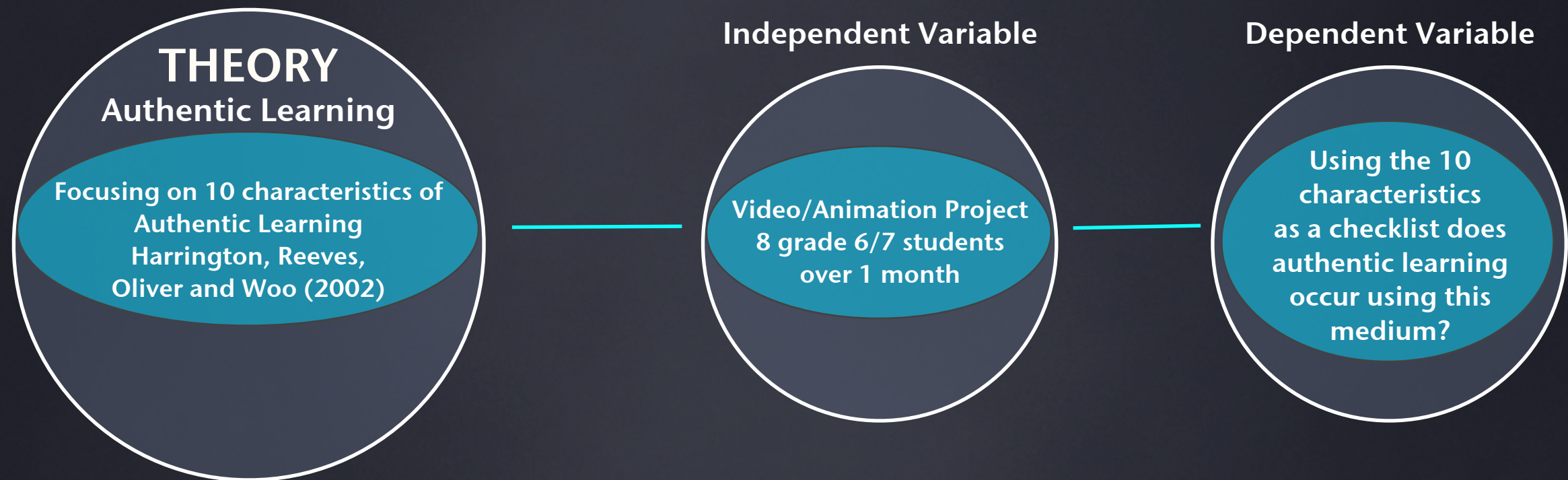# Research Question:

The objective of this study was to examine whether authentic learning can be achieved in a k-12 classroom through digital storytelling using the mediums of digital video and animation.

Digital Storytelling is quite simply the art of storytelling in a traditional way using contemporary media such as computer generated graphics, text, music, video and animation to tell a personal story.

Authentic Learning focuses on real-world, complex problems and their possible solutions. It is real life learning… It encourages students to create a tangible, useful product that they can share with the world and it is within the process of the task that students have a meaningful shared outcome that connects with the real world.

Theoretical Framework

Digital Storytelling: An authentic approach to engage student learning

THEORY
Authentic Learning

Focusing on 10 characteristics of Authentic Learning Harrington, Reeves, Oliver and Woo (2002)

Independent Variable

Video/Animation Project 8 grade 6/7 students over 1 month

Dependent Variable

Using the 10 characteristics as a checklist does authentic learning occur using this medium?

Joel Campbell, 2014

No.	Characteristic of authentic activity	Supporting authors, researchers and theorists
1.	Have real-world relevance	(Lebow & Wager, 1994) (Cronin, 1993) (Oliver & Omari, 1999) (Brown et al., 1989; Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990a; Jonassen, 1991; Resnick, 1987; Winn, 1993; Young, 1993)
2.	Are ill-defined, requiring students to define the tasks and sub-tasks needed to complete the activity	(Sternberg, Wagner, & Okagaki, 1993) (Lebow & Wager, 1994) (Bransford, Vye, Kinzer, & Risko, 1990) (Young, 1993) (Brown et al., 1989; Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990a; Winn, 1993; Young, 1993)
3.	Comprise complex tasks to be investigated by students over a sustained period of time	(Lebow & Wager, 1994) (Bransford, Vye et al., 1990) (Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990b) (Bransford, Vye et al., 1990; Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990b; Jonassen, 1991)
4.	Provide the opportunity for students to examine the task from different perspectives, using a variety of resources	(Sternberg et al., 1993) (Bransford, Vye et al., 1990) (Young, 1993) (Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990b)
5.	Provide the opportunity to collaborate	(Lebow & Wager, 1994) (Young, 1993) (Gordon, 1998)
6.	Provide the opportunity to reflect and involve students' beliefs and values	(Young, 1993) (Myers, 1993) (Gordon, 1998)
7.	Can be integrated and applied across different subject areas and lead beyond domain-specific outcomes	(Bransford, Sherwood et al., 1990; Bransford, Vye et al., 1990; Jonassen, 1991)
8.	Are seamlessly integrated with assessment	(Reeves & Okey, 1996; Young, 1995) (Herrington & Herrington, 1998)
9.	Create polished products valuable in their own right rather than as preparation for something else	(Barab, Squire, & Dueber, 2000) (Gordon, 1998)
10	Allow competing solutions and diversity of outcome	(Duchastel, 1997) (Bottge & Hasselbring, 1993) (Young & McNeese, 1993) (Bransford, Sherwood et al., 1990; Bransford, Vye et al., 1990)

(Reeves, Herington, Oliver, 2002)

Method

- One month qualitative case study.

- Eight, grade 6 & 7 students.

- Two, 2 hour sessions per week.

- Students explored digital storytelling by creating a stop motion animated film.

- Myself and the teacher facilitated the project by assisting and offering instruction with the process and the technology used.

- I acted as a participant observer.

- Observations were made through written notes, video and photography.

- Data was collected from semi-structured interviews with the participants at the beginning of the project and surveys at the conclusion of the project.

- Surveys with the teacher and Child & Youth worker were also utilized to gain different perspectives.

- Using the data gathered from the interviews, notes, survey questions and video footage I attempted to find any connections relating back to the 10 characteristics to see if authentic learning was in fact taking place during the project.

Findings:

• Data collected indicated that throughout the project
there were identifiable elements of authentic learning taking place.

Some of the data collected from the student and teacher interviews indicated:

• Sustained involvement and investigation over the course of the project.

• Pride of ownership and value in the finished product.

• A strong importance on collaboration with fellow students was expressed.