

A Day in the Life

AN INSTRUCTIONAL TELEVISION SERIES



Extension Ideas for Integrating
Technology into the History Curriculum

Colonial Williamsburg

Extension Ideas for Integrating Technology into the History Curriculum

History is a particularly good curriculum area in which to integrate a variety of technologies. History has a strong linear component and a variety of naturally occurring branching aspects that allow teachers to easily design activities that encourage students to not only delve into the facts of history, but also discover how and why history is important to them. The use of technology within the history curriculum also encourages creative consideration of multiple intelligences [<http://www.aenc.org/KE-Intelligences.htm>].

The use of technology to teach history must be driven by content rather than the availability of the technology itself. Ideally, the decision to use technology occurs during the teacher planning process and should consider the following:

- The type of content to be delivered
- The abilities and prior experience of the students
- Whether the content is linear or affords branching opportunities
- The purpose of the end project
- The audience for whom the project is intended
- The probable size of the project
- The length of time, in and outside of class, required for completion
- How and where the students can obtain their information
- The resources that will be provided by the teacher and media specialist
- The relevance of Internet resources and available connectivity
- How the project will be evaluated and the rubric for doing so
- The feasibility of the project considering time, resources, and personnel
- The particular pieces of technology available to the students.

(For additional information, refer to “Tammy’s Technology Tips for Teachers” at [<http://www.essdack.org/building/>].)

Once the technology project has been determined, it must be organized so that it provides all participants with a clear vision of the end product. The use of flowcharts, graphic organizers [<http://tlc.ai.org/graphorg.htm>], and brainstorming software such as Inspiration [<http://www.inspiration.com>], all contribute to developing an awareness of each student’s responsibility and an overview of the entire project. For example, when using a multimedia development application such as HyperStudio, it may be helpful to use some butcher paper or other roll paper. As the necessary components of the project are discussed, illustrate them as cards with appropriate labels and brief notes regarding the contents of each card. Either as the cards develop, or once all the cards have been identified and illustrated, use arrows to show how the individual cards will link together and how the end user will navigate through the project. Leave the flowchart prominently displayed in the classroom, allowing participants to monitor and make necessary changes to the project.

Once content has been established, an appropriate time line selected, the feasibility of the project determined, and some evaluative rubrics [<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/assess.htm>] considered, the teacher should consider the available technologies and how they might be useful in completing the project. The following list includes examples of generally available technologies and some ways they could be used in a project.

1. **Telephone:** A telephone can be used to call state representatives, state agencies, and other experts for information using a student-designed telephone interview and/or survey form.

For example, students who are researching current data for election participation records could call the Secretary of State or Elections Commission. Fax machines may also be used where available.

2. **Polaroid Camera:** These are useful for quickly capturing images of people, events, and other data. Photos can be easily scanned on a flatbed or special-purpose print-film scanner and imported into any digital document. Photos may also be pasted onto Bristol board.

For example, on the first day of school, choose an appropriate background, preferably outdoors for best lighting, and take a portrait picture of each student. Have the students write their name, with a permanent marker, on the large white space at the bottom of Polaroid pictures. These pictures may then be displayed on a bulletin board and left up for the entire school year. Each Monday, one child's picture is moved to the "Student of the Week" corner of the board where space has been provided for the student to display items of their choosing brought from home (awards, newspaper articles, family photos). Give the "Student of the Week" a few minutes each day of that week to present their objects to the class. By scanning and saving the student photos, images can be used in the child's work throughout the school year. These images and documents can also be stored and included as part of a student's portfolio.

3. **35-mm Camera:** The traditional single-lens reflex (SLR), the small point-and-shoot camera, and the disposable camera can all be useful in capturing images. Many film developers now provide prints on traditional photo paper, on diskette, on-line, or on Photo CD—all of which allow for easy insertion into digital documents or projects.

For example, traditional photos may be assembled into scrapbooks designed around historical themes. This works especially well with community projects like the "History of the Adam's Mall Construction," "Mayberry's Volunteer Fire Department," or "Reading's Historical Gravestones."

When the same photos are "developed" into digital images, they can be customized using photo-editing software (Adobe PhotoShop, Kai's SuperGoo, Microsoft Photo Editor), and they can be imported into digital applications such as word processing documents, art projects, and multimedia projects.

4. **Digital Camera:** The wide variety of styles and prices makes these cameras attractive for educational technology projects. They capture the image in a digital format ready for immediate insertion into any digital medium.

For example, after researching a historical character, students may attire themselves in various stages of the character's life, from young person to old person. These images can then be imported into a slide show application (Power Point, Kid Pix Studio Deluxe, HyperStudio) and given appropriate titles and even audio file narrations to demonstrate how events of their day affected them (Franklin Delano Roosevelt, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benedict Arnold).

5. **Tape Recorder:** Older style cassette recorders may be used by students to provide audio content for use on its own or for future multimedia projects such as a radio show or a man-on-the-street interview.

For example, students may be studying the events leading to the American Revolution and particularly some of the people who were involved. Place a new tape and fresh batteries into a cassette recorder and have a news team interview characters such as Sam Adams, Peyton Randolph, Patrick Henry, Lord North, King George III, an American soldier, a British soldier, or local tradesman or merchant. Each student will have previously researched a figure and his or her point of view about the British-American hostilities.

6. **Video Camera:** Older models may be used for television productions, interviews, news shows, and commercials or simply played directly from the camera to a television (many also have an adapter for playing in a VCR). Newer models have a wealth of editing features in addition to their ability to

be directly connected to TVs, VCRs, and even computers. To use video within a multimedia project, it must be captured using a video capture card and manipulated with its associated software (Adobe Premier, Apple iMovie, Presto VideoWorks, MGI VideoWave, Corel Lumiere).

For example, students can create a takeoff of Mel Brooks's Ten-Thousand-Year-Old Man routine. They first select and research any historical character, and then use the camcorder to videotape someone interviewing (with a list of preset questions) the character as he or she appears on the street in appropriate costume. The video presentation can then be shown as a television show.

The same video can be digitally captured, processed, and imported into a multimedia application (HyperStudio, Power Point). Digitized video does require a large amount of memory space, so video should be limited to small clips. The use of a multimedia application allows students to incorporate video, text, animations, graphics, and sound into one presentation.

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

1. **HyperStudio, Digital chisel, Power Point, and Corel Presentations** are multimedia creation programs that allow users to develop interactive presentations. These can include text, audio, video, digital images, artwork, animations, special effects, and sounds. Each application has its strengths. HyperStudio is widely used in schools, has excellent pricing, and offers a free "Home Use Version" making it possible for projects to be taken home for development, to maintain a home-school connection, or to show parents completed student projects. Projects may range from simple slide shows to complex multimedia explorations.

For example, as part of a class study of George Washington, each student could design a set of slides demonstrating something they learned about Washington that they did not know before the lesson. Students can use text, clip art, and sound clips to present their ideas. The teacher (or a student) can then insert the transitions that move from one child's slide to the next with the click of a mouse. Each student should be given the opportunity to present his or her own slide to the class. Simple slide shows can be stored on a school library/media center computer for other students to access.

For example, a more complex project would involve more time, research, planning, and technology. Students studying important American documents could design an exploration project that includes images of the original document (perhaps from the Library of Congress), transcriptions of the documents, hyperlinks for important words (which would take users to a dictionary or other explanatory resources), images of relevant authors (Jefferson, Mason), biographies of the authors, audio clips of the student reading various passages of the document, video clips of reenactors portraying the authors, songs of the times recorded from audio CD, and links to sites on the Internet that would supply additional information [<http://www.monticello.org>]. The user would select a document to explore and discover many layers of information. A project this complex takes a long time to create, but can be continuously updated in subsequent classes and made available to the general student body.

2. **Classroom Newspaper Workshop** is a Tom Snyder product, which provides students with the tools to develop a newspaper—from researching a story to printing the paper.

For example, students learning about the Boston Massacre (March 5, 1770) might discover Paul Revere's engraving of the scene. They can research the circumstances of the event and how it was portrayed in colonial newspapers in Boston [<http://www.universitylake.org/history/boston.html>] and other cities. By using Classroom Newspaper Workshop or other newspaper creation software, students can record their research, compose their articles, and publish the finished product.

3. **Kid Pix and Kid Pix Studio** are early elementary versions of multimedia and slide-show presentation applications that allow for text, animations, digital images, and original artwork that are

especially well suited for a computer slide show.

For example, younger students learning the facts about Paul Revere's ride can illustrate the signal from Old North Church (even create blinking lanterns) and present Revere leaving by boat to his awaiting horse. They can then illustrate the riders, a map of their routes, and the results of each rider's efforts. This is an excellent forum for original student artwork and animations. The slide show can be exported to diskette and shared with other classes and parents.

4. **Timeliner** by Tom Snyder Productions allows users to create, illustrate, and print time lines using predeveloped templates.

For example, students learning that the American Revolution came as a series of step-by-step events can research the various events (the Peace of Paris, the Stamp Act, the Declaratory Act, the Townshend Duties, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, the Coercive Acts, the Battles of Lexington and Concord), record brief particulars about each event, insert them into a the new time line, choose the parameters of the time line, enter details of the events and people, and then print the time line out in a variety of sizes.

5. **Decisions, Decisions** by Tom Snyder Productions puts the user into the decision-making process of historical situations such as the American Revolution, colonization, and prejudice.

For example, as students learn about the major characters of the American Revolution, they will discover that all choices were difficult and had great influence on each person. Everyone had much to lose regardless of whether they were a patriot, a loyalist, or undecided. This software package provides a mechanism for students to discover the range of decisions necessary and puts them into the role of decision maker. The software tracks their choices and provides accurate consequences for decisions made. Since it saves their places, it can be done over several class sessions.

6. **E-mail**: As more classrooms become connected to the Internet and schools provide staff and students with e-mail accounts, the ease of communicating with a global audience becomes attractive. E-mail opportunities connect students to resources traditionally unavailable to them. For example, one needs to be eighteen years old to check out a book at the Library of Congress, but there is no age restriction on e-mailing the librarians. In addition, many students are benefiting from communicating with their peers as "e-pals" and as collaborators in a variety of projects.

For example, fifth graders learning about famous colonial characters may discover that many of those characters have unique and informational epitaphs engraved on their tombstones. As they search for the burial places of their chosen characters, they can also search for local schools in the burial city by looking on Web66 [<http://web66.coled.umn.edu/schools.html>] and then contact a local school by e-mail. Once the connection is made and the project is described, the local school may be asked to take a digital picture of the tombstone (or a rubbing of the tombstone that can be scanned) and e-mail it to the fifth graders who are collecting the data. Students can use the digital data to design a presentation that demonstrates the relationship between the character's life and his or her epitaph along with their own evaluation of the validity of the comparison. Interesting conclusions can be drawn from information gathered about where a person was born, his or her political involvement in the Revolutionary era, where he or she is buried, and what was written on his or her tombstone.

7. **The Internet**: The World Wide Web is a vast warehouse of data, which can be useful to students, provided they can evaluate the authority, quality, and accuracy of the information and retrieve it in an acceptable time frame and format. Learning how to search effectively, determine the validity of the data, and weed out less meaningful information are critical skills for success. Volumes have been written on how to integrate the Internet into the curriculum. There are many, many resources on the Web that illustrate and provide rationalizations for its use. One of the best resources is Classroom Connect [<http://www.classroomconnect.com/home.asp>]. The following are some additional sites that provide good information on using the Internet with students. Since Internet information is digital, it can be incorporated into any of the technologies already discussed and used effectively by

students to demonstrate acquired knowledge. Remember to always check sites to be sure they are still active and appropriate.

Integrating Technology into Schools

<http://www.unm.edu/~jeffryes/its1.html>

Integrating Technology into the Classroom

<http://www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/slides/integrate/index.html>

Technology and Learning Magazine's on-line version

<http://www.techlearning.com/>

Awesome Library: Integrating Technology

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org/tech.html>

Using Technology in the Elementary Classroom

<http://www.macul.org/newsletter/2000/jan2000/techelem.html>

ProTeacher

<http://www.proteacher.com>

Blue Web'n

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn>

Children's Software Review

<http://www2.childrenssoftware.com/childrenssoftware/>

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/>

Electronic School: Beyond Technology

<http://www.electronic-school.com/2000/03/>

Social Studies Lesson Plans and Resources

<http://www.csun.edu/~hcedu013/>

Teacher Vision.com

http://teachervision.com/tv_index

The Teacher's Resource

<http://www.eml.jmu.edu/TEIR/Ac/WEBSITE.HTM>

A to Z Teacher Stuff

<http://atozteacherstuff.com/>

Research and Critical Thinking

<http://www.crosswinds.net/~dboals/think.html>

Cyberguides

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/SCORE/cyberguide.html>

Short Guide to Citing Internet Sources for History

<http://h-net.msu.edu/~africa/citation.html>

Sites for Rubrics:

Kathy Schrock's Guide

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/assess.html>

Rubrics for Web Lessons

http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/july/rubrics/Rubrics_for_Web_Lessons.html

Other Rubric Sites

<http://www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/edu/evaltr.htm>

<http://www.middleweb.com/rubricsHG.html>

The following list of sites will provide students and teachers with good jumping-off points for historical research.

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

<http://www.history.org>

Mount Vernon

<http://www.mountvernon.org>

Monticello

<http://www.monticello.org>

The American Colonist's Library: A Treasury of Primary Source Documents

http://personal_pitnet.net/primarysources

Archiving Early America

<http://www.earlyamerica.com>

The Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov>

Library of Congress: American Memory

<http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html>

The Smithsonian

<http://www.si.edu>

The History Net

<http://www.thehistorynet.com>