

iPods in Grade 1



Exploring the use of iPods in small guided groups for literacy and numeracy applications within a Grade 1 classroom at Albion Elementary.

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Overview This year we are enjoying the opportunity to explore the use of iPods within a Grade 1 classroom, using a small number of the devices in teacher-led guided group sessions. We are actively using the iPods to gather information on reading fluency to inform our teaching and are using the iPods in a guided reading setting to further develop reading fluency in our students. Additionally, we are using the iPods in whole group teaching and in numeracy instruction where we are noticing greater student engagement, interest and involvement.



Our Approach

We are very fortunate to have the chance to participate in a side project, using a small number of the extra iPods from the Grade 3 Albion Elementary iPod project. SD 42 has provided us with a document camera and projector, and these, together with the iPods have allowed us the chance to explore the effectiveness of using a small number of iPods to increase student engagement and improve reading ability and fluency in Grade 1.



Literacy



We are very excited about the difference the iPods are making in our guided reading groups. Our students have reacted very well to apps where they can hear a story and then record themselves reading it and also love the variety of leveled readers available on the iPods. We are also using Voice Memos to record student reading for fluency assessment. It is a great benefit for the students to be able to hear themselves reading aloud and we are able to set goals towards increasing fluency with them.

Numeracy

Working with the iPods in small guided math groups has allowed us to assist our students with math strategies in an individualized manner. Addition and subtraction, mental math and number sense strategies are easily conveyed and discussed with our students while they work on apps such as Math Bingo, Hungry Fish and Splash Math. The benefits of using the iPods for numeracy instruction is that each student can be working at an appropriate level, engagement is high, and the teachers can closely observe and interact with students while they work.





Hopes for the Future

Upon receiving our document camera and projector after Christmas, we have been trying lots of new ideas with the students, using the iPods in small groups and also using one iPod in conjunction with the document camera to teach whole group lessons. We feel like we have just begun to explore the possibilities of using the iPods in a Grade 1 setting and would love to be able to continue working with this project next year. Our proposal for next year would be to continue working with a small number of iPods in a guided group manner, and we are interested in seeing how the iPods could be used at the very start of Grade 1 to assist students with learning letter sounds, sequencing events in stories, sentence structure, and building vocabulary and fluency as they begin to learn to read. We are keen to start conversations with other teachers about the benefits of including iPods in Grade 1 literacy and numeracy instruction through Pro D workshops etc. We believe our project may be of interest to the district as it is a cost-effective way of introducing iPods into the classroom, without needing to provide a class set of the devices. For the future, this could mean that more classrooms could have access to this unique teaching format, with a smaller overall investment.