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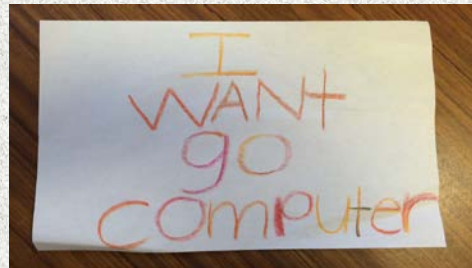
Let's Write About It!

Presented by:
Patty Ashby MNS,CCC-SLP

I'm a Speech/Language
Pathologist! Why do I need to
focus on writing?

Frequently:

We write like we Talk.



We talk like we write.

BONUS:

If a student presents with a language disorder:

If you work on writing, you can typically improve verbal expression, and vice versa.

Writing to Communicate

I frequently see students with severely decreased verbal expression and/or speech intelligibility using writing as their main means of communication by using:

- Text-to-Speech
- Using a pen/pencil/marker/crayon on paper
- Small white board
- Etc.....

- Communicating by writing is such a GREAT augmentative communication tool
- The person is not dependent on “the word” being programmed into his/her communication device- this happens, no matter how robust the language system.
- Communicating by writing is a “way out” if a person does not know where a word is located on his/her device.
- Can typically be used anywhere, anytime, since can be lite-tech as well as high-tech

We write to communicate all of the time:

- Texting
- Emailing
- Writing notes
- Writing lists
- To sign our name (ownership- this is mine!)
- Letters
- Cards
- notes
- Etc, etc.....

The more I work in this field as a speech/language pathologist, the more I realize that in order for a person to be a *competent communicator*, a person needs to have the skills/means to *speak and to write*.

Writing is expressive language,
only in a written format.

So Let's get our students writing!

Uh, one little problem: When I suggest writing something, all the students in my group give a collective groan.

“I don’t want to write!”

“It’s too hard”

“Why do I have to do this?”

Why do so many students hate to write?

This is important to address, since a person has to practice daily writing to possibly gain enough skills to use text to communicate, or for any other purposes.

1. It IS hard for them.
2. It IS boring.
3. Many times, there is not a real purpose to the writing a student is asked to do, so they don't see why they ***need*** to do it.

1. It is hard for them

Why?

Is the student struggling to:

- write the letters?
- to spell correctly?
- figure out what to say?
- to understand what these letters are all about??

Answers: Yes, yes, yes and yes

Struggling to write the letters-

-students must have access to alternative ways of writing other than a pen / pencil, etc., if he / she struggles to write letters.

Otherwise, the student will hate writing. Who wouldn't??

The ***entire point*** in writing is to get your thoughts down in a written format. This is the “communication” piece. This is what makes writing fun.

Students who struggle to formulate written language have to have access to ways to formulate those letters other than using a pen/pencil.

Frequently, students are taught to hate to write.

- Goals that focus on tracing- year after year
- Hand over hand goals- year after year
- Practice writing name for multiple years on an IEP.
- Writing letters separately, (a page of m's) - multiple times on a page, year after year, many times with tracing or hand-over-hand support.

It's no wonder these students hate to "write."

- These students have never been provided with opportunities to formulate language in a written format for meaningful purposes.
- So many times, the focus on "writing" is really about formulating letters, vs. getting ideas down in a written format

- I'm not saying that letter formulation should not be worked on, but....
 - Students need tons of opportunities to write for meaningful reasons, **in addition** to practicing letter formulation (advise with your OT)
 - Sometimes we need to “move on” - how many years are going to be focused on formulating letters??? If time is only spent on this skill, the students are missing out on tons of writing opportunities!!

We know that early exposure to meaningful experiences with literacy is huge:

- Classrooms filled with print, language and literacy play, storybook reading, and writing allow children **to experience the joy and power** associated with reading and writing while mastering basic concepts about print that research has shown are strong predictors of achievement.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/learning-read-and-write-what-research-reveals>

- But the ability to read and write does not develop naturally, without careful planning and instruction. ***Children need regular and active interactions with print.*** Specific abilities required for reading and writing come from immediate experiences with oral and written language.
- <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/learning-read-and-write-what-research-reveals>

Well.....

- If our students hate to hold a pencil because of sensory issues
- If our students struggle with visual-spatial skills resulting with them having a very difficult time formulating letters
- If our students do not have the fine-motor skills to hold a pencil
- If our students are so concrete that they can't understand what all of these lines and loops on paper are all about.....

How many meaningful experiences will the student be involved in with writing?

How many of the experiences will be positive?

How many of the experiences will help the students understand the “joy” of writing?

- SO often the answer is: Very little experiences and the experiences are negative.

Techniques to use to write other than holding a pencil:

- Using a keyboard
- Text-to-speech
- Apps

Writing with alternative pencils for individuals with complex communication needs:

“Gretchen Hanser- Alternative pencils”
- see resources at end of PPT

Using a keyboard

- Can be on a communication device
- Can be on an iPad app or other tablet app
- Can be on a iPod Touch
- Can be on any cell phone
- Can be on a computer
- Classroom Suite Intellikeys
- Portable keyboards such as the *Fusion*
- Lite tech keyboard (printed out on paper)
- Etc.....

Text-to-Speech

- Communication device: typically has keyboard and text-to-speech

The student can use the text-to-speech feature in his/her communication device as a means to write.

This feature is frequently overlooked in classrooms.



Text-to-speech:

- Takes the “motor load” out of writing, so the student can focus on getting ideas down vs. how to formulate a letter
- Helps spelling, since the student can “listen” to what he/she wrote, and attempt to correct if it sounds wrong
- Help gives meaning to those strange symbols, since it shows a student more concretely that those symbols are used to create words, which can be said out loud
- Better cognitive engagement since the student is “listening” on his/her own, vs. another person saying it for them to hear

Remember to print!!

Portable keyboards, Communication devices and tablets can be linked to a printer (via bluetooth or hardwired) so the student's work can be printed out and taken home.

Put on the refrigerator!

Give his/her work validation!!

Printing from tablets

- Typically schools do not have bluetooth printers- with iPads, if there is internet access, you can copy/paste from the message window of the language app into the "notes" app and either print/email out to print-
- Also, can email to parents so they can print out

Favorite app for text-to-speech:

- **Predictable** \$159.99 By Therapy Box Limited



- Best word prediction
- Best “next word” prediction
- Switch accessible
- -can email, facebook, or tweet message created from app

Verbally – not as strong as Predictable but cost is right! FREE

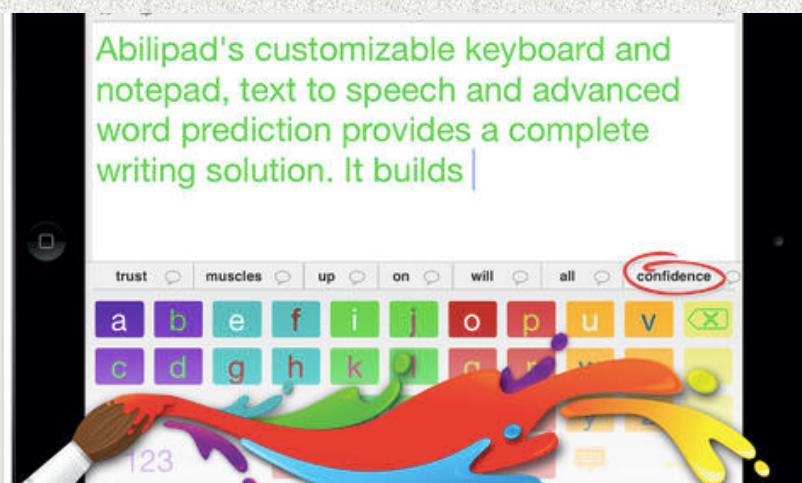


Many people who have strong literacy skills want to only use text-to-speech or writing apps as his / her augmentative communication device.

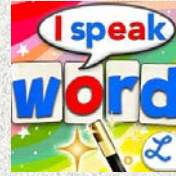
Popular: Ipad mini with Predictable- many high school students prefer- no “pictures”

One high school did not want a device, but only wanted to use text on his phone to show people

Text-to-Speech app
Abilipad app \$19.99



Word Wizard alternative keyboard with text-to-speech



Motivating alternative keyboard: Writing with *Magnetic ABC* app



Poor Spelling

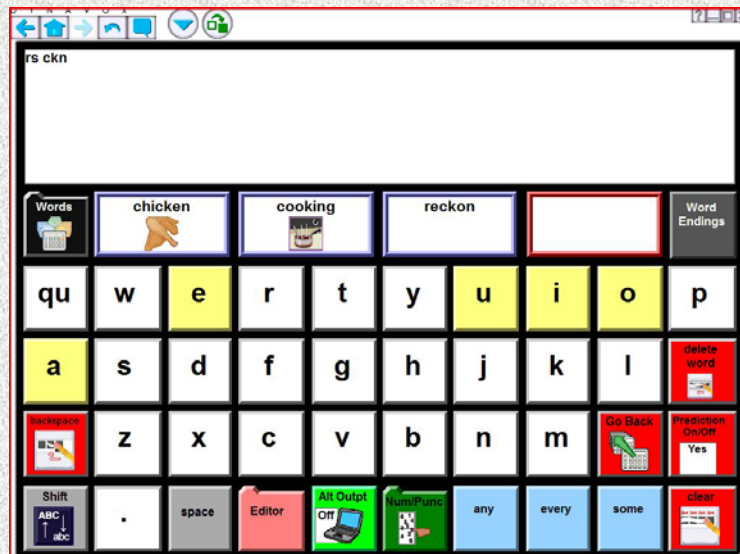
- “He can’t spell so he cannot use text to communicate.”

First Letter Cue: HUGE

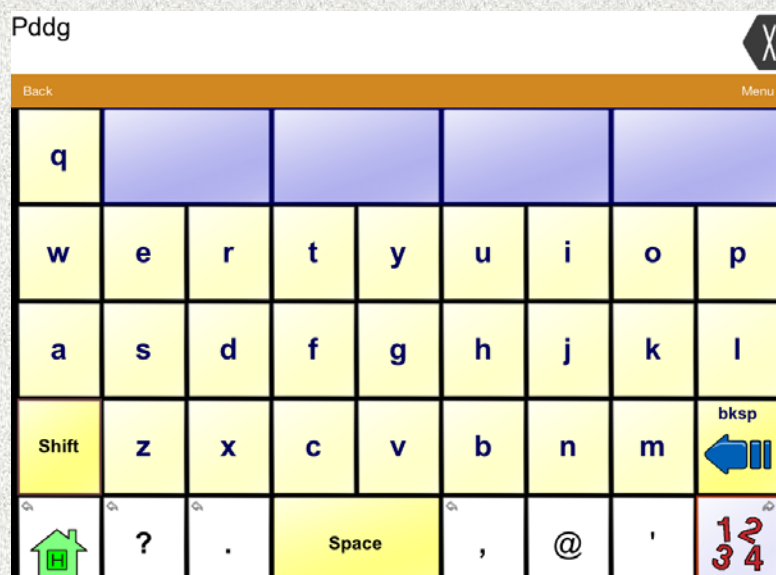
This boy was sitting in front of the T.V. pointing to it.
He wanted to watch a cartoon.



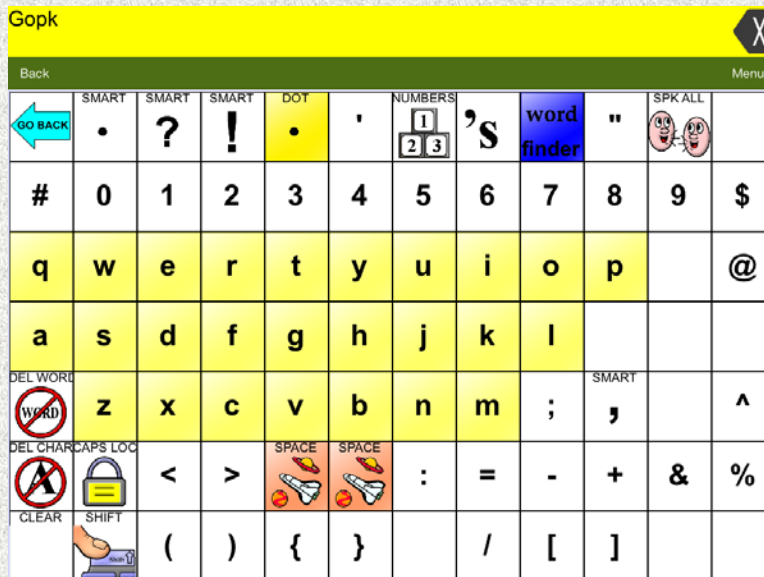
A high school girl telling her mom
what she wanted for dinner.



What a little boy wanted for dessert



A little girl, pointing to her mom's car. Her mom asked her where she wanted to go.



Even a first letter cue can help narrow down the guessing game of what a person is trying to say.

Encourage the person to “Just try- it’s ok if you don’t know how to spell it. Just write the letters you hear when you say it in your head.”

Remember:

Word prediction helps tremendously with spelling difficulties

Samples of activities that students “want to write about”

My goal during sessions:

- To provide students with multiple opportunities to purposefully write about something they are interested in.
- I really don't care about spelling – that is not my goal – I just want to see students writing-
- I stress this with my students, “It's ok, just try!”
“Don't worry about the spelling, just do your best.”
- I purposefully make mistakes with spelling in front of the students. Many times other students will correct me. YES!!

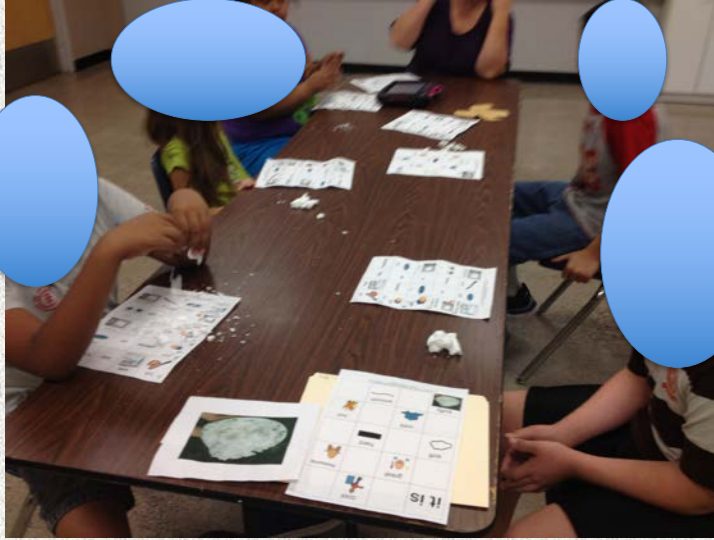
The BEST is when:

- Students “let go” and just start writing for the fun of writing.
- One student said to me “I know Ms. Patty, Let’s write about it!” That was my ultimate goal right there – he WANTED to write.
- Once students want to write, the editing can come later....DON’T EDIT AS THE STUDENTS WRITE – what a killjoy!

Project: *Puffy Soap*



You HAVE to set background knowledge before you can expect a person to write about something in a meaningful manner.



Background knowledge

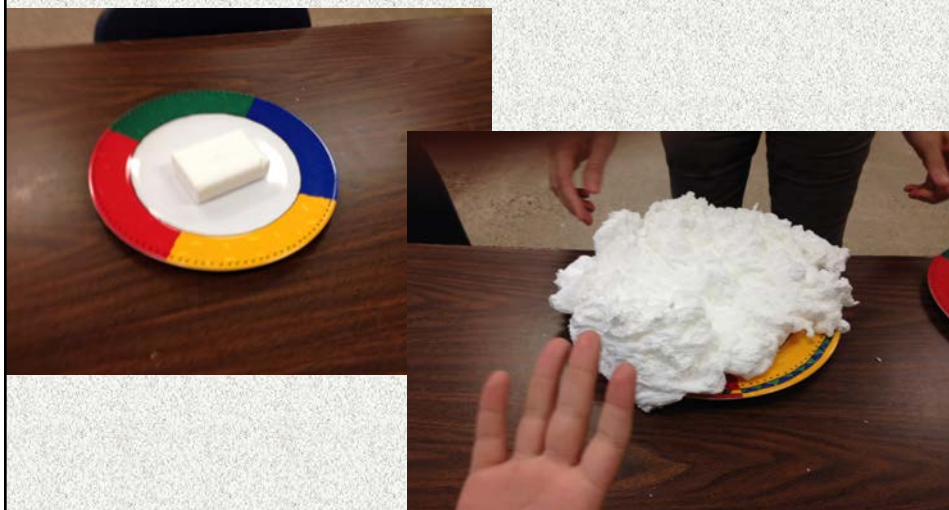


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Using ***Pictures with Words*** app with a personal picture to write about....



Before and After were two temporal concepts we focused on. We experienced it, then wrote about it.



Sticky Notes app



BEFORE

hhard
hard
cold
gghhhhjjjjkl
clod

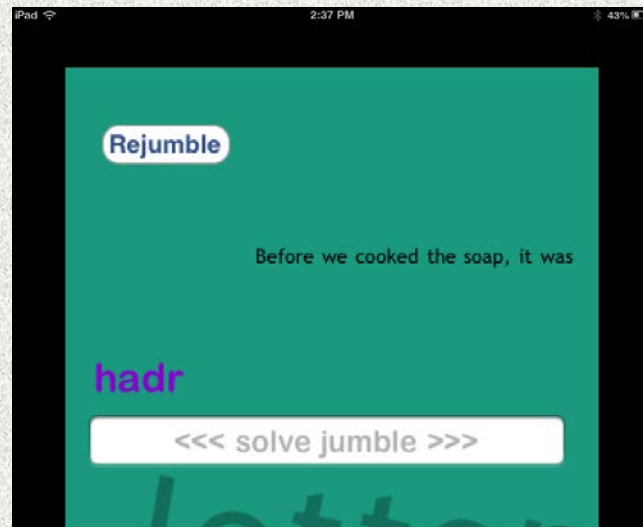
AFTER

paff soap
hht
crumbly
griDml(:?lonkifgbkjffbmfg
bmgbmgbk
erbrubry

Don't forget the power of a dry erase marker and a big white board for students who enjoy writing with a pencil/marker, etc.



Working with target concepts with the *letter jumble* app- if you don't have the app just use the concept!

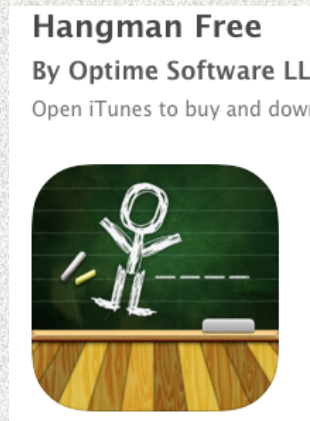


Depending on the student's needs, the jumble can be solved with different support levels.

My class: We worked it out together with the iPad projected on a white board. The students worked together putting the letters in different order and trying to figure out the word.

Since they had such strong background knowledge of the target word, they always figured it out!

Hangman is another great way to reinforce vocabulary the students are working on.

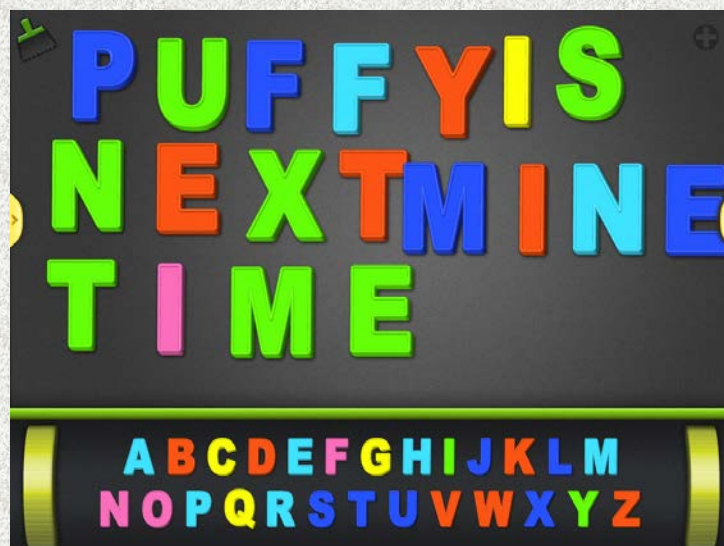


- With my students, if I let them write about their “favorite” first, they will then “refocus” and write about the topic being discussed. If I don’t let them do this, it becomes a power struggle and they do not want to write.
- Plus: It is great that they want to write at all!!

Student wanting to write about “cookie crisps” when the topic was the soap activity



She then wrote on topic.



Need I say more??!



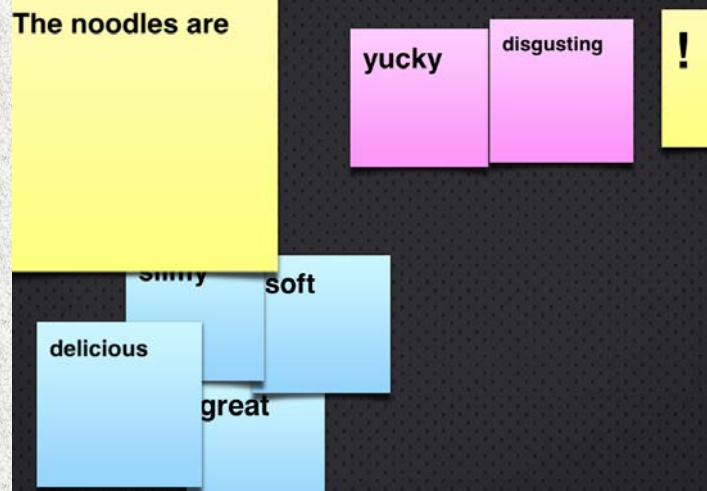
He then wrote about the soap experiment.



Goal: generating descriptors beyond good and bad. This is the “sticky notes” app.



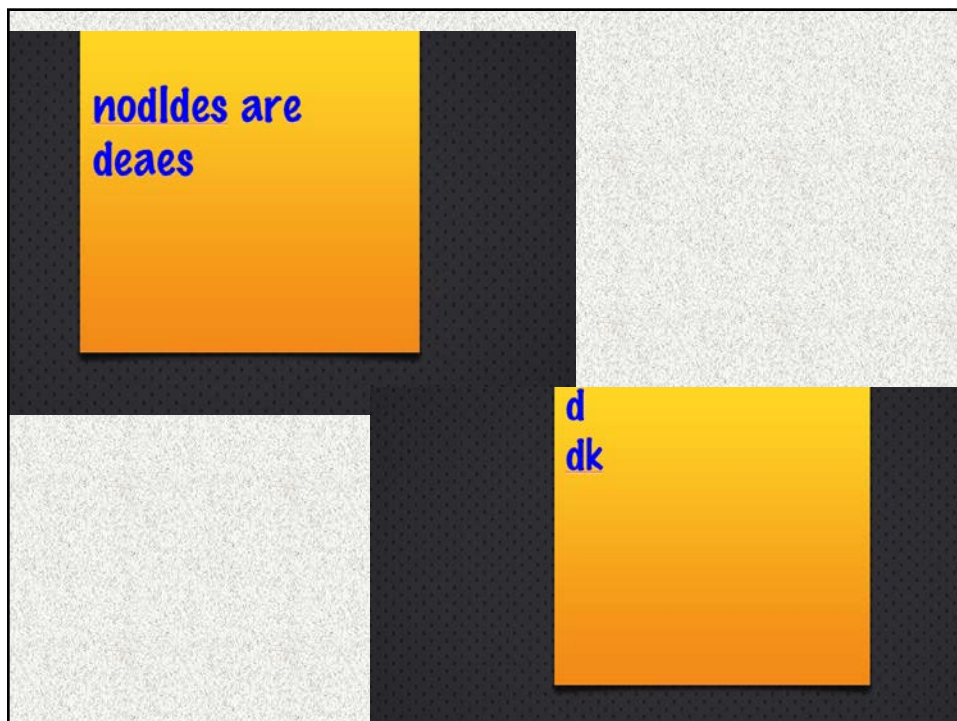
- photo 1



Writing with sticky notes- this student flat out refused to hold a pencil/marker etc. But he would use a keyboard and any alternative pencil/keyboards.



After working with the sentence generation task prior, the students generated their own description with sticky notes.



Student just introduced to a keyboard.
Refusing to hold a pencil, marker, etc.



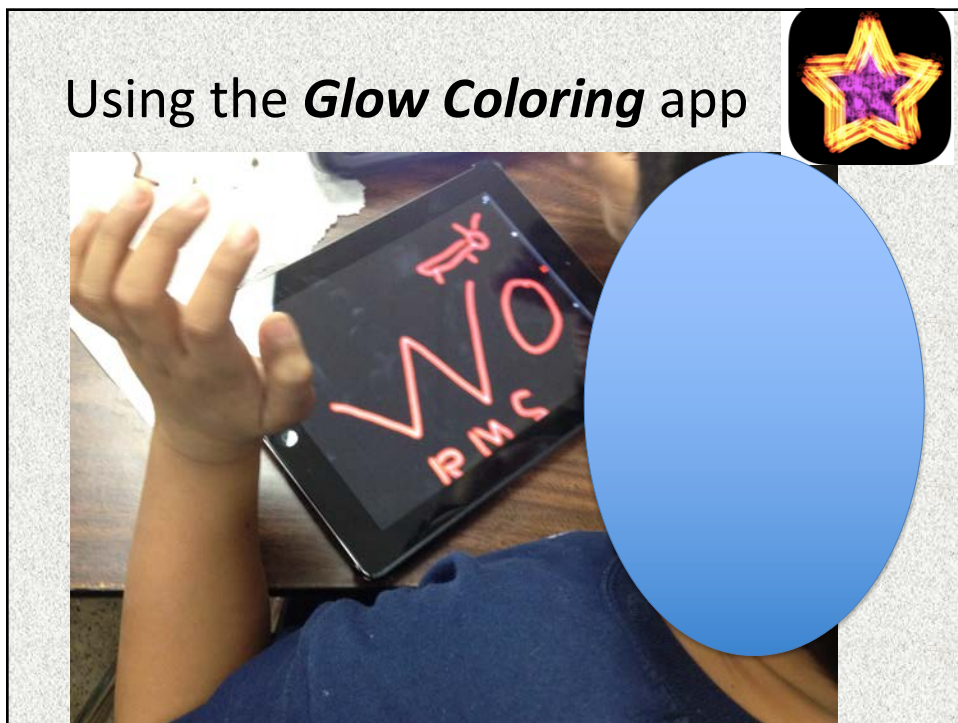
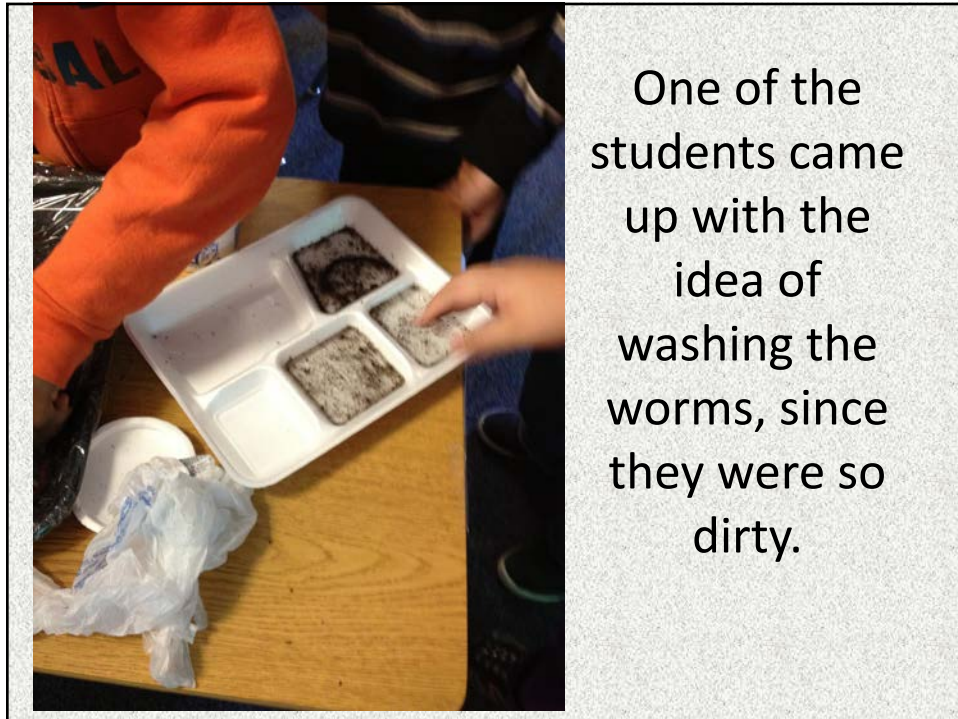
His writing.

voi
fbdiontdgoitrsg
hiulevjhkhgln
vjjuffgtffggggg
hhghhhbghghjg
nghghvhhj

Writing about worms

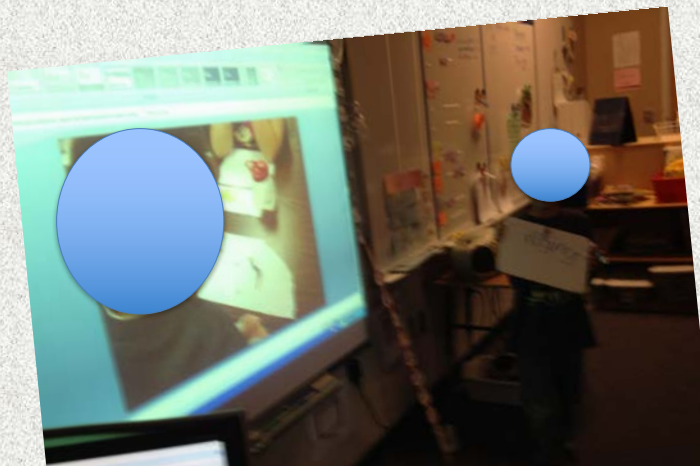


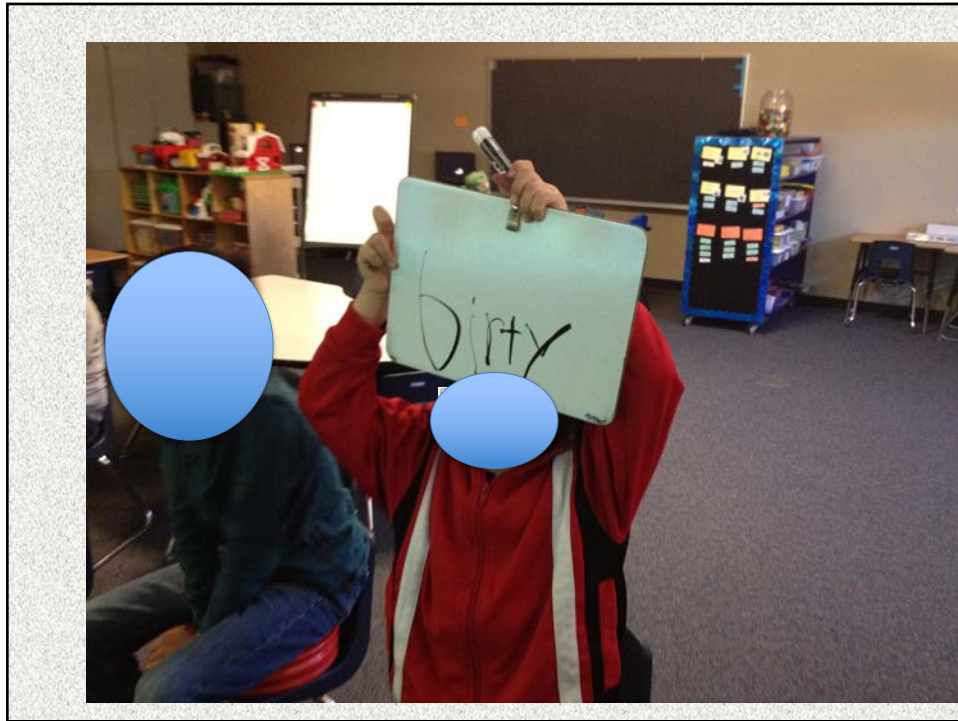
Setting the background knowledge so the students have the experiences to talk/write about.





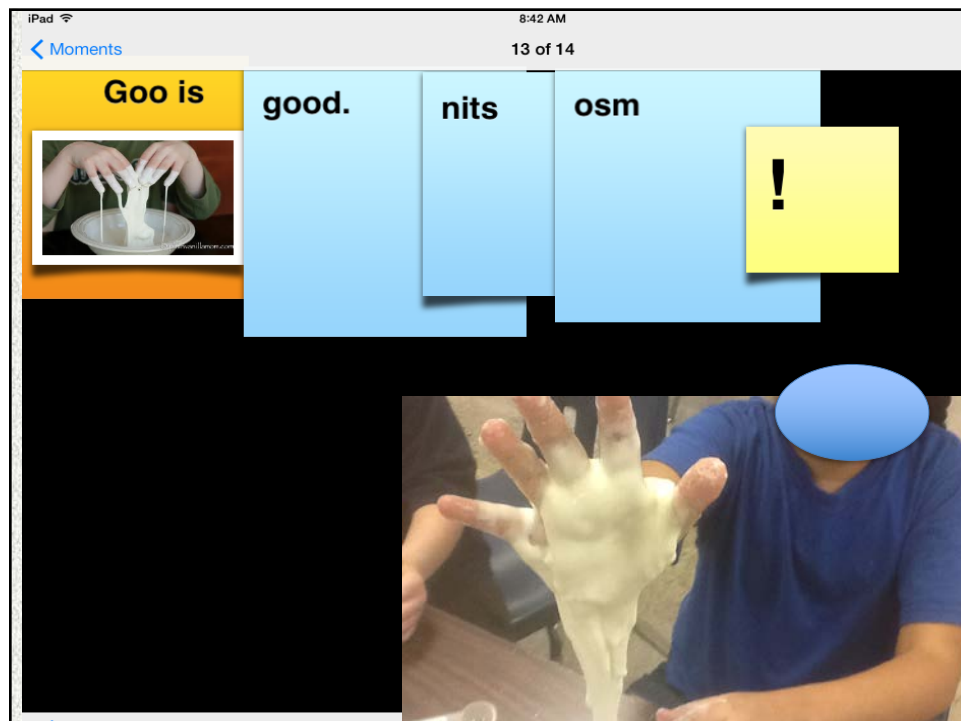
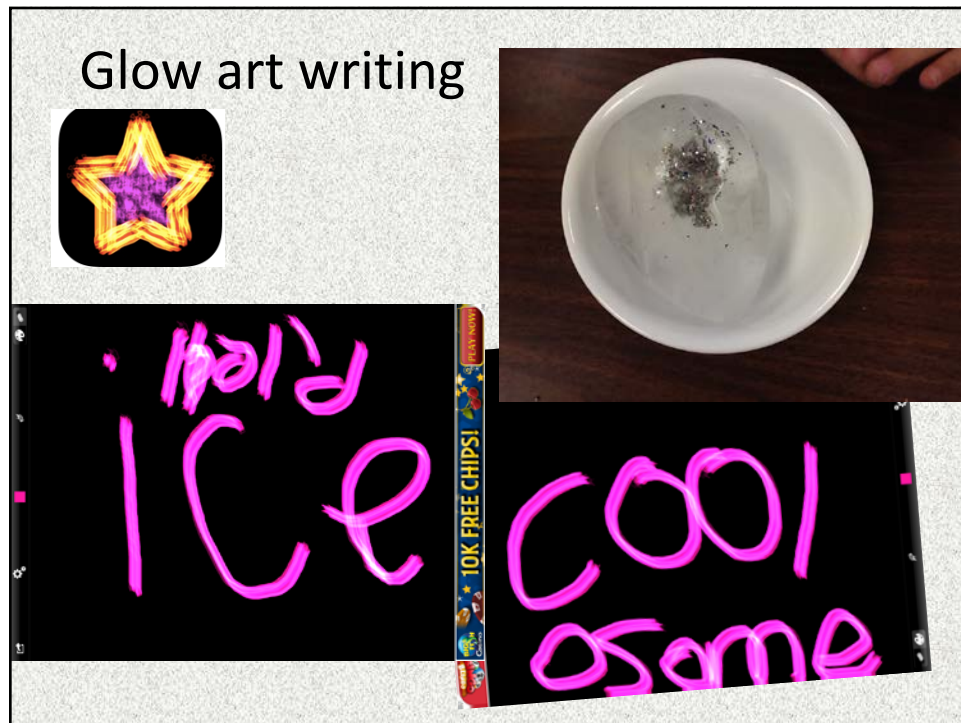
Creating a book with PowerPoint. The students wrote out on a small white board what they wanted to say/write about a picture of him/her playing with the worms. Students who did not want to write with a marker used the keyboard on the computer.





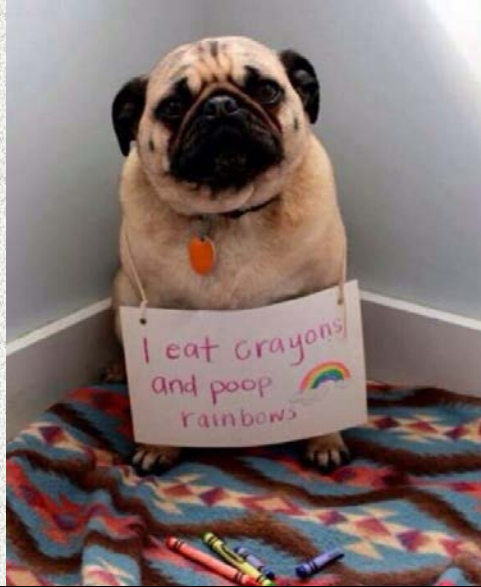
The worms also got in on the action.
“Worm art,” using the ***Glow Coloring*** app.



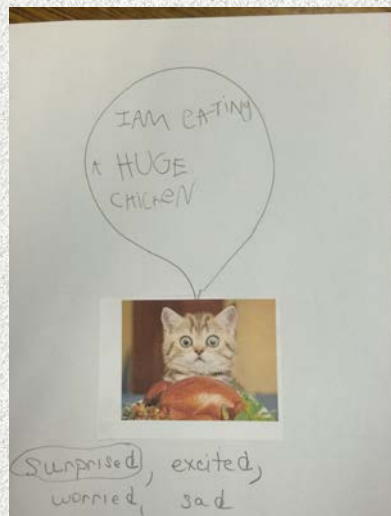


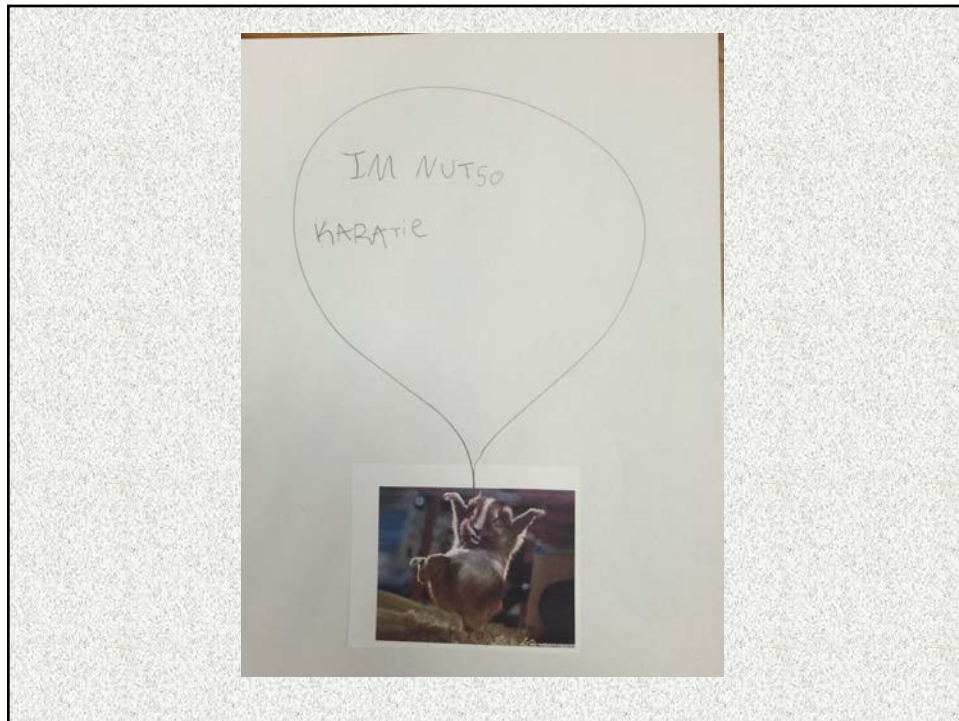
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Writing just for the fun of it!



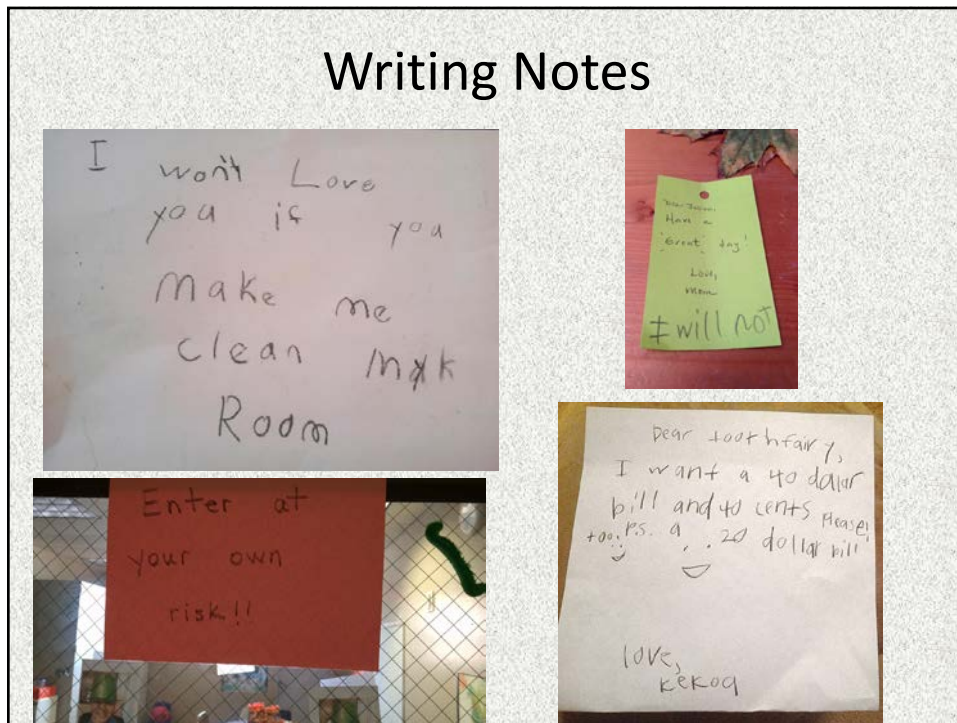
Using silly images from google image for writing from a funny perspective. Working beyond the "black and white" with a student who has high functioning autism.



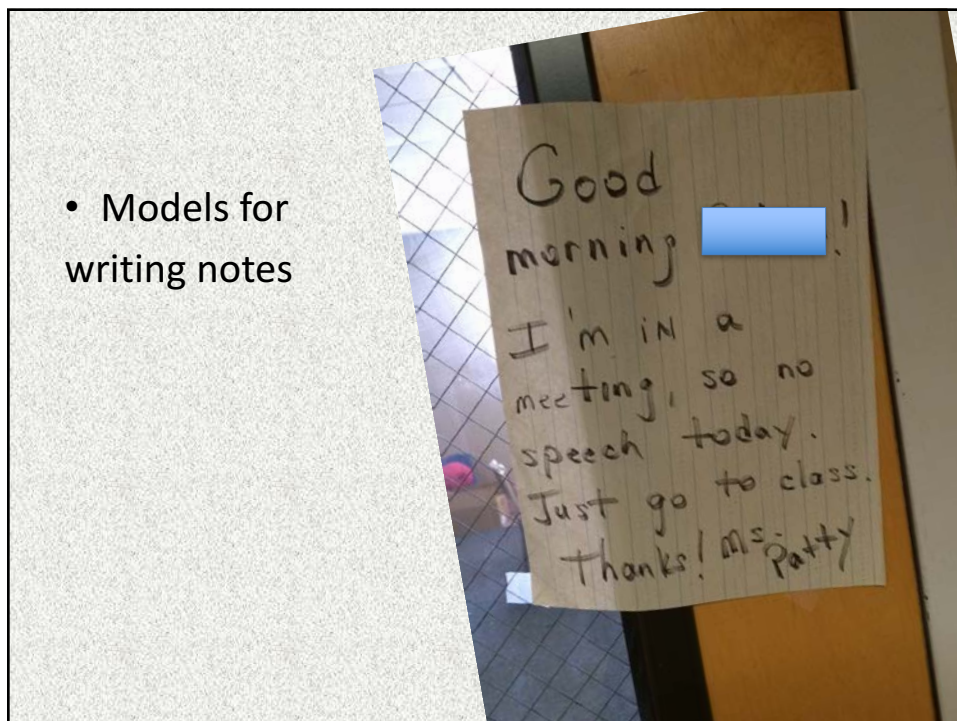


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Writing Notes



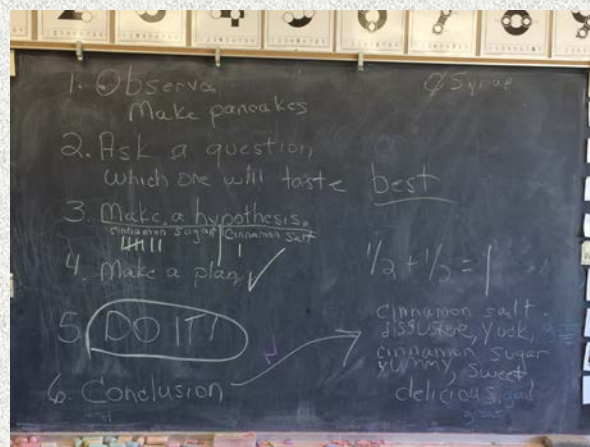
- Models for writing notes



Lots of apps available for writing cards

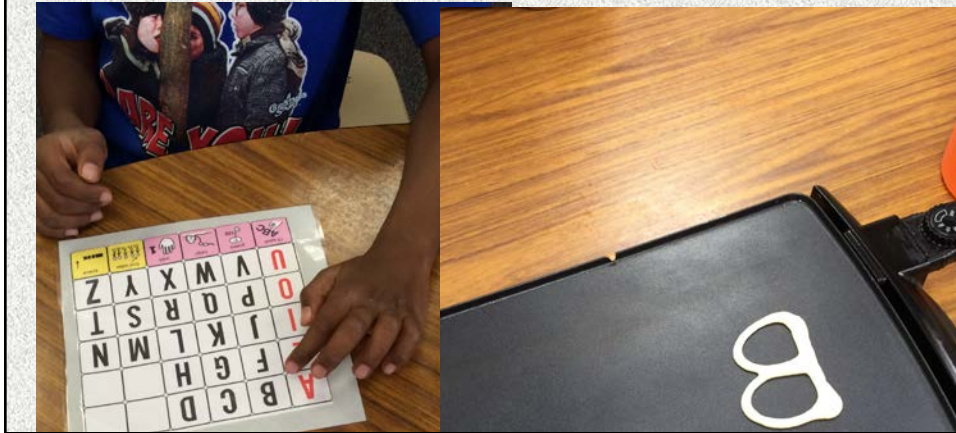


Model writing whenever you can- write as you work out activities – make mistakes, and show how you fix them- show that is ok to make mistakes. Ask students for help spelling or help thinking of a word, etc....



Writing with pancakes! Writing with an alphabet board.
I wrote the letters as the students spelled their name.
Older students wrote on the griddle themselves.

Alphabet board by Caroline Musselwhite <http://www.aacintervention.com>



Narrowing the field to choose from. This is not a “no, that’s wrong activity.” As the student is spelling, if they choose the wrong letter, say his/her name out loud as it would be pronounced with that letter, so the student can hear that it doesn’t sound right.

If the student is using text-to-speech do the same thing: let them hear the word as they spell. This way they can hear if it doesn’t sound right and try to correct it. This is **productive feedback**.



Caroline
Musselwhite

<http://www.aacintervention.com>

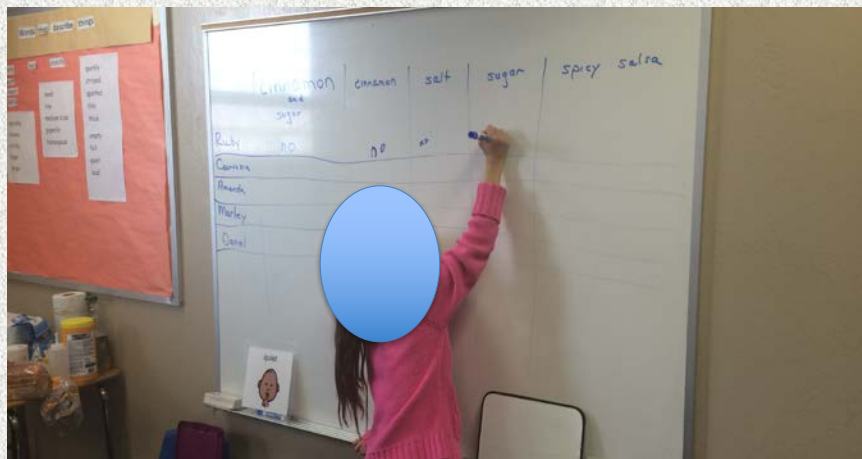
Students spelled their name with letters.



After spelling their name, they ate it!

Goal: descriptions

Writing: voting likes and dislikes of different flavors of toast, to reinforce new descriptions.



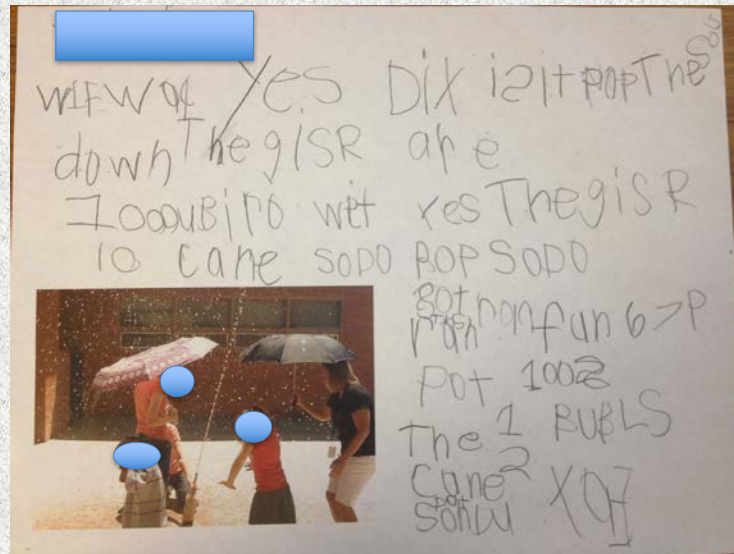
Final votes – counting up the totals

	cinnamon and sugar	cinnamon	salt	sugar	spicy salsa
DAN G	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Erin	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Itzina	Yes	Yes	NO	Yes	Yes
YAL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Xiansha	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total	No: 0 Yes: 5	No: 0 Yes: 5	No: 2 Yes: 3	No: 0 Yes: 5	No: 1 Yes: 4

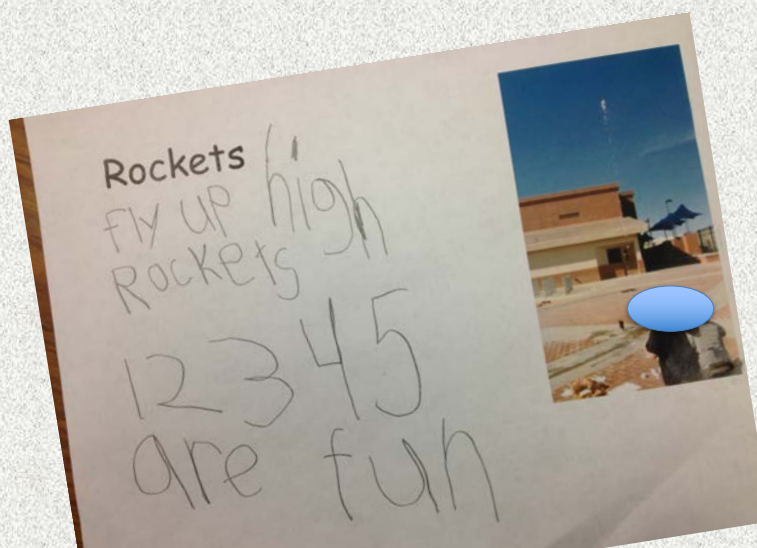
Writing to name a picture a student created- generating titles



Writing about a “geyser” activity



Writing about a rocket activity.

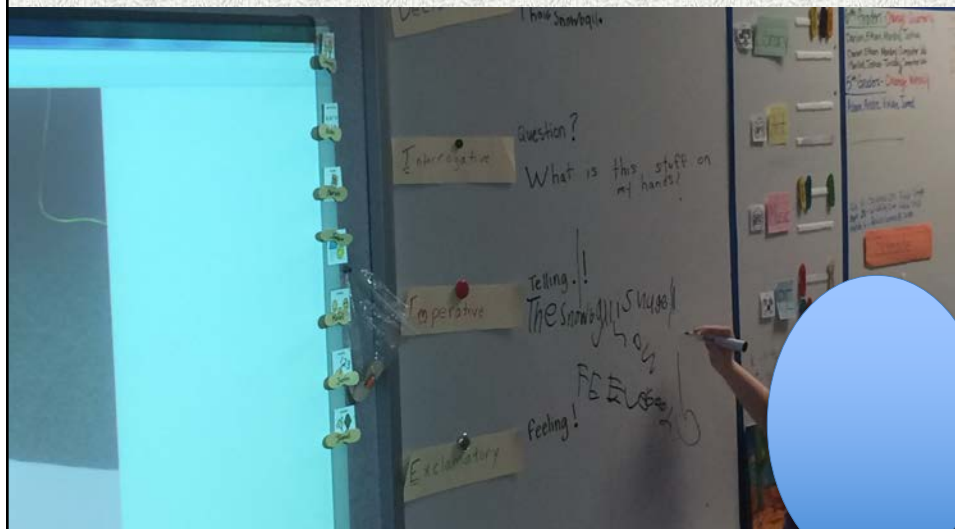


Working on generating different sentence forms.
A teacher requested help reinforcing this skill with the students.

30 min - Activity: we made fake snow and the students played with it for awhile.

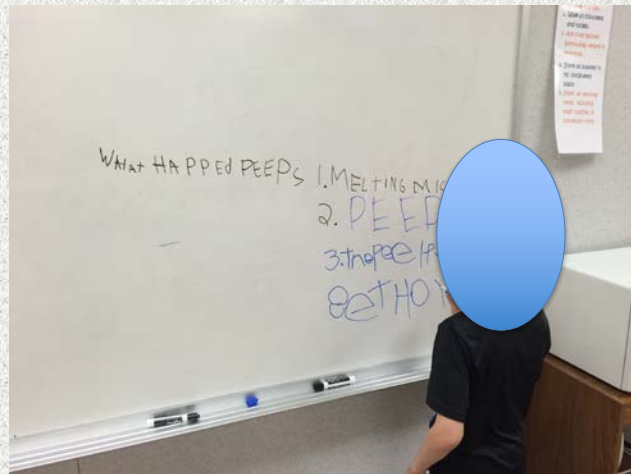


30 min: Then I emailed the pictures from my phone to my school email. From the computer, we projected the pictures on the board, and the students wrote one of the four sentence types about the picture.

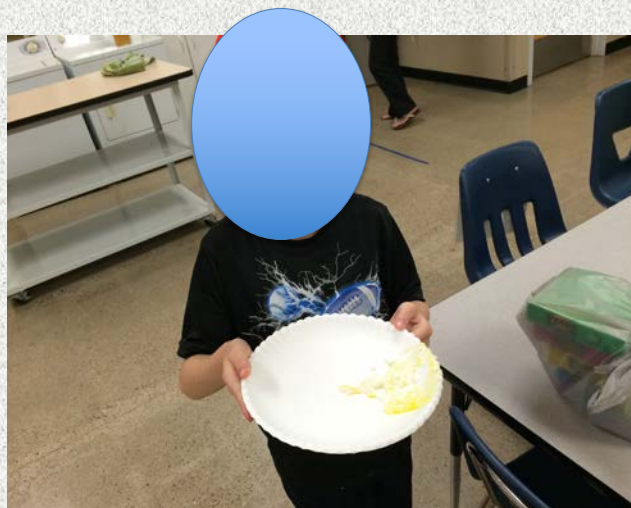


Hmmm, what happens when you put a peep in the microwave?

First the students predicted.

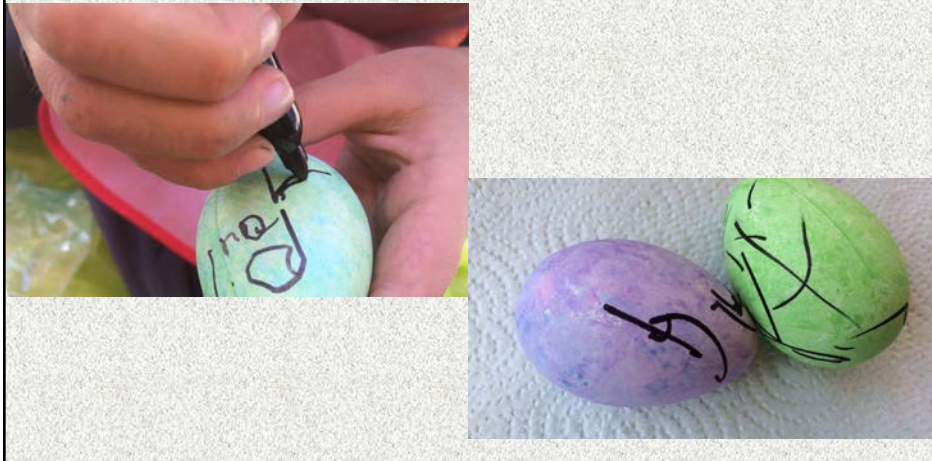


Then they did the activity and came up with conclusions. We wrote about it.

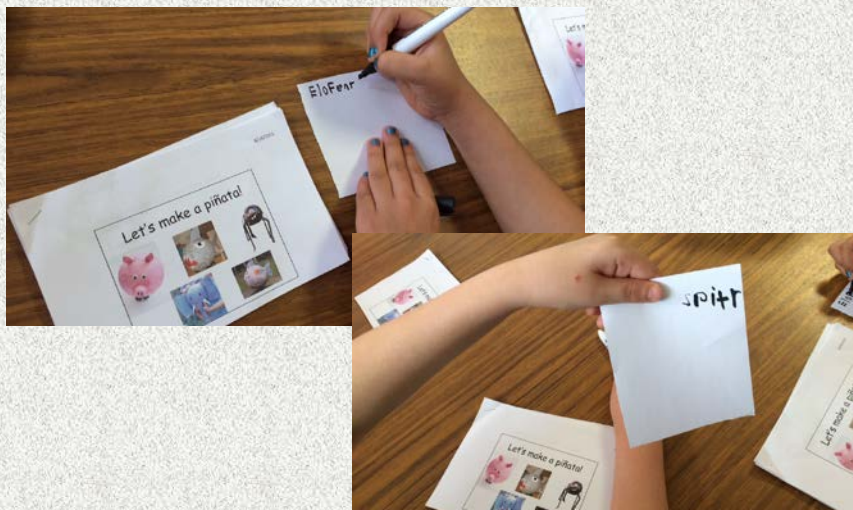


Get writing into any activity you are doing!

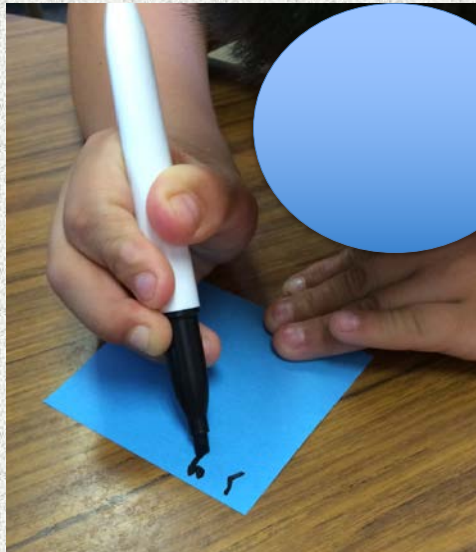
Writing name on eggs to take home.



Writing to vote for which piñata
he/she wanted to make



Writing to put your name on a goodie bag to take home.



Comic book! app

Art of Glow VERY motivating



Doodle Buddy app Very versatile



Gimme 5: Nervous

Student: _____ Date: _____

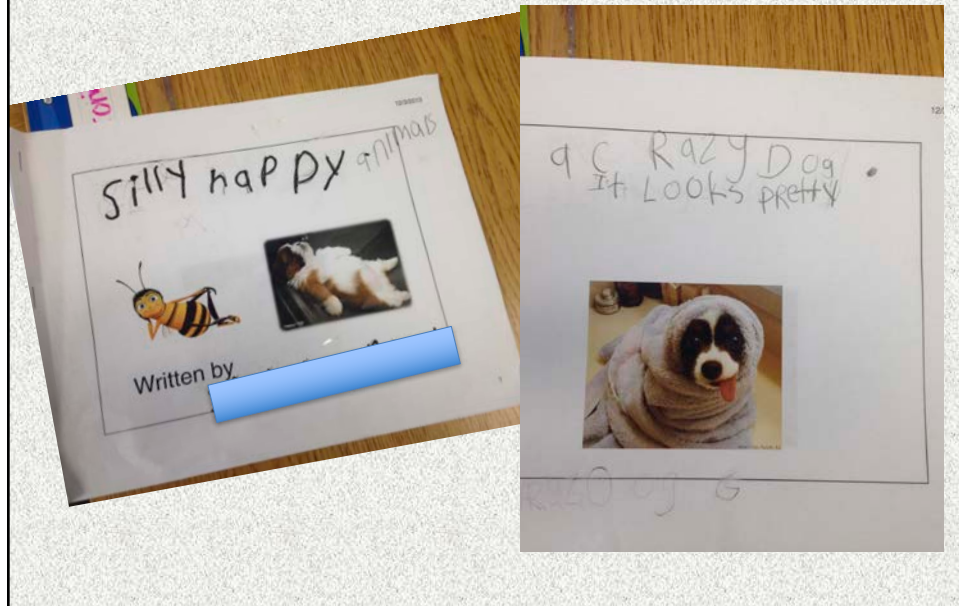
Give me 5 things that make you nervous.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Write 5 things that make you feel happy.

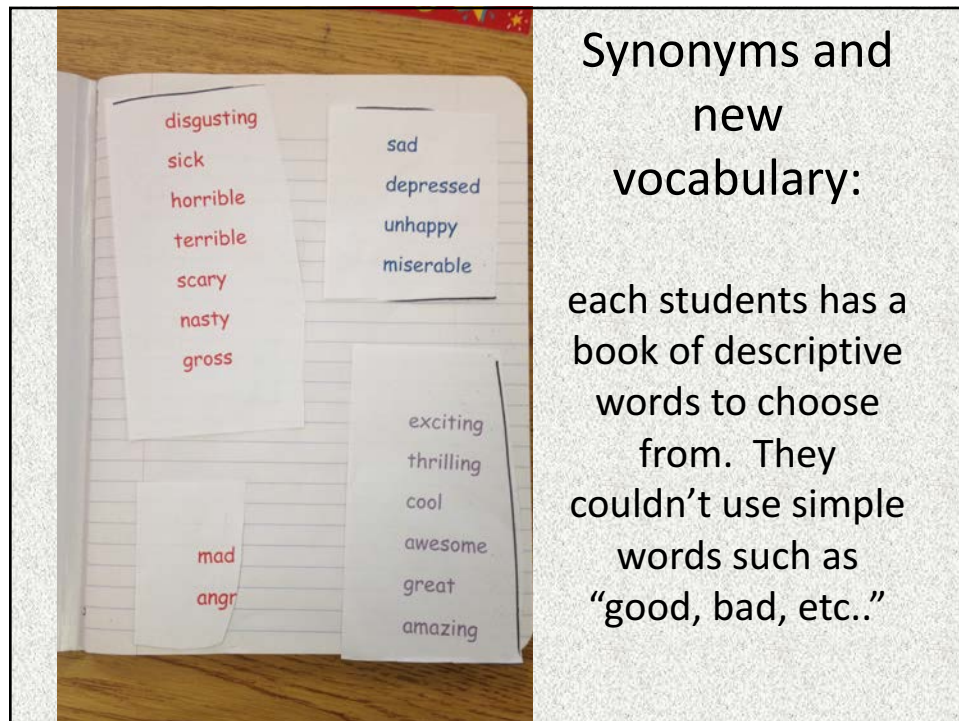
1. getting adog 
2. smile 
3. learning 
4. palyingwithmysiteter 
5. spkgs 

Books, Books, Books

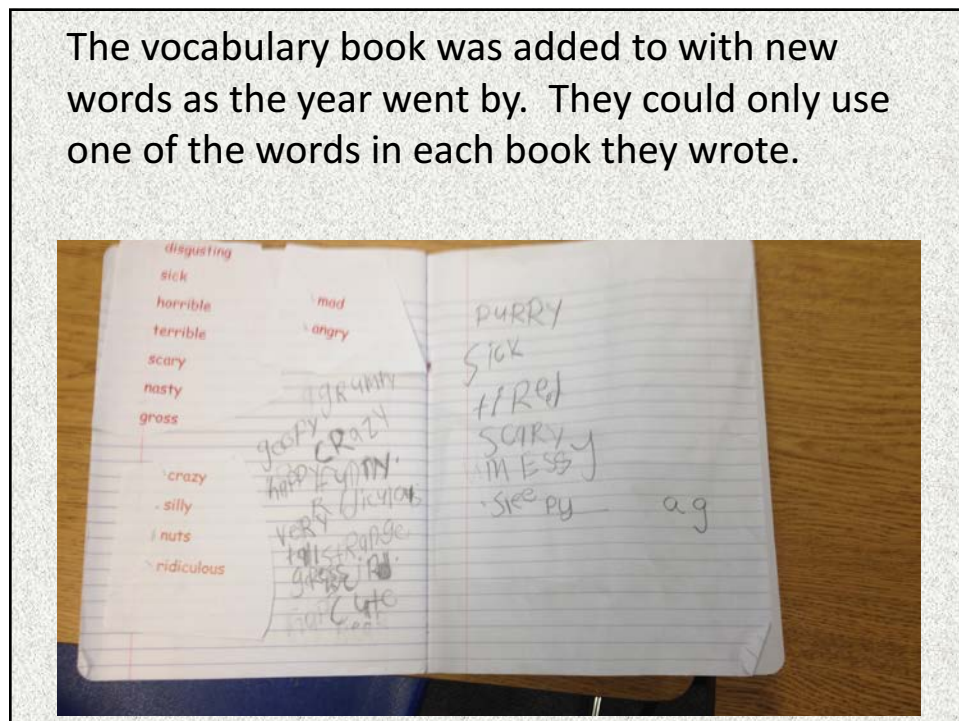


Having students write books is very powerful:

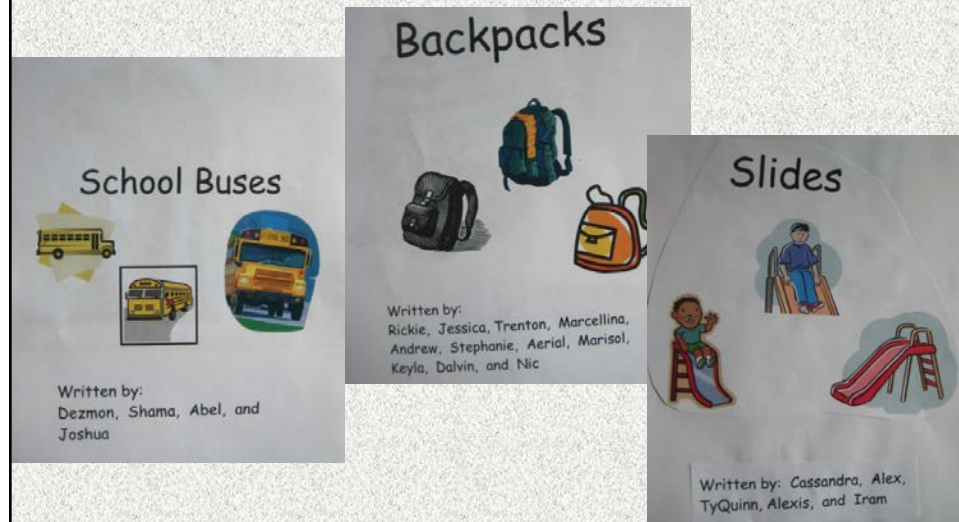
- Practice sequencing
- Practice telling and retelling a story that they care about
- Reinforcing new vocabulary
- Practice sentence construction
- Generalization- the students bring the books home to show to parents, and the language is reinforced in that setting as well



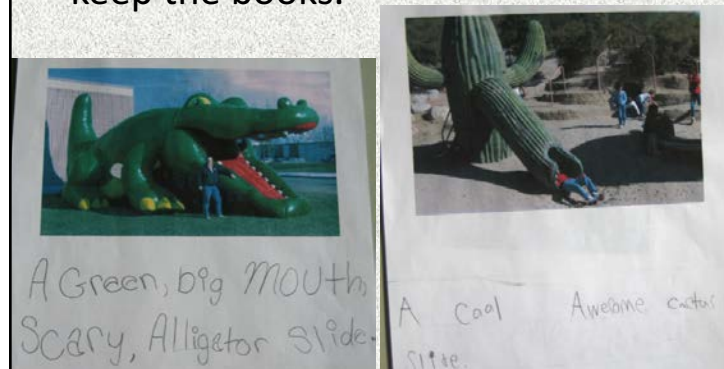
The vocabulary book was added to with new words as the year went by. They could only use one of the words in each book they wrote.



Writing books for preschool students Students generated “topics”



After the pages were edited, the pages were laminated and put together to make a book. The students read the book to the preschoolers and the preschoolers got to keep the books.



The preschoolers LOVED them. They actually wore them out and the pages had to be bound again.

Electronic Talking Books- very motivating platform for students to write with

My favorites:

- Pictello \$19.99 -has text-to-speech and highlights words as speaking- can download book as PDF to print out



- Click n' Talk
\$2.99 recorded speech



- I print these out by taking screen shots of each page and then printing-

Turning a lesson gone south into something productive.

Noodles!



Next >

- Creating an electronic book about Noodles. I took pictures while the students were eating the noodles, emailed them to my school email from my phone.
- We then moved over to the white board with the iPad connected to the projector, to project the book and write about the pictures I took.

Goal: sentence formulation

It's my back. I don't like noodles! No thanks.



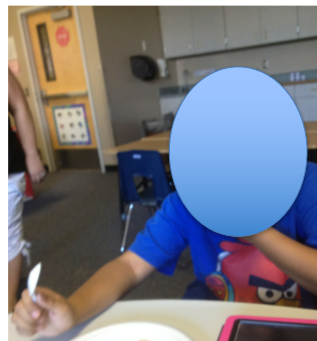
Goal: descriptors

The noodles are puffy. I like them. They were cold. They were hot.



Goal: expressing likes/dislikes

oooo, yum, delicious. I like food.
Eat it. Noodles.



Kid in a Story



- Unique because: a picture of the student can be added throughout the book- fun graphics



Purposeful writing project

*Palo Verde Middle School
Washington Elementary School District
Phoenix, AZ*

Patty Ashby MNS, CCC-SLP

Caseload:

30 students – ages 12-13

Various diagnoses:
autism
severe learning disorders
mild / borderline ID
mild cerebral palsy

Slide from Patty Ashby

- Students were seen as a class 1x a week for 50 minutes.
- Activities throughout the school year focused on interactive, hands-on activities that could be replicated at home.

The activities provided multiple opportunities for purposeful writing. Students were not writing just to write, but for a specific purpose.

Slide from Patty Ashby

3 Month Activity

Learning to sew for various purposes

1. Making sock puppets for preschool class
2. Making pillows for mother's day

Slide from Patty Ashby

First Activity

Learning to thread a needle and tie a knot at the end.

Purposeful writing activity:

- writing down directions for threading a needle

Slide from Patty Ashby

Threading a needle

Name: [redacted] Date: 2-24-2011

Materials you will need: scissors, needle, thread, string, cushion

First: measure your thread use a ruler to measure the string

Then: cut the thread into two pieces

Next: put the thread through the needle through the hole

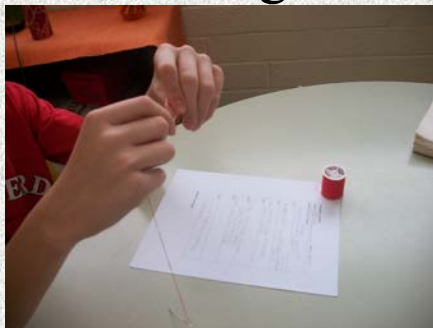
Next: make the string even your rap the ends around your finger and thumb two times slide it off

Next: slide the thread off your finger

Finally: pinch the thread and slide down between two fingers

Keep Practicing!!

The students used their written directions to complete the task. This led to greater independence.



Second Activity

Sewing on buttons *Repetition with Variation!*

Purposeful writing activity:

Writing directions for sewing on a button

Slide from Patty Ashby

Sewing a button

Name: [redacted] Date: Mar 10

Materials you will need:
Socks, Buttons, thread, Felt, sizzlers, needle, ruler

First: Cut out a small piece of felt

Then: Cut thread and thread your needle and tie a knot

Next: Poke your needle thru the felt

Next: Pull the thread thru felt till the knot

Next: Put the needle thru the bottom hole and drop it

Next: Push the needle thru the other hole

Next: Push the thread over and over again

STOP



Third Activity

Making puppets

Purposeful Writing Activity

Develop a puppet plan

Slide from Patty Ashby

Sock Puppet Plan

Name [redacted] Date 2-17-2011

Character (what type of puppet are you going to make?)
dog

Materials you will need: sock young ear
eye felt button

The students made their puppets based on the written plan.



Fourth Activity

Put on a puppet show for the preschoolers, then gave the children the puppets.

Purposeful Writing Activity

Describing Puppet Character

Slide from Patty Ashby

Name [redacted] _____

Describe your puppet character

Name of puppet character: *Adriana Reyes*

Gender: (boy or girl) *girl*

Personality: *loveable and caring*
and to be read

Likes to: *to spend time with*
her friends.

Doesn't like to: *be girly*

Slide from Patty Ashby

The entire class developed a story together based on their puppet characters. This story was performed by the class using their puppets for the preschool.

Slide from Patty Ashby

They generated settings and voted on them

Park 3
 house
 Store 3
 mall 4 6
 - theme park 4
 mansion 4 4
 beach 4
 pool party 2 5
 Grocery store 4 3

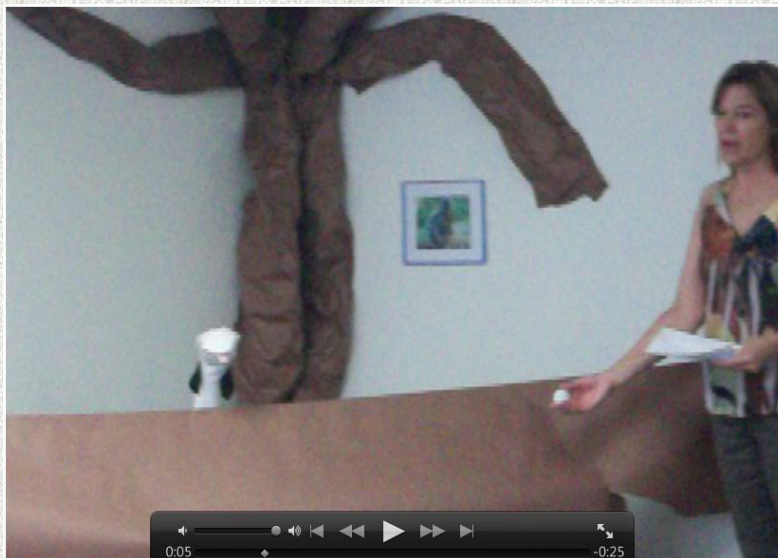
Slide from Patty Ashby

They worked as a group to develop the plot.

- One took place at Great Skate. Mishaps kept occurring, but Superman was there to save everyone. They ended the story by everyone rapping (including the preschoolers).

Slide from Patty Ashby

One show was on a stage. A talent show took place with each puppet demonstrating their own special talent.



Another show took place at Great Skate.



Next Sewing Activity

Sewing pillows for Mother's day. The students wrote to their moms on the pillows using permanent markers.

Process was:

- Generating ideas on white board
- Completed a rough draft
- Revised / edited (editing for a purpose)
- Published on the pillows

Slide from Patty Ashby



Goals focused on:

- Sequencing in many contexts
- New vocabulary – (since these were used purposefully, the students retained the words they learned)
- Generating complete sentences
- Generating short stories
- Verbally participating in group activities
- Following and providing directions
- Speaking in large group settings
- Social/Pragmatic skills

Slide from Patty Ashby

BONUS! Generalization of language and functional skills

- A male student told me he sewed a hole in his pocket by himself
- A male student told the class that a button came off his shirt, and he fixed it himself.
- Many students started sewing at home with their moms.

Slide from Patty Ashby

EDITING, continued.....

Editing for the sake of editing

- Ugh
- BORING!!!!!!!

Editing to publish

- YES!!
- MOTIVATING!!

Tar Heel Reader

Resource from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill NC

- Free resource for easy books
- Appropriate for beginner readers: older students, age respectful content
- Offers an authoring tool for teachers
- Can read books online, or download in PowerPoint
- Offers text-to-speech reading
- Accessible via switches and Intellikeys

www.tarheelreader.org

In order for a book to be published on Tar Heel Reader, it must be edited correctly.

This is VERY motivating for students to edit their writing. There is a real purpose to editing.

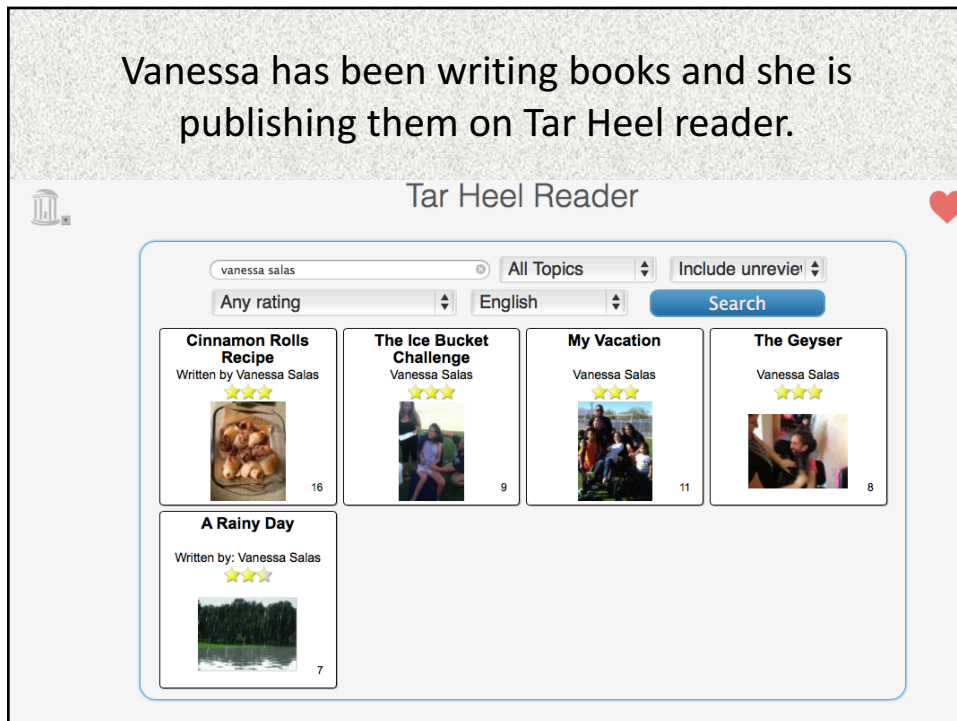
Vanessa

Vanessa is working on:

- Sentence formulation- asking questions, including articles in her sentences, word order, etc.....
- She uses eye gazing to access her communication device

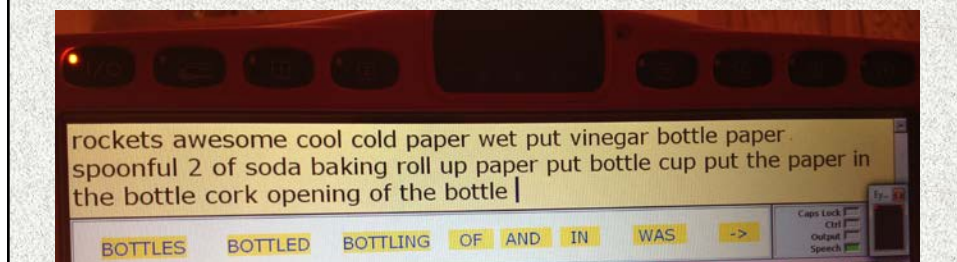


Vanessa has been writing books and she is publishing them on Tar Heel reader.



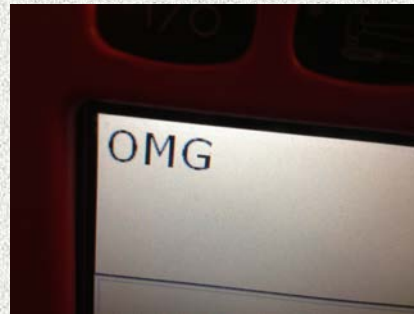
First- Generating thoughts on “paper” after completing the activity and/or reviewing the pictures at a later time. (see picture below).

Vanessa then picked the pictures and put them in the order she wanted. She then wrote a rough draft for each picture/page. We then edited the book and published it on the website. Her mom posted the link onto Facebook so friends and family members could read it and comment back to Vanessa.

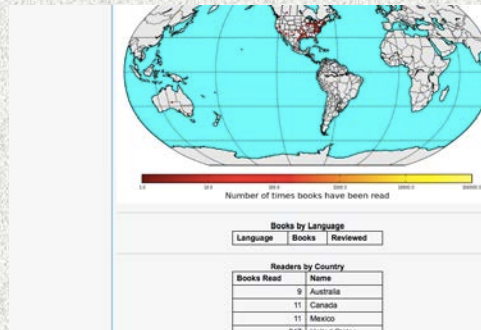


The Geyser

Written by: Vanessa Salas



Authors can track where in the world their book is being read.



The site will track how many people have read your book in which state.

Readers by US States and Possessions	
Books Read	Name
1	Alabama
86	Arizona
2	Arkansas
21	California
9	Florida
2	Georgia
10	Illinois
1	Iowa
11	Kansas
3	Louisiana
9	Michigan
1	Minnesota
1	Nevada
3	New Hampshire
2	New Jersey
2	New Mexico

Pictures, Pictures, Pictures

- Students love to talk and write about experiences they have had
- Take as many pictures as possible during fun activities
- Have the family email you pictures
- Have the student take the pictures

More resources

Resource for alternative keyboards:

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/assistive-technology-tools-writing>

Alternative Pencil- Four Block Wiki

<https://fourblock.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alternate+Pencil+CD+-+Order+Form.pdf>

Alt Pencils Overview 2009

<http://www.iod.unh.edu/asi/pdf/breakouts/A-6%20Wed%20b-%20Alt%20Pencils%20Overview%202009%20-%20HANDOUT.pdf>

Alternative Pencils in Action (video clips)

<http://alternativepencils.weebly.com/alternative-pencils-in-action.html>

- <http://www.aacintervention.com> (Caroline Musselwhite)