Media Publishing

INTRODUCTION

Now that your students have created their media projects, what do you do? Publish them! Here you'll find some helpful tips for where and how to publish your media for some—or all—to see.

Gone are the days of printing a project on paper and turning it in to an audience of one. There are different publishing options depending on the type of media your students have produced. The digital nature of today's media allows a potential audience of millions to see the material almost instantly. But each type of media produces its own kind of file, and it can get a bit confusing.

Video works are among the easiest and the hardest to deal with, depending on where you want to publish them. Most video-sharing sites can convert a large variety of file types from one to another, so it doesn't matter what program or computer platform your students used create their work. For example, YouTube accepts just about any kind of video. After you upload your video, the site gives you a special code that then allows you to embed your video in blogs or other Web sites. Photos are simpler. Usually you only have to deal with the one type of file that most cameras use to store images—JPEG.

This chart outlines different kinds of media files.

	MPEG	JPEG	MP3	WAV	MOV	AIFF
Video	X				X	
Audio			X	X		X
Still Images		X				

When using Google Maps to create map projects, there are two publishing options. It is possible to make your map "public" for anyone to see or "private" where only those people to whom you have sent the map link can access the map content. Like publishing video content on YouTube, once a map has been created the site gives you a special code that then allows you to embed your map in blogs or other Web sites.

CREATING ACCOUNTS

Many sites that allow you to post media require that you first create an account, which can be an issue in educational settings. Some sites have a minimum age requirement for their accounts. For example, you have to be at least 13 to create an account on Google.

Privacy is another issue. Even though students may already have their own accounts for various Web services, creating individual accounts for students just for media projects, or leveraging their preexisting accounts, can be problematic when considering privacy. Creating one account that is managed by the educator is the best way to avoid privacy concerns.

FINDING APPROPRIATE SITES

Publishing media to the Web is pretty straightforward once you have all the elements in place. However the World Wide Web is just that—it's everywhere and contains every imaginable subject. Placing your media about cellular mitosis in a Web environment dedicated to electric vehicles isn't the best way to get appropriate feedback or encouragement.

There are also many media publishing sites that some schools and educational settings block to keep students from accessing inappropriate content. In our experience, the Web's most popular video publishing site, YouTube, is blocked by system administrators in many of the schools we work with. As an educator, it's important to find appropriate places and work with system administrators to identify ways to publish your material.

One tactic that has proven successful is for the educator to post the content to the appropriate Web site. The teacher gathers the individual project files and uploads them to the site. That way, the students don't have to interact with the uploading interface, but can enjoy seeing their creations online. Some schools have local intranets that are only accessible from inside the school or outside the school using a special password. This is the best option if it's available, since it ensures that the content will always be in the proper context.

Finally, you don't have to publish student work to the Web at all. A class screening is a great way for students to demonstrate what they've learned as well as practice other important skills like public speaking and organizing a presentation. Publishing to the Web is good, but playing the files locally can also be a very rich experience.

PROMOTING YOUR WORK

Now that you've posted your media to the Web, you need to let people know it's there. The Internet is a big place. Just because you put your project on it, that doesn't mean people will see it. Your classroom may be as far as you want to go in terms of an audience, but sometimes the work you create is destined for greatness! Some sites where you post your work also have tools built into them that help you promote the work. Other sites exist purely to help spread the word. Many of the same concerns about privacy and classroom appropriateness apply here, too, so decide how you want to handle the promotion process. Use one of these tools to help bring attention to your students' work.

- Social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, Ning)
- Twitter
- E-mail links
- Embedded in Web pages and/or blog posts

For additional resources and links for publishing media to the Web, visit the "Publishing" tag at Delicious.com.
http://delicious.com/KQEDScienceEd/Publishing

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This resource is a component of the Media-Making Toolkit for Science Education, developed by KQED Education Network. The Toolkit includes instructions, worksheets and rubrics to assist educators in implementing media-making projects with students.

For a complete listing of the resources in KQED's Media-Making Toolkit, please visit www.kqed.org/quest/education