

Technology Newsletter

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& Marion Wood, Division
Instructional Technologists



Director's News

Spring - a time of rebirth and rejuvenation!

This is a good time to summarize all the great things going on in the world of technology in Appomattox County Public Schools.

We started the school year with three division instructional technologists. This mandate came from the Dept. of Education (DOE) and was expected to be in place this school year. However, several school divisions did not utilize these positions as DOE expected. Although we are still in the growth phase, they have been a wonderful addition to our technology team.

We have updated several computers labs, including AMS, to prepare for on-line SOL testing. Our primary school received their first wireless lab and each school received additional

The Palm T/X By Danny Richardson

The latest version of the Palm handheld is called the Palm T/X. It offers built in Wi-Fi and Bluetooth wireless technologies. The Palm T/X allows you to carry and edit Word, Excel and PowerPoint files, to view photos and videos, to listen to mp3 files and to view and listen to e-books.

The primary school is currently piloting an assessment program utilizing the Palm T/X and Wireless Generation handheld software.

Our Division has purchased a classroom set of Palms available for checkout from the cottage. In addition to the above mentioned features the classroom set of Palms will be loaded with GoKnow software HLE (Handheld Learning Environment) integrated software for learning. This suite of software includes a powerful group of

laptops and schoolpads to be used for staff check-out in classroom instruction. We have offered MANY technology workshops to update many skill levels. Several staff members have benefited from DOE conferences and workshops offered to enhance instruction with the integration of technology. And finally, we are in the process of updating our software inventories and TSIPs (Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel).

A thought for us to ponder: *With so many new and interesting things going on in the world of technology, both in education and in the public sector, how do we evaluate what works, what best meets student needs, what raises student achievement levels, what we do next, where we go from here?*

We value your input - stay in tune, stay informed, stay involved!!

applications suitable for the K-12 classroom as listed below.

- FreeWrite=an easy to use word processing tool
- Sketchy=an easy to use drawing and animation tool
- PiCoMap=an easy to use concept mapping tool that links to Sketchy and FreeWrite documents
- FlingIt=moves images and text from web pages to the desktop and then to the handheld

An in-depth description of GoKnow's software at their website:
<http://goknow.com>

Please take advantage of the exciting possibilities the Palm T/X offers your classroom!

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Summer Staff Workshops
August 1 - 3

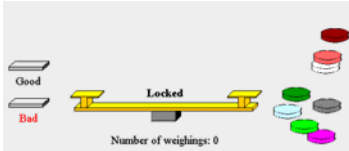
Virtual Learning & Manipulatives

By Susie Fisher

Your students know about virtual reality, but do you? More and more virtual learning sites are popping up on the web, and some are very good teaching tools. Some are not. Virtual Learning is learning that takes place in front of a computer either with or without the teacher's assistance. Many math sites pioneered this way of learning with the use of virtual manipulatives.

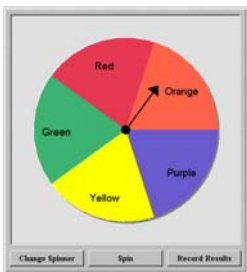
Usually the term "virtual manipulative" refers to copies of physical manipulatives placed on the World Wide Web in the form of computer applets and usually are used to explore or discover some mathematical principle. Some educators have expanded this definition to include all subjects.

In the following two articles you will find many of the best virtual sites that we have been able to discover.



The above virtual manipulative on money can be found at:

<http://arcytech.org/>



Virtual Spinner for teaching

http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/category_q_1_t_1.html#probability



www.starfall.com

Virtual Manipulatives for Grades K - 5

By Marion Wood

<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>

The National Library for Virtual Manipulatives is one of the best places to find virtual manipulatives at the K - 5 level, also.

<http://www.dositey.com/>

Math & Language Arts K - 8

Here, you will find interactive activities for Addition • Subtraction • Multiplication • Number Facts • Math Challenge • Measures (Time, Money) and Alphabet • Spelling • Reading and Writing Skills • Vocabulary • Phonics

www.starfall.com

The Starfall Learn to Read website is extraordinary. It is designed for PreK-2 students. It is hard to believe that this wonderful resource is free.

<http://www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geogquiz/usaquiz.html>

Name the States

<http://www.moneyinstructor.com/inp/inpcountcoins.asp>

Counting Money

<http://whyfiles.org/013tornado/3.html>

Interactive tornadoes

Virtual Manipulatives for Grades 6 - 12

By Susie Fisher

The most comprehensive site for math manipulatives is the National Library for Virtual Manipulatives. Here you will find topics from number operations through probability for grades k-12.

<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>

Virtual Frog Dissection:

<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/frog/>

Virtual Piano:

http://www.frontiernet.net/~imaging/play_a_piano.html

Virtual Sports Injury Therapist

<http://www.sportsinjuryclinic.net/vst/index.php>

Virtual Cave:

<http://www.goodearthgraphics.com/virtcave/>

Virtual Stock Exchange:

<http://game.marketwatch.com/Home/default.asp>

Virtual Black Hole and Neutron Stars:

http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/htmltest/rjn_bht.html

And my favorite: Virtual Chocolate

http://www.virtualchocolate.com/sen_d.cfm

There are 50+ virtual sites listed on my portaportal. Feel free to go to www.portaportal.com and log in the guest access as susyq04 and explore the virtual world.

A.M.S. Technology Lab *By Freda Layne*

The Technology Lab at Appomattox Middle School allows students the opportunity to explore many forms of technology and career options. Students select and work in computer modules, complete hands-on activities, and practice their reading, writing, and computer skills as they progress through the class.

The computer modules available to students are:

Alternative Energy: Students explore alternative sources of energy through interactive discussions and experiments.

Animation: The history of animation and the technology involved in creating computer generated animations is explored. Students make simple FLASH animations.

Auto Exploration: Students examine automotive systems, design and test computer generated designs, and explore racing software.

Automation and Robotics: Students study the impact of robots and learn how to operate and program a robotic arm.

Computer Graphic Design: Through exploration of their creative design potential and the technologies related to design, students use computer software to design and print it on their own T-Shirt

CO2 Raceway: While learning about the manufacturing process students build and race their own CO2 powered cars.

Engineering and Stress Analysis: Students learn about principles of engineering as they build and test the strength of various structures using a computer controlled stress analyzer.

Exploratory Electronics: Students learn the technology and scientific principles of electronics as they build and test basic circuits.

Fiber Optics & Lasers: Students learn about these technologies and perform hands on experiments to observe these phenomena.

Flight Simulation: Students apply what they learn about aviation technology as they build model planes and use virtual flight software to give them professional flight training experience.

Health: Students are introduced to medical and fitness technologies as well as health-related careers.

Radio Broadcasting: This module demonstrates the variety of knowledge and skills needed in the broadcasting industry, while giving hands on experience using stereo equipment and a mixing panel.

Residential Wiring: Basic wiring safety and skills are learned and practiced as students use real world tools and supplies to wire light fixtures, switches, a service panel and doorbell.

Space Rocketry: Scientific principles involved in space travel, knowledge of the solar system, and the history of space explorations are taught throughout this module. Students build and launch model rockets.

In addition to rotating through the modules of their choice, students also complete individual and group hands-on projects such as using GPS systems, using digital cameras, building models with K-nex and RoboLeggos, and building and launching various types of rockets and hot air balloons.



8th grade student building CO2 car



Working in modules

Middle school students explore many forms of technology.



7th grade student building rocket



Practicing with robotic arm

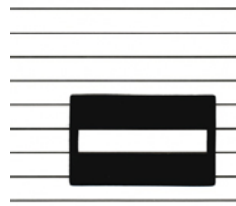
Assistive Technology

The Lottie Kit As Demonstrated By Evelyn Ford



It's a "Try Before You Buy" kit. The Lottie Kit is a kit with many different examples of low tech adaptations that you might like to try with your students. If they work, then you can order as many as you like.

Here are a few examples:



Heavy duty plastic guide, just the right size for signing credit cards and checks. Also makes a perfect reading guide that won't rip or tear.



Ergonomically shaped pen fits perfectly into the palm of your hand.



Heavy duty, full page plastic guide that helps students see and keep their writing within lines. Best yet, it's reusable.



Includes 6 different pencils with modified Grips.



High quality rubber stamp sets of numbers and operation signs, lower and uppercase letters.



Magnify map or page images for visual or attention needs. The pocket magnifier comes with a plastic case and is the size of a credit card.



Clever copy holder holds up to 20 sheets of paper in an upright position. Use next to the computer or at the student's desk when a standing copy is needed.



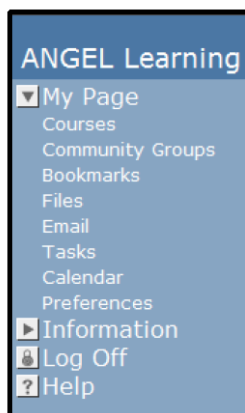
Coinulator
A new kind of calculator with keys shaped and sized exactly like coins along with a smaller dollar bill. Add or subtract amounts or use one of the two learning games.

You can find out more about the Lottie Kit by going to <http://www.onionmountaintech.com/kit.php?id=13>

Designed to help students in reading, writing, math, and organizational skills.

There is a Lottie Kit in each school. Check with your Special Education teachers.

Welcome to Technology *By Felicia Pickerel*



If you think you might be interested in learning how to use the ANGEL system in your classroom, contact one of the instructional Technologists for more details

Welcome to the wonderful world of entertainment... technology. Many of our students expect us to entertain them. It is becoming increasingly harder to keep their attention. Many of our students are so technologically savvy that it is hard to stay on level with them. We are blessed to have a lot of technology in our division. I hear other teachers from other counties remark that they don't have access to the same kinds of technology or resources in their divisions as we do.

One of the things I have started using is the ANGEL (A New Global Environment for Learning) network. It takes some practice to set it up and patience while learning to use the system. It is relatively easy to use once you get the hang of it. The first thing that I did was get my students into a class roster and then have them sign in and change their passwords (I write them down in the grade book as I know they will forget...and warn them about the password being case sensitive). The first item that I actually put up on ANGEL was the syllabus for my class. It gives all the information about the course, the SOLs, attendance policy, and how to contact me if needed. The students have access to this at all times. Parents can access the website if they have the student's username and password.

I also use this website to post homework for the week. You can determine how long you want it to remain on the site. I post homework for the week on Mondays. This gives my students a chance to see where we will be going for the week and for those who are ambitious a chance to get ahead especially if they have projects in other classes.

This site is also used to post my class Power Points. All the material that I covered in class is posted for students to review as needed or to use to catch up on if they have been absent. I have also just started a Biology Chat Room through the ANGEL network. I host this room on Mondays for any of my students who need extra help. I do this for two hours in the evening. I have had students come in and get help with a chapter study guide as well as others that come in for a quick answer

to a question.

The part of using ANGEL I am most excited about is the ability to post a test on the network and have students take it using the computer labs or laptops. I can import a test that I have saved using Exam View Pro or one that I have made up myself. I can also use Snag It to capture the graphics for the questions as well. I have the tests set up so that they are only available for a limited time for each block to reduce the chance for other students to view them while in another class. Each block of students is designated as a team and that team only has access to the test on a given day and time to further reduce access to the test. The test itself is set up in a format similar to an SOL test. It is a multiple choice test (there are other options) with all choices given in one column. The questions are delivered one at a time as well. You can even have the test graded for you! One drawback that I have found is that the points you can assign are all integers. You cannot give a question a decimal value.

I am using the online testing on ANGEL as a part of my research for a college course that I am taking. I am looking at the impact of online testing versus traditional paper/pencil testing on students average test scores. I will look at each student's average test scores on traditional tests and compare those scores with tests that they took on ANGEL. I will then look at the data and possibly look at male versus female scores as well (that is my summer project).

There is so much technology available to us that at times it is overwhelming. I am trying to learn a few easy ones, increase the complexity later, and then focus on learning them well. My students are very patient as we explore new technology and they even give me ideas to try. They are also a good resource for me. They also really enjoy helping out the teachers when it comes to technology...what a self esteem boost for them!

Intel's Educational Web Site Has Some of the Best Online Lesson Plans By Marion Wood



I would like to introduce you to a site that has some of the best lesson plans I have seen. Go to <http://www97.intel.com/en/ProjectDesign/UnitPlanIndex/GradeIndex/> and enjoy the lesson plans that were created by teachers who participated in Intel's Teach to the Future professional development program. These lessons emphasize aligning to standards, promoting higher-order thinking skills, authentic projects, effective instructional strategies, and performance assessment. The lesson plans are divided by Grade level and Subject area.

Some of my favorites are:

K-2 Monster Swap
<http://www97.intel.com/en/ProjectDesign/UnitPlanIndex/MonsterSwap/>

Grades 3-5 Go-Go Gadget Invent A Machine

<http://www97.intel.com/en/ProjectDesign/UnitPlanIndex/InventAMachine/>

Grades 6-8 Forensics: Get A Clue

http://www97.intel.com/en/ProjectDesign/UnitPlanIndex/Forensics/SR_UnitPlans4.htm

Take a look at the amazing resources at Intel's Educational Site

<http://www97.intel.com/education/>

05-06 Technology Support in Appomattox

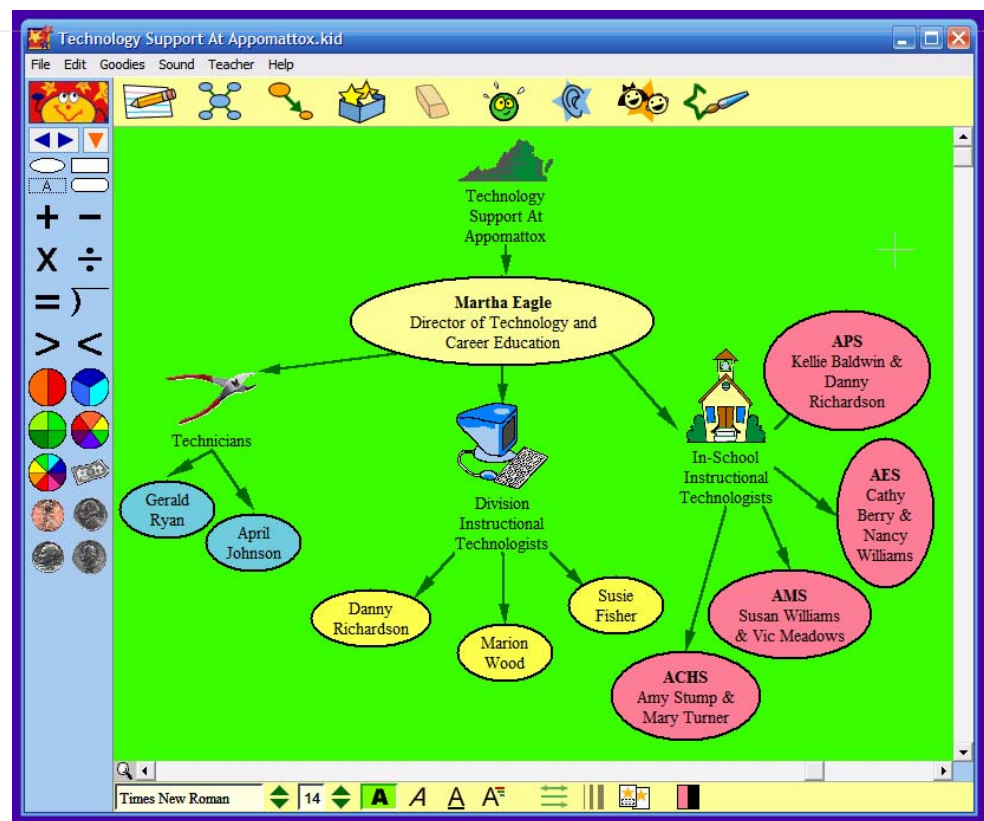
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 Kidspiration software



Learning and Succeeding in a Caring Environment
 We're on the web at www.appomattox.k12.va.us
 Check out our past online newsletters if you have missed them.