



December 2024: Unwrap the Magic: Ohio's Digital Storytelling Extravaganza Spreads Holiday Cheer to Thousands!

Forget sugar plums! Thousands of students across Ohio, New York, and Tennessee this holiday season were treated to a digital feast of heartwarming stories. The Ohio Digital Learning Association's (OHDLA) annual "Holiday Storytelling Extravaganza" transformed classrooms into virtual winter wonderlands, celebrating literacy and community. This year's extravaganza was a collaboration with OCM BOCES in NY and also partnered with the Tennessee Distance Learning Association, reaching 37 classrooms across rural West Tennessee.

For two enchanting days, the air crackled with excitement as administrators, educational leaders, and distinguished readers from across the state shared their favorite holiday stories. Forget passive listening – students were invited to actively participate, engaging with the readers and diving headfirst into the magic of each narrative.

"It's more than just reading a story," explains an OHDLA organizer. "It's about creating a shared experience, fostering a love of reading, and building connections during a time of year that's all about togetherness."

The event's innovative format allowed teachers to tailor the experience for their students, choosing from a diverse lineup of readers and stories offered every half hour. This flexibility meant students could embark on multiple literary adventures, experiencing the joy of diverse voices and narratives.

This year's Extravaganza shattered previous records, drawing in a staggering 187 classrooms from three states and captivating over 3,600 students. This free, collaborative initiative proved to be a resounding success, demonstrating the power of digital tools to bridge geographical gaps and bring the spirit of the holidays directly into the hearts of learners.

"Seeing the students' faces light up as they listened to the stories was truly magical," shared one participating reader. "It's a reminder of the power of storytelling to inspire, entertain, and connect us all."

The OHDLA's Holiday Storytelling Extravaganza is a testament to the organization's commitment to innovative educational practices and its dedication to fostering a love of reading in students across Ohio and beyond. It's a reminder that even in a digital world, the magic of a well-told story can still bring us together, creating lasting memories and spreading holiday cheer.

Interested in Joining or Starting a USDLA State Chapter? Email Erica Bell, State Chapters Chair, at ebell@usdla.org.