



Creating a Smart Phone App: Encouraging Students to Have a Conversation with their Parents About 9/11

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Grade level: 6

Number of class periods: 3

Objective

How can we understand the perception of 9/11 by 6th graders who were not even born on 9/11? Do the students have information about the events passed down to them by their parents? Is there a way technology could enable kids to have that sensitive and private conversation with their parents? In the lessons, students brainstorm ways that an original app could help them learn about 9/11. They plan ways to market their app, and develop an oral presentation before an audience of professional App designers to convince them why their app is addresses an unmet need better than any existing app.

Skills developed: Innovation/Creativity, Problem solving, Design thinking

Common Core Standards

Comprehensive Common Core Alignments at end of lesson plan.

- Writing Standards for Literacy in History/ Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 2, 4,
- Language Standards 3
- Speaking and Listening Standards 1, 4, 5

Resources

- [How to build an app for iPhone, iPad, Android, or Windows](#)
- [Education Resources, 9/11 Tribute Center](#)
- [Teach + Learn, National September 11th Memorial and Museum](#)
- [App Brainstorm Worksheet](#)
- Writing materials, drawing materials (easel, markers, ruler) and PowerPoint presentation software

Preparation

Students are given explanations and examples of *User Stories*. Students are asked to think about:

- What they each know about 9/11.
- Learning more about 9/11 by asking their parents or grandparents.
- Questions they want to ask about 9/11: *Who, What, and How?*
- How creating a phone app could help them learn more about 9/11.
- Whether they want to share their private conversation. Would they want to share it with friends? Would they want to share it with a museum?

Activity

Need Assessment

Students assess the need for people in their generation to learn more about 9/11 and determine how an app could be useful. Students are assigned with one partner (pre-determined) and with that partner they are to choose one question and answer the user cases for the question. Working with one partner allows minimal volume in classroom and allows each student's opinions to be listened to and discussed with their partner.



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Students receive paper to answer questions and write other ideas that come to mind as they discuss with their partner. The students think about how an iPhone app can help them learn about 9/11.

1. What are the use cases for a camera phone?
 - a. How can students have an opportunity to record their parents' 9/11 story?
 - b. What format would the recording take? Audio? Video? Length of story?
 - c. What questions would I ask my parents about 9/11?

Pairs of students share with the class their answers to the questions.

Brainstorming Marketing Potential of the App

Students learn the 5 important P's for creating a product and beginning brainstorming what their product will be. They think about why students haven't talked about 9/11 with their parents and discuss how they think an app would be helpful in encouraging the conversation. They think of ways to get other students interested in making and recording these conversations with their parents. Students talk about whether or not they would like to share these conversations over social media.

The teacher directly teaches the students about the importance of marketing

- *Marketing* is a way of presenting your business to your customers. To communicate the value of your product or service clearly, you create a *marketing plan*. What are the different communication channels you would use to encourage students to use this app?
- Every marketing plan has five main *strategy* areas, sometimes referred to as the "Five P's."
 - People*
 - Product*
 - Place
 - Price
 - Promotion*

* Students receive a slip with the following questions regarding the 3 key P's in Marketing - People, Product, and Promotion. They will complete their charts independently.

They each fill in boxes with answers to the following: Which people will use their 9/11 app? What will their app do that other apps do not already do? How will they promote their app?

Making the Design for the 9/11 Story App and a Final Marketing Plan

Students are placed in groups of 4 consisting of the previous pairs and each group is responsible for a completed Marketing (App) Plan and the design of their phone app by the end of the lesson. Students use their creativity and innovation thinking in creating the display of their app.

Questions for students to address:

- Does your app have a logo? What does it look like?
- What will the home page look like?
- What will the other pages look like?
- Do you want these stories to be immediately shared?
- Where would you like to archive these stories?



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- Who should be allowed to listen to them?
- What can we learn from the 9/11 stories our parents tell us?

Assessment/Reflection

Students present their idea for the 9/11 app and the Marketing Plan to an audience (of app design professionals if possible). They will receive feedback on the strength of their argument about why this app would be liked by other students and for the originality of their ideas for the design of the app.

Common Core Alignments

This lesson can be adjusted for use with other grade levels. It aligns with the following standards:

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/ Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes

Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

- Students will be writing short informative and explanatory texts about the nature and purpose of their app. They will be informing the assessment panel about what makes their app unique and how it can be used to educate people about September 11th.

Production and Distribution of Writing

Standard 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- While students' main assessment will be their presentations, students must write in order to address the task of designing an app and students must explain all relevant details of their app including its appearance, features, details, expected main uses and outcomes.

Language Standards 6-12

Knowledge of Language

Standard 3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- Students will be making a "pitch" to a panel of app designers and must show knowledge of language when presenting their app and when listening to professional feedback.

Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12

Comprehension and Collaboration

Standard 1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Students will be engaging in collaborative discussions with their partners and with their larger groups in order to build on one another's ideas and develop a stronger app. Collaborative discussions will help students whittle down their ideas and focus on what essential components their app should include.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard 4: Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

- Students will be presenting their app ideas to an audience which will preferably include app designers. In order to do this, they will need to have extensively researched and planned their app and will need to put their ideas and suggestions in a logical order and accurately describe the app they are trying to sell. They



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will also need sufficient facts and details to promote their app and to explain how that app can stimulate learning and engagement about 9/11 where ordinary conversation fails.

Standard 5: Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, and sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

- Because of the nature of the students' tasks, they will need to become extremely familiar with multimedia. They will need to show and demonstrate how different aspects of multimedia will function in their app (video, sound, pictures and possibly music if appropriate) and will be expected to include that multimedia in their presentation.