Windows Movie Maker in the Intermediate Classroom*

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Movie Maker in the Intermediate Classroom

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Summary: Windows Movie Maker is an application that comes with the Windows XP package. It was introduced in 2000 and has been updated since. The newest version can be uploaded for free to update your existing software. Windows Movie Maker allows users to create movies or slideshows using imported pictures or videos, sounds or music, text, transitions, narrations, and effects. When the movie or slideshow is complete, it can be published to share with others.

Tech Module: Movie Maker in the Intermediate Classroom

Introduction: Windows Movie Maker is a fun and easy way to make movies for presentations, slideshows, or home movies. This program was designed for beginners in movie making and presentations. There are many websites online that provide tutorials for each of the features of the program as well. The easiest place to look for help is the program's own help toolbar. This will allow you to search the program or search the online website for help topics.

Windows Movie Maker 101: Windows Movie Maker is divided into three areas of viewing for creation purposes when opening the program. There is an area for the storyboard and timeline, the panes of the movie or slideshow and the preview monitor.

The panes of the movie or slideshow are the bulk screen when you open Movie Maker. In this area, you may upload files, edit existing files, add text slides, or publish your product. Each of these options lies on the toolbar on the left side. By clicking any of the options, you will be taken through the steps of performing that action. These created slides and uploaded files are what you will drag on the timeline to create your movie.

The story board and timeline is the area in which the movie will be created. Once slides have been created and pictures, music and videos have been imported, they can be easily dragged from the panes at the top of the screen onto the timeline. At this point they can be rearranged by dragging. The slides can also be adjusted by right-clicking on them. When right-clicking on the slide, the option of adding a transition or effect is given.

The preview monitor is just that. It is a mini-screen on the right side of the larger screen. If at any point, you would like to preview what you have completed thus far, you can click the play button and watch it.

Helpful resources online for using Windows Movie Maker:

1. The Windows Help website on Microsoft.com provides the same directions and help categories as the application provides within its own help menu. There are specific instructions for areas of dif-

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ficulty in the program. The website also provides demos and screen shots for better understanding. http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/ec3fff68-e53c-4168-ae74-8557325e57e21033.mspx[1]

2. This website gives a very basic overview of how to get started on your own Windows Movie Maker presentation. Through the links on this page, you can also find more detailed directions as you proceed in your creation process. When you click on the link, it takes you through each step of the feature you want to learn about. It includes screen shots for visual confirmation. http://presentationsoft.about.com/od/moviemaker/a/m
3. The following website is organized into chapters, each pertaining to a different stage of movie making. It gives tips and tricks that they claim are not given by Microsoft. Each link brings you to an article on the topic. Some of the articles include screen shots but this website is more focused on giving tips than specific instructions. http://www.mightycoach.com/articles/mm2/[3]

Movie Maker Examples:

http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/nisa/gmawinners.htm[4]

"The Wright Brothers" is a brief movie about the Wright brothers and their dream to fly. This movie was created along with many other movies by other schools and classes to connect to a theme of leadership. The Wright brothers had the "courage to lead" by taking initiatives to explore and experiment with flying. The movie starts off with a picture of the Wright brothers from a newspaper. The movie then has text to give a brief description of history of the Wright brothers including the impact of their mother and father, their dream to fly, and how they accomplished that dream. At the end of the brief biography of the brothers, two students are discussing the brothers and their amazing first flight. The girls are talking about when the flight was, how far they flew, and other details surrounding the event. The movie ends with more text and pictures of the Wright brothers. Credits, bibliography, and standards are listed at the end of the movie.

http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/nisa/gmawinners.htm[5]

"Smart Rockers" is video created by students at Liberty Elementary School about erosion, deposition, and the Smart Rock created by David Sears. This movie also went along with the theme of leadership. Although it discusses erosion and deposition, which is a review tool for students, the movie discusses David Sears who took the initiative to find ways to help the environment. In this movie, the students are casually talking outside about their lesson in science on erosion and deposition. A group of boys approach a group of girls who are talking about the topics and the boys ask for clarification. The girls then explain in their own words what erosion and deposition are. There is a slight pause in the movie for a typed definition of these two vocabulary words. Then the group of students begins to talk about the Smart Rock created by David Sears and what it is. Another student comes and asks what they are talking about and they explain in their own words. Again, a typed explanation and definition of the Smart Rock comes up on the screen. The movie ends with all the students understanding the topics. Credits and bibliography roll at the end of the movie.

http://www.grandviewlibrary.org/Fold/Bios_Watkins/Bio_Watkins_Sherlinda.html[6]

The movie is about Walt Disney. A student is reading along as the movie scrolls through the text about the history of Walt Disney. The student talks about Walt's accomplishments, background, and how he has impacted her. This movie most likely went along with a research project for the students where they had to research a famous person and write a biography about that person. Then, the students recorded what they wrote in the movie. There are no graphics or music, simply a student reading while the text is scrolling at the same time. This movie would be useful for replaying so students can remember and review important individuals.

http://www.grandviewlibrary.org/Fold/GrandviewNews.aspx[7]

[1] http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/ec3fff68-e53c-4168-ae74-8557325e57e21033.mspx
[2] http://presentationsoft.about.com/od/moviemaker/a/mov_mak_beg.htm
[3] http://www.mightycoach.com/articles/mm2/
[4] http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/nisa/gmawinners.htm
[5] http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/nisa/gmawinners.htm
[6] http://www.grandviewlibrary.org/Fold/Bios_Watkins/Bio_Watkins_Sherlinda.html
[7] http://www.grandviewlibrary.org/Fold/GrandviewNews.aspx

This movie was created by a kindergarten class about ladybugs. It seemed like the teacher was able to use every student in the movie. The student would stand in front of a board they had created about ladybugs displaying their characteristics. The student stated one fact about ladybugs while holding a ladybug in front of them. After each fact, the movie cut to another student who would tell another fact. Some scenes had more than one student telling facts. This was a create movie that got all the students involved. It is also a movie that would be easy to replay for review about ladybugs. The students will remember their fact they had to state on the video as well as the facts of their friends.

Movie Maker in the Classroom- Affordances and constraints:

One of the affordances we have found is that when Windows Movie Maker is used in the classroom, students have an interactive way to learn material. We saw many movies that involved students acting out what they are learning in science or social studies. By doing this, students are able to repeat what they learned in their own words and act out what they learned. By having such an interactive way of learning, students will be more likely to remember and understand the material.

With Windows Movie Maker students can add songs and graphics to the presentation. I viewed many movies that had songs that went along with the theme of the movie/lesson. By attaching a song to a lesson or piece of information, students are more likely to remember it. Graphics can also express the message of the movie and also make the information easier to remember. I think songs, however, have the greatest impact when it comes to learning and remembering information.

Lastly, Windows Movie Maker can add a sense of community to the classroom. All students must work together as team in order to create a movie. Then once the movie is created, it is something students can look back on and see what they have accomplished. The students can even share the movie with other classes and peers which will also create a strong sense of accomplishment and teamwork.

One of the most obvious constraints is time. Acting out lesson plans and putting them onto a computer takes more time than just lecturing the students and asking them to remember the information. Using this tool is not something a teacher could use with every lesson, but it is something to use occasionally to help the students learn.

Another constraint is that only a limited number of students can participate. Suppose the class has twenty students, it will be difficult to find a role for all 20 students in the movie. Not all students will be in the movie and the teacher will have to take turns and pick appropriate students to participate. The teacher can think of other roles students can fill in order to be involved. Holding the camera, picking songs and graphics, editing, and directing are just a few off screen roles students can fill.

Tips for Teachers:

1. Have students create a storyboard on paper before beginning their movie in order to speed up the time spent at the computer and eliminate wasted time.
2. Browse the application for yourself before assigning students to use it. In this way, you will be able to better direct their inquiries and answer any questions they may have.
3. Suggest to students that they start with the basics. They should fill their slides with the information, graphics, videos, and photos which they wish to include. If time permits, they can revisit their slides and add special effects and transitions.
4. Allow students time to preview their product in order to check that words are large enough or bright enough to be read.
5. Remind students to save frequently so they are sure not to lose their work!