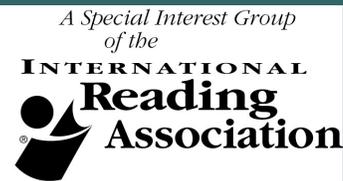


August 2011  
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# TILE-SIG



*Technology in Literacy Education Special Interest Group*



### Special Interest Articles In This Issue:

- **Using Cool Tools – Voices from the Field: VoiceThread: From Traditional Slide Show to Interactive Multimedia Presentation** by Dr. Denise H. Stuart pages 2-6
- **2011 TILE SIG Presentation: Students Can!...** page 8
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## Welcome message from the Co-Editors of the 2011-2012 TILE-SIG Newsletter



Greetings TILE-SIG Members!

In this issue of the newsletter, our regular columnist, Denise Stuart, consults several experts regarding the integration of VoiceThread into classroom instruction in *Using Cool Tools: Voices from the Field* (see p. 2). Book Reviews is a new column by Brenda Stein Dzaldov that will feature timely information regarding books on literacy and/or technology. In this issue, she reviews *Books, Media & the Internet: Children's Literature for Today's Classroom*. In addition to our regular contributors, several presenters from the 2010 and 2011 TILE SIG meetings have shared summaries of their presentations. In their summary titled, *Students Can! Implementing the Internet Workshop Model to Transform Content Area Literacy*, Karen Pelekis, William Yang, and Carole Phillips tell us about a project that integrated a workshop model within science and social studies instruction. Emese Felvégi and Kathryn I. Matthew describe *The Challenges of Using eBooks in the Classroom*. Finally, Karen Ford and Susan Tancock introduce the *Teacher Talk: Literacy Teaching With Technology* blog that they have created to help teachers discover and implement new technology. And be sure to read the Call for Applications for this year's IRA Technology and Reading Award (see p. 13).

We encourage all of you to think about how you could become more active in the group. Currently, this is especially relevant as IRA has approached Julie with a number of opportunities for our members to contribute and share their expertise. A membership form is available on the last page of this newsletter to share with others (or to remind you to pay your dues). Preparations for the TILE-SIG's peer-reviewed journal continue and your membership dues will help us meet our goal of an inaugural issue by May 2013. Enjoy this issue's resources and your school year!

☺ *Mike Putman* and *Julie Coiro*, Co-Editors, TILE-SIG Newsletter

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● ● ● By Denise H. Stuart, PhD., Column Editor

*Denise Stuart is an Associate Professor of Education at The University of Akron. As a literacy educator, her teaching has spanned preschool through adult in school and community settings. Among the courses she teaches are Literacy and Technology, Language Arts and Media and Children's Literature. Her current research focuses on issues of integration of technology in literacy teaching and learning. You can reach Denise at [dstuart@uakron.edu](mailto:dstuart@uakron.edu)*



## VoiceThread: From Traditional Slide Show to Interactive Multimedia Presentation

I recently saw a group of middle school learners giving a presentation at a local bookstore about inquiry learning at their school. They were using [VoiceThread](#), demonstrating its interactivity as they discussed their content. While the learner at the bookstore talked about inquiry projects, showing both pictures and videos through VoiceThread and highlighting features by digitally circling them, his peer chimed in as an avatar picture displayed on the side of the slide show from a remote location to add to the discussion. This type of interactive multimedia is what Kajder (2010) reminds us students bring to the classroom as "kids come to us multiply literate" (p.6). VoiceThread is one free (no software to install) cool tool to encourage collaborative, creative multimedia slide shows.

The voices from the field I called upon were those who have been engaged with using this cool tool in many ways. **Susan Hall** is the learning coach of the students giving the public presentation at the bookstore. She is a former instructor, a consultant and Media Specialist at the National Inventors Hall of Fame Middle School, a public STEM school. She has co-designed a Digital Literacy course where learners are immersed in using a variety of digital tools for exploration, production and presentation in learning. Susan offers both ideas about using VoiceThread within the classroom and in global interaction with other schools.

**Sarah King and Jeremy Bruick**, both licensed teachers are Ph.D. candidates at The University of Akron. They are engaged in teacher education and professional development with a focused integration of technology in teaching and learning. In this column they frame their thinking about VoiceThread in the larger world of Web 2.0 then offer many specific ideas for integrating this engaging technology, with links to examples. They further share resources for those interested in learning more about the pedagogical approaches for using VoiceThread in the classroom by inviting them to explore (log in as a guest) an open-access e-Learning course, *VoiceThread: Utilizing Technology to Enhance K-12 Reading*, at [http://bit.ly/UA\\_Voicethread](http://bit.ly/UA_Voicethread).

### **Susan Hall offers how to use VoiceThread in her Digital Literacy Class**

VoiceThread is an interactive linear slide show discussion platform that offers the ability to add images, text, video, audio, and documents to frames for discussion. The discussion may be completed through typed text or recorded audio. During the discussion, learners may also use tools to circle the portion of the visual frame which they would have questions about or would like to highlight. Learners who are using the discussion VoiceThread have the ability to create an avatar which can be an uploaded photograph or icon. For security purposes, our learners create icons as self representations and eliminating the video cam comment feature.

My experience with VoiceThread started three years ago in a book discussion platform to extend the book club discussion to others in our school by embedding it into my school Pageflakes website. Over the years, we have used it in my Digital Literacy class to promote media production skills using digital camera, video, and documents to provide the basis for discussion in all content area formats as well as digital literacy cyber safety. In one of the projects last year, learners provided their thoughts on [Dale Chihuly's](#) artwork for their art lessons. This year we have taken our VoiceThread to a more global level in using it as a discussion format for our *Skype* friends in a Kentucky Middle School. For security purposes, we are not making this a publicly shared discussion

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## Voice Thread: From Traditional Slide Show...

(continued from page 2) by Denise H. Stuart, PhD.



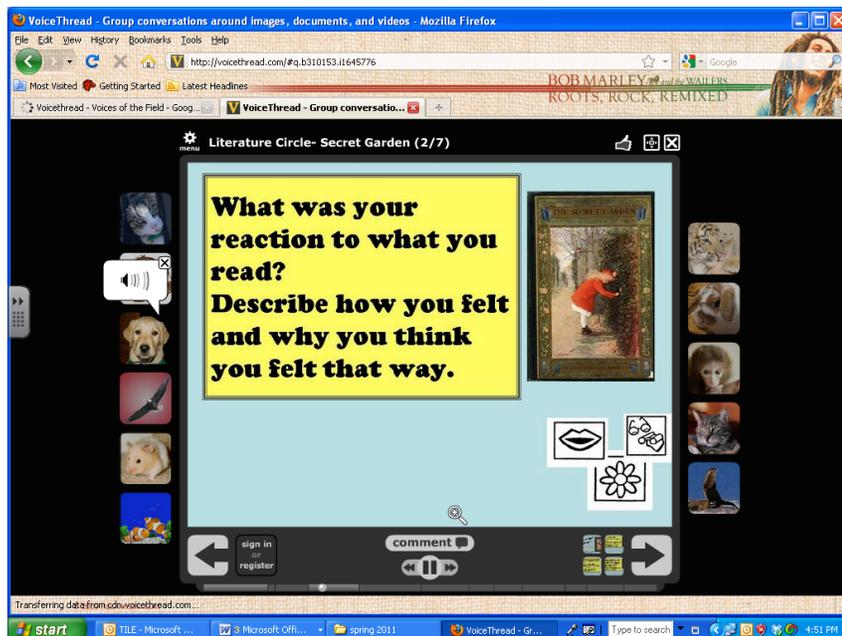
so we are using a common account. This year we have also used VoiceThread in Health class to provide a discussion and presentation of learning for the field trip to "Bodies The Exhibition" in Cleveland. In the future, I plan to be using VoiceThread discussions with classes in Mexico and China. As we offer the Mandarin Chinese World Language class in our school, this is a chance for not only sharing books, content, and field trips but also the cultural experience between teens.

### Jeremy and Sarah frame the use of Voicethread in the web 2.0 world

A technology-mediated environment in today's schools can make a dramatic difference in children's literacy development. Computers and the Internet have changed the way we locate, communicate and disseminate information, how we approach reading and writing, and how we think about people becoming literate (Reinking, 1995). Learning to become literate using mobile and desktop devices is as commonplace in twenty-first-century classrooms as basal reading programs were in the twentieth century.

In today's classroom, web-based applications allow students to access and retrieve information, construct their own texts, interact with others and access information immediately, using desktops, laptops and mobile devices. As they become more sophisticated in the use of web 2.0 tools for text composition, children become skillful in their ability to organize, revise, and edit what they write.

One web-based application that is gaining popularity in the classroom is VoiceThread (<http://ed.voicethread.com/>). This free, web-based, interactive digital storytelling application allows students and teachers to create online slide shows of images, documents, or videos. VoiceThread creations enable viewers to comment on any slide via text, audio or video comments or drawing on the image itself. VoiceThreads can also be shared privately or publicly with students, families and other classrooms inside and outside your school. This makes VoiceThread a great resource to safely publish student work to a global audience on the Internet.



How to incorporate VoiceThread in the classroom:

- **Literature Circles:** Through the use of VoiceThread, students can participate in literature circles with their classmates, students in different classrooms in the same school, and even students in different parts of the country or world! Teachers can structure the layout based on what they want their students to focus on or

(continued on page 5)

## Digital Resources to Keep You In the Loop

### Free Digital Literacy Resources



**LiveBinders** (<http://livebinders.com/>): According to the creators, LiveBinders was created to allow users to organize digital information into containers – like digital 3-ring binders. LiveBinders can contain almost any content, but notably can be used to provide students with access to website addresses or specific content. They can also be used as a way to communicate with parents directly and efficiently.

**Lino** (<http://en.linoit.com/>): Another of form of the now popular digital post-it notes is Lino. Lino allows users to post pictures and videos as well as notes that can be shared amongst group members. It also has directly functionality with iPhones/iPads with an app that was recently released.

**Storyline Online** (<http://www.storylineonline.net/>): Storyline Online is a free website that features members of the Screen Actors Guild reading children's books. Each book also includes lessons plans and activities, both online and downloadable.

**WordTalk** (<http://www.wordtalk.org.uk/>): WordTalk is a free text-to-speech plugin developed for use with all versions of Microsoft Word. It will speak the text of a document, highlighting it as it progresses. It also contains a talking dictionary and allows the user to change the voice and the speed of the speech. Users can convert text to speech and save as a **.wav** or **.mp3** file so that it can be played back on an iPod or mp3 player.

### Fall 2012 TILE-SIG Educational Blog Watch



#### ***Cool Cat Teacher Blog***

***By Vicki Davis***

<http://coolcatteacher.blogspot.com/>



*An award winning blogger, Vicki Davis uses the Cool Cat Teacher Blog to help parents and teachers think about and use technology to reach this generation's learners. In addition to the blog, you can follow Vicki on Twitter under @coolcatteacher to receive a variety of up-to-the-minute updates and suggestions.*

## VoiceThread: From Traditional Slide Show...

(continued from page 3) by Denise H. Stuart, PhD.

allow students to create their own layout. Each student can post a VoiceThread based on his/her role assignment (discussion director, connector, illustrator, etc.) or all of the students in the literature circle could post their work to a single VoiceThread. Students would then be able to comment and respond to each other. Example: 4th grade-Secret Garden: <http://voicethread.com/share/310153/>

- **Book Reviews:** Students who have written book reviews can create VoiceThreads based on their writing. Classmates, other interested students, or even family members are able to comment on the book review and suggest other books for the students to read. Several examples are already on VoiceThread. Example: There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom: <http://voicethread.com/share/56011/>
- **Book Reports:** In order to provide opportunities for higher levels of thinking, teachers can challenge students to create book reports using VoiceThread. There are endless possibilities of what students can create. This type of activity could meet several national standards in reading, writing, and presentation of information to peers. Example: 1st Grade-The Foot Book: [voicethread.com/share/21787](http://voicethread.com/share/21787)
- **Reader's Theater:** If you want to take this popular classroom activity to the next level, you can record your students reading the script and create a VoiceThread. Classmates and families would be able to listen to it whenever they wanted. In order to extend the activity, students who are not yet proficient readers could follow along with the script while listening to the VoiceThread. Example: 3rd Grade-Piggy Pie: <http://voicethread.com/?#q+Readers+Theater.b952785.i5094509>
- **Biographies:** Another popular instructional activity in numerous grades is reading and writing biographies. Students can research the person of their choice and create a written report of their findings. Then, students can find pictures of their subject to use as slides in their VoiceThread. The teacher and classmates can then watch and respond to each student's VoiceThread biography. Example: Mrs. Howells' Class-Interviews: <http://voicethread.com/share/338750/>
- **Summaries:** Students can use VoiceThread to create summaries for stories and even concepts learned in the content areas. The students can write the summaries, find pictures to use as a single slide or multiple slides in their VoiceThread, and then record themselves reading their summaries. Classmates can respond with comments and questions. Example: To Kill a Mockingbird: <http://voicethread.com/share/14574/>
- **Timelines:** Students at various grade levels can use VoiceThread to take this instructional activity to another level. Researching the events through books and the Internet can prepare students to create a comprehensive timeline. While researching, students can find pictures to use for their VoiceThread. Once all of the information is compiled, students can create a timeline using VoiceThread. Example: 3rd Grade-James Madison: <http://voicethread.com/share/107845/>

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## Voice Thread: From Traditional Slide Show...

(continued from page 5) by Denise H. Stuart, PhD.



- **Peer Teaching:** Students can demonstrate and articulate their process as in this example of a student who created a VoiceThread to show classmates how to do two-digit subtraction with regrouping using the pen feature. Other students then tried to complete the same math problem using the pen feature. Two-digit subtraction <http://voicethread.com/share/61088/>
- **Classroom Updates:** Teachers can use VoiceThread to upload pictures and comment on what is going on in their classrooms. Students can even be involved in taking the pictures and commenting depending on their grade level. Example: 2nd grade: <http://voicethread.com/share/526948/>

### References

Kajder, S. (2010). Adolescents and digital literacies: Learning alongside our students. Urbana, IL: NCTE

Reinking, D. (1995). Reading and writing with computers: Literacy research in a post- typographic world. In K.A. Hinchman, D.J. Leu, & C. Kinzer (Eds.), *Perspectives on literacy research and practice* (pp. 17- 33). Chicago: National Reading Conference.

**Thinking about Multimedia Writing**

Think about using audio, images, sound, text, and video in writing. What considerations would be most important in helping students craft a quality piece of digital writing? How would this help students to develop voice, skills of organization, or ability to generate ideas?

What new questions or thoughts you have?

sign in or register

Example of VoiceThread for Responding (From Digital Writing Workshop by Bill Gaskins)



**Book Review:*****Books, Media & the Internet: Children's Literature for Today's Classroom - Shelley S. Peterson, David Booth and Carol Jupiter (Eds.)***

Review written by Brenda Stein Dzaldov. Brenda can be reached at [Brenda.steindzaldov@utoronto.ca](mailto:Brenda.steindzaldov@utoronto.ca)

*"Behold the intersection of text and screen." (p. vii)*

This book is the culmination of the work of presenters from an inspiring conference, "A Place for Children's Literature in the New Literacies Classrooms," held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in April, 2008. Each of the text's authors presents different and exciting ways to reconcile the essential need for children's literature in our classrooms with the inevitable new literacies that are a part of our everyday world.

The theme of this book converges on the common understanding that it is not necessary to abandon children's literature in favor of digital text. In fact, the two text forms compliment each other and multimedia can widen any teacher's approach to using children's literature in all its forms in the classroom.

Filled with ideas, thoughtful challenges and technical tools, this teacher-friendly resource integrates children's literature with the multimedia resources that are available to teachers and their students. As Carol Jupiter notes in her chapter, "our ability to access new literacies is compromised if solid foundational literacies are not in place" (Leu, 2004). With these foundational skills in mind, the authors open up the world of text to teachers and readers, offering ways to foster "learning to read/write" skills across grade levels, metacognition, integration of critical literacy, using print or digital texts and the use of technological tools (e.g. interactive white boards, websites, computer programs) to expand and enrich students' literacy experiences.

Although the teaching ideas and theories are invaluable for educators and parents alike, the valuable references cited within each chapter support the ease of use of wonderful children's literature and all the different forms of multimedia. Included is a look at digital collections of historical children's books in Chapter 14. Looking back at the uniqueness of children's literature and looking forward to the possibilities available in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are a hallmark of this book, which will have you reaching for your technology to experience the richness and beauty of teaching with children's literature.

## Upcoming Technology/Literacy Conferences

Even if you cannot afford to travel to the following conferences, there are often many resources and handouts made available to readers after the conference is held.



- **Association of Literacy Educators & Researchers.** November 3-6, 2011 in Richmond, VA. Register at [http://www.aleronline.org/PDF/files/Precon\\_Info\\_2011.pdf](http://www.aleronline.org/PDF/files/Precon_Info_2011.pdf)
- **Illinois Education & Technology Conference.** Nov. 15-16 in Springfield, IL. *Digital Adventures in Teaching and Learning.* Register at <http://www.il-edtech.org/index.php?page=register>
- **Literacy Research Association.** Nov. 30 – Dec. 3, 2011 in Jacksonville, FL. Register at <http://www.nrconline.org/conference.html>



## 2011 TILE-SIG Presentation: Students Can! Implementing the Internet Workshop Model to Transform Content Area Literacy



Karen Pelekis, William Yang, and Carole Phillips  
Scarsdale Public Schools

The TILE-SIG presentation entitled "Students Can! Implementing the Internet Workshop Model to Transform Content Area Literacy" explored how the use of Internet inquiry with early elementary school students can take learning to a new level. The session highlighted a collaborative project for first graders at the Greenacres Elementary School in Scarsdale, New York, where an Internet Research Workshop was used to teach social studies and science. Technology teacher William Yang, school librarian Carole Phillips, and first grade teacher Karen Pelekis, together with Lisa Zawilinski from the University of Connecticut, created this project over several years. In the TILE-SIG session, Mr. Yang, Mrs. Phillips, and Ms. Pelekis explained the details of the Internet Research Workshop: why it is used, how it works, and how it enhances learning.

The session began with an explanation of why the presenters taught Internet inquiry to early elementary students. After reviewing research on online literacy, the collaborators discussed their belief that the use of technology is a literacy issue, not just a computer skills issue. Since technology is an important component in learning about literacy and can even be used at the preschool level, they tested these ideas to discover if first grade students were ready to receive more formal Internet instruction in school. Over time, the presenters realized that students could understand it with the proper scaffolding, and found that it enhanced student learning. As a result, Internet inquiry became an essential component of the first grade balanced literacy program.

Then the presentation detailed how the Internet Research Workshop was implemented in the first grade curriculum. The students had an Internet

workshop one reading period for an hour and a half in each six-day cycle. They used laptops in the classroom to conduct online research, following the format of a typical guided reading time for a traditional Reading Workshop. In addition, the class had an hour-long session once a cycle at the school lab to reinforce computer skills. During the Internet workshop, students gathered information from Google Earth and a class wiki. The wiki was used as a main resource for main resource the students to research topics. The wiki contained carefully screened videos, which were embedded using KeepVid to prevent students from gaining access to inappropriate sites. The wiki had carefully chosen web sites, including online encyclopedias. It also included student work as resources, obtained from older students that collaborated with the first grade class.

Finally, the session showed how the Internet Workshop fostered student learning. Over the course of the year, the students used geography journals, VoiceThread, illustration programs such as Pixie, and organizational tools like Kidspiration, to develop skills and strategies. Examples of student work revealed critical and creative thinking, and the reading and writing possibilities for this type of project. They included journal entries, graphic organizers, creative writing, and shared writing pieces. Students furthered this learning by communicating and collaborating with other classes through videoconferencing, wikis, digital postcards, and blogs. The students became both learners and teachers, and enjoyed practicing their literacy skills. Through this inquiry process, students developed critical reading skills, synthesized information, and deepened their understanding of the subjects they studied. Using the Internet Workshop transformed their learning.





## 2011 TILE SIG Presentation: The Challenges of Using eBooks in the Classroom

Emese Felvégi and Kathryn I. Matthew  
University of Houston, Clear Lake



The number of books in the home, and for young children, adults willing to share the books with them, correlates strongly not only with reading engagement, but also with reading achievement (Chiu & McBride-Chang, 2006; Mullis, Martin, Kennedy & Foy, 2007; Myrberg & Rosén, 2009; Stahl & Yaden, 2004). Smartphones, dedicated eBook readers, and computers are capable of holding hundreds of books, which makes it possible for families to have extensive home libraries. These libraries are not limited to shelves in the home as they can be carried in pockets, purses, and backpacks. These compact electronic libraries can also be found in classrooms where they have the potential to enhance teaching and learning.

The purpose of this study was to conduct a review of literature from multiple disciplines pertaining to the use of eBooks in the classroom in order to understand the underlying literacy and technology related issues and challenges. This study synthesizes research from the field of literacy education, teacher training and professional development, cognitive science, library and information science, instructional technology, and social sciences. The primary goals of the study were (1) to identify theoretical frameworks examining literacy practices specific to the reading of e-books, (2) to identify trends and issues related to using e-books in the classroom, (3) to examine the practical applications of e-books in the classroom, and (4) to suggest ideas for future research.

For the purposes of this review of literature the following definition was developed: eBooks are (a) self-contained texts used, (b) in a classroom environment, (c) in digital format, and (d) using an electronic display. Such a definition specifies that (a) the basic structure of the material mimics traditional books, (b) education is the field in focus, (c) the encoding of the text, and (d) the method of delivery or access.

### Theoretical Frameworks

The transforming effects of technology on traditional definitions of reading and learning are discussed in papers addressing the purpose, processes, medium and act of reading (Labbo & Reinking, 1999; Leu, Kinzer, Coiro & Cammack, 2004; McEneaney 2006). Position statements, guidelines and research briefs from both the International Reading Association (IRA, 2003, 2009) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 1995, 2007) support and recognize this change in literacy activities and call for teachers to utilize all available resources for literacy instruction suggesting that technology is to become a cornerstone of education.

### Trends and Issues

Access to and the formatting of ebooks is an increasingly popular topic with discussions of readability, legibility, accessibility, assistive technologies and legal matters pertaining to eBook use, and comment on the need for further studies and action in all these areas (Cavanaugh, 2002; Coyle, 2008; Gibson & Ruotolo, 2003; Renear & Golovchinsky, 2001; Anderson-Inman & Horney, 2007; Salmerón, Canas, Kintsch, & Fajardo, 2005). When comparing three different eBook formats university students preferred the book that was easiest to use, specifically the book that was easiest to navigate (Chong, Lim, & Ling, 2009). In a limited study involving twelve university students, Lam, Lam, Lam, and McNaught (2009) reported that students found it difficult to comprehend the digital text, complained about problems with the technology not working correctly, and that students who spent the most time using the eBooks regarded the experience more negatively than students who spent less time using the eBooks. Shepperd, Grace, and Koch (2008) also found that students rated the electronic version of their psychology textbook unfavorably and that students who had previously purchased electronic textbooks in other courses purchased print versions of this textbook.

Just as there is no one set page size, font size, font type, and layout for print books, there is a lack of standards for eBooks, too. While traditional books are not formatted according to a single standard, they

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## 2010 TILE SIG Presentation: Using Emerging Technologies to Redefine Literacy Instruction



Karen Ford & Susan Tancock  
Ball State University

If you haven't seen the You Tube video titled "*Digital Students (in) Analog Schools*" you should take the time. This video captures a series of talking points taken from conversations with college students about how and what they are learning. The power in this video is the message that many educators are teaching today's students with yesterday's tools. We use it with our graduate students/teachers to reinforce the reality that effective teaching tomorrow or next year or five years from now is going to demand that teachers bring a new set of skills to the classroom. They must be prepared to engage their "digital native" students in ways that match their learning needs and strengths.

As you can imagine, the "reality" that we are suggesting typically generates a lot of conversation and complaining. The following comment was posted on one of our discussion boards by a middle school teacher with twelve years experience, "...I just don't have time to sit at the

*computer and search the whole web for new ways to do something with technology in my classes...if they want us to use technology, then they need to just show us some ways or show us one or two places to look or something..."*

This kind of comment actually became the impetus for the [Teacher Talk: Literacy Teaching With Technology](#) blog that we developed for this presentation. Responding to their need for being able to find some new ideas or cool things to do with reading and writing instruction, but not having the time, energy or knowledge of where to look, we decided to bring those things to them.

[Teacher Talk: Literacy Teaching With Technology](#) is an evolving "idea site" for teachers. It's one place that they can visit to find ideas and suggestions for integrating emerging technologies into their instruction. Since many teachers don't have the time to search for both the technologies and then how

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## 2011 TILE-SIG Reading Research Award Winner Announced: Dr. Renee Hobbs from the Temple University



*Dr. Renee Hobbs,  
TILE-SIG 2011  
Reading Research  
Award Winner*

The TILE-SIG has awarded the 2011 Computers in Reading Research Award to **Dr. Renee Hobbs, Professor of Communication at Temple University**. Dr. Hobbs is one of the nation's leading authorities on media education. She founded the Media Education Lab at Temple University and is a co-founder of the Alliance for a Media Literate America (AMLA), the national membership organization that hosts the National Media Education Conference. Her research explores the development of reasoning, communication and critical thinking skills in response to media messages, the impact of youth media production, and the role of media and technologies in the teaching and learning process. Dr. Hobbs is considered a pioneer in the field of media literacy education, having created the first national-level teacher education initiative on this topic at the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1993. She has produced award-winning videos, including "Tuning in to Media," which won the Parent's Choice Award in 1995 and "Know TV," which won the 1995 Golden Cable ACE Award for public service initiatives in the cable industry. Her textbook, *Elements of Language* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston) is the only secondary language arts series in the United States to include a comprehensive approach to integrate media literacy. She has published numerous scholarly and professional articles in various outlets. We look forward to her presentation at next year's TILE-SIG session in Chicago, IL.



## *Using Emerging Technologies...*

(continued from p. 10) By Karen Ford & Susan Tancock

to use them for instruction, we have and continue to do it for them. We have an ever-expanding list of “cool tools” and are constantly on the prowl for ways that other teachers have used them in their classes. The blog has five individual pages dedicated to various aspects of literacy instruction and skill development: presenting research or information, conducting inquiry-based activities, lists of book sites with different ways of reporting or sharing info, responding to reading activities and ways to engage students in writing. Finally, we really want to encourage interaction with the teachers

and other individuals who visit the site. We’d like them to feel comfortable sharing their tips for a smooth integration of one of the new technologies. And we’d like to tap their experience by asking for suggestions about potential pitfalls or how they’ve successfully navigated necessary troubleshooting. Although it may sound like a lot to ask from one site, we’ve tried to keep it simple and always focused on providing as much information as we can for the teachers who use our site.

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## ***The Challenge of Using eBooks***

(continued from p. 9) By Emese Felvégi & Kathryn I. Matthew

do have page numbers and distinguishable chapter headings. In the case of children’s storybooks the illustrations allow for a group of readers to turn to the same page to discuss what they have read. eBooks often lack identifying features such as page numbers and illustrations. Since eBooks can be displayed on different size screens and readers can select different size fonts or page orientation, multiple readers may not be able to find the specific text in their own eBook that is being discussed and shared (Best, 2009; Duntemann, 2008). Many, but not all eBooks include search features, which have the potential for multiple readers to search using the same phrases and perhaps find the same text. However, a lack of page numbers and the changeable text make it difficult to cite eBooks as academic references (Duntemann, 2008; Sukovic, 2009).

### **Practical Applications**

CD-ROM electronic storybooks can read the text aloud to students, can provide them with multimodal enhancements to build their reading comprehension, their reading fluency, and their vocabulary, and can enhance students’ motivation to read (de Jong & Bus, 2002; Doty, Popplewell, & Byers, 2001; Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005; Matthew, 1996, 1997; Pearman, 2008; Shamir & Korat, 2006). Text that is highlighted as it is read out loud, word pronunciations and definitions, animations that depict the story actions, and opportunities to reread the books without adult supervision have the potential to enhance students’ developing reading skills. Over reliance on the supports provided by electronic text, such as having words pronounced aloud, rather than attempting to decode them on their own, may hinder students from developing their reading skills (Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005; McKenna, 1998). Additionally, some of the incidental animations, sounds, delays in page turning, and games distract readers, which interferes with their comprehension and leads to passive viewing rather than active reading (Labbo & Kuhn, 2000; Matthew, 1996, 1997; Pearman & Chang, 2010; Shamir & Korat, 2006; Zucker, Moody, & McKenna, 2009). Hence, optimal student learning from electronic storybooks requires adult support and guidance, whether these adults are teachers, parents, or caregivers (de Jong & Bus, 2002; Kim & Anderson, 2008; Korat, Segal-Drori, & Klien, 2009).

While the focus of research on young students and electronic text centers around CD-ROM storybook, the focus of research on adults has been on eBooks stored on computers or dedicated readers. The ability to amass large personal reference libraries on portable, pocket size readers gives students ready access to course materials (Gibson & Ruotolo, 2003; Lam, Lam, Lam, & McNaught, 2009). University libraries have previously offered electronic versions of text to be checked out on computer and some are now allowing students to check out

(continued on page 12)

## The Challenges of Using eBooks (continued from previous page)



dedicated readers pre-loaded with electronic books and exploring which genres of electronic books to add to their collections (Christianson, 2005; Clark, 2009; Gregory, 2008). Some readers miss the feel of the book (Larson, 2009; Raab, 2010); some readers print the text rather than read it on a small screen (Anuradha & Usha, 2006); and when offered both print and electronic versions of a book over 50% of the students preferred the print version (Gregory, 2008).

### Future Research

From a theoretical point of view, additional research needs to be conducted regarding the nature of reading using eBooks and devices. Further research is needed into using dedicated eBook readers at various stages of cognitive development to provide the educator with the specifics about the nature using eBooks at the respective developmental levels. Research is also needed on eBook formats and reading devices, pagination and citation, as well as the assistive technologies that enable access to the materials for the visually impaired or those with preferences for multiple modalities.

National and international assessments (NAEP, PIRLS, PISA) and standards (IRA/NCTE, NETS) alike signal a change in educational practices by including questions in context questionnaires regarding the access to and use of electronic devices and texts, as well as the use of electronic devices to assess and record reading achievement. case studies and large-scale studies dedicated to classroom integration of eBooks and the new generation of dedicated eBook readers at the elementary or secondary level have yet to emerge.

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## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

### IRA Award for Technology and Reading



Applications are due by November 11, 2011

The IRA Award for Technology and Reading is designed to honor educators in grades K–12 or equivalent who are making an outstanding and innovative contribution to the use of technology in reading education.

Entries are judged by members of the International Reading Association Technology, Communication, and Literacy Committee. There will be a grand prizewinner selected as the best application from across all the regions and up to nine regional winners. The committee reserves the right not to award all prizes if the quality of entrants does not merit awards. **Deadline for submission is November 15, 2011.**

#### **Eligibility Criteria:**

1. All entrants must be educators who work directly with students grades K-12 for all or part of the working day.
2. Educators who work in public, parochial, or private elementary or secondary schools in the United States, Canada, or other countries (includes U.S. Territories and APO schools) are eligible for the regional awards. ***All entries are eligible for the grand prize.***
3. The program being described must be complete as of the date of the application. No programs planned for future implementation will be accepted.
4. Entries incorporating any brand of computers, operating systems, software applications, and other technologies such as TV or video are acceptable.

#### **IRA Award Webpage and application:**

[http://www.reading.org/Resources/AwardsandGrants/teachers\\_presidential.aspx](http://www.reading.org/Resources/AwardsandGrants/teachers_presidential.aspx)

#### **Last year's (2011) winner:**

**Eric Claravall.** Claravall is a teacher at Regnart Elementary School in Cupertino, CA. He teaches Special Education (mild to moderate) 3-5 grades. Prior to teaching he was a school psychologist, when he realized that he wanted to be more involved with his student's academic involvement, he decided to go back to graduate school and obtained his special education: mild to moderate credentials. The IRA award specifically recognizes Claravall's project "Podcasting: Promoting Literacy and Poetry Appreciation in Special Education," which provides him a window of information as to how his student's self-correct errors when reading poems. The podcasts allowed him to reflect on his students' performance and qualitative progress in their literacy development, particularly in reading fluency, speech intonation, and decoding errors. Podcasting serendipitously has become an informal assessment in his literacy curriculum.



## A new peer-reviewed journal is proposed for the TILE-SIG --

### *Journal of Technology in Literacy Education*



At the 2010 TILE SIG business meeting in Chicago, those in attendance discussed the possibility of the TILE SIG developing a professional journal for sharing research and teaching ideas related to literacy and technology. Denise Johnson and Beth Dobler volunteered to head up this project and have proposed a tentative timeline.

- Fall 2011/Spring 2012 – establish online submission website/software and publication format, establish review board for journal
- Fall 2011 – publicize journal (take flyers to national, regional, state professional organizations e.g. LRA, ALER, NCTE, IRA)
- May, 2012 – call for manuscripts
- October 1, 2012 – submission deadline for inaugural issue
- May 1, 2013 - online publication of inaugural issue of the *Journal of Technology in Literacy Education*

Dues collected by the TILE SIG will be earmarked for the development of this journal. Exact costs are unclear at this time, but a formal proposal will be given at the TILE SIG business meeting in May 2011. Anyone interested in assisting with this project please contact Denise ([denise.johnson@wm.edu](mailto:denise.johnson@wm.edu)) or Beth ([edobler@emporia.edu](mailto:edobler@emporia.edu)).

### *Technology in Literacy Education Special Interest Group*

## Seeking volunteers to get more involved in SIG Activities and Initiatives



As we continue to grow our membership and provide the greatest number of benefits possible, we are seeking your ideas and contributions to make our SIG more active in ways that meaningfully contribute to your professional development. We are currently seeking volunteers who would like to lead or help with the following activities:

1. **Working with the Technology in Literacy Education Committee:** IRA has approached Julie to work on a number of initiatives in conjunction with the committee and we need people willing to volunteer their time to work on multiple charges that may have a lasting impact on the organization.
2. **Contributing to our SIG newsletter.** We are always looking for teaching activities and classroom research to share with our members. If you teach, do research, or read lots of good books and would like to write an article or review a book about how technology is used in the classroom, please consider sharing your ideas in our newsletter! The writing style of the newsletter is relatively informal and we welcome all of your creative submissions at any time.
3. **Becoming a TILE-SIG Committee Member.** If you have ideas about how the SIG can better meet your needs, and would like to have a more formal voice in SIG initiatives, please consider becoming a committee member. We meet once a year at the annual conference and would very much welcome your assistance in setting the vision for the future of our Special Interest Group.

Please contact Julie Coiro at [jcoiro@snet.net](mailto:jcoiro@snet.net) to express your interest in any of the above opportunities or if you simply have ideas for how the SIG can better meet your needs.



## TILE-SIG Membership Update and Call for Dues

Now that we have obtained a longer time slot on the conference program with over, we need to maintain our status with at least 100 registered members for the 2012 conference. If you have not already done so, please pay your membership annual dues of \$10 so that the TILE-SIG can maintain our longer time slot and continue to contribute funds that help defray the costs of:

- Co-sponsoring a lunch at the Technology Pre-Conference Institute
- Awarding our annual recipient of the Reading Research Award
- Organizing and distributing the SIG newsletter
- Providing a small honorarium to visiting non-IRA members invited to present at our SIG session
- Supporting classroom teachers and SIG members with new initiatives based on future needs and interests
- Development of a peer-reviewed TILE-SIG journal to begin in 2013

For your convenience, you can find the SIG membership form on the last page of this newsletter. Please complete the form, detach it from the newsletter, and mail it with your \$10 check to:

Dr. Joan Rhodes  
Membership Chair, TILE-SIG  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
School of Education  
1015 West Main St.,  
Richmond, VA 23284-2020

### Please note:

*Only individuals who are members of IRA are eligible to be members of the TILE SIG.* Each spring, membership must be renewed and IRA membership numbers and expiration dates must be verified. Be sure to include this information on your membership form. If you have questions, please email Joan Rhodes at [jarhodes2@vcu.edu](mailto:jarhodes2@vcu.edu). And of course, feel free to make copies of the registration form and invite your colleagues to join IRA and our Special Interest Group.

### About Our Organization...

The Technology in Literacy Education SIG is a special interest group of the International Reading Association (IRA). The purpose of the group is to bring together members of IRA who are interested in literacy and technology. Each year at the IRA Conference, the TILE SIG hosts an annual meeting and presentation session. The length of this session varies from 1½ hours to 3 hours, depending on the number of members we have in the SIG. Various members share information and teaching ideas in the areas of literacy and technology. Also a TILE SIG business meeting is held at IRA. All members, or those interested in joining, are welcome to attend the business meeting. Details from the 2011 SIG sessions are included in this newsletter with more forthcoming.



**PLEASE  
PAY  
YOUR  
DUES!**



**Thank you!!**



**We now have over 175  
TILE-SIG members!**





INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

Technology in Literacy Education  
Special Interest Group

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**\*\* You must be a member of IRA in order to join the TILE-SIG**

**IRA Membership # (required):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Exp. Date (required):** \_\_\_\_\_  
(The 6-digit # above your name on any mailing label from IRA or you can email IRA to get this)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Preferred mailing address (check one): \_\_\_\_\_ home \_\_\_\_\_ Institution

Phone (office): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Your e-mail address will be used as the main method of communication with the SIG. Please notify us if your e-mail address changes.)

Would you be willing to serve as a liaison of the TILE SIG to your state or local reading association?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If yes, you will be contacted with further information)

Would you be willing to serve as a host for one or more of the featured technology sessions at the annual convention? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If yes, you will be contacted with further information)

Would you be willing to serve on a committee of the TILE SIG? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual membership dues are \$10.00**  
**Make check to Technology in Literacy Education SIG**

I have enclosed my check for \$10.00: US Resident  Outside US

**Please mail form and check to:**

Dr. Joan Rhodes  
Virginia Commonwealth University, VCU School of Education, 1015 West Main St., Richmond, VA 23284-2020  
[jarhodes2@vcu.edu](mailto:jarhodes2@vcu.edu)