

Technology and Literacy

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The instruction of literacy can be enhanced through the use of technology as a teaching tool. The implementation of technology in the classroom should be explored to assess how it can positively assist students in reaching the desired goal of becoming life-long readers. The following are suggested uses of technology in each of the literacy areas.

Writing

The goal of this section is to develop writing skills through mini-lessons, modeling, shared writing, and independent writing. Using technology with writing is an excellent means of stimulating student creativity. Word processors can be used to draft, revise, edit and publish student work. Some scheduling of student computer use may be necessary in most classrooms since the number of computers is usually limited, although schools with computer labs would not experience this obstacle. This scheduling of individual computer usage by students could be established during the Writing & Teacher Conferencing time. When completed, student work published on the computer may be illustrated, made into a book or the file could be saved as a web page and uploaded to the web.

Technology can be an excellent tool for all writing purposes:

- ✓ Narrative writing--telling stories or sharing events with word processing, newspapers created through Publisher
- ✓ Report or informal writing—graph or charts could be included through the use of Excel, interviews which can be enhanced with photos from a digital camera.
- ✓ Functional writing—letters or directions created with word processor, signs created with PrintShop, calendars created through Publisher
- ✓ Producing and responding to literature --stories, poems, songs, evaluating or comparing literature

As children are introduced to basic writing skills as part of the teacher's mini-lessons, technology could be an excellent tool for modeling these skills. These lessons could be conducted on a computer connected to a wide screen TV or to a projector and

viewed by the whole class. If a TV screen is used a dry erase marker could be used on the screen for viewing editing and revising.

Finished writings could be made into "Big Books" either as individual work or a compilation of the entire class' writings. Illustrations for student writing can be created with a WaCom Digital Drawing Board (\$100) that attaches to the computer and allows the child to draw with their tool of choice, the pencil.

Younger children can create rebus stories using clipart and the word processor. The old concept of "Language Experience Charts" would be another means of utilizing technology through teacher modeling. This technique involves brainstorming through posing such questions as:

- How many ways can you....?
- What would happen if....?
- What can we do with....?
- What do you notice about....?

Once the stage is set to stimulate the children's thinking the teacher serves as a moderator encouraging the children to verbalize their thinking as their ideas are recorded on the computer's word processor (the experience chart). The process of writing to record the student's ideas is a key step in helping them make the connection between their spoken words and text. Even though they may not be able to read, every child knows which idea has his/her name appears after on the chart. Experience charts provide the link between the concrete expression of a voiced idea and the abstract representation in print. When completed the chart can be printed in large font so the children can go back to reread it (independently or with the teacher). They may notice their name and other words that have the same letters in them. They may also find words that look the same.

Experience Chart Tips:

- 🔗 Write exactly what each child says — word for word. (Children know when you have changed their words!)
- 🔗 Add simple pictures (called rebuses) to illustrate words on the chart. Then when children go back to read it, they can use the picture cues to help them make meaning out of the print.
- 🔗 Talk as you write. Tell what you are writing, including the punctuation at the end of the sentence. You might say, "*Reggie was so excited by that idea, let's put an exclamation point at the end of the sentence.*"
- 🔗 Point out directionality as you write. "*Where should I start the sentence?*"
- 🔗 Periodically, stop writing and read back what you have written or encourage individuals or the group to read aloud from the chart.
- 🔗 Invite children to add drawings to illustrate the chart. Older children can write their own name and words if they like.
- 🔗 Make a variety of different experience charts throughout the year. You can use them to record children's ideas and predictions, write thank you notes, shopping lists, record memories, write a class newspaper.

Web Resources for the Writing Block:

- *Writing **For** and **With** Students Modeled, Shared, and Interactive Writing*, [http://24.72.1.100/lang/Spring%202001/writing for and with students.htm](http://24.72.1.100/lang/Spring%202001/writing%20for%20and%20with%20students.htm)
- Writing the Write Way, http://www.writingthewriteway.com/article_spelling03.htm
- Alyssa to Zyi: A Classroom Alphabet Book, http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/a_to_z/atoz.htm
- DoodleLoops, <http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/doodle.htm>
- Writing Mini-Lesson Topics for First Grade, <http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/FourBlocks/minilestop.pdf>
- Integrating Technology into Language Arts, <http://208.183.128.3/integrate/laprimary.html>, <http://208.183.128.3/integrate/lamiddle.html>
- Integrating Word into Language Arts, <http://208.183.128.8/cc/la-word.htm>
- Writing Block Conference Log, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/lennette_writing_conference_log.pdf
- Writing Conference Form, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/porzel1_writing_conference.pdf
- Second Grade Silly Rhyme Paper http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_early_sec_silly_paper.pdf
- Silly Rhyme, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_silly_rhyme.pdf
- Writing Assessment Record, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/angie_tsedit.pdf
- Writing Rubric, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/angie_writingrub.pdf
- Writing Mini-Lesson Outline for 2nd Grade, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/outline_for_writing_mini_lessons.pdf
- Writer's Workshop, <http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Atrium/1783/WritersWorkshop.html>
- Making Class Big Books, http://pages.cthome.net/jtburn/big_books.htm
- Dear Teacher Writing Activity, <http://208.183.128.8/cc/templates/dearteach.zip>
- Kid News Sites, <http://208.183.128.3/kidsnews.html>
- Creating Online Classroom Newspapers, <http://208.183.128.3/tutorials/classnews.html>
- All About Me Creative Writing Template, <http://208.183.128.8/cc/templates/allaboutme.zip>
- All About Me Graphics, <http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/Fountain/5616/me2.html>
- Never Books, <http://208.183.128.3/integrate/never/books.html> Template, <http://208.183.128.8/cc/templates/never-book.zip>
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Internet projects which focus on goals of writing skills:

-  The Teddy Bear Project <http://www.learn.org.au/tbear/>
-  Classroom Pet Exchange, <http://208.183.128.8/cpe/index.html>



Guided Reading

The guided reading section provides children the chance to experience a wide variety of literature experiences. The main goal is to improve comprehension using several activities.

Guided Reading strategies can be adapted to the computer and a word processor through starting the reading experiences by using the Internet to anticipate and make predictions about what will be read. Instead of dividing students into groups to use their paper and pencil a computer screen could be shared by the group in a collaborative effort.

Books can also be presented to the students in guided reading through a PowerPoint or Hyperstudio presentation with four slides which provide the titles (and maybe a picture of each book taken with a digital camera) and stimulates the students to share personal experiences on the book topic.

The computer word processor and a wide screen can also be used to create a KWL (Know, Wonder, Learned) chart. Students can respond to what they read using the word processor or PowerPoint or Hyperstudio. The word processor can be used to develop a dramatization as a whole class activity. The original story text can be prepared with a word processor ahead of time in the word processor. This document will be displayed on the screen for the students. The teacher and the class will then convert the story together to create the theater script. The edited document can then be printed out for the student dramatization.

Self-Selected Reading

Through self-selected reading activities children are given opportunities to become lifelong readers through teacher aloud reading sessions and reading books on their own level independently.

Through the use of the Internet, teachers can provide their students a variety of multi-level materials. An affluence of all types of text including information on countries, maps, children new sites and magazine articles are in cyberspace just waiting to be employed. Material appropriate to all reading levels can be found online. A collection of bookmarks can be developed and saved on a disk to be imported for student use. An online resource, TrackStar, provides teachers a means of creating a simple web page of links by topics for the guided reading activity.

Clipart can be used for Picture Walks in which the teacher motivates the student's observations, connections, and predictions and relates new vocabulary.

Group sharing could also be enhanced through the use of the word processor in the development of a paragraph in which the student responds to what they have read.

This outline can be found online

<http://208.183.128.8/integrate/guidedreadingactivity.doc>).

Web Resources for Guided and Self-Selected Reading:

- First Grade Bookmarks (choose either .pdf file or Word format)
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/Tenia_Mason_bmarks.pdf
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/Tenia_Mason_bmarks.doc
- Narrative Bookmarks (.pdf file)
http://teachers.net/4blocks/ella_narrative_bookmarks.pdf
- Expository Bookmarks (.pdf file)
http://teachers.net/4blocks/ella_expository_bookmarks.pdf
- Guided Reading Checklist,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_guided_reading_checklist.pdf
- Reading Conference Log,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/lennette_making_words_hmwk.pdf
- Themes and Book Ideas for Primary Grades
http://www.ri.net/schools/Central_Falls/ch/heazak/themes.html
- Guided Reading Lesson Plan, Mr. Wishy Washy,
<http://www.teachers.net/lessons/posts/2176.html>
- Online Children's Stories, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/stories.html>
- Children's Books and Folktales,
<gopher://ftp.std.com/11/obi/book/Fairy.Tales/Grimm>
- Tell Me A Story, <http://home.talkcity.com/GaiaWay/sequana/TellMe.html>
- Folklore and Mythology, <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html>
- Folk and Fairy Tales, <http://www.nhptv.org/kn/vs/kidbookfolk.htm>
- ★ Best Stories, <http://www.browardlibrary.org:2000/kcweb/kcBestStories>
- TrackStar, <http://trackstar.hprtec.org/> (Create your own web page of links!)
- Shared Reading,
<http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Atrium/1783/SharedReading.html>
- Teacher Resource for Guided and Shared Reading,
<http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Atrium/1783/TeacherResource.html>



Words

The goal of working with words is to provide children opportunities spelling and reading words through activities that build phonemic awareness and application of phonetic skills. There are many programs that state they teach phonetic skills. However any approach that presents the skill in isolation will not be successful because it allows little or no transfer. Several Interactive Books are available as computer software for children. This type of software presents popular pieces of children's literature. The text is read to the children by the computer and hot spots (playthings) are hidden through out the screen. These programs are basically entertainment, providing limited vocabulary or phonemic enrichment.

Since the manipulation of letters is so important in the Words Block, technology can provide the teacher the materials and resources that can be downloaded to their classroom computer.

Multimedia vocabulary cards can be created through PowerPoint or Hyperstudio. The teacher could record a sound file by reading the word and a sentence with the word that is then inserted in the appropriate slide.

The activities in the working with words section allow a teacher to observe, teach, mentor, and evaluate children in spelling and reading words in a manner that is both timely and efficient. These activities are multi-level and whole group. Presently, more practice, instruction, and assessment can be done using the activities described in Four Blocks materials than any one or two programs can provide.

Web Resources for the Word Block:

- Word Identification and Recognizing Word Patterns using "Goodnight Moon" (lesson plan),
<http://lessonplanspage.com/LAWordIDPatternsGoodnightMoonK1.htm>
- PuzzleMaker, <http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com/>
- Phonemic Awareness,
<http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Atrium/1783/PhonemicAwareness.htm>
- Word Walls, <http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Atrium/1783/WordWalls.html>
- Word Wall, <http://members.nbci.com/XMCM/iteacher/wwall.htm>
- The Phonics Room, <http://members.aol.com/phonicsrm/index.html>
- Grade 1 Spelling Game, <http://candlelightstories.com/D001/Vocab1.asp>
- A Spelling Test of the Most Commonly Misspelled Words,
<http://www.sentex.net/~mmcadams/spelling.html>
- Words in A Word Interactive Game, <http://24.2.81.10/cgi-bin/jumble.pl>
- Sound of English Dictionary of Phonetic Sounds, <http://www.soundsofenglish.org/>
- Making Words PowerPoint Presentation,
<http://www.lesd.k12.az.us/RSF/multiage/mwppt/index.htm>
- Making Words Homework Sheet,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/lennette_making_words_hmwk.doc
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/lennette_making_words_hmwk.pdf
- Word Wall Chants, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_ww_chants.pdf
- Word Wall Charts, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_ww_list.pdf
- Working with Words,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_working_with_words_checklist.pdf
- WordO, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_wordo_form.pdf
- WordO Form 2, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/kelley_wordo_form_2.pdf
- Karen's Word Wall 2nd Modern Primary,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_word_wall_2nd_ModPri.pdf
- Karen's Word Wall 2nd National First Font,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_word_wall_2nd_nff.pdf
- Karen's Word Wall Words 3rd Ariel,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_word_wall_words_3rd_ariel.pdf
- Karen's Word Wall 3rd Modern Primary,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_word_wall_words_3rd_ModPri.pdf
- Karen's Word Wall 3rd National First Font,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_word_wall_words_3rd_natff.pdf
- Karen's Making Words 01,
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_making_words_01.pdf

- Karen's Making Words 02, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_making_words_02.pdf
- Karen's Making Words 03, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_making_words_03.pdf
- Karen's Making Words 04, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_making_words_04.pdf
- Karen's Making Words 05, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_making_words_05.pdf
- Karen's Silent Letters, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_student_letters.pdf
- Karen's Big Letters, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/karens_big_letters.pdf
- Working With Words Reference Cards, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/activity_cards_www.doc
http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/www_activitycards.pdf
- Using Words You Know, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/words_you_know.pdf
- Mystery Word Match, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/ella_mystery_word_match.pdf
- Word Block Plan, http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/WordBlock_M_G_T.html
- Between the Lions Word Helper, <http://www.pbskids.org/lions/words/index.html>



Related Links

The Internet provides the teacher a tremendous collection of ideas and resources to implement the Four Block Literacy approach.

- ✓ **The Four Blocks Literacy Program™** created by Patricia Cunningham and Dorothy Hall, <http://www.wfu.edu/~cunningh/fourblocks/>
http://www.applesandacorns.com/Articles_four_blocks_literacy_.htm
- ✓ A World Wide Web platform for the continuous sharing of ideas, questions and concerns in implementing the 4 Blocks approach can be found at the **4 Blocks Literacy in Kankakee**. <http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/fourblocks/>
- ✓ **Blocks 4 Reading** provides an overview of Four-Blocks™ and a balance of the best practices in reading and writing which assures that children of all levels of ability and styles of learning will be provided with instruction which consistently meets their needs. <http://www.blocks4reading.com/>
- ✓ **Four Blocks Literacy Model™ Network for Primary Grades** through the Utah Four Blocks Literacy Model Network Project provides primary grade teachers with long-term, research-based professional development in language arts. <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/goals2000/Showcase%20Items/4blockslit.htm>
- ✓ **Four Block Goodies** from Teachers Net includes template materials found at <http://www.teachers.net/4blocks/goodies.html>
- ✓ **Theory into Practice Four Blocks in the Middle Grades**, <http://www.connieprevatte.com/>
- ✓ **The Reading Lady** is an online resource for educators as they strive to understand literacy teaching. <http://readinglady.com>
- ✓ **Cyber Exchange PowerPoint Presentations**, provides titles of teacher-created presentations which can be downloaded, many of which are literacy-based presentations. Grades K-2 <http://208.183.128.3/ce/ppt1-2.htm>
Grades 3-5 <http://208.183.128.3/ce/ppt3-5.htm>
- ✓ **Literacy Lane** contains resources for teachers implementing a full literacy approach. <http://208.183.128.8/read>