

Shutterfly  
*Photo Story*  
*for iPad App*

Pilot  
Project  
Findings



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# Shutterfly *Photo Story for iPad* App Pilot Project Findings

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## Research Premise:

Shutterfly is the market leader in personalized digital photography products and services for the U.S. consumer market. Shutterfly believes its *Photo Story for iPad* app can provide personalized learning opportunities for students in every grade level across every subject area. Shutterfly needed empirical – as well as anecdotal – evidence that *Photo Story* is an effective instructional tool for K-12 teachers before it invested heavily to market *Photo Story* in education.

To obtain this empirical and anecdotal evidence, Shutterfly contracted an education research team to first conduct a series of focus groups, and then, between March and June 2014, conduct a pilot project with fifty K-8 classroom teachers from Arizona, South Carolina, Texas, California, Washington, Virginia, and Indiana.

The purposes of the pilot project were to:

- Test the assumptions that *Photo Story* is a valuable and easy-to-use classroom tool to help students build and present knowledge in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies;
- Determine what supports Shutterfly would need to offer teachers to guarantee the successful implementation of the *Photo Story* app in K-12 classrooms; and
- Determine ways Shutterfly could improve *Photo Story* for students.

## K-12 Education Need

With the proliferation of iPads in K-12 classrooms, teachers need apps (tools) that leverage this powerful, new technology and can help them create active, participatory, authentic classrooms that (a) meet the needs of students with multiple learning styles, and (b) align with Common Core or State Standards. In addition, teachers are responsible for (a) enhancing students' literacy skills, (b) providing project- and problem-based learning opportunities, and (c) differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Shutterfly believes that *Photo Story* provides many unique features to meet these needs:

- The ability to add 30-second audio messages to accompany each page of the book;
- A drawing feature (Doodle) that allows students to draw on an image/photo or a blank page to illustrate a story or report;
- QR codes that provide easy digital sharing;
- A multimedia format featuring photos taken by individual learners;
- A design format in which learners control all of the content; and
- The ability to generate a published physical book.

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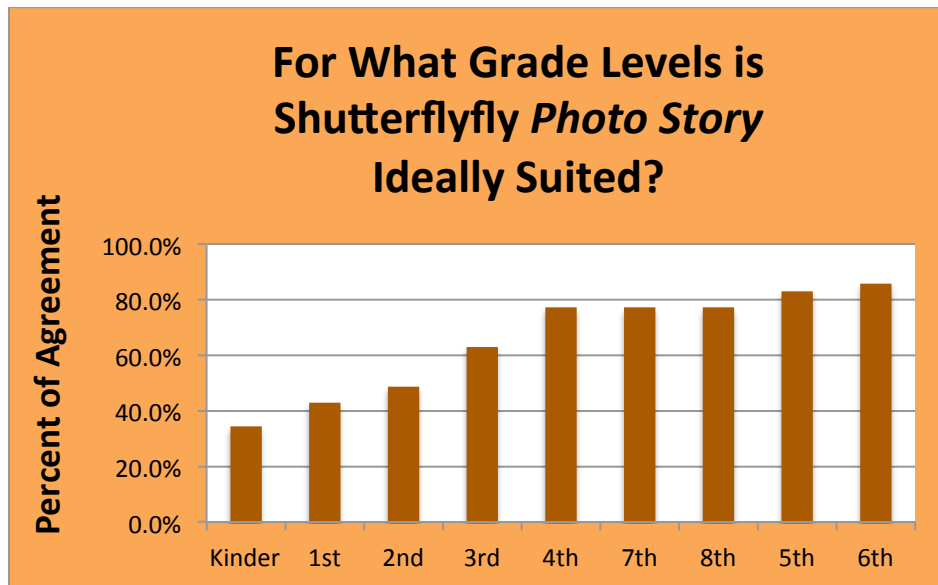
## Pilot Project Findings

Seventy-two percent of the K-8 teacher participants responded to the survey and used the *Photo Story for iPad* app with their students to create digital and physical books. Seventy-three percent used the iPad 2, and the other 27% used the iPad 3, 4, Mini or Air. Teachers chose the subject area/s in which they incorporated *Photo Story*: 89% used *Photo Story* in English Language Arts, 24% in Social Studies, 14% in Math, and 14% in Science. A majority chose to create their own lessons rather than use the initial limited selection of lessons provided by Shutterfly's team of curriculum specialists.

Teachers introduced *Photo Story* to their students in a variety of ways, 69% visually demonstrated the app, 67% let students play with the app, 50% discussed the features of the app, and 42% showed students the demo video. After using *Photo Story* to create their books, teachers rated ease-of-use at 7.06 on a scale of 1 to 10. Although many found the app easy to use, some reported difficulties with (a) the size of the text boxes, (b) saving files, and (c) the audio features of the app. Some of the K-2 teachers reported that they created group or class books rather than have the students use the app to create individual 20-page books.

When asked if using *Photo Story* with their students was valuable, all but one teacher responded positively. Teachers cited that *Photo Story* (a) engaged and excited students, (b) helped them with sequencing and content review, (c) gave students a voice, (d) gave students broad audiences for their published works, (e) improved both their writing and technology skills, and (f) gave them a treasured keepsake in the form of a physical book.

The K-8 participating teachers indicated that Shutterfly *Photo Story* was appropriate for all of their students, as indicated by the graph below:

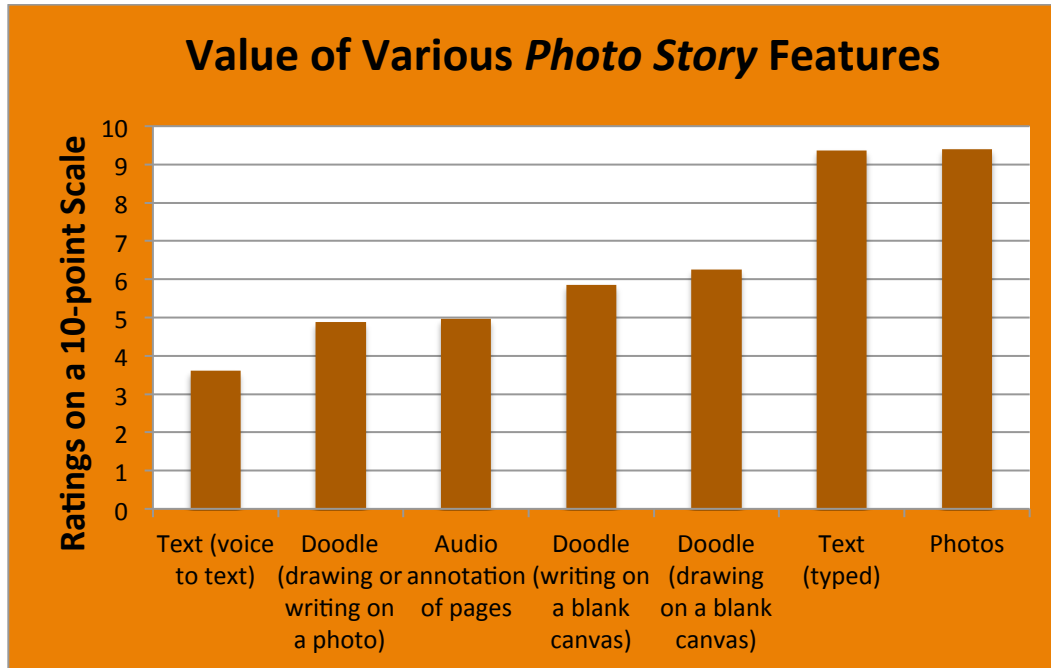


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Although the pilot teachers were predominately 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, they indicated that Shutterfly *Photo Story* would also be appropriate for high school students.

Using a 1-to-10 scale, teachers identified that the two most valuable features of Shutterfly *Photo Story* were the text tool and the ability to add photos to books. The value of all features is summarized in the graph below.



Of the projects that used photos, 94% were taken with the iPad, 54% were downloaded from the Internet, and 37% were photos stored on Shutterfly. The majority of projects used a combination of photo sources.

After creating digital books with *Photo Story* on their iPads, 100% of the participating teachers chose to have Shutterfly print the books for their students [provided as a benefit that Shutterfly offered during the pilot project]. Regarding the quality of the book, teachers rated the paper on a 1-to-10 scale at 9.45, the cover at 9.26, the binding at 9.19, and the photo quality at 9.16, with an overall score of 9.29. On the same scale, teachers and students rated the value of the physical book at 9.65. Reasons for this extremely high rating included:

- The excitement, appreciation, and pride of students regarding their published books;
- The excitement, appreciation, and pride of parents regarding their children's published books;
- The published books provided visual evidence of the efforts of each student; and
- The published books were a great motivation for students.

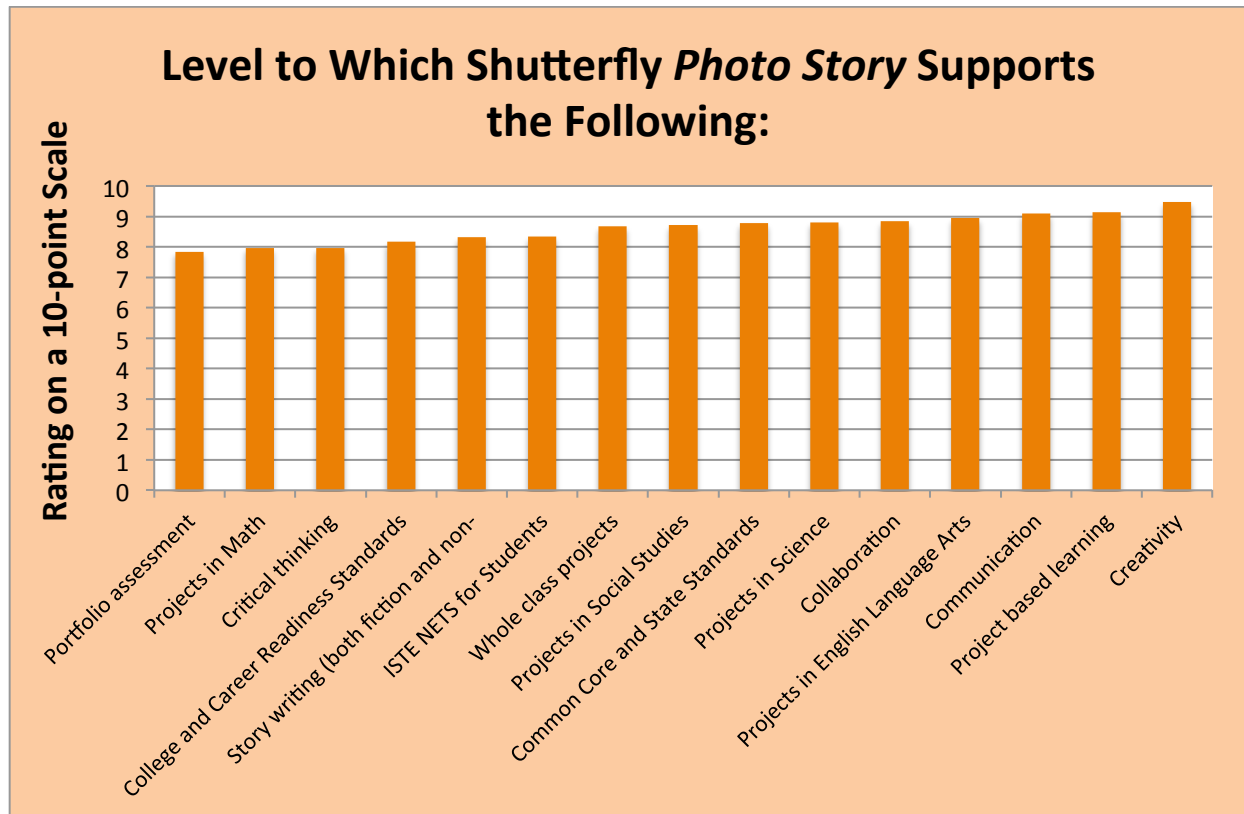
## Shutterfly *Photo Story* for iPad App Pilot Project Findings

When asked about funding for published books after the pilot project was over and Shutterfly no longer offered free publishing for student books, all but one respondent indicated that published books were such an integral part of the success of the pilot, they would seek future funding.

Teachers rated their likelihood of using *Photo Story* in their classrooms again as 8.53. Their assessment of the *Photo Story* app as a student tool for project based learning and storytelling (on a one-to-ten scale) was 8.38, with individual ratings as shown below:

7.84	Portfolio assessment	8.34	ISTE NETS for Students	8.84	Collaboration
7.97	Projects in Math	8.67	Whole class projects	8.94	Projects in ELA
7.97	Critical thinking	8.71	Projects in Social Studies	9.09	Communication
8.16	College and Career Readiness Standards	8.78	Common Core/State Standards	9.13	Project-Based Learning
8.31	Story writing	8.81	Projects in Science	9.47	Creativity

Teachers provided overwhelming evidence (7.84 – 9.47 on a 10-point scale) that Shutterfly *Photo Story* would support both Common Core/State Standards and International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) NETS Technology Standards. In addition, it would be useful in Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Math, and would support project-based learning. Finally, it would be an excellent tool to develop creativity, communication skills, collaboration among students, and critical thinking skills.



## **Shutterfly Photo Story for iPad App Pilot Project Findings**

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When asked how Shutterfly should reach out to teachers to make them aware of *Photo Story* for their classrooms, responses included: (a) using social media, (b) advertising success stories, (c) offering online tutorials and face-to-face professional development, (d) providing book samples at open houses or teacher conference events, and (e) offering discounts on the cost of printing the physical books.

Despite the fact that teachers suggested online tutorials and face-to-face professional development for other teachers, they indicated the importance of support from Shutterfly for themselves as follows:

5.97	Access to comprehensive lesson plans correlated to CCS or state standards by grade level and subject areas	6.73	Additional "How To" video tutorials about features of the <i>Photo Story</i> app
6.16	Webinars on how to use <i>Photo Story</i> , highlighting lesson ideas tied to CCS or state standards	6.74	Brief video overviews of lessons featuring example student books created in other classrooms
6.45	Access to lesson ideas tied to CCS or state standards by grade level and subject areas		

This apparent discrepancy is possibly explained by the fact that the pilot participants received training in the use of *Photo Story* as a condition of participation in the pilot project.

Teachers believe that the best approach to marketing *Photo Story* to other teachers is to emphasize the brand – Shutterfly – and cite the number of times the app has been downloaded from the App Store (currently 900,000+ times). Secondly, teachers thought it was an asset that the Shutterfly *Photo Story* app creates an archive of student progress and achievement that can follow the student throughout their academic career. Thirdly, teachers suggested that Shutterfly offer professional development for educators that will provide the training and resources needed to help students engage with the app quickly and easily. Teachers appreciated the dozens of grade specific, teacher-created lesson plans tied to Common Core/State Standards guaranteed to engage and excite students in any subject and support teaching new standards. Teachers also stated that Shutterfly *Photo Story* unleashes the power of the iPad to transform student learning.

Finally, when asked how Shutterfly could improve the ability of the *Photo Story* app to support student learning, respondents cited the following:

- Allow users to control the size of the text boxes;
- Set default for a 8x8 softcover 20 page book;
- Integrate with files from Google Drive;
- Address saving issues;
- Provide clearer SAVE and LOGOUT buttons;
- Allow for collaboration among groups of students;

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- Improve the editing process for greater ease of use;
- Have each text field automatically start with a capital letter;
- Simplify the set up of student accounts; and
- Simplify the ordering process for teachers.

Since determining ways Shutterfly could improve *Photo Story* for students was one of the purposes of the pilot project, Shutterfly is addressing many of these teacher recommendations in current and future updates of the *Photo Story* app.

## Summary

Shutterfly *Photo Story* is an app (tool) that can help teachers create active, participatory, authentic, standards-based learning environments addressing multiple learning styles. The pilot project also provides empirical and anecdotal evidence that Shutterfly *Photo Story*:

- Engages, excites, and motivates students;
- Enhances students' literacy and technology skills;
- Provides project- and problem-based learning opportunities;
- Allows for differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners;
- Is appropriate for use at all grade levels and all subject areas;
- Provides students with broad audiences for their published works;
- Provides students and their parents a sense of pride regarding their published books; and
- Provides a tool that encourages collaboration, communication, and creativity.

Teachers can download the *Shutterfly Photo Story for iPad* app for free from the App Store and visit [www.shutterfly.com/photostoryclassroom](http://www.shutterfly.com/photostoryclassroom) to see video tutorials and lesson plans.

## Researchers:

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