



## Digital Media in the Classroom Spring 2007

### Moodle Training

OTAN is now offering educators the opportunity to experiment with Moodle. Moodle and Blackboard are both course management systems (CMS) designed for distance or blended learning (a combination of face-to-face and distance learning). They can also be used by teachers who would like a simple way to upload handouts and list links to various Web sites.



Creating a course in a CMS initially requires a significant time commitment, but this new medium will open up numerous possibilities for extending teaching and learning in adult education.

Contact Branka Marceta at [bmarceta@otan.us](mailto:bmarceta@otan.us) to sign up for one of the online training sessions required in order to apply for a course on OTAN's Moodle server.

### United Streaming

UnitedStreaming is a Web-based service offering digital video clips, audio files and photos, to enhance classroom instruction [[unitedstreaming.com](http://unitedstreaming.com)]. OTAN contracted with Discovery Education to offer the service to 50 California adult education teachers for one year. The goal of the pilot is to determine whether UnitedStreaming is a useful resource for adult educators.

Participants in the pilot attended online orientation sessions in January 2007. After the orientation they explored the resources that would best fit into their programs and instruction. Videos can be downloaded on a local computer and played in the classroom. Using LCD projectors and interactive whiteboards can make these classroom videos even more engaging.

In an online forum created for the exchange of ideas and experiences, the pilot participants are reporting both challenges and successes in the use of UnitedStreaming resources.

## Technology Mentors Support Teachers

by Branka Marceta, OTAN

Is technology used efficiently by teachers at your school? If you think that this area may need improvement, OTAN's Technology Integration Mentor Academy (TIMAC) offers an excellent avenue for learning from and networking with other technology enthusiasts in adult education. Applications may be submitted online until May 18, 2007.



**Dr. Paul Porter helps Ronda Rafidi of CLASS with her project plan**

The new group this year, Cohort 3, has already met in Sacramento for three days of training and networking. They continue to communicate with their mentors and meet together online. They will be presenting their projects to the full Academy in May.

Many TIMAC participants will be presenting at upcoming adult education conferences and other professional development events. Another TIMAC objective is to create a community of practice, with members willing to share and lead the field in infusing technology into instruction. The most important goal of TIMAC, however, is that our learners benefit from the opportunities that technology makes possible by upgrading their technology skills, now considered a part of basic literacy.

Interested? Apply yourself or nominate someone from your program. May 18, 2007 is the deadline for applications for TIMAC 2007-09. Apply online at <http://www.otan.us/timac/applyonline>. If you have any questions, contact Branka Marceta at [bmarceta@otan.us](mailto:bmarceta@otan.us) or 916-228-2587.

The purpose of TIMAC is to support individual adult educators in becoming technology mentors for their colleagues. The training emphasizes technology skills and mentoring skills equally. Each year, 15 new participants are accepted and commit to TIMAC for two years. During this time, they complete a project designed to help one or more colleagues more effectively implement the use of technology in their classrooms. Projects might focus on offering more training in productivity applications (word processing, slideshows), to using new technologies (interactive whiteboards, document cameras, LCD projectors), or establishing online resources by creating Web sites.

### Cohort 3 Participants

1. Justin Bush, Ceres Adult School
2. Sharon Dansereau, Santa Barbara City College
3. Susan Guzzetta, Fresno Adult & Comm. Education
4. Elliot Jordan, Burbank Adult School
5. Catherine McNally, Eureka Adult School
6. Lisa Moore, Corrections, Vaca Valley Adult School
7. Larry Peté, San Bernardino Adult School
8. Margaret Pinto, Azusa Adult School
9. Ronda Rafidi, Central Learning Adult School Site
10. Mia Reed, Downey Adult School
11. Tatiana Roganova, Hayward Adult School
12. Blair Roy, Garden Grove Adult Education
13. Kathleen Rutherford, Glenn Adult Program
14. Diane Wallis, City College of San Francisco
15. Shirley Zentmire-Salas, Bakersfield Adult School

## Inside this Issue

# Once Upon a Time... Digital Storytelling in Adult Education

by Penny Pearson, Winterstein Adult Center

In our digital age, many adults find their closets bursting with shoeboxes full of family photos, or their investment in a digital camera has left them with hundreds of photos filling up their hard drives. What to do? The answer may lie in “digital storytelling.”

Storytelling in and of itself has a rich legacy in our culture. Think back to your favorite family stories and I’ll bet it will bring a smile to your face. With free and low cost software tools, anyone can take those small snapshots of time and create a compelling and interesting story.

In developing a course for Winterstein Adult Center in Sacramento, it was important to use tools that were either free or within the financial grasp of our students, not to mention within the school’s budget.

By using the software programs within Windows XP® and supplementing those resources with free programs like the audio editing program Audacity, the initial cost to the student is low. They can now afford to experience the process of creating rich, multimedia stories to share with friends, family and co-workers.

“This class is addictive!” says one student, Lari James, “At this point in my life I thought I was done since I work a lot in Photoshop

Elements®, but this class has started me off in a whole new direction! This is a great way to pull together all the stories that are lying around the house.”

Storytelling classes at Winterstein are centered around having fun, while learning practical and creative skills. As students learn each software program, they also generate storyboards, narration scripts and other support materials for their stories. Some students created stories for family members in another country, and posted their work on the popular video Web site, [YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com). Others construct more traditional stories about children, family trips or special family events. Still others have produced informational pieces for work-related projects.

While Winterstein is offering this class in Career and Technical Education, storytelling projects are appropriate for ABE, ESL and High School students as well. Skills needed to complete a project can include writing, speaking and organizing information, as well as visual literacy and understanding the relationship between images, words and music.

## Resource Web sites for digital storytelling:

KQED in San Francisco offers workshops on digital storytelling.

<http://dsi.kqed.org>

A resource site for primary (original) sources from national archives, libraries, universities and government Web sites. (Requires registration)

<http://www.awesomestories.com>

Download Audacity, a free audio recording and editing software program.

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>

Search for Photo Story 3, a free program to turn still photos into movies. (Requires Windows® authentication)

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads>

# Ask the OTAN Techies Buying a Digital Camera

by Scott Dowell, OTAN

**Q.** I’m looking for a digital camera but I have some questions. What is the difference between a digital point-and-shoot and a digital SLR (single lens reflex) camera? How many megapixels do I need to print my own photos? What image sizes should I use for emailing?

**Ian Schwartz, Santa Rosa, CA**

**A.** It is a great idea to ask some questions before you get a new digital camera. The most noticeable differences between the two types of cameras are: features, lenses and price.

Most point-and-shoot cameras are designed to be easy and intuitive to use. This is why most point-and-shoot cameras come with very few advanced imaging features, such as histograms, image bracketing, and spot metering, just to name a few. Although most basic camera users are not looking for these tools, as you gain more knowledge of digital photography you will find these features quite useful.



**Point and Shoot**

Unlike point-and-shoot systems, digital SLR cameras allow the user to change lenses depending on their needs. Most SLR users have a close-up lens, a zoom lens and possibly a specialty lens. Although this does add great flexibility to your camera system, you have to purchase the lenses separately.

This brings us to camera pricing. You can purchase a basic point-and-shoot camera for as low as \$40. Digital SLR cameras start at \$600, just for the camera body. Each additional lens costs from \$200 to \$400. With digital SLR cameras and lenses, kits can easily range from \$899 to \$2,000.

Most people look at megapixel size as the key attribute when purchasing a digital camera. Does that mean you have to toss away that 4 megapixel camera for a new one with 10.1 megapixels? The simple answer is no. In fact, the digital camera you now have will most likely produce prints far beyond your needs. The following print size table shows minimum megapixel and resolutions needed for various print sizes:

Print Size	Min. megapixels for print	Min. resolution for print
Wallet	0.1	360 x 240
4 x 6"	0.6	930 x 620
5 x 7"	0.7	1008 x 720
8 x 10"	1.3	1280 x 1024
16 x 20"	1.8	1500 x 1200

# Using Online Videos in the Language Classroom

by Kristi Reyes, MiraCosta College Adult Education

As a language instructor, I often wish I could provide students with more exposure to the language as native speakers use it – with fast speech rates, contractions, reductions, and idioms. Internet videos are an option, but what can instructors have students do with video besides sit back, relax, and have a chuckle? Here are a few ideas:

Use short action clips with or without sound to practice grammar. Students can tell a partner or write what is happening, what happened, what has just happened or what will happen next. Try this with a collection of short action clips at <http://my.break.com/media/view.aspx?ContentID=225214>

Use a longer narrative clip for fluency development and writing practice. Students can watch a muted clip and write dialogs, perform the dialogs in pairs, and watch the clip with sound to find out who was closest to the original. Students can also complete a synopsis with blanks (cloze) or write a scene summary, fill in deleted words from the script or use the script to practice pronunciation (intonation, stress). Have students provide oral or written alternate endings or character descriptions. I did this with a funny video from <http://www.zippyvideos.com/2477783773712226/castro> about a guy trying to pick up a woman.

Use a full-length or documentary video as part of a class project to predict content from the title or an opening scene, and order words, sentences, or events from the video. Students can practice listening for main ideas and details by answering comprehension questions, taking notes on an incomplete outline, or by filling out a time line, plot map, or Venn diagram. Another creative project would be to make a poster, slide show, digital story, or PowerPoint presentation. The video at <http://www.archive.org/details/ListeningSkills0623> about communication between a mother and a daughter works well as a listening activity.

Video provides several benefits for students such as authentic language input, visual support, and opportunities to build fluency. For instructors, Internet video provides a break from the routine, and free, high-interest, engaging lesson materials that are just a few clicks away.



## Ask the OTAN Techies, cont.

A good way to decide on camera resolution is to determine the size of your final image. Just remember that these are minimum recommendations. If you have higher megapixel images, you can still print any size.

Your final question is a point of frustration expressed by digital photographers and the millions of family members that receive the photos on a regular basis. A single 4 megapixel image is roughly 1.5MB in size. Attaching just a few photos to an email is enough for the message to be returned because of attachment size limits. So what size should you use when you send out the next group of photos? It is recommended that email photos be reduced to 640 x 480 pixels. This reduces the file size to 50kb - 60kb per image. Now you can attach 10 -15 photos per email without worry. As always, we hope this information helps. If you have a question for the OTAN Techies, please send an email to [support@otan.us](mailto:support@otan.us).

Thanks,

The OTAN Techies

## Free Employment Videos !!

The OTAN library has videos about job interviews and job success!

**Succeed In Your Job**, AV-324

**Getting Along With Co-Workers**, AV-335

**Nerves, Sweat, and Fear: The Basics of Interview Preparation**, AV-325

Call Shelley at the OTAN ETN Library at (916) 228-2752 today!

## VESL Teachers: Don't Reinvent the Wheel

Want your name known nation-wide? Want to reduce VESL class prep time? By pooling our best work, teachers can focus on developing new "wheels" of curricula instead of recreating existing ones.



Share your curricula and build your library with OTAN's VESL/ Workplace Clearinghouse! Be part of this resource by submitting your adult vocational or workplace learning materials (electronic or hard copy) for inclusion in the Clearinghouse public domain collection. For submission or a catalog and information, contact:

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# Executive Director's Message

One objective of OTAN is to research and make available information regarding new and emerging technologies. As a part of that objective, OTAN staff offer opportunities for California adult educators to sample these new instructional resources.

Two types of evolving technologies that show promise are digital video and Web-based course management systems. Both of these technologies are currently being evaluated by OTAN in partnership with local agencies and frontline teachers.

In higher education, commercial course management systems such as Blackboard provide the skeletal infrastructure for delivering online courses. During the past several years, however, open source course management systems like Moodle and Sakai have gained in popularity. OTAN believes it is past time for California adult educators to develop a better understanding of how these tools might be used to extend learning with the students we serve.

The emergence of high-speed networks is beginning to alter the ways educational video is used in and outside of our classrooms. Taking advantage of these networks, commercial vendors such as Discovery Education now offer thousands of online videos delivered via the Internet or over a local area network. OTAN is evaluating and pilot testing this and other streaming video products to better understand how they might be used in adult education.

Are you ready to post your video masterpiece to YouTube? Producing a video is easy, but making a good video requires proper planning. For some valuable tips and tricks for video scriptwriting, be sure to look inside of this edition of the OTAN Online Connection.

John Fleischman

Executive Director, OTAN



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