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CEP 840: Professional Development Project

In this presentation, I will address Assistive Technology in the context of a small private school. The school is a K-12 institution with approximately 150 students and 20 teachers. Most teachers have little to no experience using assistive technology. The professional development session will be made up of exclusively educators and administrators. The presentation could later be made to parents and community members as appropriate depending on the response and implementation. An encore presentation to parents and community members would be given in order to make them aware of the resources available to their children and could be tailored appropriately. The necessary materials for this presentation include PowerPoint presentation capabilities, multiple computers with internet access for listeners to use, and copies of included handouts.

Currently, this school does not service students with disabilities because they lack the resources. The goal of this presentation is to show how the school can, at very little cost, service students with mild disabilities through the abundance of free and inexpensive assistive technology available, as well as better service its regular education students through the use of these technologies. After this presentation, teachers should feel comfortable using the technologies presented, incorporating these resources into future lessons, and be aware of funding options. To assess whether these goals have been met, a post seminar survey will be given approximately one week after the presentation, after teachers have had time to incorporate their learning into their lessons and classrooms.

The topics and subtopics to be addressed include: a definition of assistive technology, a rationale for using it in the classroom, a list of available free resources (this includes break away activities and discussion accounting for the majority of the session), funding options (subtopics including Medicaid, Medicare, and grants), and a final wrap-up.

Group 1: Assistive Technology Scavenger Hunt!

With your team, complete the following tasks. Then, be prepared to share with the large group about the sites and resources you have discovered. Keep in mind how easily or with how much difficulty your students will be able to navigate these sites and resources or how you may be able to train parents to help younger children benefit from these tools.

1. Using "Natural Reader Free Version," have the reader read the following passage aloud to you:

The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms. Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly little house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing.

-Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*

<http://www.naturalreaders.com/> (install Free Version Only) When using Natural Reader you do not have to cut and paste information into a box to be read. You simply select the text you want to hear and use the floating "MiniBoard" to start the reading program.

2. Find "The Wind in the Willows" in the library at the following sites and read or listen to the same passage.
Gutenberg http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page
Literature Network - <http://www.online-literature.com/>

Which site do you like better and why?

3. Go to the following site: <http://www.ghotit.com/home.shtml>
Watch the YouTube video and explore the site. Then discuss with your group and write down how you might be able to use this site in your classroom to better serve your students.

4. Go to the following link: <http://www.edtech-associates.com/index.htm>

Find the "Web links for teachers" tab on the left side. Explore the resources provided according to your grade level. Develop a lesson based upon these resources.

Further points of discussion: Under what circumstances would you or would you not use each of these tools (are there students whom you would not use these with (why not?), which students would you use these with and why?)?

References: Grahame, K. (2006) *The wind in the willows*. New York: Signet Classics.

Group 2: Assistive Technology Scavenger Hunt!

With your team, complete the following tasks. Then, be prepared to share with the large group about the sites and resources you have discovered. Keep in mind how easily or with how much difficulty your students will be able to navigate these sites and resources or how you may be able to train parents to help younger children benefit from these tools.

1. Using "Read Please Free," have the reader read the following passage aloud to you:

The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms. Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly little house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing.

-Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*

<http://www.readplease.com/english/downloads/#rp2003> (Requires you to cut and paste text into a window for reading.)

2. Find "The Wind in the Willows" in the library at the following sites and read or listen to the same passage.
UVA <http://etext.virginia.edu/ebooks/>
Online Books at the University of Pennsylvania <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/>

Which site do you like better and why?

3. Go to the following site: <http://www.ghotit.com/home.shtml>
Watch the YouTube video and explore the site. Then discuss with your group and write down how you might be able to use this site in your classroom to better serve your students.

4. Go to the following link: <http://www.edtech-associates.com/index.htm>
Find the "Web links for teachers" tab on the left side. Explore the resources provided according to your grade level. Develop a lesson based upon these resources.

Further points of discussion:

Under what circumstances would you or would you not use each of these tools (are there students whom you would not use these with (why not?), which students would you use these with and why?)?

References: Grahame, K. (2006) *The wind in the willows*. New York: Signet Classics.

Group 3: Assistive Technology Scavenger Hunt!

With your team, complete the following tasks. Then, be prepared to share with the large group about the sites and resources you have discovered. Keep in mind how easily or with how much difficulty your students will be able to navigate these sites and resources or how you may be able to train parents to help younger children benefit from these tools.

1. Using “Word Talk,” have the reader read the following passage aloud to you:

The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms. Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly little house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing.

-Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*

<http://www.wordtalk.org.uk/> Free text-to-speech plugin that works with all versions of Microsoft Word (from Word 97 and up). It speaks and highlights the text of the document when it is used. It also contains a talking dictionary to help determine which word spelling is most appropriate. New version allows text to be converted to speech and saved as an MP3 for portability.

2. Find “The Wind in the Willows” in the library at the following sites and read or listen to the same passage. Fordham <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/Sbook.html>
LibriVox (AudioBooks) - <http://librivox.org/>

Which site do you like better and why?

3. Go to the following site: Webspiration - <http://mywebspiration.com/>

Go to the “Visual Thinking” tab and read the contents. Then discuss with your group and write down how you might be able to use this site in your classroom to better serve your students.

4. Go to the following link: <http://www.edtech-associates.com/index.htm>
Find the “Web links for teachers” tab on the left side. Explore the resources provided according to your grade level. Develop a lesson based upon these resources.

Further points of discussion: Under what circumstances would you or would you not use each of these tools (are there students whom you would not use these with (why not?), which students would you use these with and why?)?

References: Grahame, K. (2006) *The wind in the willows*. New York: Signet Classics.

Group 4: Assistive Technology Scavenger Hunt!

With your team, complete the following tasks. Then, be prepared to share with the large group about the sites and resources you have discovered. Keep in mind how easily or with how much difficulty your students will be able to navigate these sites and resources or how you may be able to train parents to help younger children benefit from these tools.

1. Using the free text-to-MP3 conversion website, <http://www.yakitome.com/>, convert and listen to the following text:

The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms. Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly little house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing.

-Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*

2. Find "The Wind in the Willows" in the library at the following sites and read or listen to the same passage. Accessible Book Collection (requires free educational registration)
<http://www.accessiblebookcollection.org/>
Free Classic Audio Books - <http://freeclassicaudiobooks.com/>

Which site do you like better and why?

3. Go to the following site: Webspiration - <http://mywebspiration.com/>

Go to the "Visual Thinking" tab and read the contents. Then discuss with your group and write down how you might be able to use this site in your classroom to better serve your students.

4. Go to the following link: <http://www.edtech-associates.com/index.htm>
Find the "Web links for teachers" tab on the left side. Explore the resources provided according to your grade level. Develop a lesson based upon these resources.

Further points of discussion:

Under what circumstances would you or would you not use each of these tools (are there students whom you would not use these with (why not?), which students would you use these with and why?)?

References: Grahame, K. (2006) *The wind in the willows*. New York: Signet Classics.

Assistive Technology Resource List

Text to Speech:

<http://www.naturalreaders.com/> (install Free Version Only) When using Natural Reader you do not have to cut and paste information into a box to be read. You simply select the text you want to hear and use the floating "MiniBoard" to start the reading program.

<http://www.readplease.com/english/downloads/#rp2003> (Requires you to cut and paste text into a window for reading.)

<http://www.wordtalk.org.uk/> Free text-to-speech plugin that works with all versions of Microsoft Word (from Word 97 and up). It speaks and highlights the text of the document when it is used. It also contains a talking dictionary to help determine which word spelling is most appropriate. New version allows text to be converted to speech and saved as an MP3 for portability.

<http://www.yakittome.com>

Online Libraries:

Gutenberg http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page

Literature Network - <http://www.online-literature.com/>

UVA <http://etext.virginia.edu/ebooks/>

Online Books at the University of Pennsylvania <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/>

Fordham <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/Sbook.html>

LibriVox (AudioBooks) - <http://librivox.org/>

<http://www.accessiblebookcollection.org/>

Free Classic Audio Books - <http://freeclassicaudiobooks.com/>

Writing:

<http://www.ghotit.com/home.shtml>

Webspiration - <http://mywebspiration.com/>

Misc:

<http://www.edtech-associates.com/index.htm>

Post-Seminar Survey

1. Which group were you in for the scavenger hunt? _____

2. How do you implement the resources you learned about it in seminar in your classroom lessons? _____

3. Which resources did you find the most helpful? _____

4. The least helpful? _____

5. Is there any area or topic related to Assistive Technology that you would have liked to have learned more about? _____

6. Suggestions for future presentations on Assistive Technology:

References

Family information guide to assistive technology (2005-2006). Retrieved from

<http://www.fctd.info/resources/fig/index.html>.

Grahame, K. (2006) *The wind in the willows*. New York: Signet Classics.

Honey, M., Culp, K.M., & Spievogel, R. (2005). *Critical issue: Using technology to improve student achievement* . Retrieved from

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/technlgy/te800.htm>.

Maes, A. Funding assistive technology through Medicaid. Retrieved from

http://www.onlineconferencingsystems.com/dn/funding_at/.

Socol, I. (2009). Software collection. Retrieved from

<https://angel.msu.edu/section/default.asp?id=FS09%2DCEP%2D842%2D730%2D870191%2DEL%2D14%2D204&goto=>.