Introduction

What is digital publishing?

Digital publishing is simply a tool or platform that allows you to publish your content digitally. Some examples are podcasts, multimedia presentations and digital portfolios.

Digital publishing is highly engaging for students and provides endless possibilities for creativity, the opportunity to share their work with a wider audience and learn technological skills in an authentic context.

There are many digital platforms and apps that can be used to present students' work. As these constantly change, they have not been referred to in this resource. This chapter focuses on the generic skills and practical support that students will need in order to get started. A great deal of effort goes into students' work before it is ready to be published and many basic principles apply whether work is presented by hand or using technology.

Digital publishing empowers students to express their ideas, develop critical thinking skills and connect with the world beyond the classroom.

Other benefits include:

- Encouraging collaboration, social skills and peer support
- Digital publishing formats provide many opportunities for students to work together and to connect with people outside the classroom. Students can learn from each other and feel supported
- Creating opportunities for feedback
- When students receive authentic feedback from classmates, friends, family and a wider audience, it makes their efforts feel purposeful and valued
- Highlighting editing skills
- When students publish their work to a wider audience, motivation is increased to ensure it is correct
- Fostering self-esteem and confidence
- Learning new skills and having their work published for an authentic audience builds students' pride and confidence in themselves.

Podcasts

The word 'podcast' is a portmanteau word from the combination of 'iPod' and 'broadcast'. Podcasts are like radio on demand, and often involve in-depth interviews or information about specialist topics. They provide an authentic way for students to connect with people and learn about different topics. Podcasts can be created easily by recording onto a device if sound-mixing equipment is not available. Students can plan short podcasts (three to five minutes) and build up to longer ones over time. It is important for students to listen to a number of different types of podcasts and analyse the features of them before they create their own.

eBook Students can use the Podcast planner BLM to plan the podcast.

Podcast planner

Podcast name ....

Team ....

What is your topic?	Will it entertain, inform or persuade?
Who is your audience?	How long is it?

Structure
How will you structure and organise it? Will you follow a script or will it be a conversation or an interview?

Is it a one-off programme or part of a series?
If it is part of a series, what will the other episodes cover?

Content
What information are you including, e.g. research, stories, personal experiences?

Is anyone else involved apart from the podcast team, e.g. technology support, interviewee?

Audio
Music and sound effects can be used at the beginning (intro) and/or at the end (outro), to move between segments of the podcast or at dramatic or funny moments.
What music or sound effects will you find or record?

eBook If the podcast is an interview, students could use the Interview planner BLM to prepare for the interview.

There are many engaging and authentic reasons to make a podcast. Here are some ideas.

School topics

- weekly classroom news broadcast
- document a class trip or camp
- a sports report that interviews school teams and coaches and shares team results
- record a class discussion or debate
- interview a student about their cultural background
- interview a student who was born in another country about what life was like there
- a student who speaks another language could teach other students some basic language from their culture – greetings, numbers, colours, etc.
- make a thank you podcast for teachers or school helpers at the end of the year
- interview people at a special event like a cultural day, school production or a book week
- research and share the history of the school
- interview school staff about their jobs – principal, grounds staff/caretaker, office staff, cleaners, cafeteria staff, etc.
- interview a parent who has an interesting job or a particular skill or interest
- older students create podcasts of stories for younger students
- students share their best jokes or riddles
- 'Top Ten' – students vote for their top ten things, e.g. books, movies, games, websites, toys, songs, sports, holiday spots
- hobby podcast – students share their own interests
- interview a group in the school – gardening club, environment group, student leaders, etc.
- travel report – students share interesting destinations they have visited

Reading and writing

- book chat – this could be a book club response
- research the history of a word or words
- record a Readers Theatre play
- students record a myth or legend from their own culture
- record reading a book to create an audio story
- students record their own writing

Other curriculum areas

- interview an expert in a particular field
- interview people in the wider community
- report on a study or inquiry topic
- interview a parent or grandparent about their own days at school
- discuss an issue affecting the school, local community or country, or a global issue. This could be a topic that affects all these situations, like recycling.

Blogs

A blog is an online journal where students can share their experiences, ideas, opinions and reflections in short diary-style entries or posts. Posts are displayed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent post appearing first. Depending on the way the blog is set up, readers can also add comments. Blogs can be published by individual students, groups or classes.

Here are some ideas for different types of blogs.

A single project blog

- a learning blog, where students write about what they are learning and reflect on it
- a project where students create a product, such as a model, piece of art or multimedia presentation
- documenting a trip or camp
- a special school event such a production, sports day or cultural celebration

A special interest blog

- a skill like cooking, woodworking, gardening or a type of craft
- a hobby (e.g. gaming, cultural dance group) or a sport
- a cause (e.g. conservation, animal welfare or fighting poverty)

A review blog

Students could review:

- podcasts
- video games
- apps
- sports games
- movies or TV shows
- books.