

eLearn Proposal

High Quality Internet Resources for Early Childhood Teachers

This session will share high quality, free Internet resources ideal for early childhood teachers. (Many of the sites can also be used by K-2 teachers). The presentation will highlight the wide variety of websites available for early childhood students to utilize in such areas as math, early literacy (especially talking books), social studies, science, games, interactive activities, and much more. The presenter will be highlighting some of the best websites available for early childhood students. Possible examples include: literacycenter.net, Sesame Street kidsite, online talking books sites, The National Library of Virtual Manipulatives and many more.

Attendees will also learn how Internet resources link to national standards for PK-2. Resources will be matched to standards in such areas as pre-literacy, numeracy, basic computer skills, problem solving, and more. Research will be shared showing how appropriate computer use increases cognitive and social interaction skills.

Participants will be encouraged to share their favorite sites and discuss how they use the Internet with young children. Annotated, detailed handouts will be available in print and electronic form.

In addition, attendees will learn how to create desktop shortcuts to favorite sites, customize the shortcuts for an individual student (name and picture), and make the website content available offline. Step-by-step instructions and sources for free shortcut icons will be provided to attendees.

Attendees will depart with a greater appreciation for the variety and quality of free materials available to early childhood teachers and students, and a comprehensive listing of websites to access in their classrooms. Attendees will be motivated and able to immediately apply what they have learned, and be encouraged to continuously search out and utilize the vast and ever growing resources available to early childhood educators and students.

Supporting Research - There is a great deal of research supporting the benefits of appropriate use of technology in early childhood. There is also an entire body of research documenting the fact that early childhood educators may resist using technology for several reasons - lack of training, belief that technology use in EC is not developmentally appropriate, lack of resources, etc. This session addresses those concerns, showing how websites can be fun and educational, lend themselves to pairs or small groups of students (thus fostering collaboration, building of social skills, etc.), are high quality and free, and how educators can have students use web resources without having to be connected to the Internet (a concern among some ec educators is children being able to access the Internet unsupervised).

Presenter Background - My doctorate is in instructional technology, and I have a Masters in Early Childhood education. I am currently completing an extensive literature review of how early childhood educators are using technology in their classrooms, and have interviewed many ec educators and visited many ec centers in the course of my research, which has helped expose me to some of the best websites used in early childhood education.