Bring ‘Spark’ to showcasing school events/projects

Popularity based on classroom use
As we approach the Christmas season, it is nice to showcase school work and events – work done to date; Christmas plays, concerts, projects, season’s greetings to the school community etc. One of the most popular modules of the PDST Technology in Education summer course entitled Embedding ICT in teaching and learning in 2016, concentrated on digital storytelling, and Adobe Spark proved to be a very popular tool for teachers. Since then, feedback from classrooms around Ireland is that it is an equally popular tool with pupils.

Adobe Spark – post, page and video
Adobe Spark (at spark.adobe.com) is a collection of three creation tools – Spark Post, Spark Page and Spark Video. All three can be accessed on a web browser (or apps can be downloaded individually onto tablet devices). Spark Video lets pupils create a video by narrating a series of slides. Each slide can have text, images, or icons as building blocks in the story. Spark Page lets students build a story to be displayed as one web page while Spark Post is a tool for designing images. This article will detail a classroom use for Spark Page.

Preparing to tell a story
As with any story, it is important to plan the sequence of the story in advance, captions/narratives agreed and whatever images need to be uploaded can be organised into a single folder. If video is to be used, it will need to be uploaded into Youtube or Vimeo in order to be incorporated into Spark Page.

Setting up your Adobe Spark Account
Go to spark.adobe.com/login to create your own individual account by selecting the ‘Start now for free’ option.

Once signed up for free, navigate to the left top corner and select the ‘three lines icon’ Once clicked this will open a menu with three coloured options namely ‘Post’, ‘Page’ and ‘Video’. To combine still images, text, video and music into a story, ‘Page’ is the preferred option.

Creating an Adobe Spark page
Once ‘Page’ is selected, a menu will appear and a title and a subtitle can be added by simply clicking on the boxes and typing in content.

At this stage, the digital stories can go off in a myriad of different directions using combinations of media. The ‘Page’ can be personalised even further by using the ‘Themes’ setting.

The ‘Preview’ button at the top of the screen will allow you to look through work done to date. The ‘Share’ button allows you to add some metadata to the page (Title, author, photo credits [if non-Creative Commons photos have been used] and it must be categorised Education for school use).

The next stage of the ‘Share’ process will generate a shareable link to your ‘Page’ with options to share through social media, email or to use the embed code to add the ‘Page’ to your school website (in accordance with your acceptable use policy for use of school related images).

We would love to see your stories created as a result of this article so share them with us (if in line with school policy) through Twitter accounts @PDST_Ireland and @PDST_TechinEd

We want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support in 2016, to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and we look forward to working with you all again in 2017.

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