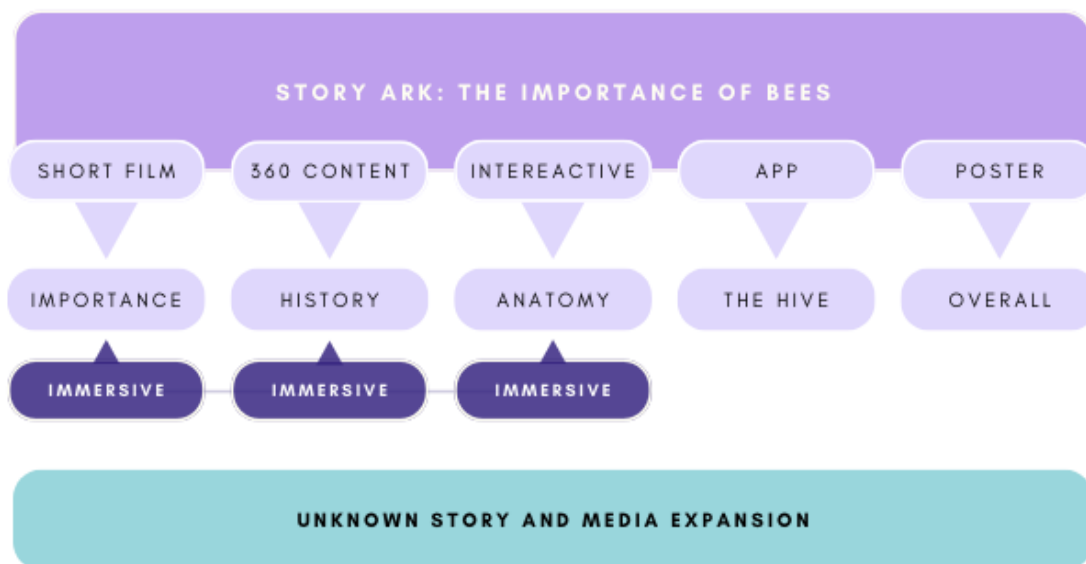


Multiplatform Content (HPMF6004)

This module aimed for us to plan and create 5 different interactive media artefacts that convey a narrative-driven experience on The Importance of Bees, and offer a user experience to a chosen audience, which in our case was a Primary School classroom aged 10-11. The project must also interconnect the environmental message of how and why Bees are important to the world.

My starting point was to take part in a range of intensive and critical research. Before I started to brainstorm and develop my media types, I first wanted to understand our main narrative, the importance of Bees. Initially, I found the research stage daunting. To overcome this hurdle, I decided to break down my research into several different categories. The purpose of a Bee, the anatomy of a Bee and the history of a Bee. This meant could delve deeper into more specific research avenues.

Next, I started to develop them into my five multi-content media types. However, I needed to understand what transmedia storytelling was, and its value. As defined by Henry Jenkins (2007), transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels to create a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. To use Jenkins' definition and apply it to my own transmedia story, I break down my narrative into a story ark, a common technique when it comes to creating a transmedia story.



Looking at the technical side of my work and producing the content, there was a lot to consider. The main focus was utilising and understanding the new and exciting immersive room that has been built on the university campus. Technology is a huge part of my future profession and is constantly changing. So, not only is it important for me to keep up to date with the latest trends in technology, but also to find new ones and attempt to predict the future of what technology will bring. As stated by Globe Newswire (2023), there

is an Increasing Demand for Virtual Reality: VR and AR technologies growing Popularity is driving the demand for 360-degree cameras. For capturing immersive and interactive content 360-degree cameras are ideal. When you take my target audience of 11-year-olds into account, an important part of keeping them engaged is using exciting content that they will find interesting and want to interact with. With, access to the immersive room, I knew that it would instantly hook the pupils and be a great way of engaging them while continuing to learn. Three of my products were based in the immersive room, these included a short film, an interactive game, and an immersive virtual exhibition. Despite them all using the same fundamental component of the immersive room, all three products have different purposes and roles to play and overall are three different media types that help to tell a narrative through a variety of media forms.

Throughout my process of creating the products, I was able to receive consistent feedback from a series of professionals in a variety of industries. Some of the most useful advice I received before my final screening taught me how to improve my transmedia development within my products, specifically my short film. Due to using my film as the introductory product, it was suggested, by one of the professionals, that I include and introduce several characters and assets to appear across my other media products.

In a presentation by Brett Aggerberg (201), it is taught that branding continuity is extremely important when it comes to transmedia storytelling. To represent my brand I created a main character asset (Billy Buzzford), along with a few other characters to represent my brand and style throughout my products. Having these characters continually appear throughout my products helps to sell the idea of a transmedia story and represents the idea of a 'brand' with the main front logo being my Bee character asset.



Due to some challenges in the character animation department, I was unable to produce a Bee similar to the original design, meaning I was forced to change to a pre-animated design which I downloaded. Despite not being successful in animating my character, these allowed me to save time animating and put that time elsewhere and develop my products in other ways. One way involved making my products more immersive for the pupils. To do this, I added natural sounds to give off the impression that the pupils were outside. From my perspective, I found that adding these sounds made a huge impact on the final deliverable, but I was curious to see how the pupils would react when they eventually viewed my products.

Going into the final screening where we showed the target audience our final products, I was confident that I had produced a successful transmedia story using a range of different media types. I had structured my day with intention and each media type held its purpose. The first media type I showed the pupils was my short film where my main character asset travelled around beehives and natural environments explaining the role a bee plays in life, the purpose of bee hives, what damage is being caused to bees and how we can help Bees to stay around and grow stronger. The film was shot on a 360 camera and spread itself around the majority of the room. After the screening, I asked the pupils for their initial response to the film. Some of the pupils said it felt like they were moving, showing that my immersive techniques paid off. Others claimed that the immersive style of the film helped them to engage with the

film and stay focused longer. The immersive room appeared to be a great success with the pupils, similar feedback was received from my other two products set in the immersive room. The interactive game helped the pupils to learn about the anatomy of a Bee using interactive methods. Feedback was positive from the students, they claimed that using the iPads as a tool was exciting to them and helped them stay focused on the task. From the observation of the teachers, they would have appreciated more devices being available as during the test we used 3 iPads between 20 students, meaning not everyone could get involved. When it came to the virtual exhibition, the students seemed to engage with the information presented to them. I feared that the timeline would overwhelm them with information, and they would start to lose interest. But quite the opposite happened. The pupils were fascinated and kept asking questions about certain eras of the Bees's history.

After we had finished in the immersive room, I took my group into a classroom to present my final two products, the mobile application and the infographic poster. Due to the limited number of both iPads and posters, I presented them both simultaneously, splitting the class into groups of three and asking them to share either an iPad or a poster. This tactic worked as in their groups they could work through the worksheet or the app together and ask each other what they thought about it. The purpose of both of these products is to summarise the day and see how much they had learnt/engaged with my work.

The application contained several sections for the pupils to explore, such as games, facts, videos and answers. The poster had two sides, one for the kids to display on their wall consisting of fun facts about bees, and the other side containing games and activities for the pupils to complete. After receiving back the worksheets, I was delighted to see they had all been completed to a high standard with the majority of the tasks being completed correctly.

Despite receiving positive feedback from the students, I wanted to know what the education and field experts thought of the work I had produced. The majority of the feedback I received was extremely positive, consisting of acknowledgement of the high quality and standard of the work I produced and how impressed they were that the pupils engaged so easily. To take my work further it was suggested that I focus more on the environment around us and how we can incorporate that into our work to show people first-hand how we can help Bees. One way I would achieve this creating a tour of a local woodland, park or university campus and explaining why certain items found in these areas help the livelihood of Bees, such as log piles and unattended patches of grass.

The main way I wish to take my transmedia brand further is to create new sections within my app where people can learn the fundamentals of protecting bees at home. They can learn new information and test themselves with quizzes and games, with different sections correlating to a specific age group, all the way from Key Stage One to adults and professionals. I also believe the idea of creating a series of immersive videos would be a great success. Videos where people can find themselves in Bee Hives looking at all the intricate details, but also in a factory understanding the honey-making process.



“Transmedia storytelling is the practice of telling stories across multiple media platforms, where each medium makes a unique contribution to the story world. Any combination of media may be used to do this, including movies, TV, online video, web apps, video games, blog entries, radio and advertisements” (Target Media, 2021). Overall I believe my experience in creating a transmedia story was a success. I used a variety of media types to tell a consistent narrative throughout my work. I used recognisable branding throughout my work with the use of characters, assets, backdrops and colours. Each product I produced served an identifiable purpose and successfully engaged my target audience.



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