

Teaching Reading to Today's Wired Students

# Using Tech Tools to Improve Literacy Instruction, K through 6

Lisa Zawilinski  
Doctoral Candidate, University of Connecticut



Page 1

## Agenda

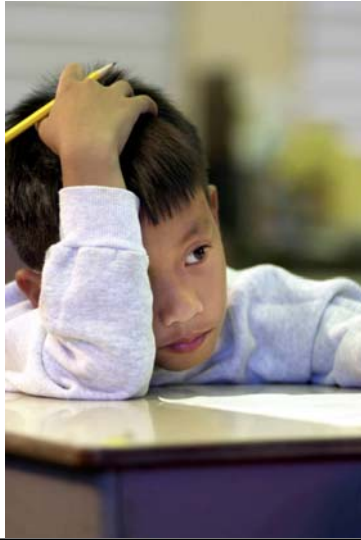
**Goal:** To review some of the challenges educators face today and explore ways to meet those challenges

- **Today's challenges** in teaching reading
- **Best practices:** What we know for sure already
- **Technology tools** make a difference in literacy instruction
- **Multiple solutions to meeting goals**
- **Questions and Answers**



Page 2

## Challenges



**Engaging students  
in learning in  
today's classrooms  
can be challenging.**



## Best Practices

**Standard teaching tools and methods  
we use to achieve literacy goals**

- **A variety of nonfiction materials**
- **Discussion**
  - Before reading
  - During reading
  - After reading
- **Differentiated instruction and multiple pathways for learning**



## Best Practices

### Teaching today's students to be literate, active learners and critical thinkers

- Age-appropriate, engaging text
- Direct instruction of strategies
- Prior knowledge
- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Multi-sensory material
- Reinforcement through review
- Authentic, supportive learning environment



## Technology Tools

### Recommended technology tools for classrooms

- **Internet-connected Computer**
  - Provides access to audio, video, and interactive features on the Internet
    - Engages ALL students
    - Supports development of background knowledge
    - Adds authenticity by providing real-life information to support print
- **Interactive Whiteboard**
  - Facilitates teacher and student demonstration or modeling
  - Provides concrete materials for group discussion



## Polling Question

**What kind of technology do you have available in your classroom?**

- A. a computer terminal with internet connection
- B. a computer terminal with internet connection and an interactive whiteboard or projector
- C. more than one computer terminal with an internet connection and an interactive whiteboard or projector

Polling  
Question

## Technology Tools

### Tips for technology use

- Target technology use where it is most meaningful: Thoughtful technology and seamless integration is key.
- Set classroom expectations for use of technology in collaborating, discussing, questioning, and learning.
- Focus on content and instructional strategy, not on the technology.
- Attend professional development sessions and share ideas and experiences with others to become proficient and learn new ways to use technology.



## Using Tech Tools to Improve Literacy Instruction, K through 6

### Technology



Computer monitor  
Interactive whiteboard  
Projector  
Internet

## Technology Tools

### Combining technology tools with best practices for outstanding results

- Ideas for integrating technology into:
  - Literacy instruction
    - Reading comprehension
    - Vocabulary instruction
    - Critical-thinking skills

## Polling Question

Which of these areas of literacy instruction do you find most difficult and challenging to teach?

- A. reading comprehension
- B. vocabulary
- C. critical thinking skills

Polling  
Question

## Technology Tools

### Using technology to teach reading comprehension

- Use **embedded audio, video, and PowerPoint** presentations before reading to develop background knowledge for ALL learners.
- Use the **notes feature** to teach questioning before, during, and after reading or as discussion starters to enhance comprehension and elicit multiple perspectives.
- Use the **highlight or mask features** to demonstrate “think-alouds” and to model use of this strategy.
- Use of **multiple tech resources** works for whole-class instruction or at a station or center where students can explore independently or in pairs.



## Technology Tools

### Using technology to teach vocabulary

- **Preview** vocabulary words to ensure that students have some knowledge of words before reading.
- **Encourage students to listen** to the words being read aloud to promote the correct pronunciation.
- **View highlighted** words and definitions—using words in context increases retention and signals their importance.
- **Manipulate text** with tools: Highlight, circle, or hide words or text on an interactive whiteboard to teach about nouns, verbs, adjectives, and pronouns.



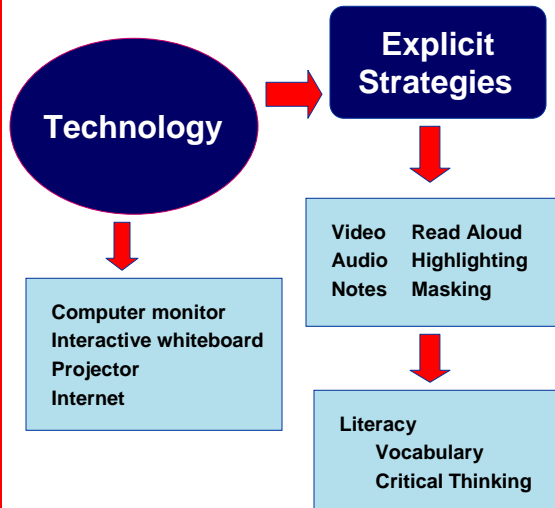
## Technology Tools

### Using technology to teach and develop critical-thinking skills

- Use student-created notes to show multiple perspectives.
- Use notes feature to model active thinking and to show examples of different kinds of questions while reading.
- Write for an audience other than the teacher.



## Using Tech Tools to Improve Literacy Instruction, K through 6



Page 14

## Technology Tools

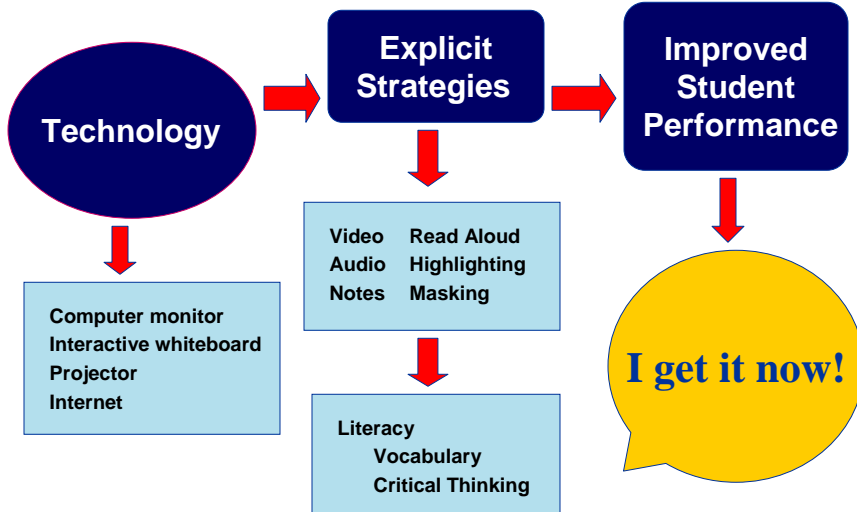
### Using technology to motivate self-directed learners

- Helps design innovative instruction
- Deepens students' understanding
- Demonstrates technology as a tool in the learning process
- Models importance of multiple sources and perspectives
- Meets students on their levels
- Increases communication and exploration
- Motivates students



Page 15

## Using Tech Tools to Improve Literacy Instruction, K through 6



## Achieving Goals



The effective use of technology can help educators meet students' needs and improve their performance.



Questions?

*"The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives."*

*-Robert M. Hutchins*

# Questions?



Page 18

Thank you for attending this  
Weekly Reader webinar.

This webinar was recorded. A link to the recorded session will be sent to all participants.

Weekly Reader has designed this new series of webinars, "**Teaching Reading to Today's Wired Students,**" to present the latest tips from literacy experts about ways to improve literacy instruction.

**Coming in January . . .**

The topic for the next webinar scheduled is "A Fresh Look at Reading Comprehension: Improving Instruction Based on the *Concepts of Comprehension*." For more information about Weekly Reader webinars, go to [www.weeklyreader.com/webinars](http://www.weeklyreader.com/webinars).

**Please stay tuned . . .**

A brief product demonstration of **Weekly Reader Connect** will follow.

[www.wrconnect.com](http://www.wrconnect.com)



Page 19

## Speaker's Biography



**Lisa Zawilinski**, a doctoral candidate at the University of Connecticut, is a member of UCONN's New Literacies Research Team, which conducts research on the new reading comprehension and learning skills required by the Internet and other emerging information and communication technologies. She is a former Reading and Language Arts Consultant and has also taught first and sixth grades. [lzread98@gmail.com](mailto:lzread98@gmail.com)

## References

- Allington, R.L. & Cunningham, P. M. (2007). *Schools That Work: Where All Children Read and Write*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Barone, D., Wright, T.E. (2008). *Literacy Instruction with Digital and Media Technologies*. Retrieved October 13, 2009, from READINGrockets Web site: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/291267?theme=print>
- Beck, I.L., Kucan, L., McKeown. (2002). *Bringing Words to Life*. New York, NY: Guilford Books.
- Duke, N.K. (2000). 3.6 Minutes per Day: The Scarcity of Informational Texts in First Grade. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35(2), 202-224.
- Gahala, J., Holum, A. (2001). Critical Issue: *Using Technology to Enhance Literary Instruction*. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED364932)
- Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence Redefined: Multiple Intelligences for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gill, S.R. (2008). The Comprehension Matrix: A Tool for Designing Comprehension Instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 62, 106-113. doi:10.1598/RT.62.2.2
- Jensen, Eric P. (2009). *Fierce Teaching: Purpose, Passion, and What Matters Most*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Labbo, L.D. (2005). From Morning Message to Digital Morning Message: Moving from the tried and true to the new. *The Reading Teacher*, 58, 782-785. doi:10.1598/RT.58.3.9
- Labbo, L.D., Reinking, D. (1999, October/November/December). Negotiating the multiple realities of technology in literacy research and instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 34(4), 478-492.
- Langer, J. & Close, E. (n.d.). *Improving literary understanding through classroom conversation*. Retrieved from: <http://www.albany.edu/cela/booklet.html>
- Marzano, R.J. (1992). *A Different Kind of Classroom: Teaching with Dimensions of Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- *The Value of Technology in Education*. (2006). Retrieved March 10, 2009, from Sun Associates Web site: <http://www.sun-associates.com/resources/bastools.html>
- Wagner, T. (2008, October). Rigor Redefined. *Educational Leadership*, 66(2), 20-24



# WEEKLY READER **Connect**™ Is Here!

**Click to see the how-to guide and frequently asked questions about all the features of WR Connect.**

**Click to hear the text read aloud.**

**Click to see the prereading questions.**

**Click to preview vocabulary words and definitions.**

**Click to view Concepts of Comprehension.**

**Click to see a video.**

**Use the menu bar tools above to**

- drag the page on your screen;
- add notes;
- highlight text;
- mask text;
- print;
- fit the page vertically or horizontally;
- zoom in or out.

**(Use the arrows to the far left of the menu bar to move the menu to right, left or bottom.)**

**Click to go to page 2.**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

### Read a Table

Read the information in the table. Then read each sentence below, and circle the name of the penguin described in the sentence.

Penguin	Fact
emperor penguin	I am the largest penguin.
macaroni penguin	I have orange feathers on my head.
fairy penguin	I am the smallest penguin. Some people call me the Little Blue Penguin.
rockhopper penguin	I can hop from rock to rock.

1. I am the smallest of all penguins.    fairy    emperor

2. I am the largest penguin.    emperor    macaroni

3. I have orange feathers on my head.    fairy    macaroni

4. I hop on rocks.    rockhopper    fairy

**TRY THIS!** Baby penguins are called \_\_\_\_\_

**Buddy's Citizenship**  
Dear Girls and Boys,  
We are visiting penguins of the organism. Jen is trying to teach one. The sign says "Do not touch the animals." What should I do?  
to small Buddy, visit [www.weeklyreader.com/buddy](http://www.weeklyreader.com/buddy)

**WORD POWER**  
Write these words in ABC order: penguin, chick, egg.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Click to see a video.**

**Circle the correct word.**

**Type in the correct word.**

**Click to watch Buddy.**

**Click to link to weeklyreader.com.**

Guide to Icons in WR Connect	
	Prereading questions
	Preview vocabulary words
	Concepts of Comprehension
	Audio clip
	Video clip or slide show
	How-to guide and FAQs

## Emperor Penguins!

I am a penguin chick. Watch me grow. Look at the pictures, and read below.



My mother lays an egg. I am inside the egg. My mother passes my egg to my father. She walks to the sea. She will hunt for food.



My father holds my egg on top of his feet. He keeps it away from the snow. His skin keeps me warm.



Here I am! I hatched. I am so hungry. My mother spits up food to feed me.



I stay safe and warm with other chicks. We will grow to be big emperor penguins! We are the largest penguins!

**Penguin Power**

Penguins can stay warm. Soft feathers close to their bodies hold in heat. Hard outside feathers keep out cold winds.

**hard feathers**

Penguins cannot fly, but they can dive and swim. They catch tiny animals called **krill**.

**krill**

**KNOW ABOUT IT!** Different penguins have different names. This is a rockhopper penguin. How do you think it got its name?

**Click to see a video.**

**Roll over to hear the word and see the definition.**

**Click to go to page 4.**

### WR Connect

**WR Connect** is a school-wide, online reading program for grades 1 through 6. It is based on a framework of reading comprehension skills that helps students gain a deeper understanding of what they read. **WR Connect** features technology that is designed to promote learning.

**How will WR Connect help me teach?**  
**WR Connect** helps foster, enrich, enliven, and extend learning. It accommodates different learning styles, providing a way to teach through text, sound, and video. Every feature is designed to promote active engagement in reading.

**Why should I use WR Connect?**  
Technology is a powerful teaching and learning tool. Experts say that integrating technology into the curriculum can give students the expertise to succeed in work and life in the 21st century. These teaching tips will help you make the most of **WR Connect**:

1. Use the prereading questions to activate prior knowledge and get students thinking and predicting.
2. Preview new vocabulary words, read the definitions, and use the words in simple sentences.
3. Click on the icons (see the chart) to extend learning with videos, slide shows, and audio clips.
4. Use the back page activity to assess comprehension or to extend learning.