

Critically Informed Dialogic Activity

Course: CMDI 1040: CMDI Foundations

Topic: Adobe Express Photo story / Multimedia Production Guide

Activity Learning Objectives:

- Build a webpage using Adobe Express
- Prepare a webpage for a professional journalistic multimedia/photo story

General Overview of Dialogue Activity:

This activity is designed to move beyond a purely technical introduction to Adobe Express by incorporating reflection and dialogue into the learning process. Rather than treating multimedia production as a set of tools to follow step-by-step, the activity encourages students to think about how storytelling choices, such as visuals, layout, and text, shape meaning and influence audience interpretation.

The purpose of this activity is to help students connect their personal understanding of storytelling with shared discussion and collaborative learning. By engaging in structured dialogue, students can compare perspectives, recognize differences in interpretation, and reflect on how their own choices influence the stories they create.

Dialogic practices are used in this activity to create a more interactive and reflective learning environment. These practices help students move from individual reflection to peer exchange and group discussion, ultimately supporting deeper understanding of both multimedia production and storytelling.

Structure of Activity:

The activity begins with a short individual reflection, followed by pair discussions and small group exchanges. Students then begin working on Adobe Express while continuing informal dialogue with peers about their design choices.

Throughout the activity, students are encouraged to ask questions, compare approaches, and reflect on how their choices shape meaning. The activity concludes with a whole-class sharing session where students explain one design decision and receive feedback.

Dialogic practices used include individual reflection, pair discussion, small group dialogue, and whole-class sharing.

General Overview of Dialogic Practices

Protocol 1: Individual Reflection

Stage I Prompt: Group Beginnings: Forming and Building Relationships

When you think about multimedia stories you have seen online, what makes them engaging or meaningful to you?

Justification:

This protocol provides a starting point for students to reflect on their own experiences before engaging with others.

Strengths:

- Encourages self-reflection
- Builds confidence before group discussion
- Activates prior knowledge

Challenges:

- Most students may not respond
 - A few others may say one or two sentences
 - Reflection may remain surface-level
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Protocol 2: Think–Pair–Share

Stage II Prompt: Exploring Differences and Commonalities in Experiences

How do your personal preferences or experiences shape what you find effective in a multimedia story? How might others see it differently?

Justification:

This protocol allows students to explore similarities and differences in perspectives through structured peer interaction.

Strengths:

- Encourages participation from all students
- Builds interpersonal connection
- Expands understanding through shared perspectives

Challenges:

- Unequal participation within pairs
 - Students may avoid disagreement
 - Limited depth if rushed
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General Overview of Dialogic Practices

Protocol 3: Small Group Dialogue

Stage III Prompt: Dialoguing about Controversial “Hot” Topics

Can multimedia storytelling ever be neutral, or do design choices always shape meaning?
What responsibility do creators have when telling a story?

Justification:

This protocol introduces critical discussion about interpretation and responsibility in storytelling.

Strengths:

- Encourages critical thinking
- Promotes engagement with different viewpoints
- Connects discussion to practical work

Challenges:

- Some students may dominate discussion
 - Others may hesitate to share
 - Discussion may become surface-level without guidance
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Protocol 4: Whole-Class Reflection

Stage IV Prompt: Action Planning and Collaboration

How will you apply what you learned today to improve your Adobe Express project?

Justification:

This protocol connects discussion to action by encouraging students to apply insights to their own work.

Strengths:

- Encourages synthesis of ideas
- Reinforces learning outcomes
- Builds shared understanding

Challenges:

- Uneven participation
 - Time constraints
 - Some students may disengage
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General Overview of Dialogic Practices

Facilitator Move 1: Asking for Themes

Justification:

- To implement both visual and verbal modes of engagement while demonstrating multimedia production
- To create a visual representation of storytelling elements (e.g., visuals, layout, text) discussed in class and to share it properly on Canvas.
- To build a collective understanding of effective multimedia storytelling

Implementation:

- One way to implement this is by using PowerPoint during the recitation lecture on Adobe Express, where key themes (such as visual-text alignment, narrative flow, and audience impact) are highlighted on slides as students observe the process of building a webpage step-by-step
 - Another way to implement this is by asking students to share what they notice during the on-screen demonstration (e.g., “What stands out about this design choice?”), and then writing these themes on the PowerPoint slide, whiteboard, or shared document to create a collective list
 - As themes are identified, the class will analyze them together by discussing what they reveal about effective storytelling, what might be missing, and how different design choices could change audience interpretation. These themes can also be revisited in relation to students’ own projects to deepen critical thinking
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Facilitator Move 2: Calling for Responses

Justification:

- To create a mode of critical engagement as students apply multimedia storytelling concepts in practice
- To encourage students to articulate and reflect on their design choices while connecting course concepts to their own work a brief justification for using the facilitator move (1-2 sentences)

Implementation:

- One way to implement this is during the live, on-screen demonstration of Adobe Express, where students are asked to respond to questions such as: “*Why might this design choice be effective?*” or “*How might an audience interpret this differently?*” This encourages real-time engagement rather than passive observation
- Another way is to call on students while they are working on their own webpages and invite them to share their design decisions, prompting them to explain how their visuals, text, and layout contribute to their story