



The Coastline Newsletter

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Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System/East serving Brevard & Volusia Counties

Digital Books Bring Inclusion to Many With Disabilities

by Janet Peters and Annette Cerreta, Simon Technology Center

Books by computer? It's the greatest change to publishing since the 15th century. Just as printing presses brought reading to the general population 500 years ago, digital books bring inclusion to many people with disabilities.

The newly reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) addresses the importance of providing instructional materials, such as digital textbooks, in alternative formats to students with disabilities. The federal law includes language about the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS), which many parents and professionals say is a step in putting 21st century technology to work for everyone.

A look at the benefits of digital materials shows their potential role in the education of all children:

- Digital textbooks (through the Internet or on CD-Rom or DVD) can have pictures, video, and interactive features that make them come alive for students in ways not possible with traditional print textbooks.
- Teachers have more flexibility. The information in online digital textbooks is usually current and indepth, and a teacher can present it in many ways. For example, he or she can project graphs and charts on a screen to illustrate points. Digital text also makes it easier for teachers to modify the lesson and worksheets based on an individual's need.
- Digital materials are more accessible than printed publications for many students with disabilities. For example, they offer children with visual or learning disabilities more options for participating in a school's general curriculum. They also improve access for students with physical disabilities who cannot handle books or other tactile materials.
- Digital materials support a "Universal Design for Learning" approach to education. They can be:
 - read aloud with a screen reader
 - listened to using a portable player
 - received through a computer using an assistive technology device
 - modified to meet the specific needs of each learner. For example, users can enlarge or edit text and add or omit text.

Despite the many benefits for students with and without disabilities, digital textbooks are often underused. A large part of

the problem is the variety of electronic formats. Without a national standard for producing and distributing digital textbooks, many states established their own file format standards. The result: a patchwork of regulations for publishers and schools. The situation complicated and slowed the production and distribution of digital textbooks to schools across the nation.

In 2002, however, the United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) began to address the need for a streamlined approach to accessible textbook production and distribution. A panel of experts assembled to determine how to simplify the process.

The panel recommended creating a national file format standard (NIMAS) for electronic instructional materials. The intent was to expedite delivery of accessible instructional materials to schools and the students who need them while reducing costs for both publishers and schools.

The U.S. Department of Education endorsed NIMAS in 2004, and language for adopting standards was included in IDEA 2004.

Many special education stakeholders claim that including NIMAS in law is a victory for students with different learning needs that can revolutionize education. **All agree that it is a sign of the times.**

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THE FDLRS/EAST LIBRARY

The FDLRS Library is ready to serve you. Here are the answers to our most frequently asked questions:

Who can check out materials? Anyone who works with exceptional education students including regular education teachers with ESE students in their classroom, exceptional education teachers, and parents of exceptional students.

How many items can I check out? Public School Teachers - 15 items; All Others - 5 items.

How long can I keep the materials? Videotapes - 1 week, computer software - 4 weeks, and most other materials - 9 weeks.

What are the loan policies? Materials are loaned for preview purposes. Participants may not write in the materials.

How can I get the materials? Materials may be requested in person, by phone, by a note through the courier, or by e-mail. Special assistance for selecting materials is available from FDLRS resource teachers. Remember, we can send and you can return items to FDLRS through the courier.

Who should I contact for assistance? In Brevard call 633-1000 for Cindy Wickham (ext. 559) or Becky Atwood (ext. 548), or send an e-mail. In Volusia call 386-258-4684.

THE FDLRS/EAST PRODUCTION LAB

The FDLRS Production Lab has a variety of equipment you may find useful when constructing teacher-made bulletin boards, wall charts, and other hands-on materials for your students, including:

Ellison Machines (both regular and large) - Choose from over 140 graphic dies, 2", 4", and 5" letters and 2" numbers. Call for an appointment and please bring your own paper.

Laminator – Due to funding constraints, we will be laminating for FDLRS workshops only.

Bookbinding Machine - Call for an appointment and bring your books and plastic spines (which can be purchased at any office supply store).

Button Machine – Bring your 2 1/4" button parts (ordering information is available upon request). Please call for an appointment.

Resource Books - The Production Lab contains a collection of resource books to assist you with unit development and classroom activities. These books are not available for checkout, but are available to you in the Production Lab. Please call for an appointment.

Who should I contact for assistance? In Brevard call 633-1000 for Cindy Wickham (ext. 559) or Becky Atwood (ext. 548), or send an e-mail. In Volusia call 386-258-4684.

**Grow to 5: Motor Development
What You Need to Know, Part 1
Sensory Processing and Associated Problems**

Children use sensory information to develop an understanding of the environment and their relationship to it. This is called sensory processing, or sensory integration, and it happens automatically for most of us. We all receive information about the world through our senses – sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, body position, and movement. Adults tend to use vision and hearing for most learning, but young children depend on all their senses – especially their sense of touch, body position, and movement. There is still a lot for them to learn about the basic physical aspects of the world, such as the difference between wet and dry and the fact that things fall down when you let go of them. So they try to touch, manipulate, and physically experience everything. As we know, infants and toddlers even like to check things out by putting them in their mouths. Some children have disabilities that are obvious from birth – such as severe cerebral palsy. Other children’s disabilities may only surface when they are challenged by activities in the early care and education setting, such as sliding, swinging, or finger painting. They may also surface when expectations for their behavior change, such as when they move from the toddler room to a preschool group and are expected to spend short periods of time attending to group activities such as story time or working quietly with toys.

As children get older, they typically become more efficient at processing sensory information. Through their everyday experiences and activities, they learn to take in sensations without being overwhelmed by them. They become able to pay attention to helpful sensory information gathered from multiple senses, and use what they have learned from their sensory experiences to help them plan how to perform motor tasks.

However, some children’s sensory processing skills do not develop automatically. This can affect their learning, play and behavior. Some examples are:

- Children who have low sensitivity to sensation may seem passive or they may seek out intense sensations such as spinning, or constantly moving or touching objects or people.
- Children who have high sensitivity to sensation may find it difficult to focus their attention. They may avoid sensory input by withdrawing from certain play and learning activities.
- Some children have difficulty planning motor activities that prevent them from coordinating information from multiple senses, such as using their vision, balance, and sense of touch to run and kick a ball.

If parents, educators, and caregivers are not aware of a child’s sensory processing difficulties, they may expect the child to perform activities that the child is not developmentally ready to perform. This is extremely frustrating for the child as well as for the adults. When a child repeatedly fails at an activity, the child may act out, become withdrawn, or respond in other unproductive ways.

Source: Florida Department of Education



A Memorial Fund for a *Special Teacher*

This past June, Mary Lynda Hutchinson, an ESE teacher in Volusia County for several years, lost a long, brave battle against cancer. As per the wishes of Lynda and her family, a memorial fund was established through the Future's Foundation in her name. Money donated to the fund is designated to be spent on the purchase of gifts for Volusia's ESE teachers. These gifts will be awarded in Lynda's memory at the February 2, 2006, Annual *ESE Teacher Celebration*. Those of us who knew Lynda remember her as a humorous, "bottom line" lady who described her work as an ESE consultation teacher as "job heaven!" We all miss her.



Download Visual Supports!

Visit this website and download visual supports!

http://www.setbc.org/setbc/communication/frame_pictureset.html

PictureSET is a collection of downloadable visual supports for both receptive and expressive communication in the classroom, at home, and in the community. This searchable database allows you to find a wide range of useful visual supports for different curriculum areas, activities and events. **PictureSET** resources are created and updated by dedicated professionals working with students in British Columbia.



First Annual Transition Scholarship

Last May at Atlantic High School's Senior Award Ceremony, Shannon McCormick, ESE Teacher, had the honor of presenting 2 special diploma seniors with *Transition Scholarships*. The two students had each typed a 250-word essay on how "Career Experiences/On the Job Training" had helped them prepare for life after high school. Thanks to the money awarded to Shannon's class for providing the food at Volusia County's annual "Pathways to Transition" Fair, the popcorn maker purchased with those funds generated monies for the 2 scholarships, one for \$500.00 and one for \$250.00! Even though these 2 seniors may not be college bound, the scholarship money is earmarked to be used on any of the following items: transportation to a job; first month's rent on an apartment; a down payment on a car or new clothes for an interview! Shannon said of the evening, "I realized last year at the awards ceremony that the Special Diploma students rarely got awards. By creating this scholarship, I have seen the appreciation of the students and their families. It truly makes me proud to be an ESE teacher!"

Thanks to Project CONNECT, The Transition Center at the University of Florida, for their support of Volusia's Transition Fair, as well as *One Voice for Volusia*, the Volusia/Flagler Community Transition Team and the Family Care Council. **Join us this year for the "Pathways to Transition" Fair at Atlantic High School, October 27th, 2005, from 4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. in the Media Center.**



Florida Education Channel

FEC is a program initiative of the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC) funded by the Florida Legislature to PAEC through the Florida Department of Education. View the following programs on Dish Network 9418 or at www.fec.tv:

•**FloridaLearns Academy**

Where the art and skill of education are accomplished!

•**Tuesday Teacher Training**

Tuesday Teacher Training offers skills to teachers that can be used immediately in the classroom.

•**Curriculum Connection: Setting the Sail**

Produced by FEC staff, this program will show you ways to manage your classroom with practical and easy strategies.

•**Doing What Works: Effective Technology in the Classroom**

This series focuses on how technology can be used to provide quality instruction to all students.

•**FEC Schedule**

View the Florida Education Channel schedule and set your VCR's to record professional development programs that fit your needs.



Website Help for Struggling Readers

Visit these websites for some creative ways to help struggling readers. Most sites have samples but require a membership fee.

1. <http://www.starfall.com/>

The Star Fall learn-to-read (free) website is designed primarily for first grade. Star Fall is also useful for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten through second grade.

2. <http://www.berenstainbears.com/>

Berenstain Bears online stories and activities

3. <http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/>

Many classic books you can read online! It is an ideal way to expand your horizons, catch up on your reading list, or read books that everyone else seems to have read.

4. <http://www.isaveatree.com/>

These virtual books are interactive, read aloud to students in different languages, have full color photos, illustrations, movie clips, and active web links.

5. <http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/greatwebsites/greatwebsitesfavorite.htm>

Links to favorite children's stories with popular characters and themes such as Arthur, Berenstain Bears, Magic School Bus and much more!

6. <http://www.rfbd.org/>

Search this extensive library for recorded books for the blind and dyslexic.

7. <http://www.magickeys.com/books/#books>

Free stories to read by categories: children's books, rare books, phonics, puzzles and more. Some are audible.



The Florida Council for Exceptional Children Presents...



October 13 - 15, 2005
Holiday Inn-Cocoa Beach Oceanfront Resort
1300 North Atlantic Avenue • Cocoa Beach, FL 32931
Hosted by Brevard Chapter 303
Contact Dan Ezell, FCEC Program Chair for further information
(321) 433-7943 dezell@mail.ucf.edu



2006 Youth Leadership Forum

The Able Trust is currently accepting applications for the Florida Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a unique leadership program that will take place July 20-23, 2006, in Tallahassee. Fifty current high school sophomores and juniors who have disabilities will be selected as delegates for the forum. The YLF, which is co-sponsored by the Able Trust and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, is designed to bring together young people with disabilities with leadership potential and help prepare them for the future.

The YLF will include educational programs that cover topics such as the history of the disability movement, personal leadership plans, career opportunities and academic and community resources. Delegates will learn leadership by example through meetings with disability community leaders, business professionals and government dignitaries. In addition, social and recreational opportunities will enable delegates to network and learn from each other.

The deadline to submit an application is Friday, December 9, 2005. For more information about the Florida Youth Leadership Forum, visit www.floridaylf.org.

Educational Services Facility
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Viera, FL 32940-6699

Palm Terrace Elementary
1825 Dunn Avenue
Daytona Beach, FL 32114



Florida Department of Education Paperless Communication

The Florida Department of Education has replaced bulk communication with paperless communication. The information distributed in this manner is archived and searchable by keyword. This effort to communicate with Florida's educational community is more timely and cost effective than bulk communication. To register, go to http://www.firn.edu/doe/menu/communications.htm. Indicate your topics of interest and you will receive email notices containing links to messages, reports, legislative updates, technical assistance papers and memorandums issued by the Florida Department of Education. All messages will link to PDF files which may be viewed, downloaded to your computer, or printed at your discretion.

2005-06 PDA-ESE Modules, Brevard & Volusia

Following is Brevard's and Volusia's schedule of PDA-ESE modules for the upcoming school year:

Brevard

Language & Communication (60 hours)
October 3 - December 9, 2005

Assessment & Evaluation (60 hours)
December 1 - February 17, 2006

Interpersonal Interactions (30 hours)
March 1, 2005 - May 12, 2006

Brevard Contact: Cindy Wickham, FDLRS/East
(321)633-1000 X559 or wickhamc@brevard.k12.fl.us

Volusia

Instructional Practices (60)
October 4 - December 9, 2005

Positive Behavioral Supports (60)
December 13, 2005 - February 17, 2006

Transition (60)
March 2 - May 19, 2006

Volusia Contact: Linda Davidson, FDLRS/East
(386)258-4684 or lldavids@volusia.k12.fl.us

For more information about PDA-ESE visit the PDA website at: www.pda-ese.org

Exceptional Student Education Week

will be celebrated October 2-8, 2005. Thanks to Florida's ESE teachers who have contributed to improved instructional leadership and higher student achievement through dedication to Florida's ESE programs!

The Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System is funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education, Division of Public Schools and Community Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, IDEA Part B, Preschool, and State General Revenue Funds.

*This publication can be made available to persons with disabilities in a variety of formats, including large print, cassette tape, and braille. Telephone or written requests should be made at least two weeks prior to the time you need the material and should include your name, address and phone number. In Brevard County requests should be made to Kim Riddle, ESE Lead Teacher, 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, FL 32940-6699, (321) 633-1000, ext. 535 and in Volusia County to Linda Stackpole, FDLRS, 1825 Dunn Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL 32114, (386) 258-4684.

* You can access the Coastline newsletter by visiting the FDLRS/East website at http://fdlrs.brevard.k12.fl.us/east/