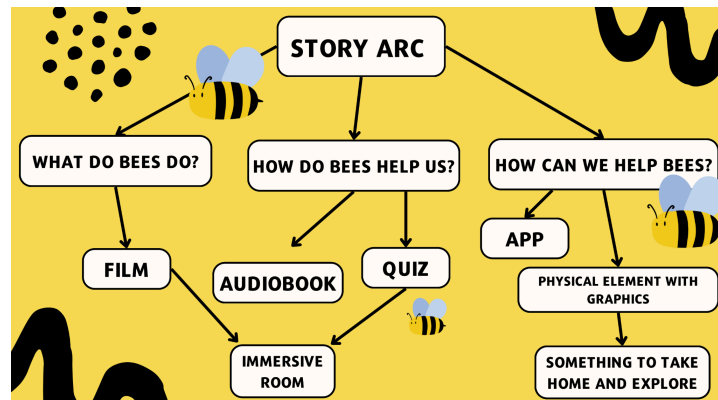


HPMF6004 Assessment 2- Report

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Throughout this project, I've explored transmedia storytelling and found that it is a designed narrative woven across a range of media platforms. I was inspired by Henry Jenkins, whose insights have reshaped our understanding of storytelling in the digital age, and started the process of constructing my story on why bees are so important in our ecosystem. I began by creating a story arc, envisioning the progression across various media platforms.



Transmedia works so that “each narrative in each medium completes each other for the target group to reach a meaningful whole” (Recep Yılmaz, M Nur Erdem and Filiz Resuloğlu, 2019, p.17). This suggests to me that the overall package should be unified and consist of similar themes and designs that work together as one. To achieve unity I created a folder of resources and graphics that I could utilise and apply to each of my media types to create a running theme. It is suggested that bright colours “catch young children's eyes because they help kids to distinguish objects from one another in their field of vision” (Pancare, 2018). I concluded that incorporating a vibrant colour palette would be essential to engage the interest of the children and polish my project.



When deciding on what types of media to include, I took into consideration my target audience's attention span and how a whole day in the immersive room might be overwhelming and distracting. I discovered that the attention span of a 7-8 year old is 16-24 mins (Hollander, 2023) and so with my overall package running for over an hour, I wanted to make sure to include a variety of media types to spark the children's interest. Creating a quiz to do in the classroom at the end of the session, allows for the children to engage and regain

their attention after focusing on big screens in the immersive room. Having an app meant that I had a resource that could be accessed outside of the classroom for children to continue to play with once they got home. The seed packet also allowed for a continuum of my story to be taken home with the children for them to share with their parents and retell what they had learnt in the day. During their time in the classroom, I wanted to create a pause in the middle of my package where the children could sit quietly and unwind, and so thought of creating an audio book. This would offer a moment of quiet where the children could just listen with the occasional visual aid of a few graphics to help tell the story. My film that I created was made with the intention to be shown on a large screen like the immersive room to offer an exciting new experience for the students. That being said, I purposely decided not to make my film 360 so that it would be accessible to schools all across the country that don't have access to an immersive space.

The majority of my film for the immersive room was recorded at UWTSD Lampeter beehives. On reflection, I admit that I made a mistake on this shoot day by not taking a tripod with me and so when I assessed the footage from the day I noticed that it was very shaky. This meant that a lot of it was unusable or took a lot of time to fix during post production. In the future, I will make sure that I am more thorough when checking my kit list for a shoot so that a mistake like this doesn't happen again. Another problem I faced with the film was creating the animation. My original plan was to have Buzzy Bumble present the film, however the task of animating this character proved to be too difficult for my skill set. If I was to work on another animation project, I would find an alternative creative to myself that is trained in animation and can complete the overall look and achievement that I am aiming for. Furthermore, this would create a synergy of collaboration and contribution towards the arts, which I think ultimately is what is encouraged by transmedia. With more skills and resources, I would have also made improvements to my app, such as having the correct answers highlighted on the word search once you found them and also implementing a counting device to help you track how many differences you find on the spot the difference. Unfortunately, due to my lack of knowledge in programming these are both things I was unable to do but as I have said before, are things I would like to achieve through collaboration with other creatives.

I was given the opportunity to showcase my work and receive feedback from a range of experts in education and environmental care. One of the notes I received was to improve my app by making the information about how to help a bee more engaging for a child and to make it clearer where the buttons were on the screen. I took onboard this feedback and added a drop shadow to my buttons to make it clear to the children this is where they should click and also created new pages to be explored about how to assist a bee lying on the ground. Here you can see the before and after:

BEFORE :



AFTER:



I then got to present my work to a group of children in my target audience and received their feedback on what they thought of my transmedia story. The overall feedback was positive towards my project and it felt rewarding to see the children engaged in the activities I had created for them. Seeing the children take part and correctly answer questions in the quiz about what they had learnt, reinforced my confidence that I had chosen the correct media types for conveying a message that was retainable to the children. One element they particularly enjoyed from the day was dancing the 'waggle dance' at the Buzzy Bumble dance party. This is something I would like to explore further by creating resources that teach children about the importance of the dance and why bees do it in the first place. One thing I did notice when showcasing my work was that the majority of my package is digital and so requires children to look at screens the whole time. In the future, I would like to find ways to engage the children physically; for example, after learning about how to treat a 'poorly' bee, the students could partner up and treat one another as if they were bees themselves.

Henry Jenkins suggests that in our stories there will be gaps in the narratives that "introduce potential plots which can not be fully told or extra details which hint at more than can be revealed"(2007). Furthermore, I believe that my story has various unexplored narratives that can be revealed further through expansion of my brand. One idea I had for expansion was that the audio book could delve deeper into Buzzy's self-care regimen to make sure that he remains healthy and doesn't miss another day of work. I would also like to expand my app by creating new universes for Buzzy to travel to and take Susan along the way. With transmedia storytelling, the possibilities are endless, as long as the story maintains continuity there is a space for growth and expansion.

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