

MAISA and the REMC Association of Michigan Best Practices in Technology Integration Plan

Title: Communications Center

Subject(s): Language Arts

Intended Grade Level(s): 1-2

Description:

Each student in the class is furnished with a shoe storage compartment style mailbox with their name on it. A large green rural delivery style mailbox is also located in the center area. Several styles of writing implements are made available. Children create stationary using mouse and keyboarding techniques adding print, borders and graphics. They add their name or monogram, experimenting with various colors, fonts, size and graphics. Depending on their preference or experience, they either type their letter right on their newly created stationary or hand write their message using the available writing implements, such as calligraphy pens, fine point markers, ball point pens or pencils. Envelopes of various shapes and sizes are also placed in a basket at the center. When the letters are written and the envelopes addressed, they are placed in the rural mailbox and the flag is placed up. At the end of the day, the classroom letter carrier for the week, distributes the mail to the individual mailboxes or delivers it to the addressee in the school building.

Students produce products that introduce them and their classmates to the joy of letter writing. They are learning the importance of expressing themselves clearly and precisely with correct spelling and keyboarding. They are learning to use legible penmanship if that is the way they choose to convey their message. The students are also being introduced to the possibilities of the computer and are improving their mouse and keyboarding skills.

Curriculum Benchmarks:

[MI.ELA.1.LE.1](#). Use reading for multiple purposes, such as enjoyment, gathering information and learning new procedures.

[MI.ELA.2.LE.1](#). Write with developing fluency for multiple purposes to produce a variety of texts, such as stories, journals, learning logs directions and letters.

[MI.ELA.3.EE.2](#). Explore the relationships among various components of the communication process such as sender, message, and receiver. An example is understanding how the source of the message affects the receivers response.

[MI.ELA.4.EE.5](#). Explore and begin to use language appropriate for different contexts and purposes. Examples include community building, story discussions, casual conversations,

writing workshops, science lessons, playground games, thank-you letters, and daily conversations.

MI.ELA.8.EE.1. Identify and use mechanics that enhance and clarify understanding.

Examples include using conventional punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, as well as approximations of conventional spelling, and restating key ideas in oral messages.

MI.ELA.10.EE.2. Demonstrate their developing literacy by using text to enhance their daily lives. Examples include reading with a parent, discussing a favorite text, writing to a friend or relative about an experience, and creating a visual, representation of an important idea.

Materials/Hardware/Software:

There are a variety of materials that can be used in this plan. Anything from an Apple II GS using Print Shop, to a Windows 95 program using a variety of card making programs. The ones most enjoyed by the students seem to be, American Greetings Create A Card and Microsoft Greetings Workshop.

Activities/Procedures:

Introduce the students to letter writing. Discuss parts of a letter and why they are important. Teach the process of addressing an envelope and why it is critical that it is addressed correctly. Brainstorm with students the purpose for letter writing. Introduce them to the communications center and point out the materials available and how they are to be used. Select a letter carrier as a weekly class job and discuss that person's responsibilities.

Display various types of stationary. Depending on student's computer experience, introduce the operation of the mouse and keyboard. Teach dragging, selecting and placing graphics, borders, and backgrounds as well as selecting fonts and changing colors and letter size. Demonstrate how to personalize by adding initials, monograms, and names, and centering and placement of those items on the paper.

Assessment/Evaluation:

Student learning is assessed through the number and quality of the letters written. The children write letters to the principal, the school secretary, the special teachers, classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, parents, siblings and one another. Assessment can include letter content, the correct use of letter formation, i.e., greeting, return address, body, closing, and signature. Correct grammar, spelling and parts of speech are also assessed and taught as need is shown through the letters. Many letters are sent to the teacher of course, and this is a great opportunity to assess the student's writing, not only mechanics and language usage, but their increasing ability to use writing as a language to express

themselves. The students are also assessed through observation of their use of the Windows 95 program, and mouse and keyboarding techniques.

Follow-up Activities:

- Write to class pen pals. The students also wrote letters to our class pen pals in Tucson, Arizona which were obtained through a list serve. This has become a great ongoing social studies lesson.
- Turn this into a school wide activity. The U.S. Post Office has a program called “Wee Deliver” which can be incorporated into a school wide letter writing project.
- A field trip to the Post Office can be planned.
- Stamp designing could be an extension in the art center. Computer labels can be colored and decorated with markers. Stamps could also be bought and sold using play money creating a math lesson.
- The letter carrier could use some kind of stamp pad and teacher stamp to cancel the letters before mailing. Replace this text with any follow-up activities that may take place.

Name: Nancy Creech

School District: Roseville Community Schools

School: Dort Elementary

**Address: 16225 Dort
Roseville, MI 48066**