

Teaser Text:

Personalizing children's stories is a key motivating factor for using touchscreens in language arts and for nurturing children's identities as readers.

Pause and Ponder:

Which strategies could teachers use to encourage children's multimedia content production?

How could touchscreens be used to enrich children's reading and story engagement?

Which modes of expression are suitable for individual children in your classroom?

How can digital personal(ized) books enrich the language arts curriculum?

Abstract

Digital personal(ized) books are a relatively recent addition to the rich repertoire of literacy resources available to a pre-K and elementary school teacher. This article summarizes the key ways in which personal(ized) books can enrich the language arts curriculum, drawing on a series of empirically-based examples. The value of personalization in the digital stories is explained theoretically using the framework of 5As: autonomy, authorship, authenticity, attachment and aesthetics (Kucirkova, forthcoming). The 5As apply to personal(ized) stories created for, or by, young children and are used to generate some practical suggestions for future use of touchscreens in the classroom.

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In the past six years, I have worked closely with preschool and elementary school teachers in an effort to understand and co-develop effective practices with tablets and iPads with various groups of children, including children with special needs. The teachers with whom I have collaborated are based in a variety of school settings across the world, including the UK, USA, Japan, Slovakia, Malta and Spain, and some of them co-authored publications with me (e.g., Kucirkova, Willans, & Cremin, 2014; Walker, Kucirkova, & Gould, 2016). In this article, I pull together some lessons learnt from this international collaborative work, focusing on one specific feature of touchscreens relevant for language arts: personalization.

Theoretical framing

My work with practitioners and professionals is framed in a socio-cultural perspective that acknowledges the instrumental role context, culture and social agents play in shaping children's learning. Initially formulated by Lev Vygotsky in the 1930s published in 1978 and rooted in the concept of social influence on a child's development, a socio-cultural perspective emphasizes the ways in which children's understanding is shaped through social interaction with 'more knowledgeable others', who can be children's parents, teachers, caregivers or peers. This perspective is integrated into practice through the attempt to redesign contexts for learning in response to the communities of practice that co-produce and define these communities.

A socio-cultural perspective compels me to pay close attention to the pedagogy that underpins the use of touchscreens in a school context and the relationships between teachers, children and the texts they create with the touchscreens. As part of these efforts, I co-designed an application for children's story-making called Our Story and developed a framework for design-based approaches to technology-mediated instruction (Kucirkova, 2016). Historically, I have critiqued approaches that focus on techno-centric innovations

assuming that technology can, in and of itself, transform educational practice and lead to educational benefits. In 2014, I advocated that we need to consider the extent to which touchscreens could ‘act as an innovative pedagogical support to current classroom practices and instructional strategies’ (Kucirkova, 2014a, para.3) and in this article, I focus on the innovative practices that teachers can adopt in their instruction when working with touchscreens.

Touchscreens in classrooms

Touchscreens are a recent addition to the teachers’ arsenal of technologies, with some new features potentially enriching the language arts curriculum. I use the term touchscreen to refer to tablets, iPads, smartphones, iPhones, iPods and convertible laptops, that is devices that can be manipulated through touch and are typically used by one individual at a time (unlike touch-manipulated tables or whiteboards designed specifically for collaborative engagement). International survey data show that across the world, tablets and iPads have become an integral part of young children’s play, communication and “early technoliteracies” (Wohlwend, 2010, p.145). In comparison to desktop PCs and other devices, touchscreens offer some unique features, such as: a large number of software programs (apps); multimedia assets (the combination of visual, audio and textual mode); increased customization options; haptic (or touch) manipulation; portability and light weight of the hardware.

These features can be flexibly employed depending on the teaching context and purpose of each activity. For example, the portability feature of touchscreens is suitable for school trips while their touch manipulation might be an advantage for young children exploring letters and their shapes in pre-K classrooms. As for the software programs available for touchscreens, the industry lags behind literacy theory: most popular children’s apps are focused on supporting basic literacy skills such as phonics or letter recognition

rather than rich literacy practices related to developing readers' identities (Vaala, Ly & Levine, 2015) or participatory literacies (Rowell & Wohlwend, 2016).

While the early wave of software programs developed for these touchscreens (the so-called "apps") was primarily designed for the home market, more recent applications have been developed for the school market, with various subscription options and support packages. However, although some applications received many awards for their high quality (e.g., FlipFlap Safari™) and some have been co-developed through partnerships and collaborations between academics and children's producers (e.g., iReadWith™), the majority of children's apps have not been developed in consultation with experts (Vaala, 2016). There is therefore a pressing need for the use of apps in schools to be contextualized and extended by the teacher.

We explored how the design and features of individual apps influenced children's collaboration among peers and their talk in a Spanish classroom (Kucirkova, Messer, Sheehy & Fernandez-Panadero, 2014). Other studies have documented and evaluated the educational potential of touchscreens' for young children's learning and play (e.g., Sandvik, Smørdal & Østerud, 2012) or their incorporation in existing literacy curriculum (e.g., Hutchison, Beschorner & Schmidt-Crawford, 2012). In this article, I complement this body of work by highlighting the pedagogical value of the personalization features of touchscreens that have the potential to extend, enrich and, possibly, innovate specific aspects of the language arts curriculum.

I outline a specific technique that is part of personalized learning, intended to complement current practices and activities within the language arts curriculum and suggested to be flexibly and sensitively used within the broader socio-technical environment

in each classroom, governed by the complex interrelationships between each child, his or her home and wider literacy experiences.

Personalization with touchscreens

Personalization is a broad umbrella term for several features, behaviors, patterns or characteristics. Objects and experiences can be personalized *for* the children or they can be personalized *by* a particular child (Kucirkova, 2014b). Although often used interchangeably, personalization is different from customization. Broadly speaking, users can customize their touchscreens by adjusting the display settings or the font size for a piece of text, but they can personalize them by inserting their own content. A personalized book speaks to an *individual* child, while a customized book is relevant to a group of children. For example, with Amazing Pages Ltd., parents can personalize a book using the child's photograph or they can use the "online character customizer to match the likeness of the child" (quoted online: <https://www.amazingpages.co.uk>), by specifying the child's gender, skin tone, hairstyle and hair color.

Touchscreens are one of the digital resources that offer rich and immediate ways in which an individual can add and share their own content. Children can add their own photographs, they can create their own texts, short or long films, drawings, audio-recordings, including music or voiceovers, games and avatars. Prior to the arrival of touchscreens, many creative teachers have been using other technologies (e.g., PowerPoint and desktops) to capture children's response to texts through their own stories, especially in relation to children with disabilities (Rhodes & Milby, 2007). Touchscreens bring several technologies into one easy-to-use, accessible and widely available platform and allow for seamless integration and production of highly polished multimedia content.

Multimedia personalization options are used and successfully deployed in business areas (e.g., users can personalize a range of gifts through an iPad application, such as adding their own caption and photograph on a coffee mug), but the added value of personalization embedded in children's books and digital texts is not widely known in language arts classroom.

Personal(ized) books and digital stories

Since their very inception, basic personalization options have been available in children's printed books: readers can pen their name in a book to indicate ownership or dedication. More recently, book publishers have developed personalized books that go beyond name-based personalization and that include sophisticated personalization options for the book design. For example, the Lost My Name Ltd. personalized books (see www.lostmy.name) use the child's name to create a different story for each child. The books are produced digitally and are available as a printed paperback. Lost My Name is one of the UK's best-selling picture books and so far has sold 1.5 million copies worldwide, with a recent \$13 million investment. The book is based on a plot which is tailored to the individual letters of a child's name. Each story is about a boy or a girl who lost his/her name, and gradually collects the individual letters from various animal characters, until s/he builds her full name. For example, if the boy's name is Mark, his book might be about a boy who receives M from a Moose, A from an antelope, R from a rhinoceros and K from a kangaroo. Less sophisticated uses of personalization are available from large commercial book publishers or book distributors (e.g., www.iseeme.com or www.simplypersonalized.com), who offer children's classic titles with the child's name. For instance, in a Cinderella book bought for Amy, the main character is called Amy and not Cinderella. For another child (e.g., Katie) the book and its storyline are exactly the same, but the name Katie replaces the

name Cinderella. These personalized versions of classic titles are priced higher than traditional classic books and although they are very popular in the home market, they are unlikely to find their way into classrooms because of their individual character.

This is different with *digital* personalized books, which can be flexibly changed and can accommodate the names or content relevant for any child in the classroom. With digital books, users can flexibly and seamlessly add their names or longer texts, and they can also add their own audio or video recordings, pictures or avatars. The finished artefacts can be printed out (hence the name *book*) or they can be shared virtually, which bears more affinity to the term *story*.

Teachers interested in the use of personalized books need to consider the level of sophistication available for personalization within individual titles. For example, with the digital book Cinderella developed by Nosy Crow Ltd., a child can insert their own selfie into one of the magic mirrors within the illustration. With the Me Books™ app, children can add their own audio recordings to a classic tale. With the Mr Glue Stories™ app, children can insert their own drawings into a set of digital stories. The final book can be ordered as a paperback and combines children's drawings with the original pictures. In addition to the multimedia personalization options within individual digital books and apps, users can create their own personal or semi-personal (personalized) stories and books with story-making apps. These story-making apps can be used by teachers and encourage children to create a story based on their templates and ideas, or they can be used in an open-ended way, encouraging children to express and develop their own ideas. The story-making app Our Story can support both approaches.

The personalization possibilities with the Our Story app

Our Story is a multimedia app with a child-friendly user interface, big buttons and iconic rather than text-supported navigation (see Figure 1). The app brings together features available within iPads (or tablets) for creating stories and allows the users to easily incorporate their own text, images and/or sounds into one storyboard. The main screen has a gallery of pictures (users' photographs, drawings or titles), which need to be dragged down on a storyline to create a sequence. The final stories can be shared digitally, or they can be printed out in a choice of three formats. The app is free to download and has no restrictions on the length or size of children's stories (although longer stories with a lot of multimedia material occupy more of the iPad memory system and take longer to upload and share). Figure 1 is a screenshot of the app's main screen, illustrating the placement and sequence of children's pictures.

Figure 1 to be inserted about here

Children's texts are placed underneath each picture in the storyboard. Examples of original texts written by a six-year-old boy (story1) and a seven-year-old girl (story2) are outlined below.

Story1

'My story

The best story

I like my school. It is a fun place where I am never bored

The weather is sunny outside and looks nice to play.' [sic]

Story2

‘Trip around school

We are taking pictures of objects and are self

We are taking pictures of are self and each other

This is the notes bord.

This is the young covers bored and it shows the school the young

covers from the last meeting in the class room

We are special because we have French skipping ropes and English

skipping ropes.

We have a super star board where super stars go.

...and this is are group!!!’ [sic]

I have been involved in the development and design of Our Story and have used it with a range of user groups. Other research projects have documented its value, for example Sung and Siraj-Blatchford (2015) for family story-telling sessions at libraries in Taiwan and McPake & Stephen (2016) for word learning in Gaelic nurseries. In the remainder of this article, I focus on pedagogical considerations and practical examples concerning the use of Our Story for language arts, with the aim of inspiring future practice of personalized education. The ideas are based on the presumption that schools already have touchscreens available and use them in daily practice. Although the examples are based on research projects that have used Our Story, other comparable applications could be used for a similar purpose. For example, Rowe & Miller (2015) used three touchscreen apps (Drawing Pad, Book Creator and iBooks) to support dual language composing of bilingual four-year-olds.

Effective language arts curriculum is about connecting formal and informal reading practices, supporting a range of children's skills related to reading and writing, as well as their long-term enjoyment of books and stories. I focus on three benefits that are related to these skills: bridging the home and school learning environments, motivating children's interest in traditional school subjects and supporting children's digital competence.

Digital personal books bridging home and school

Personal books are often called 'All About Me' books and are typically created by pre-K teachers, who are keen to facilitate children's school adjustment following the transition from home to pre-school. The books combine some information about the child (e.g., the child's likes and dislikes) with photographs of the child or the child's drawings. Some personal books are taken home by the child and get enhanced through the parents' or caregivers' input. A hand-made personal book rarely exists in multiple copies, so when children develop an affection for their book (which they often do because of its personal character), and the book happens to get lost, this is a major disadvantage. Another limitation of paper-based books is that they are not easy to update and edit and that they mostly focus on visual and textual content.

Digital personal books are similar to paper-based personal books in that they capture a child's personal information and nurture the communication between home and school. In addition, they can contain multimedia material, which can further enhance the completeness of a child's profile through audio- or video- recordings. In one UK pre-school, the practitioner used the Our Story app to create a digital personal book for two boys in the classroom. The practitioner took pictures of the boys playing in the class and added some short captions describing their interest in the trainset and computer available during free play. One of the boys' parents added a photograph of the child playing at home, thus enriching the

personal story with further authentic content. Given that the same copy of a digital book can be downloaded by a teacher in the classroom or by the parent at home, both can periodically add to it. This means that the content is dynamic and informative for the parent as well as the teacher. In addition, the digital format can be printed as many times as needed, with several possibilities for reproduction. It should be noted that although personal books contain a wealth of personal information, they are not an extension of the teacher's formal observations. Rather, personal books can enrich the language arts curriculum through the dialogue with caregivers that they can facilitate and the sharing of authentic content related to an individual child's experiences or progress.

While for pre-K children a personal book needs to be created or co-created by a teacher and/or parent, for older children, personal books can be created by the children themselves. In a series of studies with children with special educational needs (Kucirkova, Messer, Critten, & Harwood, 2014; Flewitt, Kucirkova, & Messer, 2014; Critten. & Kucirkova, 2015), we documented the value of self-made digital personal books for children's confidence, communication with others and inclusion in the classroom. For example, in one study (Kucirkova, Messer, Critten, & Harwood, 2014), Sally who had some profound language difficulties (at the age of twelve, Sally's language skills were equivalent to a 5-year old), used Our Story to create a story about her school experiences, with photographs of her keyworker, head of school and other key school personnel, together with short written captions which Sally added to each photograph (e.g., 'This is my friend Joan'). Sally's final story showed awareness of the school's key personnel and revealed that she was able to confidently communicate her feelings. The possibility of expressing meaning in multimedia, that is either with photographs, captions or audio recordings (or all three media together) meant that the young girl could communicate her feelings in an alternative and yet, socially acceptable, way.

In Critten. & Kucirkova (2015), we observed the use of Our Story with two African adolescents, who immigrated to the UK and attended a special needs school. The boys had profound language and learning difficulties and were often reprimanded for disrupting the classroom dynamics. They were encouraged to use the Our Story app to document their experiences in the school. The boys enthusiastically took pictures of the classroom environment and recorded short music pieces using their own voiceovers with the app. Their finished stories were shared at a classroom assembly and became an important tool for classroom communication. The ability to arrange captions in a linear sequence with the Our Story app contributed to the coherence of the boys' stories. Also, the iPad's portability and the fact that the boys could carry the device around the school and immediately insert pictures into their stories injected an authentic character into the boys' stories.

Motivating children to read and write

Digital *personalized* stories combine a personal content with a pre-established storyline or theme. Unlike digital *personal* stories, digital personalized stories follow a specific plot or template. With self-made digital personalized stories, users can choose the story template and add a number of personal data, including names, photographs or audio recordings. In doing so, digital personalized stories can, in addition to the child's engagement, support their learning in traditional school subjects.

In 2014-2015, I worked closely with one elementary school teacher, who has used digital personalized books to increase children's interest in a variety of subjects in her classroom (see Kucirkova, Willans, & Cremin, 2014). For example, she used digital personalized books as part of an English lesson and reading the 'Spot the Dog!' story. For this activity, the teacher used the Eric Hill's classic story about a dog hiding in various places around the house. She uploaded a digital version of the story on the iPad and replaced the

illustrations of the dog with photographs of the children. This meant that when the children tapped a page, instead of a dog hiding under a staircase, there was a group of their classmates. The children delighted in discovering their classmates' or their own photographs in the modified book and the teacher harnessed the children's interest and enthusiasm for educational purposes: she left a blank textbox on each of the book's digital page and asked the children to write the names of their friends (using capital letters for first names) and a correct description of the location (using the correct preposition). As such, the teacher innovated the way in which children can practice the writing of capital letters and specific locations (see Kucirkova, Willans, & Cremin, 2014, for details).

In another session, the same teacher used a digital personalized story to encourage children's counting and size descriptions. She based the story template on the English fairy tale, Jack and the Beanstalk and asked the children to add the correct numbers and size descriptions to each picture. This activity followed on from the children's own growing of a beanstalk in the classroom. The children had to compare the images of Jack climbing the "giant beanstalk" with the real beanstalk growing in the pots on the classroom's windowsill and they had to add their own captions describing how tall the beanstalk was. Although not a story in the traditional sense, the personalized digital narrative grew from a popular story and combined reading and writing with a cross-curriculum link to Mathematics. The process of this cross-curriculum multimedia engagement became embedded in the final story that the children created on their iPads (Kucirkova, 2014b).

Developing digital competence

In addition to practicing traditional literacy skills, teachers can encourage children to create their own multimedia personalized stories, explicitly directing them to the digital content production possibilities available with touchscreens. Teachers can create templates to which

children can add their own text but also digital creations such as their own digital photographs, collages, hyperlinks or audio recordings. In one elementary classroom that I observed in spring 2014, the teacher provided the children with a short template about Roald Dahl's life and asked them to complete it with their own audio-recordings (see Kucirkova, 2014b for details). The final piece was a rare amalgam of a collaboratively produced multimedia personalized story of Roald Dahl's biography. The children worked in groups of four children per group and each group recorded a different part of the classroom story, representing a different event in Roald Dahl's life. For example, one group took inspiration from Dahl's successful *Matilda* story and imitated the orchestral music used for *Matilda* the musical, by adding some simple tune recordings, using the school's musical instruments (Maracas, Tambourines and Hand Drums). Children needed to negotiate the volume, length and type of audio recording that they eventually added to their story. Such conversations in the classroom could extend to discussions about copyrights and original music.

In addition to the digital competence, there is the potential to support children's 6Cs skills (collaboration, communication, content, critical thinking, creative innovation and confidence), which Golinkoff and Hirsh-Pasek (2016) identified as crucial skills for children growing up in the 21st century. Within each group, the children needed to work together on the multimedia element added to each slide (portion) of the Roald Dahl story allocated to their group. They needed to discuss and critically reflect on the multimedia choices available to them and decide on the content. The participation in the activity required a certain level of digital literacy, children's confident negotiation of ideas and a creative contribution by each individual. Given this potential, future research could explore the specific teaching strategies that support children's 6Cs with various digital personalized books.

Practical applications of the 5As

The themes that cut across the three examples of digital personal(ized) stories are what I theorized as the *Five As* of effective personalized education: authorship, authenticity, attachment, aesthetics and agency (Kucirkova, forthcoming). On a practical level, the 5As can be considered as a framework within which to structure children's creation of their own stories or, in a pre-K classroom, the 5As can frame teachers' creation of stories for the children. In the next section, I apply the 5As to language arts and provide an example for each "A".

Authorship

Children's authoring has always been part of language arts, but before the arrival of digital story-making apps, it used to be exclusively focused on children's authorship of paper-based books and artefacts. Recently, a surge of availability of iPads, smartphones and tablets has inspired the *maker education*, which elevates children's authorship to the multimedia level. While the *maker education* is often associated with engineering, arts, computational literacy or coding (cf Peppler, Halverson, & Kafai 2016), the creation of personal(ized) multimedia stories is more aligned with the goals of language arts and digital literacy. Both the maker and story-making approaches emphasize the child's leading role in the choice of resources, creation process and final product. In comparison to paper-based formats that privilege the written language mode and certain artistic skills with children's drawings for example, the digital format offers more flexibility for meaning-expression. For example, with the Our Story app, the children could author their stories or add their own content, in text, as well as in audio format and visual mode (which could be either pictures, drawings or photographs). The possibility to add short personal pieces of content (e.g., adding a one-minute voice-recording or just a few words or just a few sounds) as well as very long elaborated recordings (which might include audio recordings and drama effects as in audio

books) means that with digital personal(ized) books and stories, children have more access to the authoring cycle.

Autonomy

Autonomy relates to the choices children can make with open-ended story-making apps when they create their own digital stories, but also more widely, to the concept of children's agency in activities relevant for their learning. Children's choice of the story content, and of the format of its presentation, celebrates and honors their various skills and encourages their active contribution. Emphasis is placed on the process of making, composing and creating children's own stories rather than the conventions of a certain literacy product. For younger children autonomy in story creation can be supported with making choices for content more accessible to children. For example, pre-K teachers can provide the children with basic templates that include the first picture of a child's story and leave the text blank or vice versa. For older children, autonomy is best supported with open-ended story-making apps that allow for any content.

Attachment

Attachment refers to the emotional relationship between a child and the personal(ized) story they created or that has been created for them. Children's fond regard for their personal books has been documented by a number of studies (e.g., Pakulski & Kaderavek, 2004), including those conducted by us. Irrespective of the book's format, attachment can be expressed in various ways and can represent various feelings. For example, personal books that have been co-created with the child's parents, in their home language (such as the dual language books created in the Early Authors Program by Bernhard et al., 2008), contain values that pertain to a specific cultural group and are part of the child's attachment to the artefact representing these values. With personal books that have been co-created by the

children and their parents with an effort to capture the child's home and out-of-school experiences, children's attachment is often a representation of their remembered experiences. In addition, children's attachment to their personal books is often a reflection of their close relationship with the content that they had included in their stories, such as their own audio recordings or photographs. Children take care and pride in putting together their own multimedia stories and this effort is then reflected in their keen ownership of the books. Thus, children's liking of their books can be seen as a reflection of their affection for their friends and family and/or of their own contribution.

Authenticity

The notion of authenticity is linked to the importance of personal stories being genuinely authored by, or for, the child, according to their own aesthetic choices and authentic preferences. With the digital format, there is an inevitable degree of pre-designed characteristics, determined by the digital producer (e.g., through the choice of font types or possibilities for mixing the multimedia content). Yet, within these restrictions, children can author in their own authentic content- as long as the nature of their contributions is not restricted in terms of specific themes or story characters or more pragmatic features such as the length of their story. Clearly, the inclusion of personal photographs and potentially sensitive material in children's personal stories needs to be discussed with the young authors and appropriate care needs to be taken to ensure the finished stories do not end in the wrong hands.

Aesthetics

The more the designers leave space for the children's own contribution, the more likely that children will produce diverse and idiosyncratic stories, based on their own aesthetic preferences. Conversely, with prescribed contents, children often hack existing

systems and subvert official norms to create their own rules, including the rules for multimedia production (Niemeyer & Gerber, 2015; Quinlan, 2015).

The notions of children's active participation in the story-making process and the possibility to experiment with various modes of self-expression, are closely aligned with *multiliteracies*. Unless children need to follow a restrictive format or intervention, their expression is multimodal, that is a rich combination of sounds, words and images.

Multiliteracies captures the pluralism that characterizes children's expression with digital and non-digital media. Multiliteracies "overcomes the limitations of traditional approaches by emphasizing how negotiating the multiple linguistic and cultural differences in our society is central to the pragmatics of the working, civic and private lives of students" (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, Gee, Kalantzis, Kress, *et al*, 1996, p.60).

Practical implications

The Language Arts curriculum emphasizes the interconnectedness between reading, writing and oral language skills and how digital personal(ized) stories intertwine these three skills in one rich frame. To guide future effective practice of creating and sharing digital personalized stories in the classroom, I suggest a set of questions based on the 5As. Teachers interested in using digital personalized books are encouraged to consider the following questions:

To what extent are the stories based on children's own content? (authorship)

To what extent was the creation of the final product the child's independent work?
(autonomy)

Who owns the final product? (attachment)

To what extent do children's stories capture content that is genuine and responsive to the child's own situation? (authenticity)

To what extent does the final product reflect the child's own taste and preference? (aesthetics)

Whether the digital personal(ized) stories are used for the purpose of supporting children's interest in reading, their digital skills or strengthening the home-school connection, these questions could lead to reflections about the personalized nature of children's stories and could facilitate their incorporation into the language arts curriculum.

Conclusion

An important practical, theoretical and empirical consideration concerns the inclusion of personal(ized) digital books into existing school practice. The 5As of children's personal(ized) books need to be implemented with attention paid to all stages of the book cycle. In addition to book creation, the book cycle involves book distribution and valuing of books (Harrison & Condon, 2007). In other words, children need to recognize that reading is an act of creative engagement with material written for others, as well as out of a personal need for social affiliation. The digital format enables children to be part of the entire book cycle from initial composing to the publishing and sharing stages of the final story. Harrison and Condon (2007) suggest that book-authoring in diverse communities follows a sequence of four events: Creating, Producing, Valuing and Distributing.

Therefore, one of the most important messages for teachers to understand about personalization is that personalized stories work best in conjunction with other, non-personalized texts. Traditional texts are already in libraries and part of the curriculum. Children's self-made digital books can enrich these collections and they could potentially diversify international digital libraries and book depositories. The collaborative, reciprocal

and participatory nature of personalized stories needs to be remembered regardless of the final approach used for their production.

Take Action!

1. Become familiar with a story-making app available for the touchscreen used in your classroom (check the list of suggested apps at: www.earlypersonalisation.com).
2. Encourage children to create their own multimedia stories using the app (children can audio-record their voices, make short video or add pictures and their own texts, depending on their abilities and preferences).
3. Encourage children to share their stories with family and friends (multimedia stories can be shared in the digital format or you can print the books out).
4. Celebrate children's publications with the children and discuss the aesthetics and authorship of their stories.

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More to Explore:

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Website:

- 'Literacy Apps' recommends children's apps according to their personalisation level:
<https://literacyapps.literacytrust.org.uk/category/make-it-your-own/>

- Unite for Literacy is a digital library that features user-generated books:
<http://www.uniteforliteracy.com/>