

StoryVisualizer Software

StoryVisualizer software in the classroom

Students learn to use writing to describe real-life and fictional experiences and events, express and support their opinions, and demonstrate an understanding of the subjects they study. They learn to appreciate that one of the key purposes of writing is to communicate information to an external—sometimes unfamiliar—audience in a simple and easily understandable manner. They gradually learn to adapt the style and content of their writing to suit the task at hand. Students also develop the capacity to acquire knowledge through research and to respond analytically to literary and informative sources. To achieve this level of competence, students must devote a significant amount of time and effort to writing and writing exercises.

Many students read fluently, but find it difficult to write. They have ideas, but lack the written language skills they need to create a beginning, follow a sequence of ideas and then draw their writing to a logical conclusion. These students like to draw pictures to support and illustrate their writing and communicate their ideas.

The StoryVisualizer software enables students to combine words and images to resolve problems in storytelling that they may not be able to resolve using words alone. Teachers can aid this learning process by providing the necessary help and constructive support. The software includes a variety of layout templates, designed to provide a suitable working platform for students depending on their academic level. For example, the “comic strip” template allows students to use a sequence of images supported by text to tell a story. Using this template, students also learn to transfer specific elements directly into text-only documents. For example, a text from a word bubble can be used inside quotation marks. Templates can also be customized to suit user preferences and abilities.

The StoryVisualizer software provides students with a new publishing medium. The software makes it easy to write, print, publish, and share stories with other students. The documents can also be e-mailed to parents or posted on websites.

The StoryVisualizer software provides the following benefits:

- Great visual representation of knowledge
- Easy-to-remember graphical representation of key information
- Encourages students to think, create and write
- Provides a perfect route for writing dialogue
- Encourages students with little interest in writing
- Helps organization through storytelling and storyboarding
- Provides visual images to give meaning to a story or topic
- Develops creative and higher level thought processes
- Enhances composition technique through visual-verbal connections
- Improves reading, writing and thinking skills
- Serves as an assessment and evaluation tool



The StoryVisualizer software enables you to document your StoryStarter stories. The simple and easy-to-use graphical user interface makes it easy for students to create high-quality stories for printing or sharing with others.

The StoryVisualizer software offers a variety of comprehensive features that allow students to further develop their stories using imported images, webcam capture, backdrops, clip art graphics and an easy-to-use text tool. The software simply enhances the user's creativity and helps them to realize their creative writing skills.

System requirements

Windows

- 2.33GHz or faster x86-compatible processor
- 512MB of RAM available
- 128MB of graphics memory
- Microsoft® Windows® XP (32-bit), Windows Vista® (32-bit), Windows 7 (32-bit and 64-bit) or Windows 8 (Desktop Mode, Metrostyle not supported)
- Broadband Internet connection (for downloading software)
- Minimum Screen Resolution: 1024 x 768 pixels

Mac OS

- Intel Core™ Duo 1.33GHz or faster processor
- 512MB of RAM available
- 128MB of graphics memory
- Mac OS X v10.6, v10.7 or v10.8
- Broadband Internet connection (for downloading software)
- Minimum Screen Resolution: 1024 x 768 pixels

How to install StoryVisualizer

PC and Mac version:

Download and install the StoryVisualizer software from the LEGO® Education Resources Online (LERO) website: <http://legoeducation.com/LERO>.

You can copy and install the StoryVisualizer software on multiple PCs/Macs at your school. Please refer to the installation guide also found on the LERO website.

Tablet version:

Find the LEGO Education StoryVisualizer App on your tablet and install it. Run the app by entering your tablet app access code.

For more information about the StoryVisualizer tablet app and your access code, go to <http://legoeducation.com/LERO>.

The tablet version of the StoryVisualizer software has the same overall functionality as the PC/Mac version, but has been specially adapted for the tablet platform. If you have problems using the tablet version, please check the software section of the curriculum pack for guidance.

Change language or check for software updates in PC/Mac version:

To change language, click on “Change Language” in the top menu bar and select a different language.

If you have internet access and a newer version of the software is available, the text “Updates Available” will appear in the top menu bar. Click on “Updates Available” and you will be re-directed to the LEGO Education Resource Online website, where you can see all of the available updates.

 <http://legoeducation.com/LERO>



 <http://legoeducation.com/LERO>

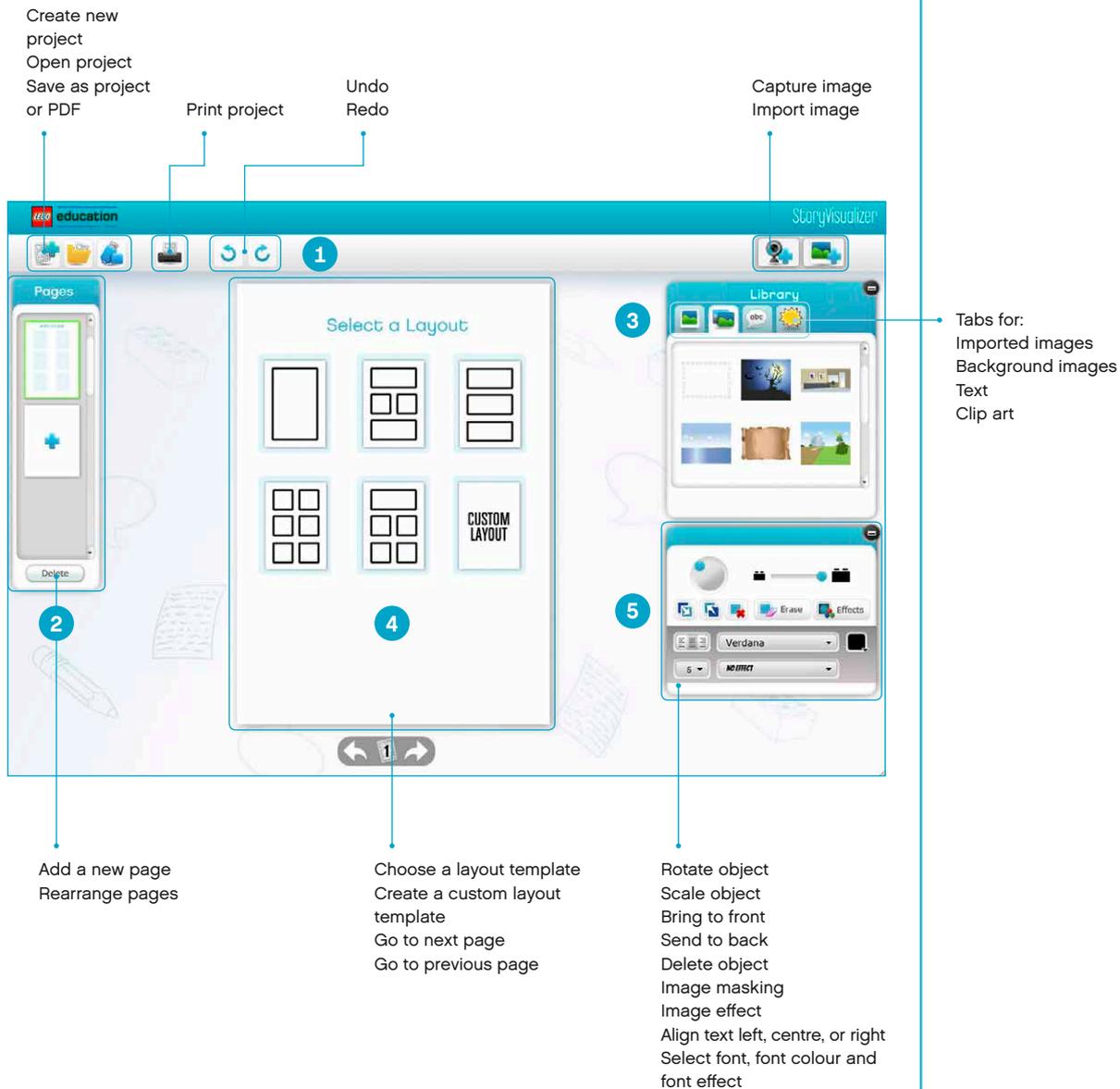


StoryVisualizer software details

Software overview

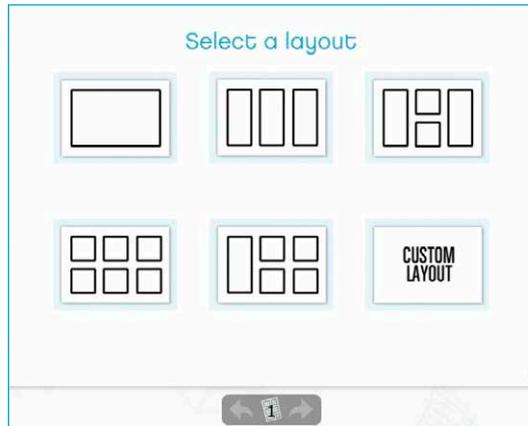
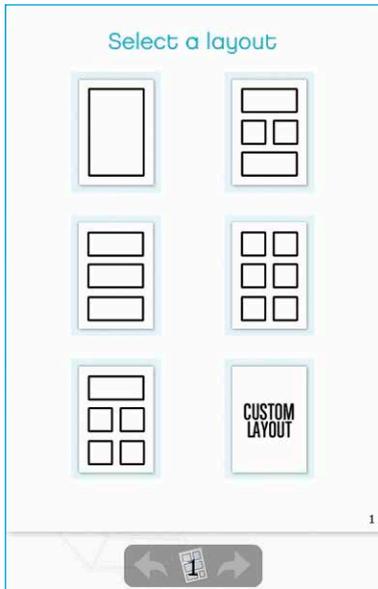
The StoryVisualizer software consists of the following:

1. Top Menu Bar—contains menus for performing tasks.
2. Page Organizer—provides quick access to a chosen StoryVisualizer page. You can also rearrange pages here.
3. Library Area—contains the various StoryVisualizer elements, such as speech bubbles, images, webcam captures, backdrops, and text tools.
4. Workspace—provides a variety of layout templates for story creation.
5. Property Panel—allows you to change properties, such as text colour, size, etc.



Working with default layout templates

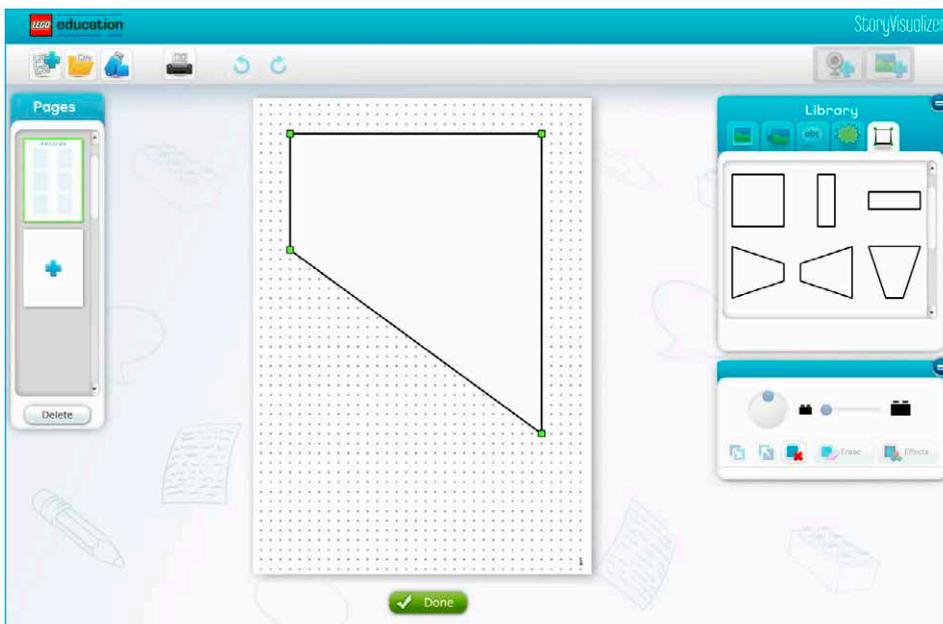
First choose the page orientation (portrait or landscape), and then select a layout by clicking on one of the default layout templates. You can select from default templates or customize your own template. You can use different templates for each page or use the same layout for the entire project.



Click the "Add page" button in the page organizer panel to add a new template page to a project.

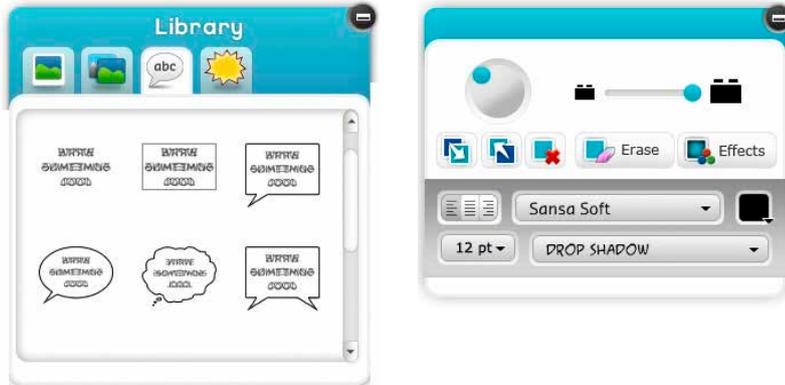
Working with custom layout templates

To create your own template, click the "Custom layout" button in the layout panel. Then drag and drop shapes from the library panel to your default custom template. Click on a shape to activate it and use the green control points to adjust its size and form. It is possible to create multiple templates. Remember to click the "Done" button to accept your customized template. Be aware that it is not possible to edit a customized layout after you have clicked the "Done" button.

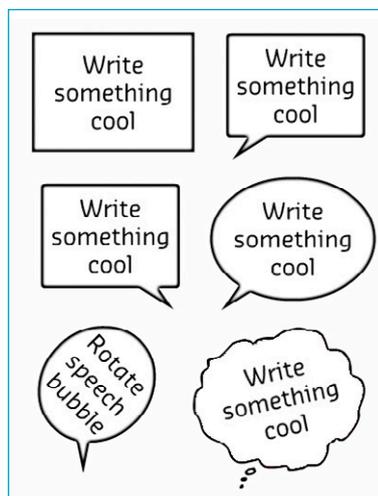


Working with text

Click the text tab in the Library panel. Drag and drop a speech bubble or text box to the workspace. The text "Write something cool" will appear inside the speech bubble. Double-click to edit the text as desired. The speech bubble/text box will automatically adjust in size to fit your text.



Speech bubbles can be moved to any position you want. To move the tail of a speech bubble, move the cursor to the end of the tail and drag the green control point to the required position.



Use the text property panel to:

- Rotate text
- Change text size and font
- Change font colour
- Align text

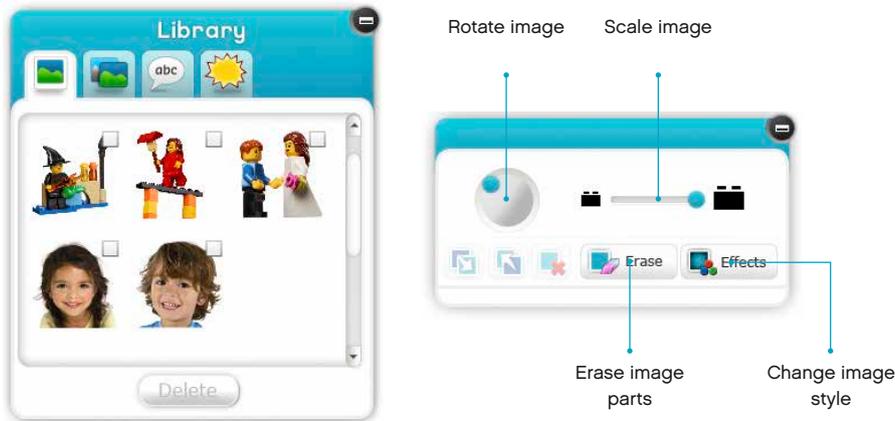
Click the speech bubble tail to reposition the speech balloon.

Text feature examples

Working with images

To add an image to your project, you must first import it to the image library. Click the “Import image” button in the top menu bar and browse the computer’s hard drive for stored images. The StoryVisualizer software will filter the images and only show supported image files. The supported image files are JPEG and PNG.

Drag and drop the image from the “Image library” to the workspace. You can move the image around within the template framework. To delete an imported image, click the check box, followed by the “Delete” button. You can only delete imported images from the image library if they are not used in your project.



Click the image “Effects” button to change the appearance of an image. You can choose from a selection of image style effects.



Click the “Image backdrop” tab to select one of the default backdrop images.



You can choose between different image style effects.

Choose from default backdrop images.

Working with image masking

This option allows you to remove the background from an image. Drag and drop an image from the “Image library” panel to the workspace, then click the “Erase” button to access the image eraser tools.

There are two image eraser tools, a hard round eraser and a soft round eraser. The size of the eraser tools can be adjusted using the slider.

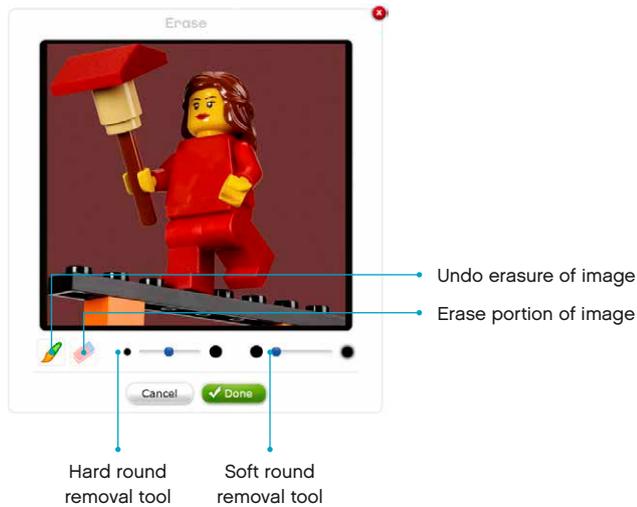


Image masking before



Image masking after

Working with image capturing

This option allows you to grab images directly from an external or built-in webcam. Click the “Capture image” button in the top menu to capture a webcam image.

The first time you click the Capture image button, the StoryVisualizer software will search for available webcams. When the search is complete, you will see a list showing the available webcam sources.



Click the webcam source you wish to use.

You are now ready to take pictures using the selected webcam. Click the “Camera” button to add an image to the image library.

If you want to take more pictures, just click the “Camera” button again. Click the “Close” button to exit the image capture area.

You can now drag and drop the captured images to your workspace and use the tools referred to in the “Working with images” section.



Click on the “Image capture” button

Working with other image devices

You can use a digital camera, a smart phone, or any mobile phone with a built-in camera as an image-capturing device.



If using a smart phone, follow these steps:

- Take a photograph
- Connect the smart phone to the computer
- Copy the image from the smart phone to the computer hard drive
- Click the StoryVisualizer “Image import” button and browse to the folder containing the smart phone image

Working with clip art

Click the “Clip art” tab in the library panel and drag a clip art image to the workspace. The clip art image can be handled in the same way as an imported JPEG or PNG image.



Use the property panel to:

- Rotate
- Scale
- Change style



Saving and publishing

The StoryVisualizer software allows you to save your projects in two different formats. Click the “Save” button to save your project as a StoryVisualizer project file (.LSP) or as a PDF file.

The files will be saved to your hard drive.

Note that you can only re-open StoryVisualizer project files!

If you want to share your project using e-mail, open your e-mail program and attach the saved file to your message.

You can also print your project using the “Print” button in the top menu.



Create new projects or open a project file

To create a new project, click the “+” button in the top menu.

To open a StoryVisualizer project, click the “Open project” button in the top menu.



You can only open a StoryVisualizer project using the StoryVisualizer software.



Use the “Print” button to print your project.



Create, or open a project.

Tips & Tricks

Constructopedia

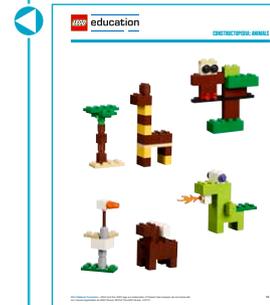
It is recommended students be given quick and easy-to-use ideas for story-building and creating scene structures during the initial stages of the process.

The Constructopedia section contains images of simple models, designed to inspire students and encourage reflection and innovation. It is divided into seven categories for ease of use and to simplify the story creation process:

- Animals
- Characters
- Buildings
- Vehicles
- Indoor
- Outdoor
- Nature

How to use Constructopedia

The images can be printed in full colour, laminated, and handed out to students or groups of students to provide inspiration. Alternatively, the printed images can be hung on the classroom wall as posters to provide inspiration for scene structures and story creation.



After a while, students will start to develop their own ideas, which are often more creative and innovative than anything an adult can produce.

It is a good idea to photograph the students' ideas. These can also be printed and laminated to build a library to provide inspiration to others. This helps promote teamwork and inspiration among students as they communicate and share their ideas.

Backdrops

The ready-made backdrops in the StoryVisualizer software depict common scenes that can be used for multiple story variations. They can be customized to fit a students' scene structure and used during a photo shoot or when working with the software. Backdrops can be printed and laminated and used over and over again.

Ask students to make their own backdrops using the same format. These can also be printed and laminated to build a comprehensive library of backdrop settings.

Hints for photographers

After their presentations, students may want to change their story or modify their scene structures. Students like to have their scene structures photographed before making changes to their creations. Webcams are ideal, but any kind of digital camera is suitable for this purpose. It's a good idea to photograph each scene separately, and in some cases, to take close-ups of structure details.

Involve the students by discussing photographic techniques, such as close-ups, special effects, and angle perspectives. Here are a few examples:

Night effect

Photograph a scene structure in a partially darkened room. Use a dark backdrop or a piece of black cardboard and use a torch for highlighting.

Worm's-eye view

Position the scene structure at a suitable height and take a photograph from below.

Character view

Take close-up photographs of characters, special situations, or outstanding details. This is especially effective for characterisation and analysing.

