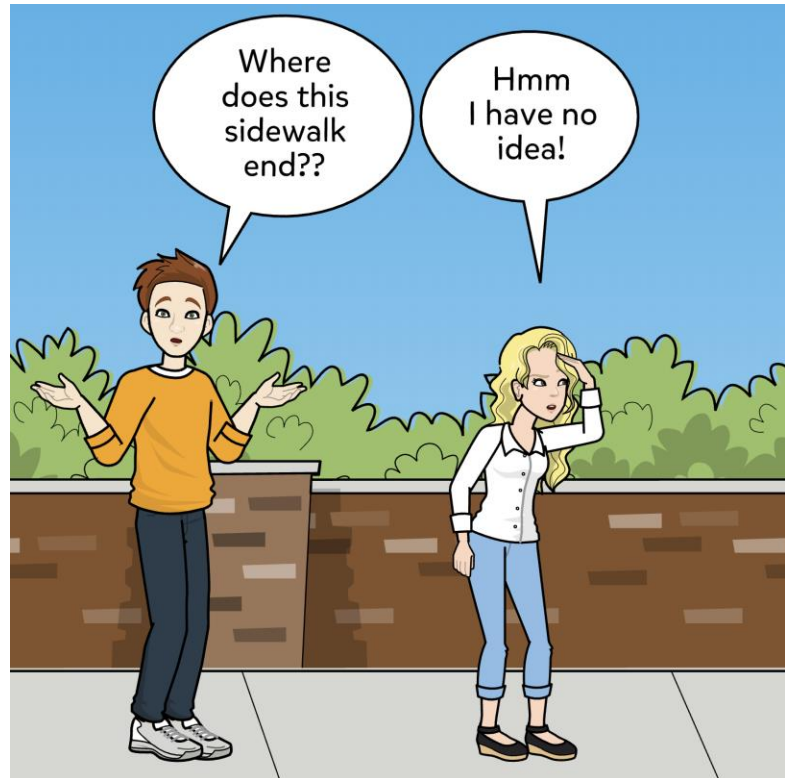
**Object of the project (in the Montclair students' words):** By using Transmedia on social media platforms and integrating the real world into it, teachers will be able to teach students how to study poetry from a different approach which will enable students to maybe interpret or analyze poems that may be hard to comprehend using a traditional teaching method. Through social media, we can focus on some of the 7 Principles of Educational Use that Jenkins laid out for Transmedia.

**Immersion vs Extraction:** By immersing themselves in the world of the poem, students could add extra verses to the poem showing where they would take the narrative if they created it. With extraction, having an art contest in the school where students create their own art in the style of the drawings of Shel Silverstein and having their peers vote on who had the best art in that styling with prizes to the winners would motivate students to research and dive into more poems by Silverstein. Students could use Instagram and/or Twitter with the hashtag #wherethesidewalkends to show their work by continuing the poem in their own words from their interpretation and display their artwork



**World Building:** World building can take place with all of our platforms. Since poetry is often subjective, students can make an entire story of their own using the feelings they have after reading the poem. For example, they can create drawings or Pixton comics that tell a story

based on how they feel. By using art or comics, they can create their own stories based on Silverstein's poems or can use visuals to help explain the meanings behind the poem so it may



be easier to digest and understand.

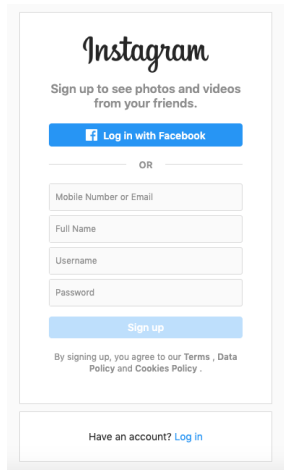
**Subjectivity**: For subjectivity, using sidewalk chalk and Instagram to display art at the end of student's own sidewalks, continuing the poem from the view of the children that are spoken about in the poem. Using the hashtag #wheredoesyoursidewalklead, students can display their sidewalk chalk art and bring Where The Sidewalk End to life.



### Transmedia Elements Used:

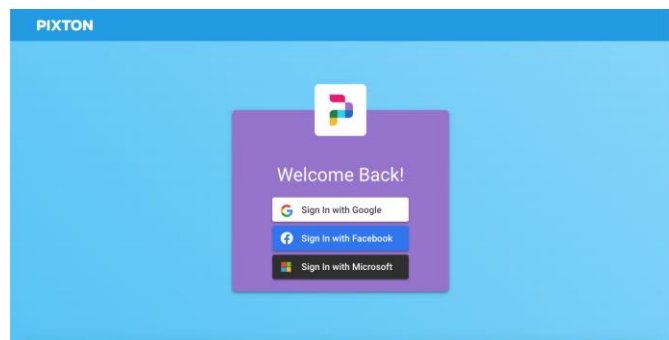
- 1.) Instagram
- 2.) Pixton Comics
- 3.) Twitter

**Instagram:** With Instagram, students can post images that they associate with the imagery from the poem. This will help the students gain insight not only on the poem itself, but also how certain literary elements make them feel. Before posting, students can manipulate the photos using the built-in photo effects in the app. If the poem makes them feel happy or empowered, the students can use the filters to brighten the colors of the image. On the other hand, if the students have a less optimistic opinion towards the poem, they can decrease the contrast and brightness of the image to symbolize a more melancholy standpoint.



**How to:** To sign up for Instagram is very easy, simply go to [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com) or download the app on your phone. Then select **Sign Up**. Enter in either your email or phone number, name, come up with a unique username, and finally a password. Also, make sure to go to **Settings**, and then check what you have selected under **Privacy**. Doing so will ensure that your posts are not made public and that you can select who you would like to view your posts. Once you've done all that you're good to go!

**Pixton:** Pixton is great for students because it allows them to create unique visual stories without requiring an acquired artistic ability. This is great because it allows the students to choose exactly which of the four branches of creative Transmedia they want to engage themselves in. For example, they can focus on "Characterization" by adding quirky or unique traits to the characters they've created. Or they can focus on "Backstory and Exposition" by digging into the roots of the characters and explaining how they got to where they are now. The students can combine these creative elements in whichever way they choose.



**How to:** Signing up for Pixton is extremely easy, you simply need to sign up using either your Google account, Facebook account, or your Microsoft account. Each of those has their own prompts that show you how to create an account for each.

**Twitter:** Much like they can with Instagram, students can create an account and post about how they feel in regards to the impactfulness of the poem. With Twitter, however, the content will generally be less visual and more focused on the written word, though there are exceptions. This will be beneficial to students who may struggle to develop creative thoughts visually. Students will be challenged to develop their thoughts more selectively as Twitter has a character limit. By using both Twitter and Instagram, students will be able to choose which platform they feel more comfortable using. Visually driven students will likely lean towards Instagram while fans of literature and the written word will likely choose Twitter as their platform of choice.

A screenshot of the Twitter account creation interface. At the top, there is a Twitter bird logo on the left and a blue "Next" button on the right. Below the logo, the text "Create your account" is displayed. The form consists of several input fields: a "Name" field with a character count of "0/50", a "Phone" field, a link that says "Use email instead", and a "Date of birth" section. The "Date of birth" section includes a note: "This will not be shown publicly. Confirm your age to receive the appropriate experience." and three dropdown menus for "Month", "Day", and "Year".

**How to:** Signing up for Twitter takes no time at all. First you need to go to twitter.com or download the Twitter app. Then select **Sign Up**, and begin entering in your information: name, phone number or email, date of birth. Once you've done this simply select a username for yourself and enter in a password that you won't forget. After that is complete remember to go to **Settings and Privacy**, in there you can select the correct settings to ensure that you are in control of who is viewing your tweets. Finally, come up with some good ideas and start tweeting away!



# Transmedia in Art

Example: “Starry Night” painting by Vincent Van Gogh



Background: “Starry Night”, painted in 1889, is an oil on canvas painting by Dutch post-impressionist artist Vincent Van Gogh. Painted from the perspective outside of the east-facing window of his asylum room at Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, the painting is marked by its imaginative night sky, a large cypress tree, and a small village below.

Students who created this section: Madalyn Rupprecht, Ben Berube, Sunah Choudhry

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 worldbuild and improvise off of something that has been pre-established. We as a group are using a painting as a way to deep dive into the world of transmedia. Our painting is “Starry Night.” There is a small village in the bottom of the painting. We

will ask our students to use transmedia to explain who lives here, what their relationships are, and how they live their day-to-day lives.

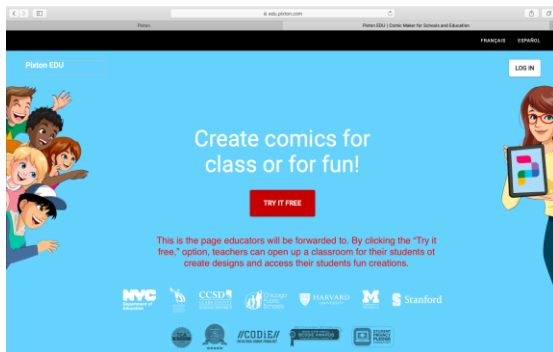
Pixton can be used to establish the world of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. We don't know what the town was like, so this gives students the chance to be creative and establish world building, seriality, immersion, and subjectivity.

### [Pixton Instructions:](#)

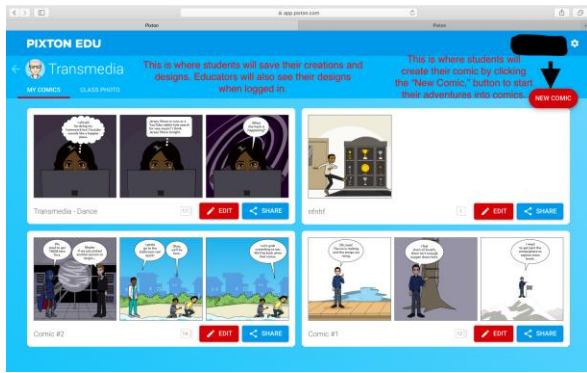
#### Step #1



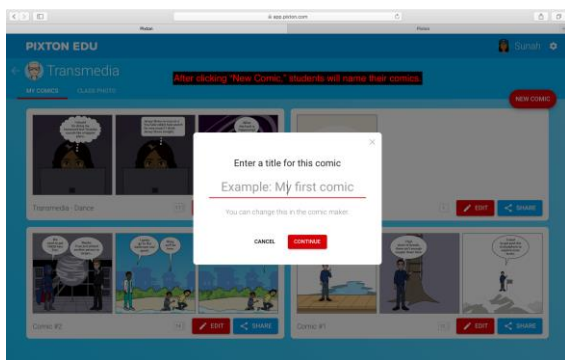
#### Step #2



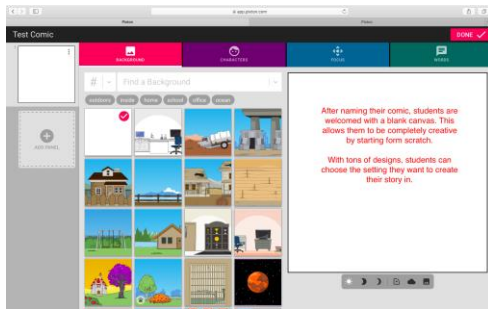
#### Step #3



## Step #4



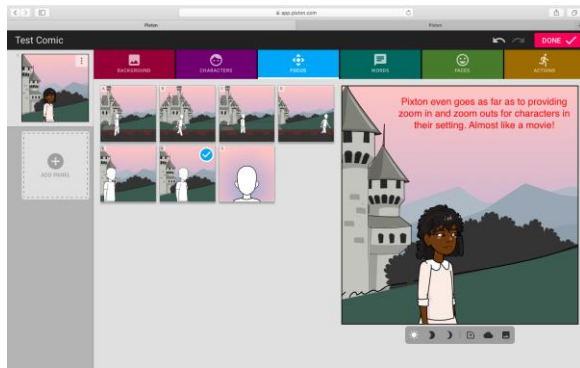
## Step #5



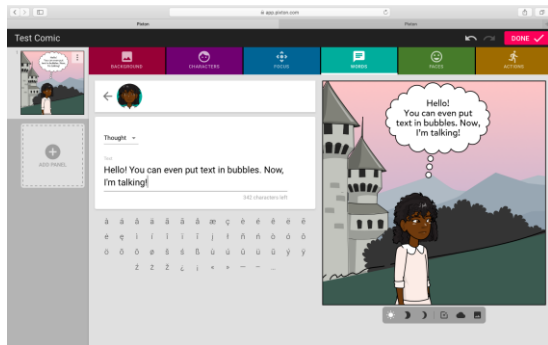
## Step #6



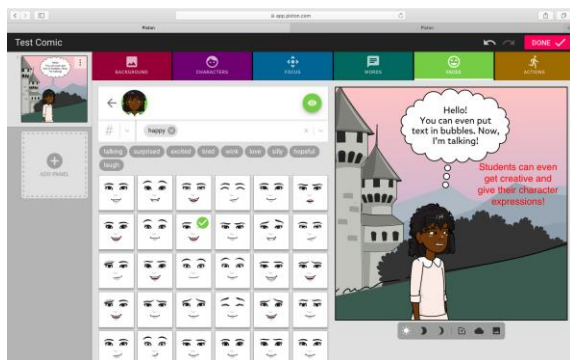
## Step #7



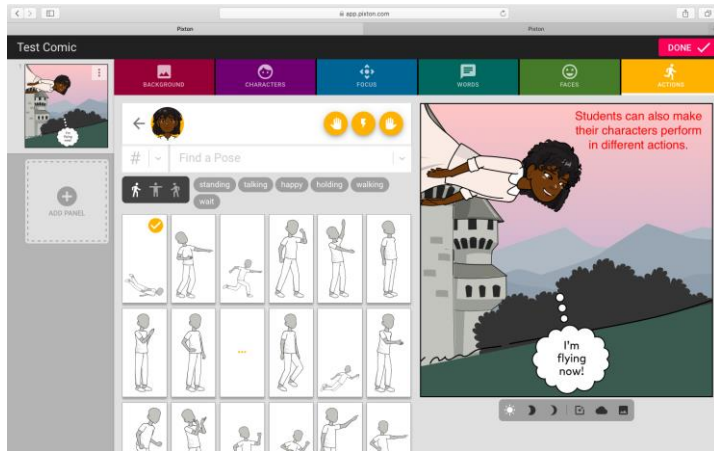
## Step #8



## Step #9



## Step #10



### Pixton Example



For spreadability students may search the internet for any potential ideas. YouTube is very popular with children and they can get ideas on how to run their story. They can also get some background on the location and time period.

[Youtube Instructions](#): Click the link to start your own Youtube channel.

Once the story, characters, location are set, the students can use arts and crafts materials to put on a play. They can come up with costumes and sets as they put on a performance. This gives students the option to not only preview their vision on technology but also use their hands on approach by bringing their vision to life with a theater production. Those aspects would use this as part of Performance and multiply. You can choose which story by randomly picking a group's story.

[Theater Production Instructions](#): Click the link to start your own elementary/high school theater production.

# Transmedia in Opera

**Example:** The Adventures of Pinocchio - *The Opera*

**Background:** The Adventures of Pinocchio is a 2007 opera created in two acts directed by Jonathan Dove with a script written by Alasdair Middleton based on the Italian novel of the same name created by Carlo Collodi. The story tells the creation of the wooden puppet Pinocchio and his ongoing adventures of becoming a real boy.

**Students who created this section:**

Andrea Ruiz, Mandonnah Mahallati, Christopher McGovern, Diana Ortiz

**Synopsis:** Geppetto carves Pinocchio out of a magical log, and ends up being nearly thrown into a fire by the Puppetmaster, who gives him five gold coins. A sharp-witted Cat and Fox tries to steal the coins, by hanging Pinocchio outside of the Blue Fairy's house, and later by tricking him. Pinocchio tries to get justice but is jailed, and when he returns to the Blue Fairy's house, all he finds is her coffin. Later, he breaks free from the Big Free Fisherman, to then be turned into a donkey in Funland, and thrown into the sea, where he is swallowed by a Big Fish. While being inside of the fish's belly, he encounters his father and rescues him. Once being on land, Pinocchio works hard to revive his father and is honored by becoming a real boy.

**Object of the Project:** Our purpose is to have students reflect on Pinocchio's actions and the consequences that come along with it. The class will learn through interactive scenarios to change the outcome by handling the issues in the story their own creative ways using transmedia. They will be challenged to use their critical thinking skills through questions in our chosen social media platforms, which will then allow them to discuss with one another the different outcomes. Students will find mentors similar to those in the film to guide them to be brave and honest in everything that they do, the way Pinocchio did.

**Educational Purposes Used:** Immersion, Multiplicity, and Extraction.

1. **Youtube:** This platform will be used to create group videos that allow students to place themselves into a scene from the story and give them the freedom to choose how they would have handled the same situation the characters were faced with.

**Youtube Incorporating Immersion: Jumping into the story!**

In order to encourage students to jump into the stories themselves, we will set up an interactive activity where students will be put into groups of 3. Each person will be assigned a character role from the story and will have to place themselves in a scene of their choice. They will have the opportunity to show the class how they would have handled the situation from the scene they chose. For example, a group of students may choose a particular scene where Pinocchio lied, causing his nose to grow. The students will have the freedom to choose whether they would have handled the situation the same way as the character they are playing or to possibly do something different. They would record their performance and then post it on YouTube. Once everyone completes their video and it is uploaded, the class would gather to watch all of the videos together and discuss the lessons each group learned from the original story.

2. **Twitter:** This platform will encourage students to read and analyze other people's characters and to find people who are as like minded as them. The activity will relate to the story in the sense that students will be able to choose influencers they trust to portray their own consciousness.

**Twitter Incorporating Extraction: Taking something from the story world and bringing it to "life."**

In order to engage students to extract parts of the "Pinocchio World," we will encourage students to visit their Twitter accounts and find an influencer they would trust to be their Jiminy Cricket, or in other words, their consciousness. As twitter is a place where people share their personal thoughts, opinions, and world-views, this platform is a pretty interesting way to get a sense of who a person is. Students will be asked to choose their conscious wisely, encouraging them to really dig deep and study the person they would choose to be their voice of reason. Students will then be asked to write a physical letter to that person of their choice asking them to be their Jiminy Cricket and letting them know why they believe that person would be the best fit for "the job."



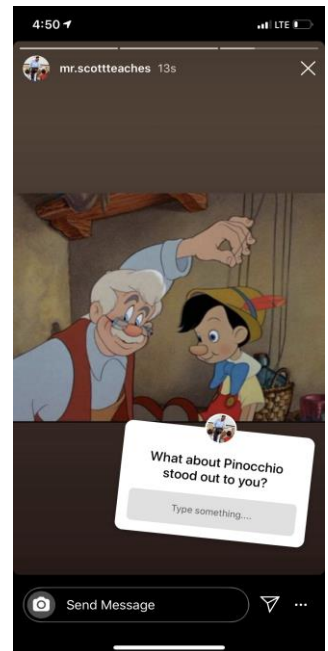
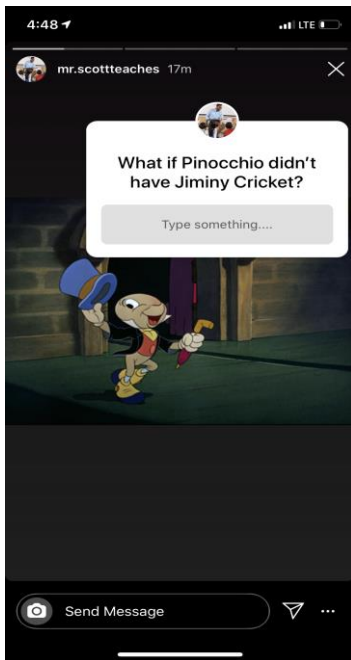


3. **Instagram:** This platform will be used to post Instagram Stories, allowing students to engage in a series of interesting and thought provoking questions that relate to the story. With this platform and the activity set along with it, students will have the opportunity to engage with their teacher in a more one-on-one fashion.

***Instagram Stories Incorporating Multiplicity: Thinking about multiple versions. Or in other words, “what if” scenarios.***

In order to engage students in a multiplistic fashion, we will set up an Instagram account for the teacher or person leading the lesson. On that account, the teacher will post Instagram Stories incorporating the “Questions” function where the teacher will post questions that allow students to submit a response. All questions would be “what if ” questions allowing students to explore the different possibilities and outcomes of the story. For example, the teacher would post “What if Pinocchio did not have Jiminy Cricket to help him know right from wrong? How would that have changed the rest of the story?” Students would then submit a response and the teacher would virtually engage with each student further exploring or simply discussing the students thoughts and predictions.





# Transmedia in Non Fiction/ Historical Moment

## **Example:** Women's Suffrage Movement

**Background:** For decades following the American Revolution, reformers organized groups that advocated for equal rights and opportunities for women. In 1848 the world's first convention for women's rights, known as the Seneca Falls Convention, was held in Seneca Falls, New York. Mainly organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, this convention drew national attention to the women's rights issue and kick-started the ongoing movement that would last for decades and centuries to come.

## **Students who created this section:**

Katelyn Woebse, Jael Mino, Kayla Dilworth, Anthony Rivera

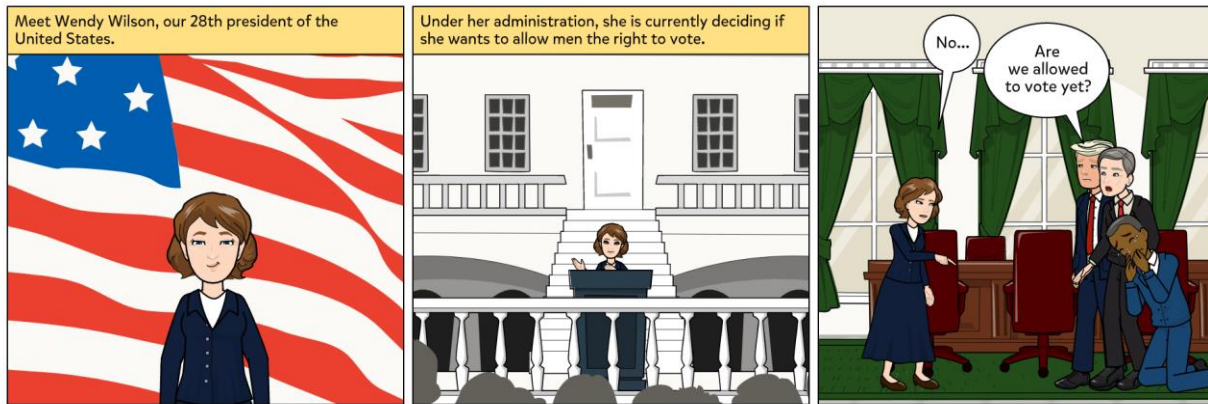
**Object of the Project:** The Women's Suffrage Movement is a topic covered in most American History classes. Traditionally, it's only discussed very briefly and not in much depth. Yet, women's rights and the topic of feminism remains prominent in modern society. Therefore, it's important for students to gain a deeper understanding of the movement itself, the meanings behind it, and the people involved. Because history is notoriously textbook-centric, utilizing transmedia will allow students to grasp the content beyond the surface level and make learning more enjoyable. With transmedia, students are challenged to think outside of the factual box. They can immerse themselves in or extract elements from history, gain new perspectives, and apply the overarching lessons surrounding women's suffrage to their own lives all while acquiring skills in different forms of media.

## **Transmedia Elements Used:**

### Pixton

\_\_\_\_\_ Using this cartoon comic book creation tool, students will be able to creatively apply *world building*, *subjectivity*, and *seriality* into the learning experience of the Women's Suffrage Movement. This will allow students to better understand the movement from different perspectives, allow the creativity to visualize the environment of the movement through comic book imagery, and allow the freedom to create alternate scenarios to get a scene of the overall impact that the movement had on us as a whole. Each student can be tasked to either make an alternate or a continuation short story of the women's right to vote movement in Pixton using different perspectives to tell the story and apply information they have gathered about the movement into the creation of their comic. Since it gives students so much creative freedom, they can also create narratives about events that surrounded the women's suffrage movement that can also stand alone as their own stories.

Example:



### Twitter

Using Twitter, students can tap into *multiplicity* and *immersion* by using what they know about the women's suffrage movement to create parody profiles of prominent figures from the movement. Using these profiles and their knowledge of the women's suffrage movement, students can create fictitious interactions between these prominent members. For example, they can choose a specific event during the women's suffrage movement and tweet from a prominent figure's perspective about how that figure may have felt during the time. Doing this allows students to feel like they are a part of the story, while also deepening their understanding of the women's suffrage movement. Allowing students to connect and walk in the shoes of prominent women's suffrage figures encourages them to learn about how those figures' actions contributed to the movement. Having the freedom to create scenarios and interactions allows students to explore the "what ifs" they have in their minds.

Example:



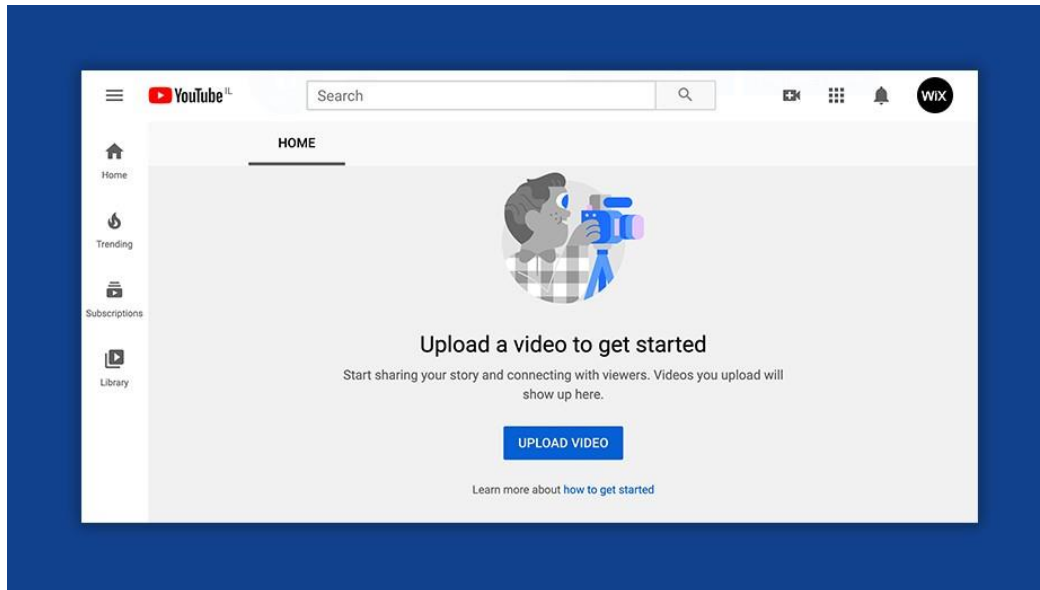
If modern day technology had been available during the Women's suffrage movement how useful could it have been to promote and support the women's suffrage amendment, later ratified and passed as the 19th Amendment. Student's will make 2-3 mock Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn posts as a way to signify how the Media relays information and news to the public today. Student's will keep in mind that they are acting as if they were generating these social media posts during the movement in the 19th century.

### YouTube

For *performance* and *drillability*, the goal is for students to apply what they've learned about women's suffrage to their own lives so they can get a much deeper understanding of the material. Video editing and YouTube are fun tools for these transmedia principles as they are

great skills for students to pick up on and provide them with many options. Students can create their own mock campaigns or speeches as if they were suffragettes, record and edit them, and post them onto YouTube. Likewise, they can choose a specific event during the movement and film a dramatic reenactment as if it were in the present day. Another option could be taking the social justice lessons of the movement and having students create campaign videos for causes that are important to them, like the suffragettes did.

[Link to starting a YouTube channel](#)



# 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, 21<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto: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."](#)