

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Welcome to the 2018-2019

It's an exciting new year and I couldn't be more thrilled to have you all in the Concept Department of Primary Education!

I am just beginning to make the rounds to your schools and look forward to working with all of you! It does seem completely weird that I did not meet with you at the beginning of the year like we usually do. I'll have to make sure to bring packages of flair pens with me as prizes for any upcoming PD we have together.

If you are new to our network, WELCOME! We didn't get to meet during the New Teacher Induction Programs Concept



hosted in some regions but I will be reaching out shortly to try to schedule AT LEAST a brief virtual meeting.

Please know you are ALWAYS welcome to reach out through email, the department FB page, or my office line for, well, anything! Okay so maybe I'm not allowed to deliver you Starbucks two states away. You will find all of my contact information at the bottom right of this newsletter.

Let's make the 2018-2019 school year the YEAR of the PRIMARY TEACHER!

Curriculum Updates

Most of you have already jumped right into your school year! Your ConceptSIS accounts should have populated with this year's Interdisciplinary Units. Please let me know if you still don't have access to this curriculum!

There were no significant changes to the curriculum for this school year and, along with the Department Steering Committee, will be reviewing the curriculum and making changes for the 2019-2020 school year.



FREE?!?!? (or really, really cheap)

Tech for Independent Practice

(school and/or home)

Tech has really opened our education world to providing adaptive learning. It's hard though to find FREE resources that can be used at school and home.

Below are a few suggestions you can easily incorporate into a learning center! Bookmark these sites or apps so when a family asks what their child can work on at home you have a list readily available!



Freckle

<https://www.freckle.com/>

Freckle (formerly Front Row) empowers teachers to differentiate instruction across Math, ELA, Social Studies and Science. On the K-2 side, students practice early reading and math skills at their own pace with audio-guided lessons and big, colorful buttons. Accounts for teachers are completely free and you can track student progress through their teacher dashboard.



Prodigy Math Game

<https://www.prodigygame.com/>

Prodigy is a free to use, curriculum-aligned, adaptive, online, RPG (Role Playing Game) style video game that focuses on math skills. After a brief placement test, Prodigy uses a proprietary algorithm in order to automatically deliver appropriate material for students. Students can access the same account at home simply by using their regular web browser!



Typing Club

<https://www.typingclub.com/sportal/>

Although typing isn't listed in any standard and some may say it's non-academic, we know students need to master certain typing skills to even access any online resources or even participate in certain assessment systems. Typing Club is a fun way to guide students toward learning the key locations as well as helping them to improve their finger dexterity.

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Building Your Classroom Library

by Jennifer Sajovec

My classroom library was one of my most prized possessions! I took tremendous pride in the fact students would say it was their favorite place in the whole classroom to visit. My students knew the power of this place and cherished their time getting to visit. They could find a bin labeled with books on just their interest topic. However, it took me years and years to build up enough books to have something for everyone. It also took a few years of trial and error to figure out how to organize my books. But let me say this.....it was ALL WORTH IT! There's magic in finding books that help you fall in love with reading!

If you are brand new to teaching or on your 10th year, I'm sure you are still working on building and organizing your classroom libraries. Here are some tips to help make your efforts a little easier!



Scholastic Bonus Points and Dollar Books

Many teachers rely on the bonus points they receive from students ordering books through Scholastic. Awesome if you have enough orders every month! Who doesn't love shopping for free?!? Don't fret, though, if you don't have a ton of bonus points.

Scholastic also offers books each month for only \$1! Grab a couple each month and you'll have 20 books by year end. Additionally, watch the Scholastic Teacher Store for special sales; you can sometimes grab cheap books and at times, they offer free shipping days.

Local Book Banks

So many cities where our schools are located have their own book banks where teachers and/or students can receive new or gently used books for free. Ask the teachers in your school or even reach out to other teachers in your area.

I am working on compiling a list of book banks in each city/region. Please share any you find via email so I can add it to our growing list!

First Book Marketplace

http://www.fbmarketplace.org/?_ga=2.144441079.333659083.1535121497-40481084.1535121497

If at least 70 percent of the students in your class come from low-income families, check out First Book for your classroom library needs. [First Book](#) offers a marketplace where teachers can find new books at 50 to 90 percent off retail prices. Additionally, First Book has a National Book Bank offering free books. The only catch is that you pay the shipping of \$0.35 to \$0.50 per book. [First Book](#) has a huge selection with Spanish language titles, music and arts books, global stories, STEM books as well as ordinary fiction and nonfiction.

Apply for Book Grants

There are also a number of grant opportunities available that provide funding for the purchase of children's books. Work together with other teachers at your school to write a killer grant and let your classroom libraries reap the benefits!

Here are some of the foundations but reach out to others around you to find even more!

Snapdragon Book Foundation:

<http://snapdragonbookfoundation.org/>

Build-A-Bear Foundation:

<https://www.buildabear.com/brand-about-giving-foundation.html>

Dollar General Literacy Foundation:

<https://www.dgliteracy.org/grant-programs/#youth-literacy-grants>

Go Digital

If you have tablets in your classroom, a digital classroom library can be a great resource for students as well. There are a number of sites that are exceptionally helpful for finding free ebooks.

Epic:

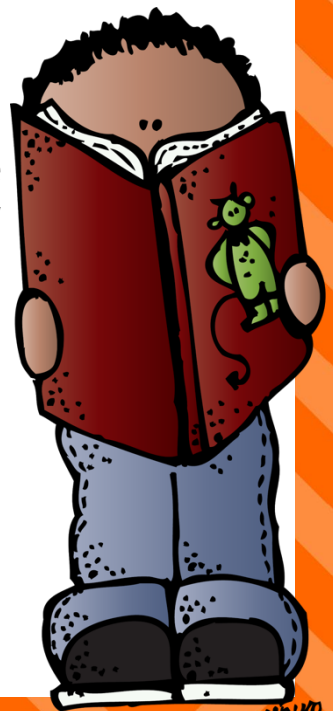
<https://www.getepic.com/>

Unit for Literacy:

<https://www.uniteforliteracy.com/>

Oxford Owl:

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>



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