

Timing: 1 to 2 hours

Level: Ages 15 and up

# Introduction to interactive media

## Activity Overview

Interactive media consists of a combination of graphics and images with video, audio, or animation. In this activity, introduce your students to examples of interactive media so they can understand its role and purpose. Students will learn how to evaluate and analyze uses of interactive media and understand how viewing interactive media on a variety of screen sizes and devices may impact the experience. They will also learn how to apply principle of design and usability when creating interactive content.

**Note:** Portions of this activity align to the Adobe Certified Associate objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam(s) are referenced with the following format: <sup>1.1</sup>

## Activity Objectives

### Design Skills

- Applying design principles
- Understanding the role and purpose of usability

### Research and communication skills

- Researching examples of interactive media
- Evaluating and analyzing various interactive media
- Understanding the role and purpose of interactive media
- Analyzing effective use of interactive media

## Project Assets

- *Worksheet:* How to evaluate interactive media <sup>1.6, 5.2</sup>
- *Guide:* Design principles for interactive media <sup>1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 4.1</sup>

## Background preparation resources

[Technical and content information](#)[ISTE NETS\\*S Standards for Students](#)[Adobe Certified Associate objectives](#)

## Activity Steps

1. Explain that interactive media consists of a combination of graphics with video, audio, or animation. Show students examples of interactive media on a variety of screens and devices, including those using Flash. Discuss how designers use interactive media for different kinds of user experiences. Some use cases to discuss include:
  - Navigation systems
  - Integrated user interface
  - Animated screen elements
  - Interactive media
  - Interactive games
2. Discuss the purposes for implementing content as interactive media and how interactive media can enhance a user experience.<sup>1.2, 2.1</sup> Discuss if and how the experience of interacting with interactive elements is impacted when viewed in different screen sizes and on different devices. You might include the following:
  - Incorporating audio and video
  - Providing transitions
  - Providing consistency
  - Showing continuity
  - Illustrating change over time
  - Getting multiple layers of information from one part of the display
  - Enriching graphics representations
  - Visualizing three-dimensional structures
  - Attracting attention
  - Creating interaction
3. Distribute the *Design principles for interactive media* guide <sup>1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 4.1</sup> and introduce how to apply design principles when creating interactive media. Things to discuss include:
  - User-centered design
  - Purpose of project and reasons for using interactive media
  - Technical requirements of using interactive media for a project
  - Applying design principles to the content
  - Designing with consistency

**Note:** If this is the first time your students are being introduced to design principles, use the *Design principles* activity prior to this step.
4. Introduce the concept of usability and discuss how good usability is defined as: easy to use, quick to learn, and providing an overall satisfying experience. A well-designed, usable application aims to enhance the user experience by elevating an application's perceived efficiency, elegance, and clarity.
5. Discuss why analyzing and critiquing interactive media for design and content are an important part of the design process and informing the design decisions. Discuss how assessing what works and what doesn't work can help them as they develop their own applications. Show students a variety of interactive media and help them identify how each serves a specific purpose and functionality.<sup>1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3</sup> Discuss the following:
  - What is the purpose of the interactive media?
  - What is its functionality?

- Who is the audience?
  - How will the audience view the media? On desktop or laptop computers? On mobile devices (tablet computers or smartphones)?
6. Distribute the *How to evaluate interactive media* worksheet.<sup>1.6, 5.2</sup> Put students into pairs and assign each pair two interactive media projects that are similar in topic and purpose so students can compare content, design principles, and ease of use. Questions to guide their review might include the following:
- Does the project convey an intended message and goal?
  - How do the effects and visual content enhance or detract from the overall message and goals of the project?
  - How does the text and audio content enhance or detract from the overall message and goals?
  - How well do the effects and visual content reach the intended audience?
  - How relevant is the content to the overall project into which it is placed?
  - How well does the text and audio content reach the intended audience?
  - How does the design create consistency?
  - How long does it take the content to load?
  - Is the content easy to use? Is it easy to navigate? Can you easily find what you are looking for?
  - Does the application look the same in different browsers, on different operating systems, and on different devices? Is the application responsive to different screen sizes and form factors?

## Assessment

	<b>0 – Does not meet expectations</b>	<b>3 – Meets expectations</b>	<b>5 – Exceeds expectations</b>
Analyzing interactive media	Absent or incomplete.	Students understand when the use of interactive media is effectively used to reach the purpose, goals and audience. Student’s evaluation details how the content meets intended goals, audience, and purpose; ways the techniques employed contribute to the overall message of the project; and how the application employs principles of design and usability.	Students understand and can clearly articulate when the use of interactive media elements is effective and can identify when these elements are not effective. Student’s evaluation details how the content meets intended goals, audience, and purpose; ways the techniques employed contribute to the overall message of the project, and how the content is usable to all audiences. Student evaluations also include a design evaluation identifying which design principles help achieve the intended goals of the project.

## Background preparation resources:

- For more teaching and learning resources on the topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>

### Flash interactive media

- Waterlife is a preview for a documentary film similar to the cinematography and storytelling from the film. Especially interesting are the navigations, which mimic the motion of water: <http://waterlife.nfb.ca/>
- We Choose The Moon was designed to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Apollo 11 Lunar landing by developing an interactive re-creation of the event: [www.wechoosethemoon.org/](http://www.wechoosethemoon.org/)
- Interactive media awards: <http://www.interactivemediaawards.com/>

## ISTE NETS\*S Standards for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS\*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

### ISTE NETS\*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

1. Creativity and Innovation  
Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:
  - a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.

## Adobe Certified Associate Exam Objectives

### Adobe Certified Associate, Interactive media objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for interactive media content.
- 1.2 Identify interactive media content that is relevant to the purpose of the media in which it will be used (websites, mobile devices, and so on).
- 1.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.
- 2.1 Identify best practices for designing interactive media content for desktop and mobile browsers, applications, games and HD video.
- 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of design elements and principles.
- 2.3 Identify general techniques to create interactive media elements that are accessible and readable.

- 4.1 Make interactive media content development decisions based on your analysis and interpretation of design specifications.
- 5.2 Identify techniques for basic usability tests.

### For more information

Find more teaching materials for using Adobe software in your classroom on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>.



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