

Video Projects made with *Microsoft Photo Story*

Repeat Offenders Activity 4

Microsoft's *Photo Story* is a user friendly program that is available for free from the Microsoft web site (<http://www.microsoft.com/photostory>). This program does not use a video camera or digital video recordings. Instead *Photo Story* creates the video from digital image stills, such as digital photographs. The program can also add narration, which will require a microphone connected to your computer. The *Photo Story* will turn your still pictures and sounds into a video at the end. The program will create video files which can be played using the *Windows Media Player* or any other video player with the capabilities of playing .wmv files (see Figure 1).



http://www.drscavanaugh.org/digitalcamera/photostorytelling/storytelling_PhotoStory.htm

Figure 1: Video story project being played with *Windows Media Player*.

First decide on your storytelling theme, topic, or project. Then you will need to either collect pictures to be scanned or go out and take some pictures

with your digital camera. Find or take pictures that you feel help portray the story's elements or characters. Whoever is planning on doing the storytelling should write out a draft script to use later as narration.

If you don't already have it you will need to download and install *Microsoft Photo Story* from their web site (<http://www.microsoft.com/photostory>). Start the *Photo Story* program and select the option to create a new project.

Creating the video using the *Photo Story* program is a five step process.

Step 1: Import and arrange your pictures

Import your pictures from the folder into the *Photo Story* project by clicking on the **Import Pictures...** button. Browse to the folder where you have saved your pictures. You can select multiple pictures by holding down the **Ctrl** key as you click with your mouse on the icon. Once all the pictures desired have been selected, click the **OK** button to bring the pictures into the project (see Figure 2).

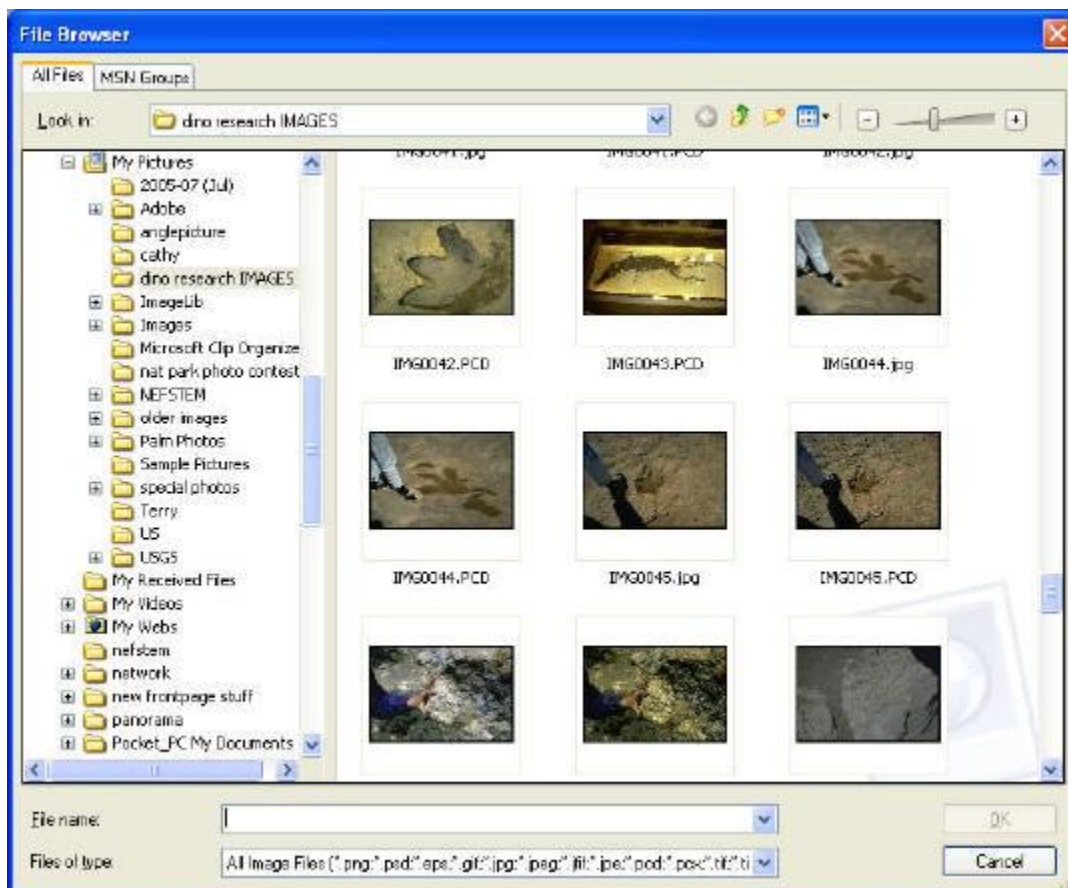


Figure 2: Importing pictures into the *Photo Story* project.

Now begin to arrange the pictures in the order that you want to appear in the final video, by dragging the picture thumbnails and rearranging them in the sequence that is desired (see Figure 3). *Photo Story* has picture tools that will allow you to adjust the color, rotate the picture, and do basic image editing. You can also change the picture by selecting from the **Edit** and then **Add Effect** menu.




Figure 3: The picture adjustment and arrangement frame.

Once you have your pictures arranged the way you want them, click on the **Save Project ...** button and then click on the **Next** button.

Step 2: Add a titles to your pictures

Once you have your pictures in the project you can add titles, quotes, or other statements over the pictures (see Figure 4). Type in what you want on the screen in the text box. The titles can be placed in different locations on

the screen using the option buttons. You can also change the color, font size, and font type by clicking on the **Select Font** button (). Click on different pictures to add titles to them.

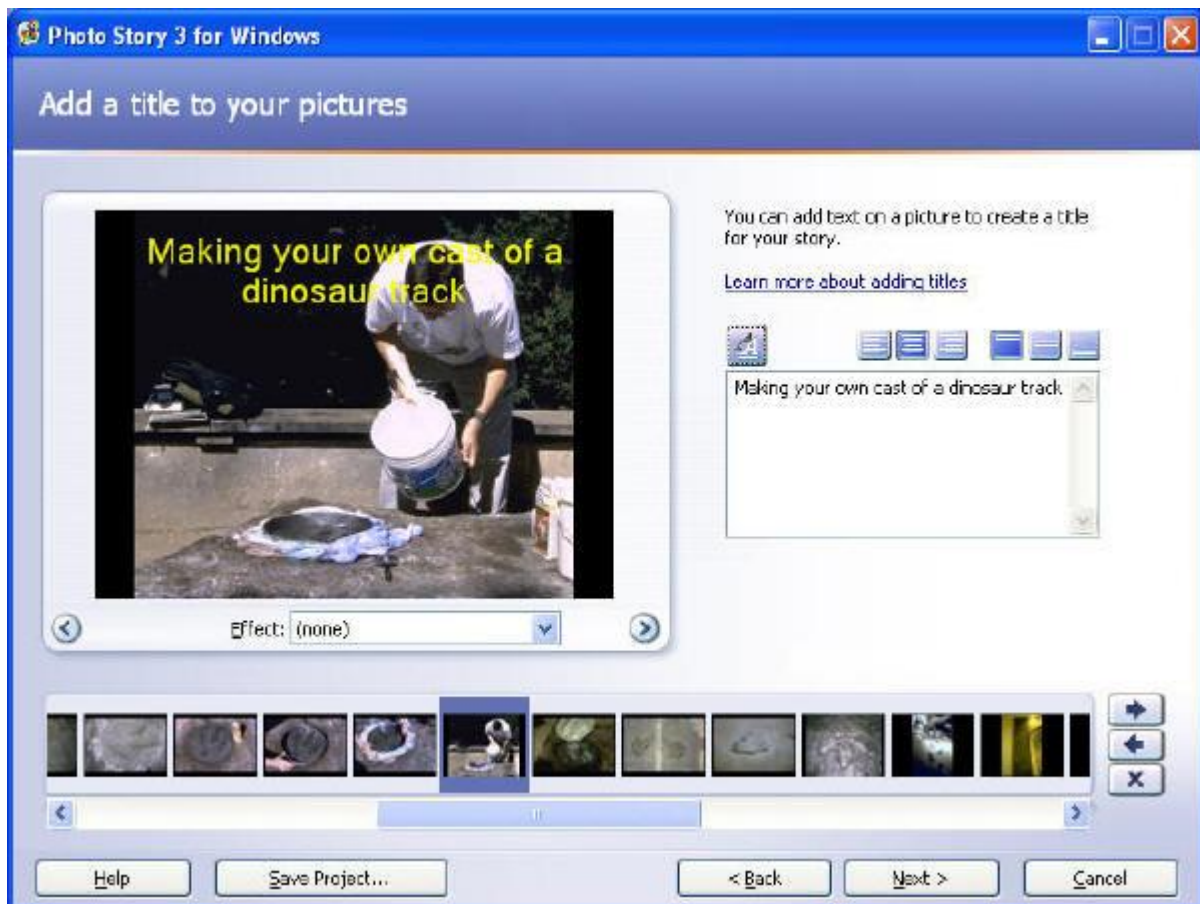



Figure 4: Adding title overlays to pictures.

Once you have all the titles created, click on the **Save Project ...** button and then click on the **Next** button.

Step 3: Narrate your pictures and customize motion

In this step you can add your own audio track and decide how you want your pictures to move and change. Each picture can have its own audio recording and individual movement.

Movement: By default each picture is displayed for five (5) seconds before changing to the next. You can change this amount for any picture by clicking on the **Customize Motion...** button (). You can also use this

option to change the way the picture is displayed. Here you can adjust how much of the picture to display at the start and at the end. The computer will then create a motion effect between the two settings. For example you could have the picture start out wide and then zoom into a part of the picture (see Figure 5). To change the size or position of motion, first click in the box to **Specify start and end position of motion**, then click on either the left or right picture. Adjust the size by clicking and dragging the corner boxes to the desired size. Adjust the position by clicking and dragging the picture box to the desired location. The video display will be a smooth zooming transition from the wide angle to the small focus. Select each picture and change the motion or duration if desired. The second tab here allows the user to change the transition effect between pictures. The default is a cross fade, but each picture can have its own transition from the fifty available options. Click on the arrows near the bottom of the window to change between pictures. Once you have your motions and transitions set, click the **Close** button to return to the project window. Now would be a good time to click on the **Save Project....** button.

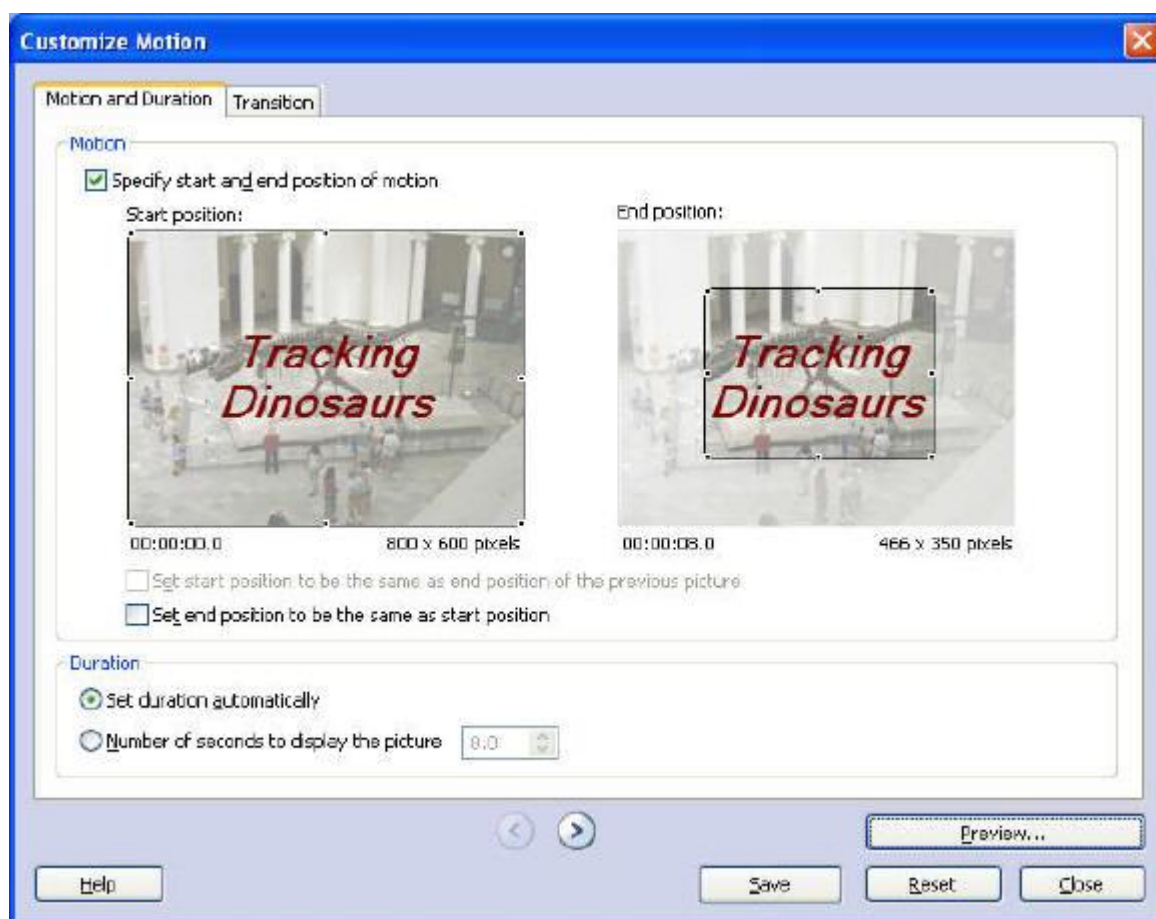
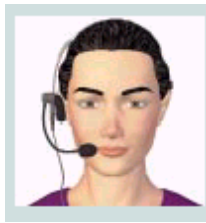


Figure 5: Setting the motion of the screen action.

Audio Narration: You should first write out your script and then figure out which part of your script goes with which picture. A good strategy for your script is to either type in or copy from a document the text that you want to read into the notes space provided, or you can use a storyboard sheet with your own script.



When speaking into a microphone it is better not to speak directly into it, but instead across it (this avoids the popping noise of air hitting the microphone). The best kind of microphone in this case is one which is worn, such as a head microphone. Place the microphone so that it is a thumb width to the side of the mouth.

When you are ready to record click on the picture to which you want to add your narration and then click on the **record** button (see Figure 6). When you have finished adding the narration for that picture click on the **stop** button. If you make any mistakes you can click the **Delete narration** button and start again for this picture. The display time will adjust to your recording time, so you will not need to go back to the Customize Motion section to change the amount of time for the picture. Click on a different thumbnail picture or use the arrows under the large picture to change to another picture and add a new narration.

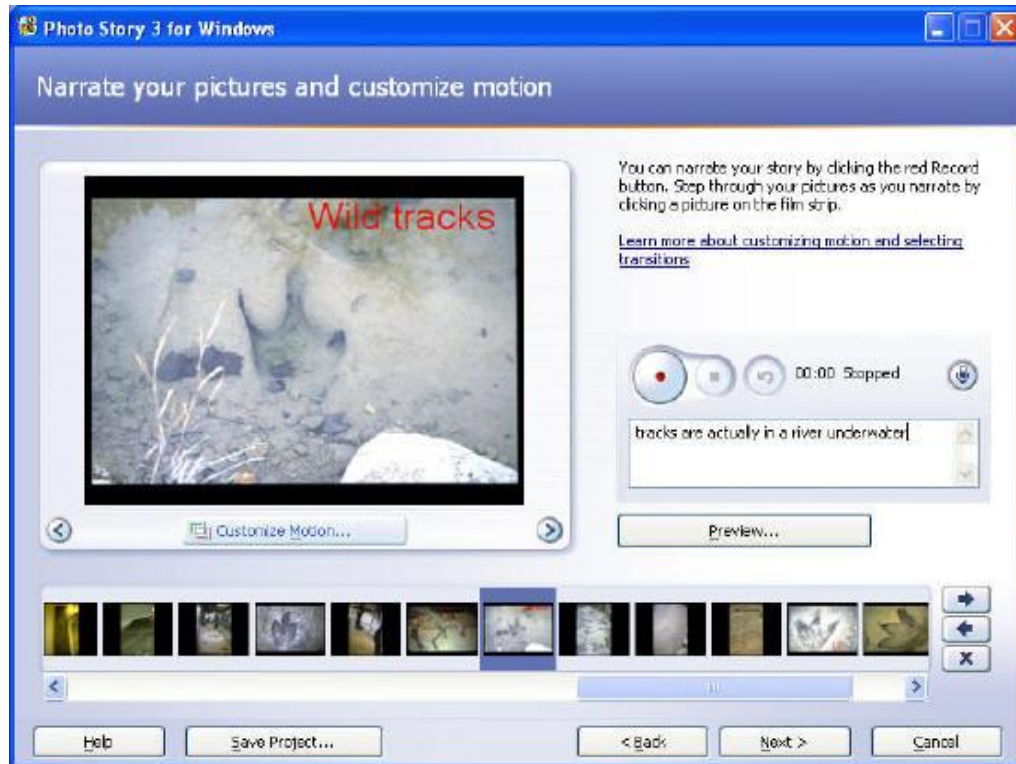


Figure 6: Adding audio narration to the project.

Once you have the movements, transitions, and narrations set, save your project and then click on the **Next** button.

Step 4: Add background music.

You can now add background music that plays during your story, by either selecting from music saved on your computer or by creating new music (see Figure 7). Similar to the movements, transitions, and narrations, it is possible to have a different piece of music play for each picture or for a group of pictures. Click on the **Select Music** button to choose a piece of music saved as a digital file from your computer, a network folder, or the Internet.

Clicking on the **Create Music** button allows you to adjust or customize specialized prerecorded music by selecting the genre, style, bands, mood, tempo, and intensity of the music. I prefer the Create Music option, which allows the music to be more tailored to the story. Click on the first picture of the project and then click on the music button. Try playing with the options, making adjustments; until you have the background that you feel goes with your story, then click the **OK** button (see Figure 8). The music will now

spread across the entire project. You should now adjust the volume setting of the background music. I would suggest that you set it at half or lower so that it doesn't interfere with the narration. If you wish, you can now click on another picture and set the music for that one.



Figure 7: Adding background music to the project.

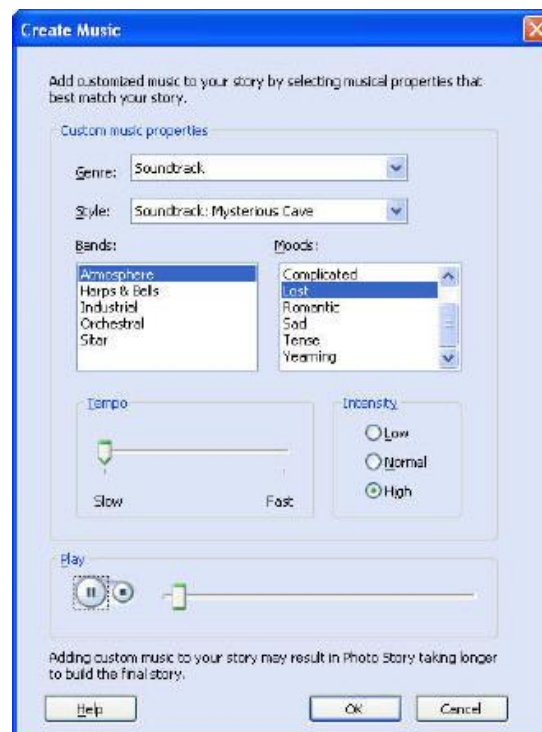


Figure 8: Creating background music by selecting genre, style, mood, tempo, etc.

Click on the **Preview** button to see how your movie will look and sound.

Once you have the background music set, save your project and then click on the **Next** button.

Step 5: Save your story

It is now time to save your *Photo Story* project file as a movie (*.wmv). At this stage the program will take the project file (.wp3) and create a separate movie file. While *Photo Story* gives you a variety of options I would suggest that you use the **Save your story for playback on your computer** (see Figure 9). You will need to go into the **Settings...** to select one of the built in options. I would suggest that you pick from the Profiles 1-4 for computers, understanding that the larger screen setting will cause the movie to have a larger file size. If you are planning to create a Video CD or DVD and play your stories on a television you should choose those options. You will then need to import the movie into a DVD/CD Video creation program to actually burn the videos onto a disc. The smallest file size would be the one for e-mail, but this one would also have the least clarity.

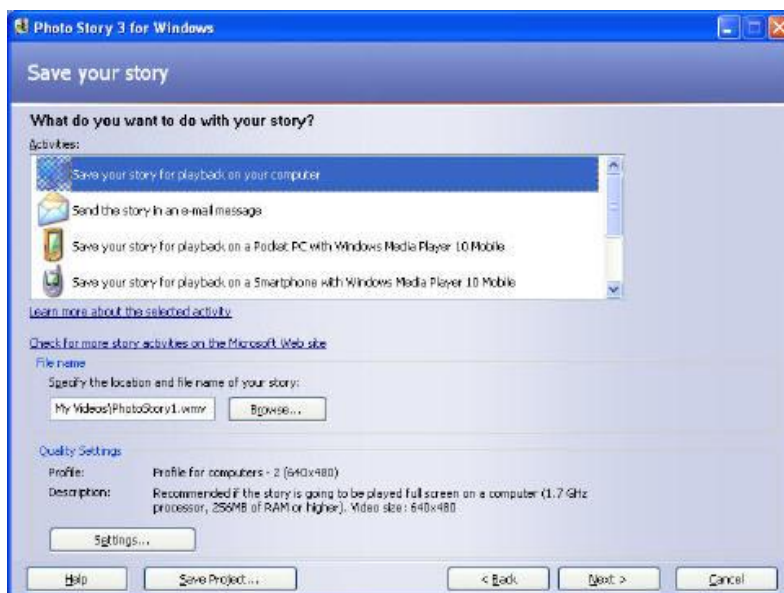


Figure 9: Selecting the file setting and location of the created video file.

Click on the **Next** button now to start the building process, in which the program takes your project and turns it into a movie file. Once this building process is completed the program will give you the option of watching your finished video or starting a new project. A three minute project, with eleven pictures, music, and narration, set for a 640 x 480 pixel display, took up

only 3.45 Megabytes of space, meaning that you could fit about 180 little movies of this size on a CD. You can play your story's movie using Window's *Media Player* (see Figure 1), *Real Player*, or *QuickTime* (with plug-in), which are all available for free.

Save your file in two places... On My Documents and again in the Middle School Shared files that Mrs. Nichols sets up for the class.