

A Mile in my Shoes: Immersive Platforms for Sharing Language, Culture, & Heritage

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Abstract. This presentation addresses the issue of sharing and retaining stories, language and heritage within any community. Communities are built on connections and over time and distance, these stories can get lost or details forgotten. This project provides an overview of one school's approach to capturing and sharing these vital narratives in the form of an immersive time capsule for generations to come. K-6 educators who seek to design and implement a unit of work that aims to: develop empathy in their students, realize the power of storytelling, share student learning through VR platforms, enable student creativity through the use of VR platforms, build an understanding of artistic expression and its forms enhance understanding of cultural perspectives.

Keywords: Immersive, Culture, Virtual, Heritage, Storytelling

1 Introduction

In their Inquiry unit for Stories of the World and its People, Year 6 students at Knox Prep investigated the big idea *Artistic expression connects people*. In the finding out phase of our learning, the case study explored different forms of artistic expression including oral storytelling, music, light festivals, and dance. Students learned about how these forms of artistic expression are used by diverse communities around the world to share their culture and stories with others. The main artistic expression that students focused on was storytelling. They spent time learning about and listening to examples from the Empathy Museum's *Virtual Mile in My Shoes* exhibition, which used artifacts and oral storytelling to share the stories of individuals.

Through these experiences, students were able to make connections to the stories they heard and between their lives and the lives of others. For their independent inquiry, students set about curating a virtual space, in FRAME VR, telling the story of an individual from within their family or community. They began by interviewing their chosen person and spent time reflecting on their story and the impact it had. Students then curated a virtual shoebox of artifacts and photographs relevant to the person. Each boy in Year 6 created an

audio recording telling the story of someone else, which is designed to be listened to while viewing the artifacts within the shoebox. The greatest learning that came from this unit was the way students developed connections with and empathy for others. Through hearing about the life experiences of others and understanding a different perspective, they were able to make connections.

2 Benefits of this Presentation

Observers will be able to understand the inquiry process, develop a unit of work that develops empathy in their students, builds an understanding of artistic expression and its forms, enhance understanding of cultural perspectives, realizes the power of storytelling of student learning shared through VR platforms, and enable student creativity through the use of VR platforms. It will benefit the audience, students, and employers to: engage with authentic student learning via immersive platforms, professional development in use of VR platform for showcasing student learning, enable students to develop skills and experience with this VR platform, and enable students to share learning with a wider audience due to this VR platform.

Ahead of the hands-on workshop please do the following:

1. Check you have the latest version of the Chrome browser.
2. Access the following site to familiarize yourself with how to move around <https://framevr.io/>
3. Check the top right corner menu (3 lines) containing all the links and resources you need.
4. Please sign into FRAME with the Single Sign-On Option of your choice (Google/Microsoft).
5. Please complete the 'Your Info' section of Frame so students and other participants can identify who they are speaking with.
6. Access and bookmark the following sites:
<https://learn.framevr.io/>
<https://learn.framevr.io/resources>
<https://framevr.io/promotingstudentagency>



Fig. 1. Year 6 love to use office spaces to run student-lead workshops.

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