Multimedia Computer Reports

You already know how valuable the computer can be when you're writing. Perhaps you've written a classroom report using a computer. Now you can use it to create a multimedia report, as well. Multimedia means "many methods of communication." In a multimedia report, you add pictures, music, and sounds to strengthen your message.

There are two types of multimedia reports: a multimedia presentation and an interactive report. For a multimedia presentation, you use a computer screen to present the major points of your report or speech. For an interactive report, you create an electronic file that your viewers use on their own. The file should contain links that the viewers can read and explore.

There are many kinds of software that you can use to create a multimedia report. Once you learn how the software works, use your imagination and a good plan to turn a basic report or speech into something that really engages your audience.

What's Ahead

This chapter will help you develop effective multimedia presentations and interactive reports.

- **Multimedia Presentation**
- **Interactive Report**

Writing Guidelines

Multimedia Presentation

As you give a speech or present a report, your audience will be more interested if you include graphics. With the help of your computer, you can create a multimedia presentation in which you show your audience different images to clarify or enhance the important points you want to make. The following guidelines will help you get started.

Prewriting ◄ Choosing a Topic ►

■ Begin with a report or a speech you have already written or with a plan for one that you will write. Make sure that the topic interests both you and your audience.

■ Create an outline of the main ideas from your speech or report. Choose points that can be presented visually.

► Gathering Details ►

■ Look for pictures in your software program or on the Internet that relate to your topic. You may also choose to create and scan in your own pictures.

Writing ◄ Preparing the Presentation

■ Prepare a storyboard—a "map" of your presentation. (See page 360.5 for a sample storyboard.) Using your outline headings as a guide, include one slide in your storyboard for each main idea in your presentation.

■ As you design the slides with your software, keep your audience in mind. Don't clutter the slides with too much information. If you include words, make them easy to read.

Revising / Improving Your Presentation

- Use linking words to connect your text with the pictures, making your report read smoothly.

- Add special effects such as bulleted points or animation.

- Rehearse your presentation enough times to smoothly coordinate the spoken part of the report with the appropriate graphics. Then try rehearsing in front of family or friends. They may be able to give you suggestions for making your presentation even better. (See page 359 in *Write Ahead* for tips to follow when you deliver your speech.)

Editing / Checking for Style and Correctness

- Check for spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization errors. Have a trusted classmate or adult check your report also.

✳ If you've planned your presentation carefully and practiced it enough, giving the presentation should be a positive experience. You may, in fact, find that adding graphics makes presenting a speech or report much easier.
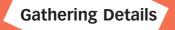
Writing Guidelines

Interactive Report

You can create a multimedia report that someone can look at on his or her own computer. This type of report usually has links that the person can click on—that's why it's called an interactive report. The link may lead to more text, a sound or video clip, or some other kind of computer file. The following guidelines will help you prepare this type of report.

Prewriting / Choosing a Topic

- Begin with a report or speech you have already written or with a plan for one that you will write. Make sure the topic interests both you and your audience.

Gathering Details

- Look for pictures in your software program or on the Internet that relate to your topic. You may also create and scan in pictures.

Writing Preparing the Report

- Prepare a storyboard that describes what will be shown (or heard) on the computer screen for each click of the mouse. (See page 360.6 for a sample storyboard.) Each main slide in your report should have the following:
  - a main idea;
  - an image you've created, found in your software program, or downloaded from the Internet;
  - links to more information about that same idea; and
  - "navigation buttons" that enable the user to go back and forth between screens.
- With this type of presentation, remember that your audience is on their own. They are probably seeing this report for the first time and must find all of the information you've included. Use fonts that are simple to read, and make the link buttons easy to identify.

Revising Improving Your Report

- Go through your entire report to make sure it works.
- Be sure your slides contain all the important information in a logical order and are connected with transition words.

Editing Checking for Style and Correctness

- Check for spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization errors.

Multimedia Presentation Storyboard

Here is the storyboard that Dan Cortez prepared for a multimedia presentation to accompany his speech. (See page 358 in *Write Ahead* for the model speech.) He will be reading his speech as he shows his computer slides.

The Long
Drive
(title page)

Traffic/weather problems can make me late for school.

Maria drives 3 hours from Mexico to Texas to get a good education.

Maria and her dad, American citizens, live in El Paso during the week.

Maria lives with her mom and siblings in Mexico on weekends.

Other students who illegally cross the border risk their lives to go to school here.

It makes me feel lucky to attend this school. (the end)

Interactive Report Storyboard

Here is a storyboard that Dan Cortez drew for an interactive multi-media presentation based on his speech. (See page 358 in *Write Ahead* for the model speech.) Since Dan will not be present when his report is viewed, he has to include more information from the speech. He links related details to the main ideas.

The Long Drive (title page)

It takes up to 20 minutes—8 minutes more than usual.

She gets up at 5:00 a.m. every Monday to make the drive.

Sometimes she waits more than an hour to cross the border.

Traffic/weather problems can make me late for school.

Maria's father stays in Texas, working to support his family.

Maria wants to get ahead, so she doesn't complain about traveling hours to school.

Maria and her dad, American citizens, live in El Paso during the week.

Maria drives 3 hours from Mexico to Texas to get a good education.

Maria feels lucky to go to high school as a U.S. citizen.

Maria lives with her mom and siblings in Mexico on weekends.

Some of these students are caught by the Border Patrol.

Other students who illegally cross the border risk their lives to go to school here.

About 400 people die every year trying to cross the U.S./Mexico border.

It makes me feel lucky to attend this school. (the end)

The blue boxes show the information added to the original slides.