Urban legends

https://vimeo.com/283410859

Organising institution:

Modern Poland

Country:

Poland

Age:

11- 17

Key question:

How to show city historic legends/cultural texts in a creative way using new technologies?

Objectives:

- analysis and interpretation of the text,
- reformulating the text into your own artistic vision,
- focusing on the nearest area – placing legends in the locality – work with the city map,
- use of urban space for text visualization,
- developing openness, interacting with neighbours,
- use of applications.

Time:

6 hours.

Software and apps to be used:

- PicPac,
- Comica.

Brief presentation:

To organize this DA it was important to find some local legend/story. It was a task for the teacher but it could be a part of work with students as well. Instead of a legend it is possible to use any other cultural text. The main task for participants is to reformulate the content of this text into a comic made in urban space. It should make this text (legend/cultural text) easier to understand. In order to do this we use mainly PicPac and Comica apps, as well as various paper material, such as wrapping paper. It gives a possibility to learn and reformulate urban legends, according to own artistic vision in a creative and modern way.

Topics covered:

- a contemporary version of an urban legend,
- comic book,
- new technology,
- social relationships.

Civic engagement:

- improving social relations – conversations, discussions, making collective decisions,
- interacting of the city,
- identification with the place of residence,
- improving verbal communication skills.

Preparation of space for the Atelier:

The best place for the realization of this DA is outdoor – if it's possible it's good to choose an area where the story from the legend takes place. You should prepare a few blankets to put them down as a place for discussion and realization of some tasks. For a summary you need a projector to show the results of activities.

Materials needed:

- Text of urban leend
- packing paper,
- tissue paper,
- markers,
- white paper A4,
- stapler,
- adhesive tape,
- big garbage bags (120l).

Main inspirations taken from personal research:

- Urban legends,
- history of Polish comic story: https://culture.pl/pl/artykul/krotki-przewodnik-po-polskim-komiksie.

Mass media and social media connections:

Getting to know the urban legends in urban space and using them to create visualisation of texts. Building a new form of expression (comic story) with new technology.

How do you plan to give voice to students to present or show their personal skills and knowledge?

Students analyse texts of the urban legends by themselves and transform them into storyboards. They explore the city area and choose places for their stories, prepare props and elements of costumes using their creativity, openness and social engagement (they need to engage passers-by into their activity).

How do you collect information as the starting point of a Digital Atelier?

Conversation about function of the legend in the local community.

Introducing students to the key question – the research begings:

Show some texts of legends to the students. Give them time to read. Ask if it is possible to transform texts into more modern form, e.g. a comic story. Which changes should be made to transform some fragments of the story into images?

Experimental phase

1. Action that unfolds the practical activity to clarify the question: Show concept of a storyboard.

2. Active work of the students: Divide your group into smaller teams of 4–5 persons each. Make sure that in each team there are at least two persons with smartphones with internet connection and free memory space. Give legends to the group. Ask them to read and locate places described in the text on the city map. Let participants follow the path of their legend. Ask them to observe places as future frames. They are free to take photos and ask people

about the places and the legend. Tell them that the legend and the places will be an inspiration for their own visual interpretation of the story.

3. Presentation of findings and results (visualisation of information): After the walk participants share reflections. You can ask them: what did you discover in our locality? What caught your attention? Did you speak to some people you met?

4. Analysis of results: Participants make analysis of collected material asking themselves how it can be used for their storyboard.

Project/design phase – part 1

1. Second action that unfolds the practical activity: How to create comic sequences using photo camera and collected materials?

2. Active work of the students: Each group prepares a storyboard (6–8 frames/ scenes). Remind the participants to think about dialogues which they want include in their scenes. The next task is preparation of the scenography do their scenes (manual work of all the team). Teams once again go to the chosen place to take photos of the prepared scenes.

3. Presentation of findings and results (visualisation of information): Group makes an analysis of their photographs and choose the best ones.

4. Analysis of results: Talking about the activity, collection of students' reflections.

Project/design phase – part 2

1. Third action that unfolds the practical activity: Show Comica app. Ask participants to make a comic story in which they can use photographs they took ealier. Show PicPac app. Ask participants to add their comic story to this app (so they will show their story as an animation) and share results of their work with you.

2. Presentation of findings and results (visualisation of information): Presentation of results.

3. Analysis of results: Talking about the activity, collection of students' reflections.

Approach to a new software or a new app:

During this DA students get to know urban legends and locate described places in the local area. They increase the knowledge about their city and important places.

Links between the Digital Atelier and real life of the students:

Using new technologies show in how many ways it is possible to present legends important from the point of view of local identification. Taking photographes in the local area encourages students to make contact with unknown people (for example, asking them to participate in group scenes).

How do you plan to evaluate knowledge and skills?

During this DA students mostly work in groups. Evaluation is made mostly by observing their work and analysing the results, which allows to assess their social competencies and level of engagement.

Conclusion:

Realization of the activites in the local area helps to increse the sense of identification with the place. Students have a chance to see their locality (for example city) from a new perspective, from a point of view of urban legend and local history. The walk allows them to explore the local area. The whole activity requires observation and cooperating in a team. The use of technology shows how, in the more contemporary way, we can take care of the local history. The activity also creates an opportunity to work with literary texts and to make intersemiotic translation.

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