

The Penguins of March

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Description:

Our ***Penguins of March*** video showcases second grade students using the computer to perform various educational tasks. Students were video taped throughout their penguin unit doing experiments, working on the computer, and participating in a multitude of cross-curricular activities following Illinois State Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Science Standards, as well as National Educational Technology Standards. Using green screen technology, students presented factual information on penguins, performed poems, skits, jokes, and then participated in the editing process. The completed project shows students using the various forms of technology to enhance their standards-driven curriculum in new and inventive ways.

Illinois Learning Standards:

- IL 1: Read with understanding and fluency
- IL 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
- IL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
- IL 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.
- IL 8: Interpret and describe numerical relationships using table, graphs and patterns
- IL 10: Organize, describe and make predictions from existing data
- IL 11: Know and apply the concepts, principles, and processes of scientific inquiry.
- IL 12: Know and apply concepts that explain how living things function, adapt, change, and interact with each other and their environment.
- IL 17: Locate, describe and explain places, regions and features on the Earth.

National Educational Technology Standards:

- NETS 1B: Students are proficient in the use of technology.
- NETS 2B: Students practice responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.
- NETS 2C: Students develop positive attitudes toward technology uses that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits, and productivity.
- NETS 3A: Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.
- NETS 3B: Students use productivity tools to collaborate in constructing technology-enhanced models, prepare publications, and produce other creative works.
- NETS 4B: Students use a variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences.

How the Video Project Was Created:

Each school year, the second grade students of Stevenson Elementary School are introduced to a cross-curricular unit on penguins. Students began the project by using the World Wide Web to research penguins. With this information spreadsheets of penguin heights were created using Scholastic Keys. Using their spreadsheets, students developed various types of graphs. Using Kid Pix, a computer-drawing program, students were able to create original works incorporating facts about penguins. The students also used their web-generated research to complete projects and reports within the classrooms.

The video captured students conducting standards based science experiments within the classroom. As an alternate form of assessment, students were able to view and discuss their classroom experiments and activities with their teacher and classmates. Using the video as an avenue for parent/school communication, parents were able to view their children actively engaging in a multitude of classroom activities guided by the Illinois State Learning Standards.

For the past three years, students had use of a digital camera in which they were able to photograph each other. Using Microsoft Photostory 3, the students were able to incorporate photos and music to make a photostory.

Students narrated their photostory, added transitions, titles and music to complete this portion of the project. The completed photostories are posted on the classroom website.

In the 2006 penguin project, the use of video editing technology to add English sub-titles for our Spanish-speaking students added a unique element. Both English speaking and Bilingual students enjoyed the incorporation of both native languages into the video.

As a new element in the 2007 project, students participated in green screen videotaping and editing technology. Students were encouraged to share ideas and give input during the editing process. Teacher, Chris Bohne, used Visual Communicator 3 and green screen technology to edit the final version of the video.

A True Learning Experience:

During the Penguins of March project, students exploded with excitement. When working on the technology components of this project we found very few behavior problems. The students were more interested in learning the technology than in being disruptive in the lab or the classroom. Students who did not normally excel in the traditional classroom, excelled in this project. Teachers were able to share the excitement of technology and innovation with the students through the Penguins of March project.



Students researched Penguins on the computer. They also used the computer to make Venn Diagrams, Acrostic Poems, spreadsheets, graphs and original computerized drawings.

Using the green screen, students presented facts of penguins, jokes, skits, and poems.



Students conducted and video taped science experiments in class which they later reviewed with their teacher and peers.



Teachers and students shared the excitement of technology and innovation with the students through the Penguins of March project.



Resources

Visual Communicator 3: This is the software we used with our green screen. It includes a teleprompter and a variety of still and motion backgrounds.

<http://www.adobe.com/products/visualcommunicator/>

Green Screen: This site gives a basic overview of chroma-key or green/blue screen video technique.

<http://www.mediacollege.com/video/special-effects/green-screen/>

Kid Pix: Kid Pix Deluxe 4 for Schools combines realistic art tools and powerful graphic handling capability, with design simplicity, ease of use, and powerful new teacher tools to inspire creativity and empower learning throughout your curriculum.

http://web.riverdeep.net/portal/page?_pageid=818,1384169,818_1384199&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Scholastic Keys: provides elementary students with a kid-friendly interface and educational enhancements for Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint®.

<http://www.tomsnyder.com/products/product.asp?SKU=KEYKEY>

Microsoft Photostory 3: This free download from Microsoft allows you to create slideshows using digital photos. You can add stunning special effects, soundtracks, narration, captions and titles.

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx>

Microsoft Movie Maker: This is a free download from Microsoft. Windows Movie Maker makes home movies amazingly fun. With Movie Maker, you can create, edit, and share your movies right on your computer.

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/updates/moviemaker2.mspx>