

Regional Wrap-Up

Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU

Packed and Ready to Go!

Brenda M. Brady, M.Ed.

Linking People



and Resources

Inside this issue:

Packed and Ready to Go! Cont....	2
Farewell to Brenda	3
T/TAC On-line	3
Surfing the Web	3
Reading Rockets	3
Conferences & Training Events	4

The newest technology at Region 5 T/TAC is the traveling Assistive Technology (AT) booth. The large black case filled with devices, software, and other AT tools debuted at the Educational Technology Leadership Conference held in Roanoke in December. The inception of this traveling exhibit came from the Virginia Department of Education Assistive Technology Priority Project team and has proven its worth through the number of visitors at the conference. It has travel plans to many more conferences where it may provide those in all aspects of education with the opportunity to learn about AT. It will also be used by the Region 5 T/TAC staff for workshops and demonstrations. The software included with the AT booth includes a variety for use with reading and writing. Some of this software are new versions of existing programs and others are the newest AT available. All of the following software programs are available in the Region 5 T/TAC lending library for a three week checkout.

The newest accessible keyboard from IntelliTools is the *USB IntelliKeys*. It can be used with any platform so there are no longer separate cables for Mac and Windows. Software is provided and must be loaded to utilize all of the new benefits of the *IntelliKeys*. There are some new overlays, including an internet access overlay that saves key-

strokes by typing **www.** or **.com** with one button. Whether you have used the older version or this is your first alternative keyboard, you will quickly find uses for it! A student who is completing research or who is using a word processing program for writing can benefit from this alternative to the mouse and standard keyboard.

The newest version of Overlay Maker is *Overlay Maker 3*. It was just released last fall and pairs well with the *USB IntelliKeys* (IntelliTools, Inc.). Again, it works with both platforms and is OS X friendly. New overlays, templates, and tutorials make creating your overlays very easy. If you have *Boardmaker 5*

(Mayer-Johnson) on your computer, you can use these pictures on your overlays, as well. Creation of game boards and activities that do not use the computer are another added feature.

The software companies are listening to the research and theory concerning the teaching of reading. According to the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (2000, pp.3-1), there is research and theory to support the teaching of fluency through "guided oral reading procedures and approaches that encourage students to read more." The *Start to Finish* books by Don Johnston provide stories that can be read aloud to the student as well as a way to track the recordings of the student reading.



This series of books is broken down into two libraries, the Gold Library Collection with a readability of grade 2-3 and the Blue Library Collection with a readability of grade 4-5. With a controlled vocabulary, the stories provide the student with the ability to listen or read and even take quizzes on the stories. The fluency readings can be tracked by the computer. The first chapter reading is kept as a baseline and then each subsequent recording can be scored using the fluency calculator provided in the program.

When the teacher plugs in these results, the program automatically places the data on the fluency report. The titles of the stories fit the interest of the older reader, for example, *Kidnapped*, *Tuskegee Airmen*, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Flo Jo: The Story of Florence Griffith-Joyner*. The CD-ROM can be used on both platforms and a paper copy of the book is provided, as well.

Many companies have continued to improve on the writing software and aids. With *Cowriter*

4000 (Don Johnston, Inc.) leading the way with word prediction software, *IntelliTools Suite* (IntelliTools, Inc.) has followed with word prediction built into it. The newest *Inspiration version 7.5* (Inspiration Software, Inc.) encourages the student's organizational skills. New templates support writing across the curriculum using the visual diagrams and outlines. *Draftbuilder* (Don Johnston, Inc.) is another organizational tool. It allows the students to view their outline as they add notes all on the same screen. Onscreen tabs provide easy access from notes view to the draft view. Color-coding of the topics and one button commands allow the writer to move around the topics with ease. The assistive technology tools of spell checker and text reader are included.

Pixwriter (Slater Software, Inc.) and *Writing with Symbols* (Widgit Software, Ltd.) allow the student to create a writing by choosing symbols or pictures. One major benefit of both programs is the inclusion of the word with the picture. Both programs are set up with the text to speech option.

The newest portable word processor available from AlphaSmart is called Neo. It builds on the tradition of AlphaSmart with the same ruggedness, ease of use, and long battery life of 700+ hours on 3 AA alkaline cell batteries. It weighs two pounds so it is very portable. It has twice the memory and a 50% larger display than the *AlphaSmart 3000*. Wireless capabilities increase its ease of use and the exchange of the files for printing or sharing. AlphaSmart does offer educational discounts.

References:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction.* (NIH Pub. No. 00-4754). Jessup, MD: National Institute for Literacy at EDPubs

Contact Information:

AlphaSmart, Inc., Los Gatos, CA,
www.alphasmart.com, 1.888.274.0680

Don Johnston, Inc., Volo, IL,
www.donjohnston.com, 1.800.999.4660

Inspiration Software, Inc., Portland, OR,
www.inspiration.com, 1.800.877.4292

IntelliTools, Inc., Petaluma, CA,
www.intellitools.com, 1.800.899.6687

Slater Software, Inc., Guffey, CO,
www.slatersoftware.com, 1.877.306.6968

Widgit Software, Ltd., and Mayer-Johnson, Inc.,
Solana Beach, CA, www.mayer-johnson.com,
1.800.588.4548



Bye-Bye Brenda

It was with mixed feelings that the Region 5 T/TAC staff said farewell to Brenda Fogus as she resigned from our office to begin a new job on January 10. Brenda had worked at T/TAC for four years as a coordinator and recently moved to JMU special education programs as an instructor while she completes work on a doctoral degree. While at T/TAC Brenda primarily worked in the areas of moderate-severe disabilities and autism and was a familiar face to many of you as she provided consultations and training throughout the region and state. While we'll miss her professional expertise and sunny smile, we are delighted for her on her new venture and send our best wishes for her continued success. Brenda's E-mail will remain the same (fogusbe@jmu.edu) should you wish to contact her.

Surfing the Web

Visit a new website for those supporting students with autism, <www.valleyautism.org>. The local Harrisonburg/Rockingham site is sponsored by the *Shenandoah Valley Autism Partnership*.

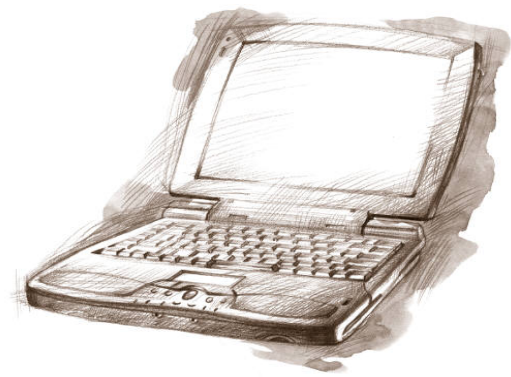
The Busy Teacher Café is a Web-based resource site for elementary teachers, <www.busyteacherscafe.com/index.html>, that contains handouts, worksheets, E-pen pals, and teaching ideas for early elementary teachers.

Time for Time, <www.time-for-time.com>, is a resource for teachers and students to learn a wealth of information about the concept of time. Included on the site are worksheets, games, quizzes, interactive practice clocks, lesson plans, and lots of information on teaching and learning the concept of time.

T/TAC On-line Now

Available!!

The Virginia Department of Education and the Training/Technical Assistance Centers introduce T/TAC On-line, a Web-based community linking people and resources to help children and youth with disabilities. T/TAC On-line is available to teachers, related service personnel, and parents who can utilize the service through the convenience of a personal computer. Currently the knowledge areas on the site are categorized as SOL Enhanced, Resources, Events, On-line Training, and School Improvement.



Visit T/TAC On-line at <www.ttaconline.org>



Reading Rockets, a national reading initiative that looks at how young children learn to read, why so many struggle, and how to help them, offers research-based tools and strategies to educators and parents. Guided by an advisory panel of leading researchers and experts in the field of reading, *Reading Rockets* is a national educational service of WETA, the public television and radio stations in Washington, DC. It is funded by a grant from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The Web-site <www.ReadingRockets.org> offers a wealth of information and resources. Check it out!

Conferences and Training Events

April 16: 2nd Annual Shenandoah Valley Autism Partnership Conference, James Madison University, Harrisonburg.

The conference will focus on awareness, characteristics, sensory integration, and behavior as they relate to persons on the autism spectrum. The strategies presented will benefit those living and/or working with children and adults with autism, Asperger syndrome, and pervasive developmental disorder. Sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education, Region 5 T/TAC, and Shenandoah Valley Autism Partnership. Contact Sally Chappel at Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU, chappesl@jmu.edu or (540) 568-8095 for information.

April 22-23: Applying Sensory Integration, Its Principles, and Treatment to Students In Wheelchairs.

Albemarle Resource Center, Charlottesville.

Presented by Karen M. Kangas, OTR/L.

Learn to use concepts of sensory integration including motor planning and sensory processing to better support learning, positioning, and functional independence for children with severe physical disabilities. Target audience: Therapists. Sponsored by Piedmont Regional Education Program. Early registration (by March 25) is \$195.00. Registration after March 25 is \$215.00. Registration deadline is April 8, 2005. Call PREP office, (434) 975-9400, for more information.

April 14 : Transition Practitioners' Council 2005 Spring Meeting. 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Plecker Workforce Center, Blue Ridge Community College, Weyers Cave, VA.

To register contact Betsy Gauvin, egauvin@radford.edu or (540) 831-7733. Registrations must be received by April 7. For questions other than registration, contact Beth Somers, (804) 640-1168 or beth.somers@wwrc.virginia.gov.

Scott McMichael, Coordinator of Administrative Services from the Virginia Department of Education's Office of Due Process and Complaints, will present the new IDEIA legislation and how it has affected Transition. Elizabeth Evans Getzel, Director of Postsecondary Education Initiatives from the Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, will discuss the results of a statewide assessment (conducted by her and Dr. Sharon deFur) of transition services for youth with disabilities 14-21 years of age. The assessment was supported by a Virginia Board for Persons with Disabilities grant and the Virginia Department of Education.

July 28-29: DCDT Summer Institute 2005. Roslyn Center, Richmond.

The Institute is designed to share cutting edge information about transitioning youth to post-school options. For more information, contact Sally Chappel at Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU, chappesl@jmu.edu or (540) 568-8095.

Shaping the Future: Four-Day Workshop In ABA at the Virginia Institute of Autism

VIA, located at 1414 Westwood Road, Charlottesville, VA 22903, presents this workshop to provide an opportunity for educators and parents to gain a basic understanding of the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) as well as a hands-on learning experience. Participants receive classroom instruction, observe students, and shadow VIA instructors. Cost is \$500.

Dates: December 6 - 9, 2004; February 28 - March 3, 2005; March 28 - 31, 2005; April 25 - 28, 2005; July 21 - 25, 2005. For more information: call VIA at 434.923.8252 or download an application at www.viaschool.org/STFRegistration.pdf.

Raising the Bar: Improving Services for Individuals with ADHD

Tuesday, April 5th, 2005; 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
College Center, JMU, Harrisonburg, VA

Raising the Bar is an annual event hosted by the Alvin V. Baird Attention and Learning Disabilities Center and the Virginia Department of Education Region 5 Training and Technical Assistance Center. The goal of this meeting is to improve the standard of care for individuals with ADHD across Virginia. Each year researchers, physicians, educators, clinicians, parents, and students come together with the common goal of sharing information and knowledge to further the understanding of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Arthur Anastopoulos, Ph.D.

Dr. Anastopoulos currently is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he serves as Director of Clinical Training and also directs an AD/HD Specialty Clinic for children, adolescents, and adults. An active researcher, Dr. Anastopoulos has been an investigator on several federal and university funded research grants, including a recently awarded 5-year grant to study the genetic basis of AD/HD in collaboration with researchers at Duke University. He has authored more than 40 articles and book chapters on the topic of AD/HD and is also the first author on a recently published text, entitled *Assessing Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*.

Panel Discussion: A group of local professionals, parents, and students will comprise a panel for an afternoon discussion of issues. Members of the audience will be invited to submit questions to the panel.

Poster Session: Various presentations on topics of interest in the field of ADHD.

Contact Tony Tallent at Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU, (540) 568-3147 or tallente@jmu.edu, for further information.