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MEDT 8464  
Using Web 2.0 Tools

Activity:

I completed this project in conjunction with seventh grade language arts teachers. The language arts teachers wanted their students to produce a publishable piece of writing. They wanted to focus on narrative writing, and they wanted to work on the steps on the writing process with the piece of narrative writing that the students selected. Having some familiarity with Tikatok, a web-based book publishing service, I suggested the site as a way to integrate technology into the writing process and to provide students with an opportunity to have a book printed professionally.

Before coming to the media center, the students worked for several days in class writing a story about an important event in their lives. The teachers worked with the students on revising and evaluating their writing. Once each student had a suitable draft of a story, the teacher scheduled a day to come to the media center.

During their time in the media center, I showed the students how to use Tikatok, a website that allows students to create books. The students login to the site, and add their text to each page of the book. The students could either illustrate their books themselves or provide photographs that would later be scanned and inserted into the book. The students worked on creating their books on Tikatok for three days. The teacher scanned photographs and illustrations so that the students could insert those images into their books.

Next, the students used class time to continue their work on the revising process. Now that their writing was in a digital book form, the teachers assigned partners to work together. The partners read through each other's books and made suggestions for changes. Tikatok also allows the teacher to see the books so that she could make changes. During Fall Break, the teachers looked at their students' writing to make sure that the books were appropriate for publication.

Once the books were ready for publication, the students shared their books through Tikatok's website so that they could view each other's books. Students were also offered the opportunity to bring to purchase a hardcover copy of their book that would be professionally printed by Tikatok (the price of each book was \$15). Parents were also able to login and see their child's book before purchasing a printed copy.

Georgia Performance Standards:

**ELA7W2.** Engages readers by establishing and developing a plot, setting, and point of view that are appropriate to the story (e.g., varied beginnings, standard plot line, cohesive devices, and a sharpened focus).

**ELA7W4.** The student consistently uses the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate writing.

**ELA7LSV2 b.** Organizes information to achieve particular purposes and to appeal to the background and interests of the audience.

## About Tikatok

- The address for Tikatok is [www.tikatok.com](http://www.tikatok.com).
- Joining and using Tikatok to create books is free.
- Members may purchase hardback or paperback versions of their books for a fee.  
There are reduced prices for large orders. Regular pricing begins at \$16 for hardback books and \$13 for paperbacks.
- Members may use story templates and StorySparks (idea generators), or they may create books from scratch.
- When writing a book, members enter their text into a blank digital book.  
Members may then upload photographs or scanned images of illustrations and insert them into their books.
- The story editor offers a variety of options for customizing books, including the option to change fonts and colors on their books.
- After completing the story, Tikatok members may share their book with selected friends or with all members of Tikatok in the Tikatok gallery.

The screenshot shows the Tikatok website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Sign In", "Start a Book", "Join Now", and "Help". Below this is the Tikatok logo and the tagline "Imagine a Story. Create a Book." with a "Learn more..." link. The main content area features a large image of a young girl holding a book titled "Fish Flocks & Sunkan Ship". To the right of the image, there is a section titled "Capture Your Child's Imagination...In a Book" with three options: "Create" (original story), "Transform" (hardcover, softcover, or PDF), and "Share the Memory" (buy a kind book). A "Join Now" button is prominently displayed. Below this, there are two sections: "Creative Corner" with a "Start Your Own Book" button and "Gift Cards for Books" with pricing for hardcover, paperback, and PDF eBooks. A "See All" link is provided for the gift cards.

Sign In | Start a Book | Join Now | Help

**Tikatok** Imagine a Story. Create a Book. [Learn more...](#)

**See Inside!**  
Preview this book

**Capture Your Child's Imagination...In a Book**

**Create** Your child writes and illustrates an original story. (You can help a little.)

**Transform** Tikatok turns the story into a hardcover or softcover book, or PDF. You decide.

**Share the Memory** Buy your child's one of a kind book and share with family and friends.

**Join Now**

**Hardcover Book** Hardcover from \$16

**Softcover Book** Softcover from \$13

**PDF eBook** PDF eBook only \$2.99

**Creative Corner**

**Start Your Own Book** ...Or Use Our StorySparks™

- Use our templates
- Upload your own drawings & photos

Kick-start your imagination with StorySparks, our fun collection of interactive story templates

**Gift Cards for Books**

- \$25 (1 hardcover book)
- \$35 (2 paperback books)
- \$50 (2 hardcover books)

[See All](#)

## Report

I selected Tikatok as my Web 2.0 for this project because the teachers were looking for a tool to help them publish their students' work, and I had some familiarity with Tikatok through a course I took this summer, Internet Tools, Resources, and Issues.

Tikatok saves the school system money because this service is completely free. Some teachers publish their students' work by using report covers or the school's comb binding machine. Though these resources have minimal cost associated with them, Tikatok is free. Students who wish to purchase a hardback version of their book do so at their own expense, and PTSO has funds available for students who wish to purchase a book but are financially unable to do so.

Students are impacted by the use of Tikatok because they have the opportunity to use technology with which most are unfamiliar, which means they are able to develop their technological literacy skills. The novelty of the technology helps keep them engaged, and the ability for the teacher to access their work means that they receive timely feedback on their writing. Students are also impacted by the opportunity to make their work available to a wider public than just their classmates.

There was no negative feedback on the use of Tikatok for this particular project, but parents could potentially complain about the cost involved in purchasing a copy of their child's book. To that, I would respond that there are funds available to students who would like to purchase a book but are not able to do so. There is also potential for parents to worry about their children's safety while

using a Web-based tool. In response to concern about security, I would explain that Tikatok is a safe tool, designed for use by children. Tikatok protects members' privacy, and students' work is only accessible to others if they allow their work to be published to the Tikatok gallery. Even if a child wants his/her work to be published in the Tikatok gallery, that work is only accessible by Tikatok members, not by anyone using the Internet. In addition, Tikatok never publishes students' names. If parents still had concern, I would encourage them to read Tikatok's user agreement and privacy policy and to explore the site.

I would encourage administration to allow use of Tikatok by directing them to the site. Tikatok makes information about privacy and security readily available to those who are interested. Fortunately, the technology department is agreeable to unblocking blocked sites with an explanation of how the site is valuable to students.

This first time of using Tikatok, we ensured equity in access by doing all of the computer work at school. Students were not expected to access Tikatok at home, though they may have had to do some writing at home if they did not finish at school. If I repeat this project in the future and there is not sufficient time to allow each child to complete the project during class time, I would ensure equity of access by reminding the students that the media center is open late on Wednesdays and Thursdays. In addition, students may access the computers in the media center as early as 7:00 each morning by attending the school's morning study program. In addition, students may use the computers at the public library. Finally, I would allow students to use the computers in the media center during break times or free times in class if they needed additional time.

