

Unit of Study: Digital Profiles

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Indiana Partnership for Young Writers
For Y-Press, Summer 2011



This Unit of Study was inspired by the *City Stories* project, a summer camp run by Y-Press journalists. Mentored by Y-Press youth, campers from area community centers pursue stories about people in their neighborhoods, using audio slideshows and writing. During the 2-week camp, these fourth and fifth graders learn how to take photographs, collect sound, meet potential interviewees, write questions, and make editorial decisions to create powerful audio slideshows.

“Digital Profiles” embeds the journalistic experiences provided by *City Stories* into a writing workshop curriculum and reflects the central tenets of workshop teaching that are elaborated on the next pages.


In order to fulfill the educational expectations for rigor in the writing workshop, we have likened an audio slideshow to profiles, a genre that is widely available in print and digital form. We suggest beginning the study with print profiles to deepen the understanding of the digital format.



The Unit stretches across 5-6 weeks, allowing students the time needed to engage in the real work of writers. The suggested daily mini-lessons are not meant to be recipes for producing digital profiles, but rather a framework for teaching the qualities of good writing and the particular craft skills needed to create digitally or print profiles. We expect that writers will use the skills and understandings learned in this unit to the many writing workshop projects that will follow.


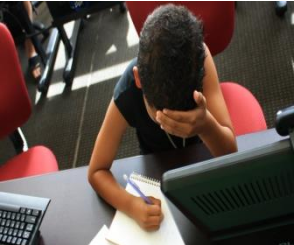
The Indiana Partnership for Young Writers, an affiliate of Orchard School Foundation and IUPUI School of Education, provides ongoing and in-depth professional development in the teaching of reading and writing to teachers in grades K-8 at more than 90 schools in nine counties in Indiana. Founded in 1999, IPYW is committed to inquiry-based workshop teaching that sustains lifelong academic and workplace success. For more information, visit www.indianayoungwriters.org.


Y-Press is a diverse, youth-driven organization that develops leadership, civic engagement and critical thinking through journalism in a variety of media, providing a forum of local and global youths’ perspectives. Y-Press began as a Children’s Express bureau in 1990. Young journalists report on issues affecting youth locally and globally. Interviews are conducted by reporters (ages 10-13) and written by editors (ages 14-18) for audiences of all ages. Outlets include, *The Indianapolis Star* and its website (<http://blogs.indystar.com/yypress/>); WFYI-FM (90.1) and its website (<http://www.wfyi.org/yypress.asp>); and the Y-Press website.

**UNIT OF STUDY – Digital Profiles
Grades 4 and higher suggested**

Days	Mini-Lessons/Lessons	Try Its	Homework
<p>BEST-GUESS GATHERING</p> 	<p>Pre-Teaching: Gather several examples of print and digital profiles. (To get started see Attachment A1: <i>Background/Print & digital profiles.</i>) Be sure to include a few non-profile examples (called Red Herrings) such as a Wikipedia article and a newspaper articles. As you do your best-guess gathering, this is the time for you to choose a Touchstone print and digital example of a profile. With <i>all</i> of the profile examples, make sure to screen them first for appropriateness for students.</p> <p>Compose a letter to send home to families explaining the project and their possible involvement in it (see Attachment B: <i>Family letter</i>).</p>	<p>Prior to beginning this study, students are not participating in Try Its. Most likely students are finishing up publication of another piece or doing self-selected writing in their notebooks.</p>	<p>Invite students to bring in examples of what they <i>think</i> a profile is.</p>
<p>Immersion Day 1</p> <p>PROFILE DEFINITIONS</p>	<p>Begin the study with print profiles to establish a definition of profiles. Have students form groups and give each a stack of print profiles as well as one example of a non-profile. Ask students to notice everything they can about these profiles first without reading (for example: titles, subtitles, length, sections, topic, inclusion or lack of images/illustrations). Spend approximately 5 minutes with this initial activity.</p> <p>Have one student record for each group and keep a list of the group’s noticings in the student’s writing notebook. Share time – take things from each group’s lists and begin charting the noticings as a class to begin to develop a working profile definition.</p>		<p>Throughout the rest of this study, continue to invite students to contribute other examples of profiles they have discovered. Add to profile stacks.</p>

	<p>Have students begin reading some of the profiles and add to their noticings (see Attachment C: <i>Noticings about profiles</i>). Spend approximately 10 to 15 minute. Use share time to add to class chart.</p>		
<p>Immersion Day 2</p> <p><i>City Stories</i></p>  	<p>Teacher can use charted items from Day 1 to compile a list of essential noticings that students missed. Share things the teacher noticed and ask students to find examples of teacher’s noticings in the profiles they have in front of them. If they didn’t miss anything, review the items charted (see Attachment C: <i>Noticings about profiles</i>). Time spent 5 – 15 minutes.</p> <p>Share and add to class list.</p> <p>Have a few good examples of Digital Profiles (DP) ready to show the class. Do not identify them as DP’s. Leave it open-ended. After viewing one example, have students discuss in small groups what they notice and share orally.</p> <p>Watch the digital profile again and encourage students to think about the print profiles if they haven’t made any connections between the two. Share in small groups as students record their noticings, which will be added to the print profile noticings.</p> <p>Share time. Switch color of markers for the rest of the list to differentiate between print and digital profile noticings. Add noticings to class chart.</p>	<p>In their notebooks, have students begin to create a list of possible people to profile for an individual project. This is just a beginning and should not be a complete list.</p>	
<p>Immersion Day 3</p> <p>NOTICINGS</p>	<p>In their small groups, have students use the suggested list of digital profiles (see Attachment A2: <i>Online resources for digital profiles</i>) or create your own list and view as many as time allows.</p>	<p>In their notebooks, continue adding to and refining list of possible people to profile. Students can also begin to</p>	<p>Encourage students to discuss with family members possible people to</p>

	<p>As they watch, ask students to add to their noticings and refine their ideas about profiles. Encourage them strongly to watch the profiles more than one time with a critical eye.</p> <p><i>[Note: Students could be looking for sound other than conversation or ambient sound or photos that convey emotion or give a sense of the person’s story.]</i></p> <p>As some groups watch Digital Profiles, other students continue their immersion work with written profiles.</p> <p>Share time should begin to focus on comparing and contrasting the two ways to produce profiles—print and digital. Find a way to record these differences (for example: Venn diagram, contrasting ink colors, T-chart, etc.).</p>	<p>identify a theme or fascination with each of the possible profile subjects.</p>	<p>profile with an emphasis on what makes that person fascinating or interesting. Have students use notebooks to note their family’s comments.</p>
<p>Sifting Day 4</p> <p>EXPERT DEFINITION</p> 	<p>Now that students have experienced many examples of both print and digital profiles, it’s time to share an expert definition of profiles. [See Attachment D: <i>Expert definitions.</i>]</p> <p>Based on these expert definitions, go through class chart and identify aspects of these definitions that students have noticed.</p> <p>Then ask if there were any examples—either in print or digitally—that didn’t fit these definitions. Have students sift through their print stacks and look for pieces that don’t fit the definitions. Discuss why a piece doesn’t fit the definition.</p>	<p>In students’ notebooks, continue to add and refine the list of possible people to profile. Students can also begin to identify a theme or fascination with each of the possible profile subjects.</p> <p>At this point, each student should have a list of at least 10 people (can be modified based on the needs of your students).</p>	<p>Students have a list of people they might profile. Have them discuss these choices with their family again to narrow the possibilities and eliminate those that are beyond the family’s capabilities.</p> <p>For example, Aunt Susie might live in California, and while an interview</p>

	<p>(If you're using Wikipedia example, students should notice such things as: there is no central focus, it's driven by information/facts instead of anecdotal, there are not extensive quotes from subject, no feeling of fascination or passion about the subject, etc.)</p> <p>Give each group a chance to sift and orally discuss. When the group decides that a piece doesn't fit, put it aside. Ask students if there were any digital profiles that didn't fit the definition. Hopefully, they will have noticed that the "Annoying Sister" piece is not a profile. Discuss the whys. (They should notice such things as: it's not the sister's story but the big brother's story, little is known about the sister other than what the brother said, it's not biographical in nature, the reader can't rely on the source of information to tell the subject's story, etc..)</p>		is possible, taking photos would not.
<p>Immersion II Days 5 and 6</p> <p>EXPLORING THEME IN POSSIBLE PROFILES</p> 	<p>At this point, determine students' level of understanding about print and digital profiles. If students need more time with examples, use this time to extend their knowledge of profiles.</p> <p>During these two days, it is important to identify the theme or focus of several pieces to demonstrate what the student writers will need to know for their profiles. This also is the point where the teacher explains exactly what they will produce. (Teachers must determine whether they will have students do both a print and a digital profile or a choose one.)</p> <p>By this time, the teacher should select a Touchstone print and Touchstone digital profile to use for modeling during the rest of the process.</p>	<p>In their notebooks, students should narrow their list of potential profile subjects, selecting at least two and no more than three people as choices. They will need to come up with a focus or angle for each choice. <i>NOTE: This is a preliminary focus just to get them started. Chances are they will uncover other themes or focus as they begin the interview process.</i></p>	

Day 7

**INTERVIEWING
&
DEVELOPING QUESTIONS**



Pose the question: How and where do writers get their information to create their profiles?

There are two major avenues for gathering information: First-hand and second-hand methods. First-hand methods will be used for product, specifically, interviewing the profile subject.

Have students visit http://cubreporters.org/adelphi_profile_story and read individually or with a partner the information about interviewing and questions. An alternative is to review it with the class by using technology.

Another resource for developing questions is Y-Press's project, Power-of-the- question, which includes a link to types and samples of questions: [Types of questions](#)

Ask students, in their small groups, to brainstorm a list of what makes an interview question a good question. [See Attachment E: *Characteristics of good interview questions.*]

Share and record their responses on chart paper.


The teacher models questions he or she would write for a possible profile subject.



[Note: Subjects might include principal of the school; member of school staff with special skill or talent; somebody from your own life that fascinates you.]



If teacher wants to delve into open and closed questions further, a Y-Press online lesson in the Power-of-the-



Students work in pairs or small groups to come up with more questions for the interviewee selected by the teacher for the modeling exercise. Have students record questions in their notebooks.



These questions will be the basis of a group interview with that person on the next or subsequent day.


	question project shares the qualities of these questions. In an accompanying video, ESPN coach John Sawatsky provides tips. Using his suggestions, students can examine the importance of how asking questions can elicit information: Open, closed and lean questions .		
<p>Day 8</p> <p>PRACTICE INTERVIEW</p> 	<p>Model the interview process, using a teacher-selected individual.</p> <p><i>[Notes: Prepare the interviewee by explaining the purpose of this exercise is to help students recognize good (open-ended questions) from bad (closed questions). The interviewee will answer closed questions with yes, no or sentence fragments. Explain that they won't necessarily elaborate unless prompted by the question or the interviewer.]</i></p> <p>Share time – discuss how the quality and structure of questions can be used to find out about a person.</p>	<p>Using their two to three possible profile subjects, students practice writing interview questions for one interviewee. [See Worksheet #1: <i>Initial interviews</i>.]</p> <p><i>Note: This worksheet should either be taped into their notebooks or recreated in their notebooks.</i></p>	<p>Set up a time and place for students' first meeting/initial interviews with at least two of their profile choices. Students should complete their interviews within a week. While in class, examine digital profiles more closely. Consider having students record these initial interviews for practice and to possibly include in their finished profiles.</p>
<p>Day 9</p> <p>SELECTING A SUBJECT</p>	<p>Profiles are meant to showcase a particular aspect of a person's life (rather than tell a complete life story). Use Attachment F: <i>Experts think about theme</i>, to explore with students how profile writers narrow their focus. Then select several profiles for students to watch in small groups to practice identifying the themes in each.</p>	<p>Narrow down possible themes/focus for their subjects as a starting point. Record these in your notebooks.</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">Day 10</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>City Stories</i></p> 	<p>Students will use knowledge of print profiles to compare to digital profiles. Refer back to the class's work during Immersion and the working definition as a basis for discussion and comparison.</p> <p>Watch a digital profile and come up with questions the profile subject might have been asked in order to discover or explore the theme of the profile. Discuss how getting the subject to talk is more important in a digital profile because the author is not adding his/her voice.</p> <p>What questions do you think were asked during these interviews? What was the focus/theme/fascination?</p> <p>For an additional resource, do the same with either Shapiro's Deli or Leo, the barber audio slideshow created by the City Story campers. See Attachment G: <i>2011 City Stories interview questions</i> to see the questions the campers actually asked.</p>	<p>Students begin working on first drafts of their written profiles. Make sure students have selected a printed Touchstone for reference. In addition, this draft will not be included in the notebook, so students will need a folder to house this work.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Day 11-12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOW TO RECORD</p>	<p>On these days, focus on the audio portion of digital profiles -- both craft and process issues. Discuss elements of audio that contribute to storytelling for a digital profile. This would include the selection of responses and audio details that enhance or add another element to the story (ambient sound).</p> <p>Audio How-tos: Use the equipment, technically gather good quality voice, gathering natural/ambient sounds; how and where to hold the mic; setting for recording the interview; what <i>is</i> natural sound and where does it belong in your profile; what should the first sound be in</p>	<p>Students continue working on their first drafts of their written profiles.</p>	<p>Create a list of additional ambient sounds they need to gather for their profiles. Students continue working on their pre-interviews. Give them a weekend within the timeframe to complete this.</p>

 	<p>your story; etc.</p> <p>This is a perfect time to bring in an “expert” to speak to the students about this subject. Transom has online tools, including Shout Out: A Kids' Guide to Recording Stories or How to Mic a Field Interview</p> <p>Listen to at least one example of a digital profile with no images. In small groups, discuss what you notice. Then watch it a second time with images only. Again discuss what you notice. Make a chart of noticings that highlight the “jobs” both audio and images do in presenting the profile.</p>		
<p>Day 13-14</p> <p>REFINING THE THEME</p>	<p>Have students refer to their notes from their homework from Day 8. Discuss how to select the theme for their profile.</p> <p>Have students rely on the work they have done so far watching and analyzing digital and print profiles to determine a theme. Have students work in small groups to help one another identify the themes. Have computers available in case students need to see more digital profile examples.</p>	<p>Once students have determined theme, they need to come up with more questions with that theme in mind. [See <i>Worksheet #2: Focused interview questions.</i>] Students also revise their written profiles based on the theme they have determined.</p>	<p>Students can conduct their focused interview. They will need to record the audio at this point. [See <i>Worksheet #3: Audio log for digital profiles.</i>]</p>

	<p>NOTE: Students will need time to record their final interviews. In the meantime, proceed with the lessons on photography. Students will need to have their interviews finished by the time you have finished the photography lessons.</p>	<p><i>It's not necessary to finish the photography lessons for students to be taking photographs during the pre- and main interviews. They then can refine and supplement these photos as they finish logging their audio (chunking). See Worksheet #3: Audio log for digital profiles.</i></p>	<p><i>Using their cameras, students take photos of their profile subject. They may or may not use these in their finished piece.</i></p>
<p>Days 15-16</p>  <p>USING THE CAMERA</p>	<p>Examine the elements of the photographs and the role these play in telling the story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the scene • Details that help tell the story • Mood or tone of the story and theme <p>Have examples of different types of photos. Use the vocabulary list of types/composition of photos to introduce students to types. (See Attachment H: <i>Photo Vocabulary</i>)</p> <p>With the class, share examples of these photos and discuss how each illustrates a type on the list.</p> <p>Choose an example of a digital profile to analyze how the author uses images. (One idea is to use this story-- Holding Up the Memories. There is one photo of the woman smoking a cigarette.) Explain that there should be as little as possible to distract the listener and the photos need to be still and stay on the screen long enough for the viewer to contemplate them.</p>	<p>Students take classroom cameras and practice creating a particular mood or effect in various photographs. They do this in conjunction with the Y-Press Photo Bingo game. [See Worksheet #4: <i>Photo Bingo</i>]</p>	<p>Students check out cameras and continue taking photographs for their profiles.</p>

	<p>Also concentrate on technical aspects such as clarity, lighting, and composition of photos. Remember, there is no wrong way to take a picture, but all pictures should be taken in a particular way for a particular reason.</p> <p>Play Photo Bingo [See Worksheet #4: <i>Photo Bingo</i>]. Students are given a time limit to work in small groups and look for and take examples of the photo types listed on the sheet. As they take the photos, check them on their card. When the time is up, have students download their photos and show the class three examples of photos described on the bingo card.</p>		
<p>Day 17</p>  <p>THINKING ABOUT PHOTO VARIETY</p>	<p>Teacher takes one unused Photo Bingo card and cuts it up into individual squares. Working in groups, each group pulls a slip without revealing the bingo square they've picked. Using photos from students' initial interviews, and the Photo Bingo activity, groups choose their best photo to represent their vocabulary word and present it to the group. Other students have to guess the photo type. After each "guess" other groups can offer their example if time allows.</p> <p>Another option is for the teacher to preselect representative photos from those taken by students and present to the whole group for guessing/discussion about the types of photos.</p>	<p>Students are finishing the draft of their written profile. This is as far as the class needs to go with the print portion of this unit, unless students are finishing a print profile.</p>	
<p>Day 18-19</p>	<p>By this time, students should have completed their initial interviews. Students make a list of audio chunks with identifying numbers and topics [See Worksheet #3: <i>Audio log for digital profiles</i>].</p>		

<p>Day 20-21</p> <p>AUDIO SELECTION</p>  <p>PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER</p>	<p>Once students have a list of audio “chunks” they need to determine which to keep and which to eliminate and then put them in order for their story (See Worksheet #3: <i>Audio log for digital profiles</i>).</p> <p><i>[Note: In iMovie, you need to use images as place holders first before you can attach the audio. See information about technical resources. See Attachment I: Technical Resources.]</i></p> <p>Students now create an outline or storyboard for their digital profile. On the storyboard, have them put down ideas for photographs including type of shot and subject matter [See Worksheet #5: <i>Storyboard template</i>].</p>	<p>Make a list of other audio or photographs that are needed to complete a profile of the subject.</p>	<p>Once audio chunks and storyboards are complete, students can finish taking photographs and collecting audio.</p>
<p>Day 22-26</p> <p>FINAL REVISIONS</p>	<p>Students go through their photographs and using their storyboard, select the photographs for their profiles thinking about storytelling and shot variety. Add the selected photos to their edited audio in iMovie.</p> <p>During this week, students continue to edit and revise profiles. Students finishing before others can assist other students with their profiles, take their written profile to publication or simply work on other writing projects.</p> <p><i>NOTE: This unit uses iMovie. There are a number of other software options that might require a different order of assignments at this point. Please see resource list for those other options.</i></p> <p><i>NOTE: Make sure authors have a copy of their profile. In addition, collect whatever documentation teacher needs for assessment/portfolio.</i></p>		

Day 27

CELEBRATION



As a class, discuss how to celebrate this work. Over a span of several days, a new profile can be “premiered” in the classroom or at a community-meeting event.

Another idea is to set up “screening rooms” where guests (including family members and other community members) can choose several profiles to watch in different locations. Have audience members write down their critiques of the profiles ala film critics so that these comments could be used in future advertising or marketing the project. The other profiles could be burned on a DVD and offered for “sale” or some other way to distribute them.

Students also could present their profiles to preselected classrooms in their schools.

A class website could be created and the profiles featured there. *[NOTE: Make sure you have appropriate release information from both the student authors and profile subjects.]*

NOTE: This unit of study requires classes/schools to have a means of recording digital sound and a sufficient number of digital cameras to be successful. There is no need for specialized software. It can be done on iMovie and with GarageBand. We highly recommend that a media specialist be brought into this project in order to provide specific technical expertise as well as help with editing both the audio and photographs, and with final production of the profiles. Ideally, a computer lab is the best scenario so that multiple students can work on their profiles at the same time.