Technology and Literacy Project

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I. My students:

I am a Kindergarten teacher at a Montessori school. I will discuss in the "my curriculum" section a little bit more about how the Montessori philosophy works as it does play a part in my overall technology philosophy. I have 28 Kindergarten students in my classroom; with a full time assistant as well. The ages range from 4 years old to 6 years old; depending on their birthday, academic readiness, and whether they have been retained or not. The student demographic at our school is varied. About 55% of our students are Caucasian, 26% are African American, 6% are Asian, 2.5% are Hispanic, and less than 1% are Native American. We are a K-2 school with roughly 300 students; about 50% of those in Kindergarten, 30% in 1st grade, and 20% in 2nd grade. We have about 15-20 ELL students currently and are expected to add more to that number next school year. The academic abilities of my students are also extremely varied. Some have never been to any preschool or school setting, where others have been in a preschool for 2+ years. Some students come in not knowing how to write or spell their name, hold scissors or a pencil, and are not familiar with what letters are or that each letter portrays a sound. Other students come in able to read, write, count, add and subtract. It definitely adds to the difficulty of meeting every student's needs.

For this project, I have chosen to focus on a set of four students from this recent school year; all of which I am tutoring this summer. Though I am tutoring all of them mostly on a one on one basis, I am working on very similar concepts with all of them. We also will be meeting once a month, altogether, to work on specific concepts as a group. I believe that it is important to have them interact with students at a common academic level. All of these students are below average on their reading levels. We use the DRA reading series and all four of them are at an Instructional (rather than an independent) A/1 DRA reading level. At the end of Kindergarten, we would like all students to be at a Level 4; so this group is considerably behind. Being as they are so young, learning disabilities have not been considered during their first year of school. Some students may need extra time to develop their maturity and academic focus; and we allow them that time before we jump to any conclusions. If they continue to struggle in 1st grade; it may be a different story.

Two of these students have IEPs for Speech and Language and one is being "considered" for having ADHD. The two students with Speech IEP's do get pulled out twice a week to work with our Speech and Language pathologist. These two students will most likely need some additional one on one help; making sure that they understand the directions and how to use each resource. All of these students seem to have challenges in the area of letter and sound recognition. All of them came into Kindergarten not knowing any letter names or letter sounds. They don't seem to have a lot of experience with books in general; for many different reasons. Simply discussing the front and back of a book and the title page is a topic of discussion during every tutoring session. They all have very limited vocabulary and we come across many words in our reading that they have never heard of before. They have difficulty focusing while reading a story aloud and retelling a story from the beginning is also a big challenge for them.

The ability to follow directions is also a struggle for all four of these students. Stepping out the directions step by step is going to be a requirement when introducing them to something new. I will need to monitor them closely and take notes on where they are struggling, as well as their behavior while using the new technologies. Getting overwhelmed is a concern of mine as well. I will need to be careful as to how many new things I introduce to them at one time. Where two of my students (Drew and Anna) are very good at learning multiple things at around the same time, Brook and Ken need one new thing introduced at a time. Both of them tend to have higher anxiety about things that they don't know a lot about.

As far as their strengths, all four of these students are hard workers and try their best during every session we have. Behavior is not an issue for any of them; including the student being considered for having ADHD. They all seem to have the "want" to learn. When using repetition while teaching a concept, the students seem to catch on rather quickly. Remembering something in a long term capacity seems to be the major difficulty with all of them. As far as motivation, all of these students seem to have very similar learning styles. They all really need the hands-on, kinesthetic approach when learning something new. They cannot just have it explained to them. They need to hear it, see it, be shown it, and then they need to be able to interact with materials and do it themselves. They also need a wide variety of materials such as using sand trays, shaving cream, clay, and finger-paints for practicing letter formation. They are very much considered to be "natural discovery" learners.

II. My curriculum:

As I am creating my Technology and Literacy Plan, I will be focusing on the literacy areas of letter and sound recognition (and an introduction to writing them), reading comprehension, sight word recognition, and phonemic awareness with my group of students. We will definitely need to focus most of our attention on initial letter and sound recognition. We have already made it pretty far in this area so I have hopes that we can soon begin the process of learning phonemic awareness; and putting those sounds together to make words. I would like to continue to work with my students on recognizing common sight words and overall reading comprehension (mainly in a read-aloud situation for now.)

Here are some specific skills that are important for my group of students to master:

- Letter and sound recognition for all 26 letters of the alphabet
- Basic writing of letters and being able to identify the name and sound of each letter
- Matching the proper letter to the beginning sound of a word (picture given; ex: c → cat)
- Mastery of Pre-Primer Dolch sight words (at least 20 words)
- Ability to briefly retell a story; from beginning to end with at least 3 important details
- Be able to sequence these important details from the story properly
- Ability to take sounds (up to three) and put them together to form a common word (ex: c-a-t = cat)

The challenges that I foresee are mainly in the sense of continuing to keep them motivated in learning the same concept over and over. It is going to take a while for these students to grasp these concepts. It will take a lot of lessons of the same concept and being able to keep them

excited about it seems to be my biggest challenge. I am going to have to come up with many different new and exciting ways to teach the same concept. Another challenge I foresee is losing the information that we go over in school; while they are at home. I only see these students twice a week, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (due to scheduling conflicts). That leaves Thursday through Monday with no instruction for them in a school setting. Some of these students have wonderful support at home; some do not. This could be a challenge for me to get these students where I know they can be. Technology is definitely something that I think will help me with both of these challenges; I am excited to see their progress!

III. Technology

Before this recent school year, I was definitely not a supporter of technology; I am a little ashamed to say. I felt that too many aspects of education were relying too heavily on technology and that we were going to lose too much of the basics. I do believe this to be a naïve notion now; an opinion of someone who was scared to go out and learn a new way to teach. I just completed my third year of teaching and was already overwhelmed with the amount of information needing to be taught; technology added and element that I wasn't ready for. Luckily, I am ready for it now and very excited about. The classroom is probably one of the most important areas in life that technology needs to be a part of. In watching some popular YouTube videos based upon K-12 learners today, it is very important for all educators (and administrators and parents) to realize that we are officially living and teaching in a digital world. The 21st century learner is no longer benefiting solely on textbooks, worksheets, lectures, and presentations. The higher level of learning that we are expected to provide requires an increase of materials and resources. Technology is the answer to providing these for our students.

Though I do believe that there is still a place in the classroom for textbooks, worksheets, and lectures, this cannot be the extent of our instruction. We must meet the needs of all of our learners who have all different kinds of ways that they learn. Some need visual, some audio, and some kinesthetic (hands-on). Many students now need instruction to be interactive; something that they can work on at their own pace and explore as much or as little as they want to explore. Technology gives the students access to resources and information that teachers cannot possible provide in the length of a school year. It also provides them the opportunity to choose the topics that they have interest in and explore to greater detail than teachers have the time to do for every single topic. There are technology tools that help students with their individual strengths and weaknesses as well. If they struggle with a certain concept, there is a plethora of interactive websites and software to help them. On the other hand, especially for students who are feeling down about having difficulty in some concepts, there are games, websites and software that are fun and engaging that may also work on concepts that come easy to them. Most importantly, there are a wide variety of tools that incorporate the two.

Beyond the internet, the use of technological tools such as whiteboards, smart boards, reading pens, Elmos, overhead projectors, and communication boards (to name a few), are an amazing asset to our "technological world" that is now before us. It makes technology not only useful and educational, but fun and exciting for not only the students; but the teachers and parents as well.

As for students with disabilities, I think the greatest thing about technology for these students is that it allows for the success of each individual learner. It isn't just for gifted students; it is for struggling students as well. Technology can provide the missing link for a student having difficulty learning a particular concept or skill. It provides that extra interactive component and allows the student to work at their own pace to master the concepts they are having difficulty with. Technology can also provide instant feedback and support; which can be difficult in the everyday school setting; especially with large class sizes and only one teacher. Technology can also aid in developing confidence in all students.

At my school, we are still very new to technology. I am a part of the newly formed "technology committee" hoping to increase our level of technology use in the upcoming school year. We have definitely made some great strides this year. We do have two laptops in each classroom for the students to use. We would love a computer lab, but unfortunately space is limited so we have to work with what we have. I also have a personal desktop computer in my room for the students to use. Each computer has a keyboard, a mouse, and headphones. The time in which the students have the ability to use the computers is the real challenge; and is something that I am working very hard on figuring out. Right now, I assign five students a day to a group and working on the current computer task is one of their goals for the day. The only downfall to that, in my opinion, is that each student only has the ability to use the computers once a week. I would like to figure out a way to increase that time. We also have an overhead projector that I use about once a week at an interactive component to some of my lessons. We only have one of these for 12 classrooms right now; which makes it difficult to use more often. Purchasing more of these is also something we are looking into.

Currently, our computers in the classroom are not hooked up to a printer but our plan is to do so for the upcoming year to be able to utilize software programs such as KidPix. We have loaded many free programs/websites onto our computers and have purchased a small amount of software for them as a starting point; though these have not be utilized yet in the classroom. We plan to research them and use them in the fall. Some of these include Numbers Undercover, KidPix, Kidspiration, Inspiration, ABCya.com, reading rockets, PBS kids, Jumpstart Kindergarten, and Starfall. The most exciting addition to our technology is the Raz-Kids Reading program. This allows the teachers to make an account for each of their students and assign them a reading level. They go to this site and they can read, listen to, and take short comprehension quizzes on books at their personal reading level. They can earn stars to use to purchase fun items and teachers can give bonus stars for excellent work. Teachers can track the student's activity (at home and at school) and can use the data to drive their instruction. This upcoming school year will be our first year with this program and I am very excited to see everything it has to offer. I am piloting this program with my group of students this summer as well.

The four students that I am focusing on for this project have very little experience with technology. They only have what I introduced to them this school year; which unfortunately was not as much as I would have liked. They all really enjoy using technology but don't get many chances to do it beyond the school atmosphere. I asked their parents about their availability to use technology at home. Three said that they have a computer at home but they do not use it educationally with their children. One parent said they don't have a computer; but occasionally go to the library and use the computers there. She said her difficulty is not knowing what sites

are most helpful. With this feedback, I am confident that I can provide ways for technology to be a major learning tool at home with these students; as well as in school with me.

IV. Literacy Toolbox

1. My StoryMaker/Clicker6
   a. Link for My StoryMaker -- http://www.carnegielibrary.org/kids/storymaker/
   b. Link for Clicker6 -- http://www.cricksoft.com/uk/products/clicker
   c. Description of My StoryMaker – This is an online story creation program that allows students to select and develop characters, objects, and actions to help them create their own stories. The children can either write the sentences themselves (if they know how), or they can choose picture icons provided by the program and it produces them for the child. When their story is completed, they can save it or print it out. They assign you a number code and you can access your story for one month on the website to make changes or share with others.
   d. Description of Clicker6 -- This is a literacy tool that empowers students to work independently to improve their reading and writing skills by giving them the ability to build and create their very own stories. Clicker6 reads back everything that the students write to help with fluency and using correct words. It also has a word predictor; so when you begin to type a word, it brings up a list of words that you might be thinking about writing (and reads them aloud for you). You can add illustrations by taking pictures of yourself with the webcam feature (great for autobiographies), adding clipart from a wide range of available photos, or using a unique drawing tools section in which the children can illustrate the pictures themselves. There are word and picture banks to help them find the words they are looking for and it also gives the children the ability to narrate their own story.
2. WYNN Scan & Read
   a. Link -- http://www.freedomscientific.com/lsg/products/wynn.asp
   b. Description – WYNN is a scan and read literacy software tool that scans text and reads it aloud for you while simultaneously highlighting the text so you can follow along. It has the ability to edit scanned pages or created documents, provides clear, easy to understand speech, shows the original layout of scanned documents, and has a talking dictionary and thesaurus built in to help build vocabulary knowledge. It offers study tools such as highlighting, bookmarking, and note taking, a word prediction software, the ability to create outlines of information, spell check as you type, and the ability to highlight information from web pages and copy that information directly into a WYNN created document. It has easy to use toolbars that help you to customize how you view documents to make it more "user-friendly." Some of the new features include PEARL® camera support which is a portable camera that can be connected to your USB port to capture web pages, Book Search to search for certain books you would like to download, MathML which helps with math and science formulas, Skim Read to help save some time by skimming through a document, Split View which gives you the ability to see the original document and the text view (which helps students with visual processing challenges), Two-tone Exact View so you can change the background color of what you are reading, Crisp Exact View to give

you a cleaner, easier to read document, a built in updater to get new information and features, easier to use scanning software, the ability to zoom in and out in a document, the ability to send a copy of the document to a printer (only with the PEARL camera option), ability to change languages (great for ELL students), a tool to fast forward or rewind within the reading, and a function that emphasizes the voice when text is in bold, italic, or underlined.

3. Quicktionary Pen
   a. Links: http://www.dyslexia-parent.com/books1.html; http://www.quicktionarypen.co.uk/; http://www.bhphotovideo.com/ (type Quicktionary Pen into the search box)
   b. Description -- The Quicktionary Pen is a portable, hand-held scanning translator that can scan a word or a full line of text and provide immediate word-by-word translation, including idioms and phrases. It is an ideal tool for anyone in need of multilingual support as well. It instantly enters text (words, sentences, and paragraphs), numbers and images into any application, including Microsoft Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc. All you have to do is slide it over printed information from newspapers, magazines, faxes, letters, etc. It gives you the ability to retype information faster than manually. Extensive foreign language support enables it to accurately recognize an incredibly vast number of foreign languages.

4. RazKids
   a. Link -- http://www.raz-kids.com/
   b. Description – This is an online reading program that provides differentiated reading instruction with hundreds of leveled books that are animated. The children can listen to books based on their level (level conversion charts are available), read the books themselves (with pronunciation and vocabulary help), and take quizzes based on their reading comprehension. They can even record their reading in the "running record" capability. Not only is this program amazing for students and parents to work on reading at home, when it is purchased by a school, each teacher makes their own class list, assigns a level to each student based on their reading level, and can track their progress with reading AND the quizzes. Each time the student completes a book, they get stars to go into the "Raz Rocket" store to buy cool things! It gives them extra incentive to want to read more! Also, teachers can award stars for extra effort or send the students a message. The "On Your Own" area provides students access to additional books (from different levels) for practice reading and quizzes.

5. ABCya
   a. Link -- http://www.abcya.com/
   b. Description – ABCya is a free computer activities website for elementary students to learn an amazing amount of information of many subjects. All educational computer games and activities were created or approved by certified teachers. Activities are modeled from primary grade lessons and enhanced to provide an interactive way to learn. The activities incorporate content areas such as math and reading while introducing basic computer skills. Many of the kindergarten and first grade games are equipped with sound to enhance understanding. You can also find great elementary holiday activities here. Abcya.com is a teacher-created

website which is meant for children to use under the guidance of their parents and teachers. The games do not collect personal information and children and adults are able to visit the site and play the games without providing any personal information to ABCya.com.

6. Starfall
    a. Link -- http://www.starfall.com/
    b. Description -- Starfall is a free website that was founded in 2002 that teaches children how to read by using games and phonics. Though it was originally made for first grade, it has been made very useful for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and second grade as well. Founded in 2002, the website teaches children how to read by using games and phonics. Starfall has four reading levels to teach children how to read. The levels, in order from the most basic to the most advanced are: "learning ABCs", "early beginning reading", "intermediate beginning reading", and "advanced beginning reading". The first level teaches preschoolers about the ABCs. The website provides learners with all the letters of the alphabet in the upper case and lower case form. When the learners see words appear on the screen, they hear the sounds of all the letters that compose a word. In the early beginning level, learners create words through the addition of consonants to different word families. The letters in every word are highlighted while they are read to the learner. In the intermediate beginning reading level, readers can bring the books they will read to life before they read them. The learner can read about artists and magic tricks. In the advanced beginning reading level, children can read a variety of books, including nonfiction books, Chinese fables, and comics.

Though my overall goal is to have all of these students using all of these programs, I also understand that they are on different levels and have listed below what I would like them to use in the beginning parts of our instruction.

Student Name	My Story Maker/Clicker 6	WYNN Scan & Read	Quicktionary Pen	RazKids	ABCya	Starfall
Brook	My StoryMaker		X	X	X	X
Ken	My StoryMaker		X	X	X	X
Anna	Clicker6	X		X	X	X
Drew	Clicker6	X		X	X	X

How would each application meet the literacy needs and characteristics of my students? How do these applications help students improve their literacy and meet the exceptions of the curriculum discussed above?

- Brook:
  - Starfall will meet Brook's literacy needs because it allows the student to start where they need the most help. I will start Brook on the first level of the Starfall website; learning ABC's. This will help her to identify the letters of the alphabet along with the sounds that they make. The unique aspect of Starfall is that it

incorporates many different activities to promote understanding of the letters and sounds; so getting bored with the activities is a limited possibility.

- ABCya will meet Brook's literacy needs because one again, it gives you different levels of activities; based on the reading level of the student. I would definitely start Brook on the very beginning alphabet games and activities to give her a variety of ways to practice her letter names and sounds; including magnets, connect the dots, alphabet match, alphabet puzzles, and alphabet order. Once Brook masters these games, then we can move onto more difficult ones to continue to focus on the curriculum I have designed above, including sight word practice, ability to retell a story, sequencing story details, and putting sounds together to make words. This website touches on all of those areas as you move through the sequence.

- RazKids will benefit all of these students in a similar way. RazKids is a phenomenal resource for books that the students can read, listen to, and answer comprehension questions about. The fact that I can manually put in the reading level of each student to give them a starting point is a wonderful aspect of it. I can also send them messages to motivate them. They receive stars when they read, listen to, or take a quiz on a certain book. They take these stars to the Raz Rocket store to buy cools things; it definitely is a great motivator for all of these students who require variety and excitement in their instruction. I can also give them extra stars for working exceptionally hard or advances to a new level. This website really aids in learning sight words, works on being able to comprehend and retell a story, and helps sequence story details together. Another aspect that is beneficial is that it is something fun they can do at home with their family as well as in school.

- A Quicktionary Pen/Reading Pen would be a great literacy tool to use with all of these students but I think that Brook and Ken would get the most use out of it; knowing their personalities and how they work with instruments and tools. Both Anna and Drew would probably play way too much with them; instead of using them for the correct purpose. I would be willing to try it with all of them; but would begin with Brook and Ken. I think it would be beneficial for both of them to be able to scan words in their reading that they do not recognize; as well as don't understand the meaning to. This would really aid in their overall fluency as well.

- I wanted a program to work with each of the students on writing and creating their own stories. I researched two great programs; My StoryMaker and Clicker6. I chose My StoryMaker for Brook and Ken because of their background knowledge and experience in writing. They are both very limited in this area so I wanted to start small with them. Mt StoryMaker allows you to choose symbols to create your own story. You don't have to write any words if you don't want to. This is a very limited program when it comes to options so it would definitely be a stepping stone for them; gradually moving to Clicker6 when they become more confident. My StoryMaker allows the children to be creative; which both Brook and Ken really enjoy. It would help them with sequencing details in a story, retelling a story, putting sounds together to make words, and an introduction to

simple sight words. Plus, they get a sense of ownership knowing that they "wrote" their own book.

- Ken:
  - Starfall will meet Ken's literacy needs because it allows the student to start where they need the most help. I will start Ken on the first level of the Starfall website; learning ABC's. This will help him to identify the letters of the alphabet along with the sounds that they make. The unique aspect of Starfall is that it incorporates many different activities to promote understanding of the letters and sounds; so getting bored with the activities is a limited possibility.
  - ABCya will meet Ken's needs in the same way it meets Brook's needs. They are on the exact same knowledge level of letter names and sounds. The multitude of games will help Ken stay focused and engaged on these tasks; which is an area that he struggles with. The website also allows for breaks because it doesn't contain timed games. He can easily switch from one activity to another with little teacher guidance.
  - RazKids will benefit all of these students in a similar way. RazKids is a phenomenal resource for books that the students can read, listen to, and answer comprehension questions about. The fact that I can manually put in the reading level of each student to give them a starting point is a wonderful aspect of it. I can also send them messages to motivate them. They receive stars when they read, listen to, or take a quiz on a certain book. They take these stars to the Raz Rocket store to buy cools things; it definitely is a great motivator for all of these students who require variety and excitement in their instruction. I can also give them extra stars for working exceptionally hard or advances to a new level. This website really aids in learning sight words, works on being able to comprehend and retell a story, and helps sequence story details together. Another aspect that is beneficial is that it is something fun they can do at home with their family as well as in school.
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simple sight words. Plus, they get a sense of ownership knowing that they "wrote" their own book.

- Anna:
    - o Starfall will meet Anna's needs because it allows her to begin with the program where she needs to work the most. I have decided to start her on the 2nd level of Starfall. Throughout our tutoring this summer, her recognition of letters and sounds has really improved; more so than Brook and Ken. So, I would start her on the "early beginning reading" level. In this level, she can read simple phonetic books to teach her to begin sounding out words.
    - o ABCya will meet Anna's literacy needs in a little bit different of a way. She is past the simple letter matching activity and could begin working on simple sight word knowledge, word searches, and phonetically reading stories. What I really like about the books that are read to the user, is that they highlight each word as they go; so the students are able to follow along while it is being read to them. It also gives the students the ability to read it themselves first, and then have it read for them to help with accuracy and comprehension; both skills that we are working on. I also think she would benefit from the alphabet uppercase and lowercase matching because she struggles when writing these letters; and often mixes them up.
    - o RazKids will benefit all of these students in a similar way. RazKids is a phenomenal resource for books that the students can read, listen to, and answer comprehension questions about. The fact that I can manually put in the reading level of each student to give them a starting point is a wonderful aspect of it. I can also send them messages to motivate them. They receive stars when they read, listen to, or take a quiz on a certain book. They take these stars to the Raz Rocket store to buy cools things; it definitely is a great motivator for all of these students who require variety and excitement in their instruction. I can also give them extra stars for working exceptionally hard or advances to a new level. This website really aids in learning sight words, works on being able to comprehend and retell a story, and helps sequence story details together. Another aspect that is beneficial is that it is something fun they can do at home with their family as well as in school.
    - o I chose the WYNN Scan & Read software for Anna and Drew because I think the program would work best for them when it comes to being able to read and understand words from books they are reading. They can highlight the words they don't understand and they can be read aloud. There is also an ability to have them explain what the words mean; to help with fluency. It also has the ability to highlight the text as you read to help them follow along in the story. This program would help with comprehension because they could go back and re-listen to certain parts of the text. This could also help them when retelling a story. As they are reading, they could highlight the main parts of the story and then put those points together when sequencing the details together; all aspects of the curriculum that I mentioned above.
    - o I chose Clicker6 for Anna and Drew because I believe they are more advanced in their writing skills now that we have been working on writing throughout tutoring. They are also more familiar with the keyboard (and have more

experience at home using one – both families got a computer at the beginning of the summer and have been working with them at home). Clicker6 is a more in-depth program to develop your own story. The fact that it reads back everything that the students write will help them with fluency and help them know whether what they wrote is actually what they wanted to write. The word predictor function will also be helpful if they aren't sure how to spell a word; it even reads you the options if they can't read the suggested words themselves. I think this program would benefit them better because both of them tend to be more independent than Brook and Ken. Anna and Drew are also much more into illustrations and drawing so the fact that you can draw your own illustrations is definitely a positive motivator for them.

- Drew:
    - Starfall will meet Drew's needs in the same way that it meets Anna's needs. Drew has also moved very nicely through letter names and sounds and I also think he is ready for the "early beginning reading" level of this website. For both Anna and Drew, the variety in books will definitely keep them interested in the books. Also, the books have animation which will make it more exciting for both of them.
    - ABCya would benefit Drew in the same way it would benefit Anna. Drew and Anna are on a very similar level when it comes to their literacy skills. Drew needs a little bit more help with matching beginning sounds to letters so I would probably also have him work on those activities and games; in addition to the sight words, story reading, and alphabet matching.
    - RazKids will benefit all of these students in a similar way. RazKids is a phenomenal resource for books that the students can read, listen to, and answer comprehension questions about. The fact that I can manually put in the reading level of each student to give them a starting point is a wonderful aspect of it. I can also send them messages to motivate them. They receive stars when they read, listen to, or take a quiz on a certain book. They take these stars to the Raz Rocket store to buy cools things; it definitely is a great motivator for all of these students who require variety and excitement in their instruction. I can also give them extra stars for working exceptionally hard or advances to a new level. This website really aids in learning sight words, works on being able to comprehend and retell a story, and helps sequence story details together. Another aspect that is beneficial is that it is something fun they can do at home with their family as well as in school.
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V.   Toolbox Implementation

Brook:

- My StoryMaker: I would like this application used at least twice a week in school (during Journal Writing time) and once at home; creating at least three stories a week. Once she is comfortable making stories with just the pictures, I will require her to begin typing her own words within her story. She will receive assistance from me on how to save the document or print it out. For the stories she creates at home, I will have her parents send me the story in a file and we will go over it together in class the following Monday.
- Quicktionary Pen: She will use this tool in class when reading any type of text. She will scan the words she is unfamiliar with and will write them down in a journal so we can practice them throughout the week. I will also recommend her parents to get one for reading at home.
- RazKids: All of the students will use this program at least three times a week during independent reading time. They will be required to read at least 5 books each week (combining school and home). They will read the books, listen to the books, and complete the quiz for each book with assistance from the teacher and the parents at home. For questions that are missed on the quizzes, we will go back and find the correct answers together.
- ABC Ya: All of the students will be required to access this site 3 times a week in school, during independent worktime and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Each week, we will set up a checklist of the activities that I want them to complete. Every Monday, we will discuss the areas that they are having difficulty with and I will show them a new program once they have mastered a previous one. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week at home.
- Starfall: All of the students will be required to access this site a total of 3 times a week in school, during independent reading time and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Again, I will have a checklist of activities each week that each student

needs to complete and will discuss challenges with each student the following Monday; and make changes accordingly. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week, using the site at home.

Ken:

- My StoryMaker: I would like this application used at least twice a week in school (during Journal Writing time) and once at home; creating at least three stories a week. Once he is comfortable making stories with just the pictures, I will require him to begin typing his own words within his story. He will receive assistance from me on how to save the document or print it out. For the stories he creates at home, I will have his parents send me the story in a file and we will go over it together in class the following Monday.
- Quicktionary Pen: Ken will use this tool in class when reading any type of text. He will scan the words he is unfamiliar with and will write them down in a journal so we can practice them throughout the week. I will also recommend his parents to get one for reading at home.
- RazKids: All of the students will use this program at least three times a week during independent reading time. They will be required to read at least 5 books each week (combining school and home). They will read the books, listen to the books, and complete the quiz for each book with assistance from the teacher and the parents at home. For questions that are missed on the quizzes, we will go back and find the correct answers together.
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- Starfall: All of the students will be required to access this site a total of 3 times a week in school, during independent reading time and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Again, I will have a checklist of activities each week that each student needs to complete and will discuss challenges with each student the following Monday; and make changes accordingly. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week, using the site at home.

Anna:

- Clicker 6: I would like this program used at least twice a week during Journal Writing Time and at least once a week at home; creating three stories a week total. The students will use the word banks to help enhance their stories, the word prediction software to make sure the words they are using are correct, the text to speech option to reread what they have written to help with accuracy, and the highlighting tool while rereading to help them follow along while reading their story. They will use the drawing tools to illustrate their stories as well. With the help of the teacher, they will save and/or print out their stories to share with the class or specific students. They will read their stories to at least 2

students in the class. For stories written at home, they will be emailed or brought in to me every Monday to go over together during independent work time.

- RazKids: All of the students will use this program at least three times a week during independent reading time. They will be required to read at least 5 books each week (combining school and home). They will read the books, listen to the books, and complete the quiz for each book with assistance from the teacher and the parents at home. For questions that are missed on the quizzes, we will go back and find the correct answers together.
- WYNN Scan & Read: This program will be used at least once a week during independent reading time; due to the fact that the text will need to be scanned into the program. We will decide upon the text for the following week every Friday so I may scan it into the program and have it reading for them the following Monday. They will use the text to speech function and the highlighting function to help them follow along with what they are reading. They will use the dictionary function to define a word they are unfamiliar with. We will then go back and go over these words together during independent work time.
- ABC Ya: All of the students will be required to access this site 3 times a week in school, during independent worktime and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Each week, we will set up a checklist of the activities that I want them to complete. Every Monday, we will discuss the areas that they are having difficulty with and I will show them a new program once they have mastered a previous one. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week at home.
- Starfall: All of the students will be required to access this site a total of 3 times a week in school, during independent reading time and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Again, I will have a checklist of activities each week that each student needs to complete and will discuss challenges with each student the following Monday; and make changes accordingly. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week, using the site at home.

Drew:

- Clicker 6: I would like this program used at least twice a week during Journal Writing Time and at least once a week at home; creating three stories a week total. The students will use the word banks to help enhance their stories, the word prediction software to make sure the words they are using are correct, the text to speech option to reread what they have written to help with accuracy, and the highlighting tool while rereading to help them follow along while reading their story. They will use the drawing tools to illustrate their stories as well. With the help of the teacher, they will save and/or print out their stories to share with the class or specific students. They will read their stories to at least 2 students in the class. For stories written at home, they will be emailed or brought in to me every Monday to go over together during independent work time.
- RazKids: All of the students will use this program at least three times a week during independent reading time. They will be required to read at least 5 books each week (combining school and home). They will read the books, listen to the books, and complete the quiz for each book with assistance from the teacher and the parents at home.

For questions that are missed on the quizzes, we will go back and find the correct answers together.

- WYNN Scan & Read: This program will be used at least once a week during independent reading time; due to the fact that the text will need to be scanned into the program. We will decide upon the text for the following week every Friday so I may scan it into the program and have it reading for them the following Monday. They will use the text to speech function and the highlighting function to help them follow along with what they are reading. They will use the dictionary function to define a word they are unfamiliar with. We will then go back and go over these words together during independent work time.
- ABC Ya: All of the students will be required to access this site 3 times a week in school, during independent worktime and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Each week, we will set up a checklist of the activities that I want them to complete. Every Monday, we will discuss the areas that they are having difficulty with and I will show them a new program once they have mastered a previous one. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week at home.
- Starfall: All of the students will be required to access this site a total of 3 times a week in school, during independent reading time and an additional two times a week at home with their parents. Again, I will have a checklist of activities each week that each student needs to complete and will discuss challenges with each student the following Monday; and make changes accordingly. I will communicate with parents every Sunday on their success or challenges throughout the week, using the site at home.

Link the applications to the technology you have available to you. Explain new technology or applications you'll need to implement your plan. Discuss training that might be needed by the student or teachers in order to use the applications effectively. Who will provide this training? What activities or tasks might require preparation?

- My StoryMaker
  - The only technology tool you need for this is a computer that has a keyboard and sound. You also need an ability to save it as a PDF file for access to it later. If you want to print it out, you need to have a connection to a printer.
  - The training on this program is somewhat minimal. The children will need to be shown what to do and walked through the steps a couple of times before being expected to do it independently.
  - I will be the one doing the training at school; and their parents will be guiding them at home.
  - Preparation includes brainstorming what the child in interested in writing about as well as basic computer (keyboard and mouse) skills.
- Clicker6
  - The software for this program will need to be purchased. Everything you need, with the exception of the computer itself, comes with the software.
  - There is training available on the website (http://www.cricksoft.com/uk/products/tools/clicker/home.aspx). There is a section that has videos (called "90 Second Training) that guides you through each

step of the software. I would train myself on how to use the program effectively and then I would train the students and the parents. The program definitely needs to be supervised the first several times; especially considering the age of my students.

- WYNN Scan & Read
    - o The only technology you need other than a computer is the actual software program <u>and</u> a scanner. You need to have at least 1.2GB of available hard drive space due to the size of the program. You do need to have sound capability on your computer as well. The program comes with a DVD with everything else you need.
    - o Not only are their training videos included on the WYNN website (http://www.freedomscientific.com/lsg/products/wynn.asp) but the software comes with video and step by step instructions. There are also Tip Sheets on the website to help with specific questions you may have. I will complete the full training ahead of time and will walk the students and parents through the program as well. This is something that will need to be supervised with as young as my students are.
    - o As far as prior preparation, the books will need to be scanned into the software program prior to the children using the program.
- RazKids
    - o The only technology you need for this is computer (with sound, a keyboard, and mouse) and internet access.
    - o I have already fully trained myself on the program and am in the process of training with the parents. The students will work on it with me (and with their parents) most of the time. The quizzes at the end of each story require the most guidance; especially given their age and independence level. Any training needed on the program will be provided by me. I will use the website FAQs and support to answer any questions that I do not know the answer to.
    - o The only preparation is for the teacher to set up their teacher website, add the student names, assign them a username and password, and input their current reading level. As soon as that is completed, they can begin reading anytime!
- ABCya
    - o The only technology you need for this is computer (with sound, a keyboard, and mouse) and internet access.
    - o As far as training is concerned, simply going through each activity and discussing the instructions and purpose of the activity, will be sufficient. Showing the children each new activity they are expected to complete and guiding them through it the first couple of times would be all that is needed.
    - o Setting up where each child will begin (based on their current academic level) is the only real preparation needed.
- Starfall
    - o The only technology you need for this is computer (with sound, a keyboard, and mouse) and internet access.
    - o As far as training is concerned, simply going through each activity and discussing the instructions and purpose of the activity, will be sufficient. Showing the

children each new activity they are expected to complete and guiding them through it the first couple of times would be all that is needed.

- o Setting up where each child will begin (based on their current academic level) is the only real preparation needed.

- Quicktionary Pen
  - o The actual Quicktionary Pen device needs to be purchased. There is no further technology needed for its use. It has a built in speaker so if you don't want it to be disruptive to other, headphones may be necessary.
  - o The children will definitely need to be trained on how to use this device. I would train myself first on how to use it; using the online tutorials as well as the information that comes with the device. Once I am comfortable with using it, I will train the students and parents on how to use it.
  - o Other than purchasing the pen, there is no other preparation needed other than gathering the text you want to read.

VI. Evaluation

- My StoryMaker – I will sit with the students the first three times they use this program, walking them through how to use each feature. After that, I will observe them for the first 5 minutes, each time they create a story during independent worktime. I will visit them for a few minutes in the middle of the worktime to give them an opportunity to ask questions or clarify things for them. Then, I will observe them for the last 5 minutes; while they finish up their story. I will take brief notes on difficulties that the students are having as well as notes on what they are really enjoying and doing well with. I will sit down with each student once a week to review their stories and work on how to improve them. If their writing improves, I will know that My StoryMaker is successful for them. Once they are comfortable with this program, I would like to move them onto using Clicker6 with the rest of the students.
- Clicker6 – I will sit with Anna and Drew the first two times that they create a story with Clicker6 so I can make sure they are familiar with the program. After that, I will observe them for a total of about 10 minutes during independent work time and take notes on what I observe. I will write down how focused they are on the project, any difficulties they are having, creativity, how slowly or quickly they are working, as well as some of the really great things that I see happening. I will sit down with each of them once a week to go over their stories and ways in which we can improve them. I would like to compare their stories from week to week to see where the growth and improvement are; as well as the area that may still need to be worked on. If I see improvement from week to week, I will know that Clicker6 is a successful program for them.
- WYNN Scan & Read - For the first few times using the WYNN software, I would like to sit with them throughout the entire process so I can show them the best way to utilize the program. This may need to happen after school or during a special time of the day. While they are working with this program during independent worktime, I will observe them throughout the process; totaling about 10 minutes. I would like to split that time up within the beginning, middle, and ending of their time with the program so I can take notes on

what I am observing. Are they focused and really utilizing what they were taught? Is this program something that these students are ready for? Then, I would like to conference with the students (and their parents hopefully) once a week to see what successes are happening in the classroom; as well as at home. This would be the time where I could answer questions or restructure how the program is to be used. If I see an improvement in reading fluency and comprehension, I will know that the WYNN program is successful for these students.

- RazKids – This is a program that I can monitor at school and at home. During school, I will observe each student for 2-3 minutes, taking notes on what I see as far as focus, frustration level, and ability to answer the questions at the end of each story. I will be looking to see if they are actually reading the stories, or just clicking through and looking at the pictures. At home when I have more time, I will monitor and look deeper into the stories that the students are reading and take notes on where I think they might be struggling. I will motivate them by sending them personalized messages telling them to keep up the good work and even recommending that they take a test over with their parents. I will award them with "bonus stars" for working hard and doing their best. If I notice an improvement in their reading fluency and comprehension, and notice that they are continuing to increase their level through this program, I will know that RazKids is a success for them.
- ABCya and Starfall – I will observe the students utilizing these websites as often as possible (5 minutes each day) during independent worktime. I will provide them with a checklist (for school and at home) so they can check off every time they complete an activity on the website. I will conference with the students weekly (as well as with the parents electronically) to find out any struggles that they are having. As I observe them in the classroom, I would take notes on what I see. Are they really completed each activity or are they rushing through just to get it finished? I would write down the struggles that they seem to be having as well as their focus on what they are doing. I would set a specific one on one time to sit down with them and assess them using the program; so they can show me exactly what they are able to do. If I see an improvement in the particular skill that I assigned to them (whether it is reading fluency, sound recognition, beginning sounds, retelling, sight words, story sequencing, or putting sounds together to make words), I will know that ABCya is a resource that is helping them be successful.
- Quicktionary Pen – I will observe the students for 5 minutes each independent silent reading time. I will listen carefully and take notes on the number of times they need to scan a word, sentence or a phrase. Are they having the pen read the entire document, or are they just using it for words that are difficult for them? Each time I observe them, I would write down the total amount of times the pen was used. After each time they read a story, I will conference with them for 2-3 minutes and have them retell the story they just read. If I see an improvement in their ability to retell a story (as well as a decrease in the number of times the pen had to be used), I will know that this device is helping them learn word knowledge and improve their reading fluency.

I would love to think that the implementation of these programs might have no hiccups or problems; but I think that would be very naïve. As with the use of any technology, problems with connection and power could be a factory. Some technical difficulties are bound to happen; like

running out of battery power on the devices, connection to the internet during the school day being interrupted, and the possibility of computers freezing or mice and keyboards not working.

I also have to be careful to make sure I observe these students closely; especially while using the website programs like StarFall and ABCya. These aren't websites that track what the student does so they could "look" like they are working on it without actually doing what they are supposed to be doing. With the attention span of my students (more significantly with my student thought to have ADHD) I need to make sure that I have a variety of things for them to do. I also need to make sure the activities are something that they find too difficult; because I can envision goofing around and lack of focus on these programs.

As for the story writing programs, there could be a lot of difficulty with coming up with what to write about. I think it would be a good idea (with the whole class; not just these students) to spend a lot of time on brainstorming what they want to write about BEFORE they sit down to do it.

I also worry about the students becoming dependent on the WYNN program or the Quicktionary Pen. I don't want them to think that the only way they can read is with the help of these; so I want to make sure I mix things up and not always allow them to use the program; unless of course they are still in the stage where it is needed for them to feel successful.

I think that keeping up with all of these programs may be difficult for me as the teacher. I am going to have to be very organized and know exactly what I want each student to be doing each day. If I am not organized, I can the success of these programs being diminished.