# DISKoveries

## New Software and Hardware, Professional Resources, DVDs for Learning and Apple Apps and iPad Accessories

### By Joan Tanenhaus

### FOR MAC ONLY

As assistive technology specialists, we are used to seeing "Windows only" on software. This section will describe some Mac only software, as well as some new Mac versions of programs that previously were Windows only.

**Parallels Desktop 6 for Mac** (www.parallels. com) Parallels Desktop for Mac is a great solution if you are trying to run Windows applications on your Macintosh side-by-side. When installed, you will be able to run Windows programs as if they were native to your Mac, all without rebooting. You can drag and drop documents, pictures and music between Windows and Mac applications or launch your favorite Windows programs right from your Mac Dock. You can choose to run Windows in full screen mode if you want – which replaces your Mac desktop with Windows 7, Vista or XP – or you can run them side by side. You can also use Apple Gestures in Windows applications – Parallels supports multi-touch Trackpad gestures in Windows applications. Parallels works on any Macintosh computer with an Intel processor (1.66 GHz or greater). To run 64-bit operating systems, an Intel Core 2 or higher processor is required. A minimum of 1GB of memory (2 GB recommended) and about 500 MB of disk space on the Macintosh HD is required.

**KeyStrokes4 with Layout Kitchen** (AssistiveWare: www.assistiveware.com) For Macintosh users only, KeyStrokes is a full-function advanced on-screen keyboard floating above other applications that can be used with a mouse, trackball, head pointer or any other mouse emulator. It comes with many different types of keyboards, ranging from very small to king size, extended with numeric pad, simple alphabetic (for beginning users), chubon and damper layouts (for single digit use), standard plus keyboards with Undo, Cut, Copy, Paste and other keyboard shortcut buttons and many more. For those who can position the pointer but cannot click the mouse button, Dwellix is integrated within the program – it allows mouse button clicks to be entered by holding the cursor motionless for a programmable period of time. It includes right and left clicking, double clickng and dragging. (The user can decide which of these should be visible and active so if you never use one of these functions, you can turn it off.) In addition, KeyStrokes now includes LayoutKitchen, which lets users design



KeyStrokes4 with Layout Kitchen (Assistiveware).

their own virtual keyboards for typing, for launching applications, to run AppleScripts and much more. It allows the keys to be given color so that vowels or functions keys can be color coded to help learning them. KeyStrokes also includes advanced multilingual word prediction with word completion, next word prediction and multi-word prediction in many languages. Choices can be displayed either by alphabetical listing or by frequency of word choice. Currently, multi-word prediction dictionaries are included for English US, English UK, French, German, Dutch, Norwegian, Italian, Spanish and Russian. KeyStrokes4 works seamlessly with all standard OS X applications. It learns your vocabulary as you type. The word prediction features also include the word prediction within the keyboard or as a separate window. The bar above the prediction also shows the sentence that is currently being written, which might be helpful for those who prefer monitoring their sentences without looking away from the keyboard. Another interesting feature is that you can turn off/on some of the features so you can show just the keyboard, just the word prediction or just the Dwellix – or any combination of these. Other features include the ability to speak what you type (English), configurable auto-spacing and auto-capitalization features, shortcut expansion features and a simple mode to limit a student's access to more advanced features. In addition, KeyStrokes can be used with Windows applications that you have running in the Parallels environment (see above for review of Parallels). Keystrokes4.1 requires Mac OSX 10.4 or higher with a minimal screen resolution of 800x600 and at least 10 MB of free memory. For optimum performance and access to all features, Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard or higher is recommended. This is an extraordinary program that is extremely functional, customizable and flawless in its operation. You can try before you buy – download the time-limited full trial version to see how it works before making a purchase.

**GhostReader** (ConvenienceWare: www. convenienceware.com) ConvenienceWare is a new product family from AssistiveWare , the leader in accessibility solutions for Macintosh computers. GhostReader is a text-to-speech program that lets you listen to your Mac talking in the language of

your choice. It lets you listen to selected text in an application with word or sentence highlighting. You can point the cursor to text in Safari or Pages to hear the paragraph below the cursor. When writing, you can listen to your own text to proof read for spelling, grammar, sentence structure and paragraph integrity. You can also create personal podcasts by converting text to audio files or to iTunes tracks. Listening to these audio files on your MP3 or iPod is a great way to is listen to driving directions, to help a student with difficulty reading, to enhance listening and reading comprehension, improve pronunciation of foreign words and study while commuting or driving. There is a pronunciation editor that can be used to modify the way a word is pronounced or to add new abbreviations. GhostReader includes naturally sounding voices in a language of your choice. Available languages include American English, Arabic, British English, Czech, Finnish, French, Canadian French, German, Greek, Icelandic, Italian, Danish, Dutch, Flemish, Spanish, American Spanish, Polish, Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, Norwegian, Russian, Turkish and Swedish. This is an excellent program for Macintosh users who struggle with reading and writing difficulties. Like Assistive-Ware products, you can try GhostReader before you buy – download the time-limited full trial version to see how it works before making a purchase.

**The following programs are not Macintosh only programs, but some are recently available on Macintosh and the others are available separately from the Windows versions. I wanted to highlight them so that Macintosh, as well as Windows, users are aware of their availability and their uniqueness in Special Education.**

**WordQ V3 for Macintosh** (WordQ- www.goqsoftware.com) WordQ is not a Macintosh only program, but it is new to Macintosh and I felt it was important to let all Mac users know that this excellent word prediction program is now compatible with their computers and works along with any standard writing software (Microsoft Word, Pages, e-mail, Web browsers and instant messaging). When you type a letter, WordQ predicts what you might be writing. It displays a list of words and if the word you are entering is there, just chose it with a single keystroke or with the mouse. All words can be read aloud to help you make the selection. You can also use different included vocabulary lists and/or create specialized topic lists of your own (i.e., if the student is writing a report on biology) to make predictions even better and faster. As the student uses the program, WordQ learns the vocabulary and predicts with even greater accuracy. In addition, WordQ allows users to select the root word and see different word endings by pressing backspace; has high-quality natural sounding text-to-speech voices; has in-context prediction that displays word predictions wherever the text cursor is placed (even when the cursor is in the middle of a word); usage examples with speech feedback of commonly confused words, such as there/their; user vocabularies and examples; and consideration of creative spelling when making predictions. Word Q can be used also for assisted reading and beginning writing skills.

Highlight the text, click the read button and your text is read aloud. For beginning writers, it can be set to say each letter as it is typed, to speak each word when the space bar is pressed and to read the entire sentence when a period is entered. WordQ turns any word processor into a talking word processor and word prediction does not have to be used for very early writing development. This same feature lets the older and more experienced writers use the word prediction only as needed, to spell words that are difficult for them. They can leave the prediction box hidden most of the time and show it only when they need help spelling a word. The word prediction box can be customized in the following way: number of predicted words (one to nine), font style and size, order of words (most likely or alphabetical), layout (vertical or horizontal list), position (follows text cursor or remains in one location) and color of background and text). WordQ is an excellent writing tool for learners of all different levels. You can download a free 30-day trial of WordQ to try before you buy or watch tutorial videos and other helpful information at www.goQsoftware.com. (Requires Mac OS X 10.4 or newer.)

**Read & Write 4 Gold for Mac** (Texthelp: www.texthelp.com) Read & Write 4 Gold for Mac is also not a Macintosh only program but is published separately from the Windows version. This is a review of the Macintosh version that now incorporates all the features of the Windows program. Designed for individuals who need support with reading, writing and learning, it has features that improve reading fluency and comprehension and helps with writing, spelling, test taking and research. It also includes

some powerful teacher support tools. Read&Write GOLD is a customizable easy-to-use toolbar that integrates directly with mainstream applications, allowing students to access the reading and writing support tools they need from within the programs they use every day. Some of the features that make Read & Write 4 Gold an extraordinary learning program are: Text to speech (hear your text read aloud, with dual highlighting, and also works with Flash and text embedded within graphics); Phonetic spell checker; Word prediction (learns the user's style and predicts words they are typing or words they might want to use next); a talking dictionary (each word has a description and sample sentence); a thesaurus and homophone checker; a pronunciation tutor (breaks words into syllables, allowing easy recognition of syllables in a word, and includes an on-screen moving mouth to help develop more accurate speech); and a talking calculator. Read & Write 4 Gold also includes a screenshot reader – used to read aloud all text, including text that is embedded within an image or video or is contained within inaccessible flash. Simply click the toolbar button and surround the area you would like read. The selected text will be analyzed with an OCR process and be read aloud with highlighting. The speech maker allows the conversion of text to MP3, WMA or WAV files that can be played on your iPod. In addition, you can scan paper-based documents into Word or to PDF format and the text can be read aloud and edited. Study and Internet tools include Web searches through your default search engine, an online translator that translates into multiple languages and speaks aloud while highlighting,

and Study Skills Tools that highlight and extract text from any document or Web site to create study guides, outlines, etc. Read & Write 4 Gold for Mac also comes in a Mobile USB format that includes all of the features of Read & Write Gold on CD with no installation necessary. It comes on a flash drive that contains all of the files required to run Read & Write GOLD and lets users store their own files in addition to their personalized settings. Great for those who use multiple computers and want to always have Read & Write Gold available to use – encourages independence and inclusion. Visit the Texthelp Web site and download a free trial of the program and use it for 30 days.

**Kurzweil 3000 Version 4.5 for Macintosh Standalone** (Kurzweil/Cambium Learning: www.kurzweiledu.com, www.cambiumtech.com) Kurzweil 3000 is also not a Macintosh only program but is published separately from the Windows version. Again, I want Macintosh users to know that this valuable program is available for them. Kurzweil 3000 is a curriculum independent tool that can be used across the range of curriculum areas, grade levels and student skill levels. It is a powerful way for students who struggle with printed text to access curriculum materials so they can keep up with assigned reading, learn critical study skills and successfully complete writing projects and tests independently. Kurzweil 3000 for Macintosh is designed specifically for Macintosh computers with a simple, graphic user interface. Some of the features include dual highlighting (highlight a sentence, line or phrase in one color and each word

in another color as it is read aloud); one-click access to reference tools like dictionaries, synonyms, syllables, word spelling, etc.; writing tools, such as spell check when writing, text-to-speech options (talking word processor), audible spell checker and word prediction. Kurzweil can read document in modes such as continuously, self-paced or Word-by-word. In Read Silently, the words are highlighted but not read aloud. You can also magnify spoken words. You can specify how fast or slow you want Kurzweil to read. Some of the powerful study skills include text highlighting, annotations, bubble notes (teachers can embed bubble notes containing questions and instructions to assigned reading to help students stay on task and support reading comprehension), voice notes, bookmarks (that mark where they left off in a text or date points in text where assignments are due) and extraction of outlines or word lists. The same reading and reference features are available with Mozilla Firefox on the Internet. Teaching tools also include the Writing Path – students can take notes from text, import to Writing Path, then review, create outlines and check work with a teacher-guided review checklist. There are also pre-made graphic organizers, with notes, to guide the process of writing for a number of different kinds of writing. Using Kurzweil 3000, you can create audio files so you can take your reading where you want on your iPod. With Kurzweil 3000, teachers can provide tests in digital format that provides full audible support for reading and re-reading questions as needed. Some of the unique test-taking capabilities include the ability of students to independently complete


Pix Writer (Slater Software).

worksheets, classroom test or standardized exams containing circle-the-answer, fill-in the blanks, true/false and essay questions within the program. Kurzweil 3000 for Macintosh is compatible with most electronic files, including Microsoft Word, RTF and PDF files (PDF file support only with Kurzweil 3000 Professional Color and Black and White editions), as well as the Windows version of Kurzweil 3000 for easy file sharing across school networks. Documents can also be scanned and read aloud. In the manual, there is also a chart of Keyboard Equivalents (shortcuts) that can be used for many different functions. These are particularly helpful for students who have difficulty with mouse access or just prefer to use the keyboard. Included also are over 1000 electronic texts, including literary classics for adults and children, reference materials and historical manuscripts.

**Picture It and Pix Writer** (Slater Software: www.slatersoftware.com) PictureIt V5.2 is a picture-assisted reading program that is available as separate versions for both Windows and Macintosh, in both English and Spanish. It is a teacher resource that lets you adapt materials for any curricular area. With over 10,500 literacy support pictures and the ability to import photos to personalize and customize, teachers can create their own picture-assisted reading materials to help develop literacy skills. With it, they can make reading material in any curriculum area, print the documents or worksheets, use Reader Mode to hear them read aloud, create communication boards and game cards, create and send flash cards home and much more. To make a document, you just enter the words in the story text window amd click a button to add pictures to the words – it's that easy! Print out or listen at the computer. You can also import your own pictures, use a phrase with one picture (i.e. peanut butter, thank you), customize layouts to create interesting activities and worksheets, customize fonts, change voice, rates and pronunciation, add borders, change color of words, etc. This program is easy to use and an excellent way to assist reading in children and adults who are struggling with literacy. Pix Writer is a companion program that is designed as a picture-assisted writing tool for beginning and struggling writers. It is a writing-with-pictures talking word processor. Also for Windows and Macintosh and in both English and Spanish, you can create a word bank for students to guide their expressive writing so that they can write whole words, sentences, and even stories by selecting buttons that contain both the words and the pictures. You can easily

create PixWriter word banks by typing in a word and pressing the space bar – a button is instantly created. When you have completed the word bank, you lock it and it's ready for the students to work with. Students simply click the button to write, using mouse, keyboard, touchscreen or switch with scanning. PixWriter gives immediate speech feedback. With buttons structured for individual students, writing is guided and children tend to include more detail in their writing. Easy to use and so motivating and powerful for beginning writers. By grouping your buttons and color coding them by parts of speech (i.e. subject, verb, small words, nouns, etc.) you will also be guiding grammar, word order and sentence structure. To see a video of PixWriter, you can visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtxEj2ESIBo&feature=related . There are also free interactive webinars, and demonstrations of both programs on the Slater Software Web site. You can also visit a section called Free Stuff. There you will find all kinds of resources created with PictureIt and Pix Writer that can be downloaded free of charge. They are stories created in Picture It in all categories, including animals, holidays, seasons, school, explorers, social stories, biographies, weather, hygiene, and much more – with new things coming every month. If you have children struggling with beginning reading and writing, these two programs are an excellent way to reinforce beginning literacy and give the children an opportunity for success that will motivate them to achieve even further.

## SPECIAL NEEDS: NEW SOFTWARE, PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES AND DVDS

**Webber HearBuilder Auditory Memory** (SuperDuper Publications: www.superduperinc.com) This is the fourth in the excellent HearBuilder series. For both Macintosh and Windows, it is designed to practice auditory memory, closure and comprehension skills by teaching key strategies for remembering numbers, words, sentences and stories. It is set within an adventure where each activity is a different mission. However, it can also be used by older students by skipping the introductions and proceeding directly to the activities. This research-based software includes five listening activities with many levels each. Memory for Numbers (listen to a secret code), with 17 levels, has goals for students to recall three digits with no delay with visual cues through recalling six digits with a 10-second delay without visual cues. Memory for Words, with 84 levels, has students recalling three related, one-syllable words presented at half second intervals with no delay, no foils and with visual cues through recalling five unrelated, one- to three-syllable words presented at quarter second intervals when given a 10-second delay, with no visual cues and four foils. Memory for Details, with 64 levels, has students identifying a person from a field of three, given one detail, visual cues, no delay and no distractions through identifying a person from a field of five, given four details, no visual cues, a 10-second delay and distractions. Auditory Closure, with 22



Webber HearBuilder Auditory Memory (SuperDuper).

levels, has students determining the missing word in the final position of a phrase or sentence that has a high predictability, given a phonemic cue through determining the missing adjective in any position of a sentence that has low predictability and is less than 13 words and given no phonemic cue. Memory for WH Information, with 12 levels, has students answering one WH question given two sentences with repetitions and no background noise through answering four WH questions given three sentences with no repetitions and background noise. As with other HearBuilder software, there are two editions. The Home Edition is for use with one to four children, monitors progress and prints progress reports. The Professional Edition monitors progress and tracks data for an unlimited

number of students, allows you to individualize each student's programs and to set levels of difficulty for each activity. You can also add background noise at any level and adjust the volume for each student. It lets you customize and print reports and analyze all responses. As with the other HearBuilder programs, this program is extremely well designed with great graphics and sound and with creative learning activities that engage the students and help them master the tasks.

**Counting Songs 1 and Counting Songs 2** (Inclusive: www.inclusivetlc.com) This is a delightful set of two programs for both Macintosh and Windows. Counting Songs 1 is designed for young children just learning early number concepts. There are 10 different songs, including songs like Five In A Bed, Five Little Ducks, Five Little Firefighters, Five Little Monkeys, Five Little Speckled Frogs and others. Seven of the songs count up from one to five (or one to three if you choose). The remaining three count down from five to one. There are three stages – the songs play through one verse at a time; there is counting before each verse; and the user counts every number before each verse. The songs are lively and fun, with repetitive lines. The graphics are clear and large with fun animations and adorable characters that engage the children. You can also print out all the lyrics to each song. Counting Songs 2 is designed for children ages up to 11 with difficulties learning number concepts. The format is similar, but the songs feature characters and animations that are appropriate for older learners – such as Five Girls in a Ring (hula-hoop), Five Rock Stars,

Five Superboys, Five Singers, etc. Both programs can be used with mouse, touch screen and whiteboard. Users just click the characters or the arrow key to advance the program and hear the counting. Both are excellent for individual and for group use. An audio CD of the songs is included in each program.

**Listen & Respond Professional Edition** (Judy Lynn: www.judylynn.com) In the June DISKoveries, I reviewed an excellent new interactive program from Judy Lynn for learning transitional skills, life skills, pre-vocational skills and with those who are becoming more involved in the community. It introduces and reinforces the connection of a verbal request to pictures or words within seven familiar environments (Cafeteria, Convenience Stores, School Store, Farmers' Market, Hardware Store, Boutique and Sporting Goods Store). The user is the worker and customers come up to the counter, one by one, to order one or two items found in that type of store. Now, there is a new version – Listen & Respond Professional (Windows only), with many outstanding new features. The new edition allows the customers to request one to10 items (this feature is set by the teacher.) It also lets the teacher set the customer's speech rate, add customers from photos or from any picture file, and create photo ID cards for screen display or for printing. You can specify which items can be requested by the customer (from 161 different items), determine the frequency of the store manager's positive or encouraging comments, access via touch window, mouse, auto scanning with one switch or step scanning with two switches. You are also able to choose to
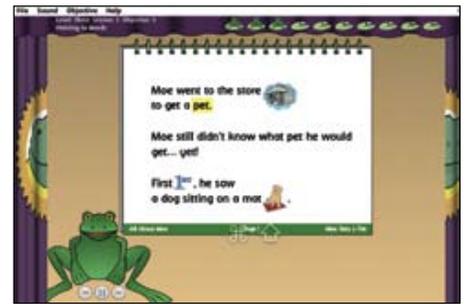


Early Literacy Skills Builder (ELSB) Software (Attainment Company).

display pictures, words or both pictures and words on the buttons. Data is automatically collected for each student that can be viewed as text or in a spreadsheet.

**Early Literacy Skills Builder (ELSB) Software** (Attainment Company: www.attainmentcompany. com) Early Literacy Skills Builder Software (ELSB), for Macintosh and Windows, is a language-based, pre-literacy curriculum for elementary aged students with moderate to severe developmental disabilities. It's a multi-year program with seven levels (each with 14 objectives) that teaches both print (sight words) and phonemic awareness. It incorporates scripted lessons, least-prompt strategies (a system of prompting the student in which the student is first given the opportunity to respond independently; if no response, a verbal prompt is given; if no response, a model is given; if still no response, a physical prompt is given until the correct response is given), teachable objectives, built-in lesson repetition, and ongoing assessments. All students begin at Level 1, but if a student struggles at that level, you can go back and administer Level A. Recommended instruction is on a one-to-one or small group basis, for two 30-minute sessions daily. The software can be used as a stand-alone curriculum or together with the print version. Lessons and objectives include Flashcard Games (to read sight words and to point to sight words to complete sentences), Pointing to Words (point to text as it is read), Hidden Words (say and/or point to a word to complete a repeated story line), Answering Questions (respond to literal questions about a story), Chunking Words (syllable segmentation), Tapping Out Sounds (tap out sounds in CVC words – consonant-vowel-consonant); Letter Sound Game (identify letter-sound correspondence); First-Last Sound Game (identify the first and last sounds in words); Finding Pictures with Special Sounds (identify pictures that begin/end with given sounds); Stretching Words (point to sound in words – sound segmenting); Finding Pictures (blending sounds to identify pictures); New Word Games (point to pictures/words representing new vocabulary); and Fun With Writing (use new vocabulary words and personal information to increase awareness of print and promote use of new vocabulary learned). Assessments are assigned at the end of each level. (Lessons may be repeated many times before the level is completed.) Sight word flashcards plus images in the program are available to print. They can be used to create overlays for communication devices or other support materials you create to be printed. These will all help with generalizing learned information. ELSB is a scientifically-based early literacy curriculum that

is research-based. With the purchase of ELSB, you are entitled to three years of free upgrades. New activities will be released to further enhance the program.

**Click To Read: All About Me** (Marblesoft: www.marblesoft.com) This is the third in the Click to Read Series for Mac and Windows. The first two, Click to Read Life Skills and Click To Read Animal Habitats, were reviewed in previous DISKoveries. This new program, Click To Read: All About Me, follows the same format. There are four stories for early readers, using SymbolStix picture communication symbols (color coded by parts of speech). Designed for ages 3-7, this is an excellent program for vocabulary and language development and the development of early literacy. Each of the included stories has a reading mode, where the reader listens to the story, sentence by sentence, and becomes familiar with the vocabulary and symbols. Clicking anywhere advances to the next page. The story can then be read in an Interactive mode. In this mode, the learner again sees the text, picture and three symbols for the text. They can then click any symbol to hear its meaning read aloud. When they are finished exploring, they can then click the arrow to advance to the next page. In the Tell The Story mode, there are three levels and children tell the story by arranging the symbols. The first level is errorless – two of the symbols are in place and the third (only symbol below the line) just gets selected to complete the sentence. In the second level, two of the symbols are already in place but there are now three symbols below the line and only one is correct. In the third level, children must arrange
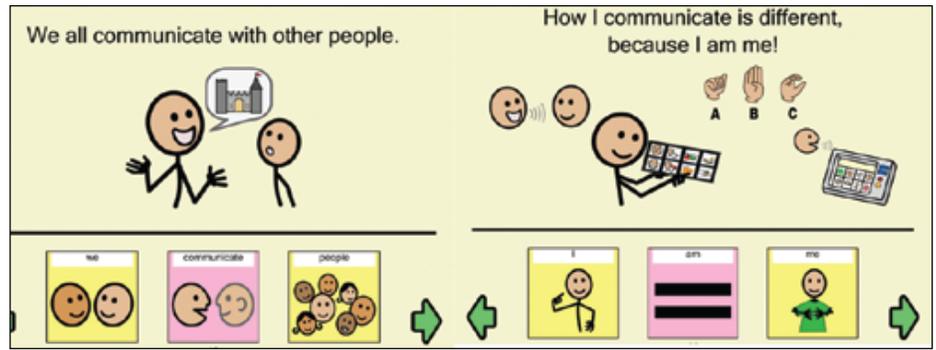


Click To Read: All About Me  (Marblesoft)

the three symbols in correct order to re-create the sentence. There is a Show What You Know activity for each story, where the players can demonstrate their understanding of the core vocabulary in a practice mode or by playing Bingo or Concentration with the picture symbols. The original and motivating stories included are I Am Me (highlighting difference and similarities between all people), How Do You Feel (emotions), Using My 5 Senses, and Looking Good (daily hygiene). Each story builds vocabulary through simple text and picture support and encourages literacy while providing student independence and success. The program works with mouse, touch screen or switches and has many options to change voice (male/female, background, etc.). Along with each program is a "print book"

that allows you to print a copy of the story for each student that can be used during guided reading, for independent practice or for home reading. The core vocabulary is also provided on small cards that you may print, laminate and cut apart. All three of the programs in this series are excellent for literacy and language for all young learners. Programs are available individually or as a bundle of all three.

**Switch Skills Scanning** (Inclusive: www.inclusive-etlc.com) This program, for Macintosh and Windows, contains 22 simple activities that can be played with one or two switches. To help leaners make choices with scanning, these activities for single and for two switches are split into five sections with increasing levels of skills and complexity. They begin with "free choice" activities (errorless) and progress to specific

# Augmentative Communication Tools

**GoTalk 4+**

**GoTalk 9+**

**GoTalk 20+**

**Attainment Talker 6**

**Attainment Talker 24**

**GoTalk 32+**

**GoTalk Express 32**

**GoTalk Pocket**

**Big Buttons**

*affordable • durable • easy to use • great sound • great service*

*powerful ... motivating ... comprehensive ... successful!*

# Early Literacy Skills Bu

**All About Moe**

**Attainment's Early Literacy Skills Builder**
SCIENTIFICALLY BASED LITERACY PROGRAM

**case**
*endorses Early Literacy Skills Builder*

**Anticipatory Set**

**Objective 6: Clapping Out Syl**

# Self-Determination Curriculum

*by*
## Dr. Michael Wehmeyer
## *and* Dr. Susan B. Palmer

**new!**
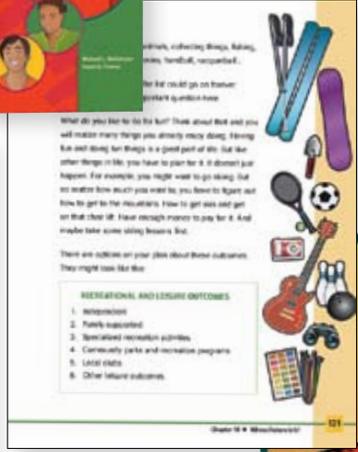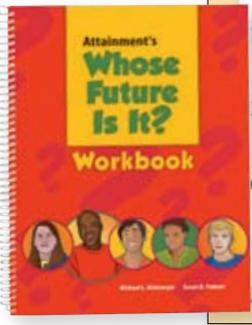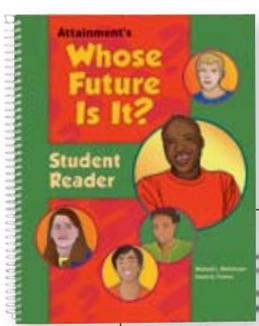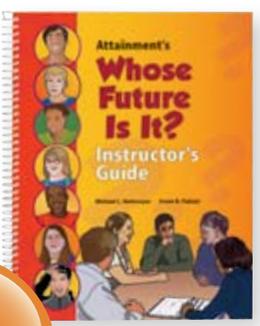
**Includes
Student Reader,
Workbook,
interactive software,
and Instructors guide**
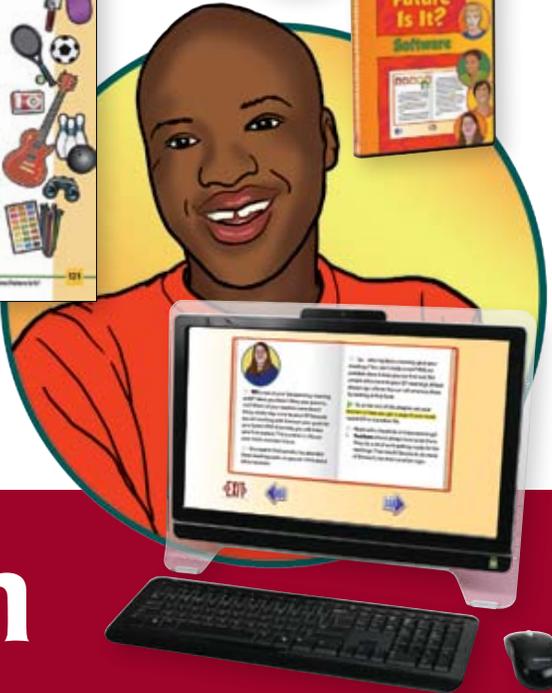
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# ilder Print & Software Curriculum

**Level and lesson**    **Moe**    **Visual progress**
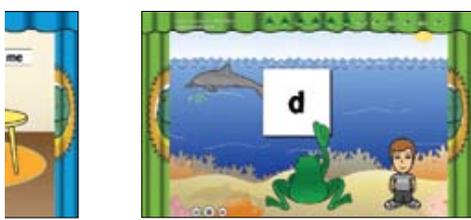
**Objective 8: Letter Sounds Game**

**Objective 13: The New Word Game**

lables
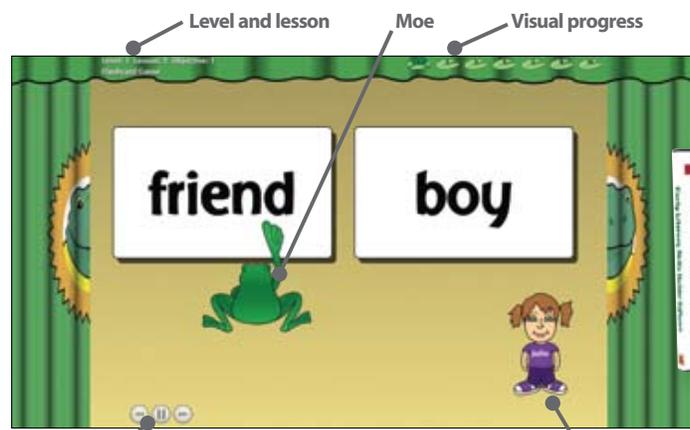
**Pause control**

**Objective 1: Flashcard Game**

**Student avatar**

friend    boy
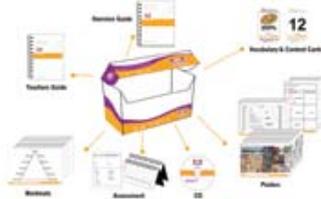
targets. "Free Choice" activities include Instruments, Rockets, FunFair and Gadgets. Three objects in the category appear on-screen in a line. Players press the switch to begin the scan and then choose any of the objects to see it animate. "Find The Object" activities have seven more advanced versions of Free Choice activities. A single object will appear in one of the three boxes. When the scan box is on the object, users select with their switch to see it animate. In "Complete the Set" activities, users select the object that belongs with two others that are already on screen. Only the object that completes the set is in the scanning boxes (other boxes are empty). The four activities in "Create A Scene" are slightly more advanced. Multiple objects (four) must now be added, one by one, to create a scene. They can be selected in any order. The final activity is "Grid Scanning"- with two or three rows. These begin with free choice activities that allow the user to pick any objects. More demanding tasks with specific targets are then introduced. This is another excellent program from Inclusive and ideal for students learning to use switches with scanning to make choices. Great practice for learning to use scanning with communication devices.

**Matrix Maker (**Inclusive: www.inclusivetlc.com) Matrix Maker was designed by Inclusive for Window XP and higher to be a simple and easy software program for making printed communication overlays and educational resources. There are templates for communication devices, schedules, calendars, communication books, boards, flash cards, scheduling charts, labels and games/worksheets. It uses the 12,000 SymbolStix library from News-2-You.

There are many options to add pictures from the computer, flash drive, camera, etc., as well as Webcam. You can flip, rotate, make painting adjustments to the picture, cell color, add and change text and many other options.

**My Crazy Life** (Apte: www.apte.com) Looking to motivate young girls to do some writing at the computer? This standalone multimedia program for both Mac and Windows provides a personal diary that can be kept on the computer – with the ability to add pictures, videos and music, as well as text. Without going online, girls can record their private thoughts, personal pictures and favorite music in a private format (password protected). Just click the calendar feature to review and browse old entries. There are log-ins for up to 10 users, so it's a good program to also use in the classroom for journaling or within the therapy situation.

**Other language programs from Super Duper** (www.superduperinc.com) include: Funzee Everyday Go-Togethers. In this fun learning game for ages 4 and up, players learn the vocabulary and find the 72 pairs of photos that go together, in five interactive activities, with three difficulty levels. As difficulty level increases, so do the go-togethers! In Learn Go-Togethers, players look at the photo on the left and click the photo on the right that goes with it for a grid of four pictures. The program will repeat any items the student misses until they are answered correctly. In Bingo/Lotto Game, they look at the photo on the left and click the photo that goes with it from a grid of 16 pictures. In Matching Game, they play concentration and match up the go-togethers. The remaining two activities are

for groups of players – you can enter two to four players or teams and they can play a concentration game. You can also create bingo or lotto boards and print them out so the whole class can play. Teachers can build their own lotto and bingo boards and save them. Webber Basic Classifying: This program includes seven Classifying Fun Decks, including Action-Agent (i.e., What rings? Bunny, telephone, tape), Classifying (hammer and nails go with which group: tools, communication, colors), Function Match-Ups (you wash your hair with it: rake, remote, shampoo), Name that Category (a frog, a kangaroo and a rabbit are: places, yellow things, hopping animals), Part to Whole Sorting (these are all parts of a ...) and Things That Go Together. Webber Figurative Language Interactive Fun Decks, for Kindergarten and up, contains six fun decks: Idioms, Metaphors and Similes , Famous Words and Proverbs (The more the merrier really means:____), Homonyms (his favorite fruit is a pair, pear), Multiple Meanings and Synonyms (one word in a sentence is highlighted and players find a synonym from three choices). All questions and answers are read aloud. All games can be played with or without sound, with a partial or full deck or multiple decks. The programs track data for an unlimited number of students and store the items each student identifies incorrectly. You can also print progress reports and change settings for each student.

**Attribute Tiles** (Attainment Company: www.attainmentcompany.com) This software program teaches students to name and sort objects of different sizes, colors and shapes. There are three activities, each with many options. You can choose

to name and match by shape, color, size or by all randomly. You can select to have one to nine different tiles on-screen at the same time. The Place activity is really fun after basic shape and color discrimination is learned. A design made up of different shapes appears on the screen and the user has to match and move the required pieces to the puzzle to color and complete the picture. When completed, a full color, real picture of the object appears. Options for this activity include the option to show only required pieces, to show a color picture or to hint shapes as mouse passes over. Attribute Tiles works with Windows and Mac OS X and is touchscreen compatible.

**Step-by-Step Choice with Levels Communicator** (Ablenet: www.ablenetinc.com) With all the features of the Big and LITTLE Step-By-Step Communicator, this new one adds the power and convenience of levels. Levels can be used to pre-record messages to be used at specific times or for recording and storing sequential messages. There's a total of four minutes of recording time. To advance the messages, you activate for the first message and then activate again. You can put in one word prompts at each level (i.e. cookie, music, book) followed by the full request. Users would then listen to the prompt, and if it's not what they want, advance to the next level. When they hear what they want, they let the full message play. You can attach the switch of your choice and play messages with an external switch. If you want only a repeating message, you can set up so that the same message will repeat with each activation of the switch top.



Model Me Going Places  Model Me Kids DVDs ( ModelMeKidspany).

Switch includes interchangeable switch tops in Red, Yellow, Green and Blue.

**Logitech Wireless Illuminated Keyboard K800** (Logitech: www.logitech.com) With this wireless keyboard, the backlit keys automatically adjust based on the amount of light in the room, helping preserve battery life. You can also manually adjust the keyboard's backlighting, using the FN+F5 and F6 keys to adjust to off, 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent or full brightness. The sensors detect your hands as they approach the keyboard to turn the backlight on and off. You get bright illumination day or night. The concave design of the keys, along with softly rounded edges, help position the fingers properly. To charge the keyboard, you connect the included cable to a USB port – no disposable batteries needed. You can always check the level of your battery by pressing FN+F7. This is an excellent

option for those who need visual support when using a standard keyboard. The keyboard can also be used with a laptop.

**Logitech Wireless Solar Keyboard K650** (Logitech: www.logitech.com) This wireless keyboard is solar powered and charges itself whenever there's light. It stays charged for at least three months in total darkness. It's only 1/3 inch thick and will work with a laptop or a desktop. This is a very "green" keyboard with a small footprint – PVC-free construction and a fully recyclable box.

## PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

**The Ultimate Guide to Assistive Technology in Special Education** (Joan L. Green: www.innovativespeech.com, www.prufrock.com) This is an excellent, comprehensive guide to using technology in all aspects of special education and intervention, including language comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, thinking and memory. It is written for parents, teachers, therapists and individuals with learning challenges. An introductory chapter explains in detail some basic issues of computer access, switch software, speech recognition, keyboard and mouse options, different computer types and operating systems, and Windows and Macintosh accessibility options. The book is divided into chapters on Technology to Improve Verbal Expression, Auditory Comprehension, Reading Comprehension, Reading Skills, Written Expression and Cognition-Learning-Memory. These chapters include treatment approaches, specific software programs with detailed descriptions and other technology options and tools, such as closed captioning, electronic organizers, talking photo albums, talking translators, LeapPad and digital photography. Extensive and excellent references are made for online programs, Web sites, and apps for iPad. There is a section on features of different word processors, picture-based talking word processors, word prediction, dictionaries and graphic organizers. Included also are chapters on games, free programs, online interactive activities, Internet communication (blogs, chat rooms, e-learning, podcasts) and much more. This book is a must-have for those who provide assistive technology services, who use technology in teaching or therapy and anyone who uses a computer or related technology with individuals with special needs. Also visit Joan Green's Web site, www.innovativespeech.com, for helpful resources and up-to-date information and to sign up for her newsletter.

**Comprehending More Complex Auditory Information** (Jean Gilliam DeGaetan, available from SuperDuper Publications, www.superduperinc.com) This is a workbook designed for students who are having difficulty with auditory processing of oral language, remembering events in order, retaining specific information, retaining subtle implied information and who need practice in relating events that occur in more than one time period. The goals are to listen to two-part and three-part sequential stories to retell the order of events, to comprehend and retain important details and subtle information and to be able to accurately answer questions at both the end of each paragraph and at the end of the complete story. The instructor reads the first part of the story aloud while the students look at the picture that shows a scene from the story. Then the instructor reads five questions aloud for the students to answer. Then the second part of the story is read aloud, followed by the questions again. After that, there are follow-up activities to remember and understand subtle (implied) information, to understand time concepts in the story, to rapidly recall specific information, to remember sequencing through clues and to be able to retell the story. Directions are provided on each instructor's worksheet to enable the professional to use the unit without prior preparation. There are 21 different activities. Good for teaching sequencing, concrete details, subtle clues and social language.

**Attainment's Writing with Purpose Teacher's Guide** (Angel Sterling-Orth and Linda Schreiber, avaialable from Attainment, www.attainment-company.com) Writing With Purpose is a resource written for teachers to use with students in grades 4-9 who need support in the writing process. It builds written language skills using oral language and thinking. The book's major emphasis is on the different types of expository text (text that instructs or presents information): writing to sequence, to compare, to describe and the writing process (planning, writing, reviewing, adjusting and monitoring progress). There are four units, each with detailed lesson plans. Unit One, with five lessons, covers topics such as what we write, what we know about writing, writing as a form of communication, and the writing process. In Sequential Writing, students write a letter home, an e-mail, a note and a recipe. There are also units on Descriptive Writing and Comparative Writing. In the Appendix, there are excellent teacher/student resources, such as an evaluation guide for rating the students' writing, outline guides for sequencing, written guidelines for descriptions, and a Venn diagram for comparing.

## DVDS FOR LEARNING

**Model Me Kids DVDs** ( ModelMeKids: www.modelmekids.com) Four excellent new DVDs for video modeling from Model Me Kids. For ages 2-8, Model Me Going Places has 12 different sequences in which children model appropriate behavior. These include the Doctor, the Mall, a Birthday Party, the Hairdresser, two sequences about the Dentist (one on what the dentist does and the other on what the patient does), the Grocery Store, Transportation, the Library, Playground a Restaurant and at School. The sequences feature songs by music therapist Rachel Rambach. This unique merger of video modeling and music therapy is designed to help teach skills in a way that appeals to the strengths of children with developmental disabilities. The graphics and the music are used to make the video appealing to children with autism, Asperger syndrome, and preschool children of all developmental levels. A CD-ROM of photographs is included with each video. The photos are a great way to demonstrate and review the social skills shown in the video. Photos may be printed as flashcards for handy reference or viewed as a computer slideshow. Also included is an insert with song lyrics. Also for ages 2-8, Model Me Faces and Emotions also feature the songs by Rachel Ramback. Children on the video demonstrate a variety of faces and emotions, including happy, sad, afraid, tired, angry, exited, surprised, bored, calm, proud, love and shy. Each scene lasts between one and two minutes and at the end is a storyboard summarizing the emotion shown. Each emotion is demonstrated in more than one situation and across environments to help promote generalization. A CD-ROM of photographs is also included, along with the storyboards. Model Me Kids also has two new DVDs for older children, those between ages 9-17. The first of these is Model Me Organization & Motivation: teen-aged children model skills for getting organized, staying motivated and persisting with tasks, including: Do My Best, Planning Ahead, Being on Time, Note-Taking, Organization, Persistence, Break It Down, Flexibility, Focus, The Big Picture, Memorization and Mistakes. The children in the video narrate each scene. There are two versions of the videos. The first is with narration and graphics that help explain the particular rule. In the second presentation, the same video is repeated without narration and graphics. This allows a parent, teacher or therapist to customize the lesson to the need of the individual child. Each skill is demonstrated in more than one situation and across environments to help increase the generalization of the material. The second video for older children is Model Me Confidence & Bullying Prevention. It includes children modeling skills to prevent bullying and to build self-esteem. These include Self-Advocacy, Peer Pressure, Choosing Friends, Building Strengths, Visualization, Positive Self-Talk, Scripting, Stay with Others, Telling Isn't Tattling, Walk Tall and a Group Discussion. The video is hosted by children from the DVD, who narrate each scene. As with the Organization & Motivation DVD, there are two version – one with narration and one without, and each skill is demonstrated in more that one situation and across environments. All DVDs include a CD-ROM of photographs also. Visit the Web site to see screen shots and short videos of each DVD to see actual sequences and music. All DVDs are extremely well done.

**Shalom Sesame** (SISU Home Entertainment: www.sisuent.com, www. Shalomsesame.org) Five wonderful new volumes of this exceptional DVD series starring the Sesame Street characters. These complete the 12-part DVD series starring Grover and Anneliese can de Pol as they travel to Israel to learn about the Jewish culture and tradition, as well as showing the diversity of Israeli life to American children. In Volume 8, Grover Learns Hebrew, Grover learns new words in Hebrew, sings the Aleph-Bet song and tells about his favorite Hebrew word. Volume 9, Countdown to Shavuot, tells about the celebration of receiving the Torah. Volume 10, The Sticky Shofar, is about Rosh Hashanah, the Israeli New Year. Grover and others learn a valuable lesson about friendship and forgiveness just in time to start the New Year right. In Volume 11, Monsters in the Sukkah, children learn about the two holidays Sukkot and Simchat Torah as Grover decorates the sukkah, and take a visit to a kibbutz. Volume 12, Adventure in Israel, is the final DVD in this series – watch Grover explore Israel his own way – by balloon.

**Some other fun DVDs for preschoolers include Timmy Time Picture Day** (www.timmytimedvd.com), Bob The Builder The Big Dino Dig (www.bobthebuilder.com) and Roary the Racing Car (www.roarytheracingcar.com), all from HIT Entertainment, distributed by Lionsgate.

## APPLE APPS AND IPAD ACCESSORIES

**Big Grips Frame and Stand** (www.biggrips.com) This is an iPad case that is made for children – it is a soft foam frame that makes the iPad easy to

grab and hold. It does not cover the back or front of the iPad, just surrounds the edges. The iPad slips in easily and snugly and leaves access to all ports and controls. It has a matching stand for working at a desk or watching movies. It can be placed in the frame in either portrait or landscape orientation. Made from the same material, the stand is sturdy and stable. The frame and stand are non-toxic and lead and latex free and come in a variety of colors that children love. They are lightweight, durable, easy to clean and are sold separately.

**BoxWave styluses** (BoxWave: www.BoxWave. com) If you thought that the only stylus out there were the thin ones (slightly smaller than 1″ circumference), you are going to love these styluses from BoxWave. The Universal Capacitive Stylus and the Universal Capacitive Styra are both 1.25 inches in circumference and, as a result, provide a little better gripping capability. In addition, the Universal Capacitive Stylus has a small connector on top through which is a string handle that can be attached to keychain or other places to keep it safe. The Universal Capacitive Styra also has a pen at the other end so it serves a dual purpose. It features either a magnetized or a non-magnetized cap. The magnetic cap option allows you to store the cap on the stylus when the ballpoint pen is in use, ensuring you never lose your cap while wrting. But my favorite for adults and children with special needs is the Universal Sketching Capacitive Stylus. It has a pencil-shaped design (eight sided) with a circumference just short of an inch and one half. It is made of durable aluminum with BoxWave's high-quality responsive tip. It really provides a good grip for those with grapho-motor difficulties and is excellent to use, especially with writing and tracing apps, like Space Board (see below).

**More iPad cases:** With the new iPad2, there are many additional kinds of cases available. If you have the Apple Smart Cover, you still need additional protection for the back of your iPad. So here are some new and great solutions to this problem, all from www.boxwave.com : iPad2 Smart Sleeve – this is a thermoplastic polyurethane case specifically designed to be paired with Apple's Smart Cover. It's thin, flexible and lightweight. The Smart Sleeve picks up where the Smart Cover leaves off, providing durable protection for the back of your iPad. When combined, the result is all-around protection. The Smart Sleeve has cut-outs that provide access to all of the iPad speakers, controls and ports. It also has a cut-out section designed to fit the Smart Cover hinge. (It comes in all colors to match the Smart Cover.) iPad2 Smart Back Cover: This is a polycarbonate (firm) case that also pairs with the Apple Smart Cover. It is lightweight and durable and designed to protect the back of your iPad with its clear, glossy finish. iPad SoftSuit with Pocket: This is a slim carrying case with a zipper. It cushions your device and also has an integrated pocket for carrying the charger when needed. Fits your iPad with the Smart Cover, too. Quilted iPad Carrying Bag: Your iPad fits snugly inside with thick and soft padding all around that's internally reinforced with a firm plastic shield. With its double zipper design, you can lock your iPad as you carry the carrying bag by its integrated and removable handle.

**PCS Apps** (Mayer-Johnson: www.mayer-johnson.com) There is now a new series of apps from Mayer-Johnson using Picture Communication Symbols – you will love using them with your students with autism, Down syndrome, language delays, pervasive developmental disorder and more. They will be great at home, in school, in speech therapy – and anywhere the iPad is. There are four apps available free of charge. In each, there is one set of PCS cards/symbols and you can order more sets if you like through iTunes. In PCS Vocabulary Flash Cards, there is a sample deck of 50 symbols. (You can order other categories, such as places, holidays, food, action, emotions, etc.) The picture appears with the word below – touch to hear it spoken. In PCS Scramble, there is a sample deck of 50 symbols (other sets include three-letter words, four-letter words, etc.). In this app, you see a symbol (touch it to hear its name) and below are the letters to spell the word all scrambled up. Children touch and drag the letters to spell the words. PCS Vocabulary Bingo contains the animal set. Others available are actions, foods, holidays, home items and much more. You select a board size (3x3 or 5x5) and match the picture on the side to a picture on your bingo board. PCS Vocabulary Memory also has an animal set, board sizes 4, 6, 8,12,16 and 20 and children can play a concentration-type game with the pictures.

**SpaceBoard Digital WorkBooks PreK** (www.space-boards.com) With this excellent app, students with grapho-motor difficulties can use the iPad to learn and practice their basic writing skills. This app, the beginning one in the series of 12, developed by classroom teachers, focuses on tracking and tracing,

directionality, tracing large pictures, tracing basic shapes, numbers and upper and lower case letters. Using a matching technique (i.e., trace or draw a line from …. to …..), other preschool concepts are integrated into the learning (i.e. go-togethers, rhyming words, initial consonant sounds, matching skills, etc.). Within the app, there are 18 Skill Packets with about 20 pages in each packet. Children can choose their pencil width and color to work in. There is an eraser to choose to remove small areas, as well as the ability to clear the page completely. This gives users the opportunity to correct errors and to practice repeatedly. There is also a Clear All Books feature on the main menu. Some other options include Wrist Protection (protects the screen from accidental wrist and hand movements ) and right/left hand selection. There are also blank pages for creative drawing and blank ruled pages for creative writing. A stylus is recommended (see above Boxwave reviews for a description of some of the styluses available that might be appropriate for preschoolers.) This is a company that is committed to supporting the special needs population and would appreciate any feed-back.

**Speech With Milo: Sequencing** (www. Speechwithmilo.com) Milo is back, this time with 35 sequencing activities. Children put three cards in order to create a sequence – for example, planting a flower, baking a cake or catching a ball. There is no narration, but under each card is the printed text (i.e., getting in car, starting car, driving car). When a piece is placed in the correct box, there is reward applause, if selected. (There also is an option for a sound indicating an unsuccessful choice.) Touching

the phrase button at any time will give you the topic (i.e. Milo is driving a car.)

**Super Duper Webber Photo Cards: What Are They Thinking?** (www.superduperinc.com) This app include 60 photos of different situations. Students are encouraged to look at the picture, analyze the situation and make suggestions regarding what the characters in the card are thinking. It is designed to improve inferencing, reasoning and conversational skills. All the people and animals in the cards have a thought bubble above their heads. Touch the screen to hear what everyone is thinking or touch a thought bubble to hear just what that person is thinking. Touch the refresh button to hear some other thoughts that fit the card, too. When the students answer with their thoughts, you can keep track of them by touching the red circle for incorrect and the green for correct. Slide the cards to get to the next picture. You are then able to collect data for one student and you can e-mail your results. Good to use in speech and language therapy to work on grammatical and linguistic skills, articulation and fluency, narrative skills and increasing sentence length. Super Duper also has a Data Tracker app that can be used to track success during a therapy session and an Age Calculator app (free).

**Shake & Make** (Day and Night Studios: http://www.nightanddaystudios.com) With this new puzzle app, players, ages 8 and up, see the picture, study it, then shake the iPad and the pieces fall to the floor. Goal is to put the picture back in under a minute. There's a hint button for another peek at the picture if you're not sure what to do next. More difficult puzzles unlock as you solve easier ones. There

are over 100 puzzles to unlock. For younger children, you can turn off the time to allow more time to solve the puzzle. They can also solve the puzzle by tilting and rotating the iPad to watch each piece snap into place.

**EBooks from Oceanhouse Media** (Oceanhousemedia.com) This company continues to be a leader in bringing classic children's books to the iPad. In the past few months, they have continued to develop new storybook apps and to increase their range. All the books are presented with three ways to read. In Read to Me, the story is read aloud, page-by-page, with word highlighting. Readers listen and interact by touching pictures to hear their names, by swiping to turn the pages, by pressing words to hear them spoken individually or by touching and holding the text to hear it read over again. In Read It Myself mode, all the same options are available, but the story is not read automatically. If the user wants a word or a page read, they can just press and hold. In Auto Play mode, the story will read in entirety without the user having to swipe to hear the whole story. Some of the new stories they have created recently include: Dr. Seuss's Happy Birthday to You, Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?, The Cat in the Hat Comes Back, and The Thinks You Can Think. This title offers a new interactive feature. For the first time, you can "build" each page by touching one of the floating question marks that appear in the white sections of the screen. After each page is created (typically taking about five taps), you can see the items labeled both in print and with clear speech. There is also a new Mercer Mayer book, I Was So Mad, two Berenstain Bears books – Learn

to Share and Bedtime Battle, and three of Helen Lester's Tacky books: Tacky the Penguin, Tacky & The Winter Games, and Tacky's Christmas. There's also Elmer's Special Day by David McKee (the story of Elmer the Patchwork Elephant), It's Not What You've Got by Wayne Dyer (lessons for kids on money and abundance) Five Little Monkeys Sitting in a Tree and Five Little Monkeys Wash the Car, both by Eileen Christelow. Once Upon a Potty by Alona Frankel is also available in both a girl and a boy version, and includes the potty song and a sing along included, in addition to the read aloud features. And for those dinosaur seekers, there's Tyrannosaurus Rex from the Smithsonian Institution. Oceanhouse Media now has several "lite" versions online – in these free apps, you can download and try the first 10 pages of the book before buying the whole book. Once you try them, you will want them all.

**MyTales Digital Books for Children:** (mytales-digital.com) This company was created with the goal of adapting exceptional children's books for use on digital devices. Working together with book publisher Tiger Tales, they have created a group of books and lullabies that are excellent for young children. One Rainy Day is all about colors and how ducks love those rainy days. One Rainy Day means red boots, orange umbrella, blue puddles and much more. The book has great graphics, fun sound effects, characters that talk and touchable objects. There are four activities – Read to Me, Read by Myself, Color (from a palette of 10 "raindrop" colors, children touch the color they want to fill four favorite scenes from the story) and Play (For example, children are directed to "Put the red boots on duck" – and then they drag the red boots from the side and place them on duck's feet. One Snowy Day is all about numbers, with a similar format of Read To Me, Read by Myself, Color and Play. Also delightful, with one wooly hat, two warm mitten, etc. There are also lullabies that come to life with beautiful illustrations, song and narrations. You can even record your own versions to enjoy with your child. Lullabies include Hush, Little Baby, and Sleep, Baby Sleep, with great illustrations and singing, reading and instrumental versions.

**Callaway Books** (Callaway Digital Arts: www.Callaway.com) Some other great digital books come from Callaway Digital Arts. In Angelina Ballerina – Angelina's New Ballet Teacher, you can have the whole story read aloud, with hotspots on the screen to help reinforce the story and delight the children. You can also Paint with the iPad and color in five of the pages from the story or create an easy or hard jigsaw puzzle. In addition, there are five videos to watch, all starring Angelina. Narration, graphics, animation and sound are all wonderful! For the boys, there's Thomas The Train: Hero of the Rails, with the same features to read the story, paint and do puzzles. And for all children, there's The Monster at the End of This Book starring Grover – delightfully illustrated, with a very funny main character and a funny story plot. Children tickle Grover, untie knots, turn pages and knock down a brick wall, which gets Grover very upset because he's afraid of the monster at the end of the book. Delightful story and some hints for parents on dealing with children's fears are also included. Callaway books are masterfully done!

Here are some of my other favorite apps for literacy learning, sequencing, language and following directions – not to mention fun – to be enjoyed by children and adults of all ages!!

**Cookie Doodle, Cake Doodle, Jelly Doodle, TieDye Doodle, Ice Doodle, and Candy Doodle** (www.shoethegoose.com)

**The Scoop Shop** (http://hippohooray.com)

**Bookworm** (www.popcap.com)

**Montessori Crosswords** ( http://lescapadou.com/)

**Word Wizard** (http: http://lescapadou.com/)

**iSwifter** (http://iswifter.net ) lets you play sites that use Flash

**Hangman for Kids** (http://ar-entertainment.net/learning/)

**I Spy Spooky Mansion** (http://www.scholastic.com/apps/

**ReadIt** (www.smackall.com) paste anything into this app and it will read it aloud for you … and it's free!

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