

eFuture Web 2.0 and Social Media Teacher resources

Resource: Storybird			
Level: all	Address: http://storybird.com/	Cost: free (although there are costs if you print)	Language: all (via Google translate)
Relevant subject disciplines	Literacy Creative writing Childhood studies Modern Foreign Languages Lesson ideas are given for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern Foreign languages developing vocabulary, writing and reading skills. - Childhood Studies to developing knowledge of child development 		
Resource description	<p>Storybird combines images and text to tell a story via an ebook; beautifully presented which can be read online, shared or printed.</p> <p>Either be inspired by hundreds of high quality artists illustrations in a range of styles or choose one to suit your story idea.</p> <p>Storybird's can either be created individually or collaboratively.</p> <p>Making, sharing and reading Storybird's online is free. The only fees are incurred with printing.</p> <p>Here's a 4 minute short tour: http://storybird.com/tour/</p> <p>And a video tutorial from teachertrainingvideos.com http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/storybird/index.html</p> <p>The site suggests children up to the age of 13 will enjoy the stories the most due to the primary visual nature of</p>		

the ebooks. However there is much scope for using the tool innovatively to either encourage literacy, development of foreign language vocabulary and written work, or developing creative writing.

The tool contains a spellchecker function whose default is American English. This can be changed to British English, French, German, Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese allowing the development of modern foreign language skills.

How it works

To be able to use the service, you need to create an account but you are able to set up a teacher account. A teacher account is like a regular account but allows you to you to enable students to use the service without each student having to set up individual accounts as well as managing classes and setting assignments.

You are able to set up classes where all student names, conversations, comments and stories remain private within the confines of your virtual class walls. You, along with the students from each class can view and comment on each others work which the teacher does have the facility to be able to moderate to prevent anything obscene or offensive being published.

You are able to create assignments within the tool for a class to complete and it will group the resulting Storybirds in a specific assignment library for easy viewing. Assignments appear on each student's dashboard and link to the assignment page which you have created including explanatory notes and perhaps an example Storybird for inspiration.

You can embed the stories into blogs or wikis and it is only the teacher who has access to these codes.

If the teachers chooses to, students story's can be published publically and only their user name will be shown providing privacy for the student.

Grades can be added to work on the site and these remain private between you and the student. You can also give students a digital sticker; like gold stars, these are for a job well done and can be viewed by all.

For those studying modern foreign languages, you can change the spellchecker function to other languages via the functions in 'Your account'. Each student will have to individually to do this in their own account. However this is will be the spellchecker for all work completed but it can be easily changed back to the home language when required and simply kept on while the story is being written.

For further teacher FAQs please see the link: <http://storybird.com/faq/teachers/>

<p>Strengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's free • 100s of high quality artists illustrations in a huge range of styles to suit all tastes and inspire a wide range of stories. • The ready made illustrations guarantee that the finished work looks professional. • The inability to upload illustrations and produce art work means that students have to focus on their writing and story telling techniques rather than being distracted by creating artwork. • The high quality nature of the illustrations make an effective springboard to encourage students to develop their literacy/ modern foreign language skills as well as their grasp of narrative and dialogue and written expression. • Teachers are able to set up accounts that enable students access without adding their own personal details. • Students work is managed through virtual classrooms where students and teachers can view each others work. • Students can comment on each others work and these comments can be moderated by the teacher. • Storybirds can be created as a group or individually. • Teachers are able to grade work privately whilst being able individual students class recognition for those who have done well through digital stickers. • Storybirds can be embedded into blogs or wikis and it is only the teacher who has access to these codes. • There is a spellchecker function which its default in Amercian English. • You can change the spellchecker function to a number of other languages including British English, French, German, Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese. You can do this via the functions in 'Your account'.
<p>Weaknesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ready made illustrations and the inability to upload you own may be limiting for students • Printing stories is not free
<p>Lesson ideas</p>	<p>Develop modern foreign language skills</p> <p>Use Storybird to encourage students vocabulary, written skills and reading comprehension in a modern foreign language (American or British English, French, German, Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese.). This can be as simple or advanced as the levels of students demand.</p> <p>The teacher will prepare an assignment, stating a theme and guidance including book length, any particular items to be included and date due. This assignment can be created on Storybird for each student to view and their Storybirds to be attached to.</p> <p>Students will then prepare individual stories, using illustrations of their choosing to create a Storybird.</p>

Once all Storybirds are published, students read each others work and provide comments on those in their native language developing their reading comprehension. Teachers are able to moderate these comments to prevent anything obscene or offensive being published.

Teachers can then privately grade work on the service and provide a digital sticker for those deserving of public recognition for their work.

Alternatively for lower level students, teachers could prepare a Storybird themselves in a foreign language leaving spaces for students to include appropriate adjectives or omitting syntax which students need to complete. The Storybird would then be shared with all students via an assignment to complete on an individual basis.

- **Write a story for different age ranges**

Use Storybird to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge of child development. Ask students to write a Storybird for children of a specific age or a number of versions of the same Storybird but for different age ranges to demonstrate children's development in reading ability and comprehension.