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## USE OF ELECTRONIC MAIL AND STUDENTS LANGUAGE

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**Abstract:**

*In this innovative article the author, an authority on reading and a versatile and prolific writer explores ways and means of utilising e-mail for achieving different objectives in children's literature and reading in general and its concomitant, writing.*

**KEY WORDS:**

Electronic Mail , Students Language , prolific writer , children's literature .

**INTRODUCTION**

New learning opportunities need to be developed continuously to assist pupils to share thoughts and ideas gleaned from reading children's literature. Why? We need to encourage wide reading by learners from the literature arena. Reading on diverse topics assist pupils individually to increase knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes in reading. TO become a good reader, pupils need to practice and use reading as an avenue of learning across the curriculum. It is enjoyable to be able to read content well and pursue reading in many genres of literature. Of all skills and abilities I possess, I indeed appreciate reading as a practical as well as a leisure time activity. I enjoy reading children's literature today as a leisure time activity. I enjoy reading children's literature today as well as reading in the different academic areas, such as history, geography, education, mathematics, science, and social science topics. Becoming an avid reader is ongoing and never completed as an objective. Beyond reading, I feel, there is nothing but more reading in broadening interests, subject matter knowledge, and the attitudinal dimension (Ediger, 1998, Chapter Twelve).

E-mail has become a way for achieving Efferent objectives in children's literature end reading, in general. How might E-mail be used to encourage reading and its connections, including writing? let us first' more traditional but good procedures to develop and increase purposes in reading children's literature increase purposes in reading children's literature.

**1. Quality Paper-Pencil/Portfolio Uses, to Enrich the Literature Curriculum:**

In supervising student teachers and cooperating teachers in the public schools, many excellent ways were in evidence that these teachers used to develop and increase pupil's reading endeavors of children's literature.

Journaling is a learning opportunity that gives pupils an opportunity to write down what was liked and enjoyed from reading. Here, pupils individually may write about characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view, and sequence of events in literature read. When the writing activity is being stressed, pupils may use their very own words and reflect: upon what has been comprehended. The reflection might also indicate what is not understood and needs rereading. Sharing of journal writing experiences provides

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opportunities to compare what has been written with ideas of others. When sharing occurs, pupils may wish to read literature that 'the other learner has just read. journaling may also occur between teacher and child when the latter has a question to be answered or a feeling to be expressed. A few pupils journeyed with parents in which both have read the same book and are interested in the child and his/her literature curriculum. Parents may also be involved in writing journal entrees to the teacher pertaining to the offspring's achievement in reading, such as in word recognition skills as well as comprehension abilities. In an atmosphere of respect, parent and the teacher may work for the good of the child to increase the letters purpose's in becoming a better reader and writer.

Diary entries may be kept by the pupil pertaining to books read as well as salient ideas comprehended. The diary entrees might also pertain to recording new words encountered in reading. Diary entrees may be shared to encourage and appreciate consumption of literature. After a period of time, the diary entrees may be combined into a log. The journals, as well as diary and log entrees provide opportunities for connecting reading and writing.

Experience charts may be developed with young learners. Thus, pupils collectively or individually might present experiences for the teacher to write on the chalkboard. The word processor might also be used with an enlarged screen for all pupils to see the typed script. Pupils and the teacher may then read together what- was written/typed by the teacher, pertaining to ideas presented by learners. Older pupils who possess their very own writing vocabularies might well develop their own experience charts.

For variation, book reports may contain vital summaries involving relevant facts, concepts, and generalizations. Written book reports should not be a routine activity, but provide variation to motivate pupils to read and write. The written book report may also be presented in proper outline form and presented orally to peers or the class as a whole (Ediger, 1997, Chapter Nineteen).

Information from reading children's literature might be shared using other intelligences than verbal intelligence (See Gardner, 1993). Thus, pupils individually or collaboratively might 'present subject matter read in

1. Art form by using spatial intelligence.
2. Musical form when using musical intelligence.
3. Kinesthetic intelligence by revealing content read through the medium of dance/body movement.
4. Interpersonal intelligence by working productively in committees or with peers.
5. Intrapersonal intelligence when indicating Individual Intelligence as a favorite and capable way of achieving.
6. Logical intelligence may be revealed by relating content read from one literary selection to another.- the kind of logic involved may be analyzed by the learner with teacher assistance.
7. Scientific intelligence might be indicated through the pupil's .highly motivated choice of reading materials. Thus, expository content read by the pupil may indicate tremendous interest in the world of nature and science.

Portfolios also have been used in determining pupil progress in reading and writing. The portfolio is .a purposeful collection of pupil products, collected over a period of time. The portfolio contents are related to the objectives of instruction. An accompanying table of contents brings order and sequence to the products contained in the portfolio. Items in the portfolio should be representative of pupil's work and may be shared with parents. In fact, portfolios work well for use to examine pupil achievement in parent/teacher conferences. Thus, there are diverse ways in having pupils reveal and indicate what has been learned. Pupils with teacher guidance need to decide which are the best ways for a learner to show achievement in any curriculum area. Sharing of ideas here 'is vital to work cooperatively in guiding optimal pupil progress. Items in a portfolio should not be too voluminous, nor too thin. .An overview of a sample of pupil learning needs to be a major goal in portfolio development and use. it provides pupils, teachers, parents, and school administrators information on how well the learner is progressing over previous experiences. What might then go into a portfolio, as examples:

1. Written work pertaining to different purposes in writing.
2. Cassette recordings of oral reading.
3. Illustrations of art work, related to reading and writing.
4. Video tapes of pupil involvement in discussions and other oral collaborative endeavors.
5. Snapshots of construction activities- and diverse project activities.
6. Murals showing comprehension of contents in reading (Ediger, 1997, chapter nineteen).

**2.E- mail Messages To Facilitate Reading/Writing Instruction:**

E-mail approaches might well be considered an extension of quality traditional written procedures used to guide achievement of learners in reading, as well as in writing. Thus, e-mail messages may be sent of journal writing, diary/log entrees, experience charts, and selections of the portfolio. Making the connections between reading and writing is of utmost importance since one truly cannot be separated from the other. Constructivism as a philosophy of education stresses that pupils be actively engaged in learning and be heavily involved in selecting objectives, learning opportunities, and appraisal procedures in reading and writing. Constructivism may be contrasted with standardized tests and criterion referenced tests, the latter developed by those outside the local school and classroom in writing test items to measure learner achievement. With constructivism, pupils, locally, are involved in appraising the self in terms of progress. The teacher assists and is a guide in helping pupils assess the latter's achievement in the curriculum.

I would now like to discuss additional important ways for pupils to use e-mail to communicate with others pertaining to literary activities. In discussing e-mail applications with teachers, I find that rich uses are made of this technology in selected schools, where this capability is present. Technology provides opportunities to vary experiences for pupils in reading and writing. Novel approaches are needed to satiate pupil curiosity in wanting to achieve, grow, and develop. More e-mail services should be available as increased technology arrives in the school and, classroom setting.

With E-mail, many approaches are available to communicate effectively with others to express interest, purpose and new ideas in literary endeavors. Thus, pupils may send e-mail messages to the teacher, parents and/or other learners in the school/classroom setting pertaining to clarifying what has been read. The style of writing and/or the openness of the print discourse read may leave gaps of thinking in the mind of the reader. Pupils who perceive those gaps tend to be creative in thinking and wish to have possible answers to these questions.

A pupil may hypothesize -about a different beginning or ending to the reading selection than the one provided. Those responding may also wish to e-mail their messages in return. A continued dialogue may result here. As a variation, the reader may suggest through e-mail a different setting, different, characterization, and/or plot in the completed reading.

The reader might want to dwell on the consistency of the author's theme or point of view in the story read. As pupils feel more ownership of the literature curriculum, they tend to become increasingly inquisitive and curious. Depth learning, rather than survey approaches, become more apparent. A psychological classroom climate needs to be in evidence which will promote pupil reading and writing across the curriculum. E-mail use is encouraged here in communicating ideas with others.

Getting parents involved in the child's reading and writing curriculum can be difficult. Not so with e-mail. Parents do like to hear about their child's progress in reading, especially if personal content is conveyed. Thus, a pupil may convey a message on what he/she enjoyed specifically about a particular book. Parents may have read the same book, brought home from the school for parental reading. Parents then appreciate the opportunity to relay messages to the child involved through digital technology. Experiences such as these truly spur pupils on to greater efforts and, achievement in making the connections between reading and writing.

There can be much enthusiasm in children's literature involving units on poetry. Pupils love to send E-mail messages involving their own written poems. After readiness activities have been provided pertaining to diverse forms of poetry,- pupils enjoy sharing their products through e-mail. These poems have consisted of rhymed, unrhymed, and free verse. Pupils and teachers tend to like sharing of poems written. Teachers can be very influential here with sharing their very own poems written.

Writers of children's literature may have an e-mail address listed and the pupil might directly relay messages to these authors. I have known many writers who do respond to e-mail as well as through letters sent through the regular mail. Recently, I spoke to the Missouri Reading Council Annual Convention, International Reading Association affiliated, on, Missouri Writers of Children's Literature". To develop my speech, Used the internet to locate the Missouri Writer's Academy website, and noticed eighty authors living in Missouri. The regular and E-mail addresses were given as well as fees charged by these authors for being a speaker in the local school (See Missouri Centre for the Book, 1999).

At Truman State University, we have an annual children's Literature Festival, of which I have been a board member (See Children's Literature Festival - - - Truman State University). Pupils in and from the Kirskville, Missouri public schools area received invitations to come to the festival. The responses are excellent indeed. Pupils then can observe and hear life authors and observe their literary products at the festival. Pupil enthusiasm for listening to and discussing stories read orally to them makes for much enthusiasm in children's literature. There seemingly is no time for misbehavior! These authors have received, among other things, e-mail messages from involved pupils thanking them for their participation, as well as

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asking selected questions and making relevant comments. For my presentation at the Missouri Reading Council Annual Convention, I found it very easy to locate names and addresses of Missouri writers and their regular and e-mail addresses. I would think other states in the nation would have similar sources to locate and send communications to writers and authors in their respective states. In other words, I believe that school systems should increasingly have "children's literature festivals" to encourage interest in reading and writing. There are ample opportunities to use e-mail here. E-mail use encourages pupil reading and writing.

Many pupils like to e-mail summaries of literature read to the teacher as well as to the parents. These summaries are generally well written with careful attention paid to the mechanics of writing. Pupils need many, many opportunities to share with others what has been read. E-mail will be an appropriate medium of communication in these situations.

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