

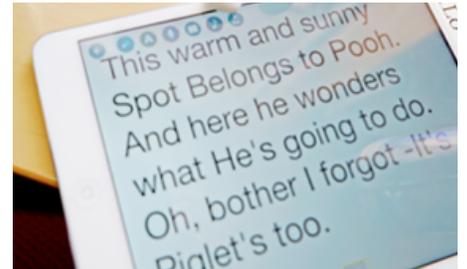
Learning to Read: Interactive Reading Practice

How to create enthusiasm for books and encourage students to do self-studying with a little help from technology. Karen DeCarolis, Crescent Park Elementary, Bethel, ME.

Outline of the Class

One of the main “jobs” of a first grade teacher is to help students learn to read. My reading program consists of guided reading instruction, phonetic skills development, lots of reading practice (both at school and at home), and rapid acquisition of sight words. Once the children can read 50-100 sight words, we begin working on comprehension of their own reading materials. Prior to that, we work on comprehension of “read aloud” materials.

In today’s world, more than half of my students do not have parental support for their academic **learning at home**.



LoiLoNote's Application

I needed my beginning readers to practice reading with support, but there didn’t seem enough time in the day. I realized that I could photograph my “easy readers” (StoryBox books, PM readers), add myself reading aloud each page in the book (the sound matched the print on the visible page), and create “**electronic books**” for my students to view on their iPads.

I recorded the books twice, once with pictures and audio, and once with just the pictures. For the first, I recorded the books with the words read aloud by me so the children would be able to listen to the stories read to them. LoiLoNoteSchool allowed me to add quiet music to the background which gave the read a more professional quality. I built a listening library this way, which the children could access from their iPads.



Benefits for Students

Children who could not practice listening to stories at home suddenly had a way of listening to them at school. This created such **enthusiasm for books** in my classroom! Once a child had heard a particular story many times, and felt confident enough to read the materials to me, I removed the copy of the book with the audio built in, and “pushed” him or her the copy of the book without the audio.

I also showed them how to record themselves reading the book. This was a big hit, with everyone wanting a chance to record a book. Once they were done, they sent the book back to me, so I could listen, but also so I could keep a record of their reading for my files. My non-readers were rapidly becoming **practiced, experienced readers!**

Benefits for Teacher

The more words a child can read automatically (“sight words”), the fewer he or she needs to “sound out”, and the smoother--and frankly, the more **fun**--reading becomes. My goal each week is to have students practice reading each evening with their parents and to have the words learned by Friday. However, many of my students were not reaching this goal because they had no one to practice with (or who made them practice) at home.

Using LoiLoNoteSchool, **in one weekend I was able to make color-coded vocabulary cards of each group’s sight words for the entire trimester!** Each Friday afternoon, I would “throw away” the stack of cards on each child’s screen that they had used to practice that week’s words. Then I would “push out” the next week’s words for each group so it was waiting on each child’s iPad on Monday morning when they arrived at school.