

Sites and Apps (Secondary Level)

WEBSITES

Reading and Writing

1 LANG-8: <http://lang-8.com>

(Free, registration required)

- This website allows the user to communicate world-wide with learners of different languages. The site allows the user to write in his/her native language or the language that the user is currently learning. The site revolves around the idea of peer collaboration in learning to write, with L1 writers supporting L2 writers in their endeavors. The goal is to have a native writer correct the writing of an L2 learner. This site gives ELL students the opportunity to reinforce their L1 writing and learn from native writers how to improve their L2 language.

Lang-8, Inc. (2013). *Learn a Language the Right Way from Native Speakers*. Retrieved from <http://lang-8.com/>

2 ePALS: <http://www.epals.com>

(Free, registration required)

- This website connects a global community of learners around the world. It allows teachers to create projects students can carry out and share through the internet. The site provides e-mail tools to enable communication among students and teachers in the different groups (there is a security screening on e-mails to prevent unwanted or inappropriate content).

A short class description is posted and, using different search criteria, a user can select one or more classes to collaborate on a project.

At the moment, my ELL class is paired with a high school class at the Athénée Royal d'Athus in Athus, Belgium. Our collaboration will start next week with an exchange of introductory e-mails and then the conversation will continue on the theme of creativity in fashion.

ePals, Inc.(2013). ePals, *Your Passport to Learning Adventures, Global Community Where Learners Connect*. Retrieved from <http://www.epals.com/#!/main/>

Teaching Resources

The website (<http://www.epals.com>) provides ideas and resources for teachers.

Other Sample Lesson Plans:

- Sample Lesson Plan for the Shenyang Collaborative Exchange, Foods that represent our culture.

ePals, Inc.,(2013). *NeuPals/ePals Fall Exchange Sample Lesson Plan*. Retrieved from

http://en.community.epals.com/epals_central/p/china-collaboration-sample-lesson-plan.aspx

- Communicating with European Students – ePALS

Gwen Varsamis, Kiser Middle (2012). *Communicating with European Students - ePALS*. Retrieved from

<http://its.guilford.k12.nc.us/act/grade6/act6.asp?ID=423>

APPS for ANDROID Platforms

Reading



3 Reading Rainbow

(The app is free to try, with a subscription service available offering unlimited access to the library for an introductory price of \$7.99 a month or a discounted price of \$19.99 for six months with automatic renewal.)

- The app allows the subscriber to select among a large selection of interactive picture books that can be independently read or have a reading immersion option. The selection of award-winning books and educational texts are organized thematically for a quicker choice and more specific selection.

The simple interface of the app, with many visuals and images, is straightforward and easy to use for all learners. This app is particularly helpful to have when working with Entering, Emerging, and Developing ELL students, as the picture books provide the needed support for comprehension. The vast selection of books enables the user to select age-appropriate books that can be read also by high school students.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

Reading Rainbow (2013) Reading Rainbow (version 1.2.1.2) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

Teaching Resources

Sample Lesson Plans:

- Lesson Plan Ideas for grades K-5

WNED (2010). Think Bright and Well. Retrieved from <http://www.thinkbright.org/Teachers/readingrainbow.asp>



4 One More Story

(The app is free to try, available subscription packages are as follows: 1 year – \$44.99, 6 months –\$27.99, and 3 months – \$15.99.)

- The app allows subscribers to select among a wide variety of award-winning picture books. Books can be selected by reading level and grades. Although the reading levels are meant to reach the lower grades, the app is designed also for Entering, Emerging, and Developing ELL students. The app guides the user with oral English directions for all the steps, from the login to the reading. Learners can read on their own, use the echo reading option or the “I Can Read It” mode to hear a particular word multiple times for pronunciation and understanding.

As the app is also supported by a main website (<http://www.onemorestory.com/index.html>), books can be read from multiple devices, and if learners don't have a tablet home they can still log on to the website.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

One More Story (2012) One More Story, Inc. (version 1.2.0) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

Teaching Resources

- One More Story links to TeachingBooks.net. Resources pertaining to the book and its author/illustrator.

One More Story (2011). *News at One More Story*. Retrieved from

<http://www.onemorestory.com/news/newsarticles/newsarticle8172011.html>



5 21 Short Moral Stories

(Free)

- This app contains a selection of 21 short moral stories. The stories can be read or have an immersion reading that highlights each paragraph read. Text and images are juxtaposed and the app allows the reader to skip through sections of the story. The stories are read slowly by a professional narrator. Given the speed of the narration, this app can be helpful for entering and emerging ELL students.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

21 Short Moral Stories (2011) Tidels (version 5.0) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

Teaching Resources

- This website provides lesson plans to teach morals.

Education Planet, Inc. (1999-2013). *Lesson Planet, Where Teachers Go to Find, Learn, Plan & Inspire*. Retrieved from <http://www.lessonplanet.com/search?keywords=moral>



6 Pronunciation Checker Free

(Free)

- This is a resource app that can be used by learners in their read aloud or silent readings when they don't have the support of a proficient English speaker. When entering a word in the designated field, the app will read the word aloud. When working with ELL students who are still learning to decode words in English, this app can support their reading by providing a quick reference. The app can be used for all ages with Entering, Emerging, and Developing ELL students.

Platform: Android Rated: Guidance Suggested¹

Pronunciation Checker Free (2011) Eltsoft LLC (version 3.0) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

¹ Guidance Suggested

"Based on information provided by the developer, the content of this application has material that is appropriate for most users. The app may include account creation, location detection, user generated content, advertisements, infrequent or mild references to violence, profanity, or crude themes, or other content not suitable for all ages." <http://www.amazon.com>

Writing



7 Story Dice

(\$ 1.99)

- This simple application stimulates creativity in writing short stories. By rolling two or more dice with pictograms, the user obtains ideas for creating a narrative based on the suggestions of the dice—these could indicate the types of characters, plot, setting, conflict, climax, and resolution of a story. The numerous pictograms are paired randomly at each roll of the dice, providing a fun and challenging approach to writing. All levels of ELL students can use this tool to improve writing through short daily practice and/or for group work. Using Bloom’s Taxonomy, students could progress in level, improving their skills and their English proficiency.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

Story Dice (2012) Thinkamingo Inc (version 1.1) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

Teaching Resources

- This website provides details on the app, an instructional video and game ideas to use in the classroom.

Thinkamingo, Mobile Apps for Education. (November 2012). *Story Dice*. Retrieved from

<http://thinkamingo.com/story-dice/>

- This website provides an idea on how to use the app for a listening activity to use in the classroom.

Teaching Spanish w/ Comprehensible Input. Reading, Storytelling, and Ideas for Technology use in the Target Language.

(Thursday, June 27, 2013). *Story Cube Apps*. Retrieved from:

<http://palmyraspanish1.blogspot.com/2013/06/storytelling-apps.html>



8 Thesis Generator

(Free)

- Writing a thesis statement can be very complicated for ELL students, as both the English language and the specific writing style might not be fully mastered. This app allows the user to input persuasive or argumentative opinions or topics, a counter claim, and two supporting reasons, and then it proposes a thesis statement that the learner can use to start writing. Furthermore, the app generates an analytical thesis from a claim and three supporting reasons the user inputs. This app can be used during practice to help all levels of ELL learners generate thesis statements for applicable forms of writing.

Platform: Android Rated: Guidance Suggested²

Thesis Generator (2013) JG (version 5.1) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>



9 Fiction Idea Generator

(Free)

- This app is a catalyst to inspire creative thinking: it randomly generates a list of plots the user can use to start writing. The app also allows the learner to select only some elements of the story, such as plot, masterplot, character, word, first sentence (usually a quote from a renowned writer), emotion, item, and location. This app can be used by Developing and Expanding levels of ELL students, as it draws examples from English literature and some vocabulary is advanced. To use with entering and emerging levels, the teacher can pre-select a combination of elements and ask the student to creatively write around them.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

Fiction Idea Generator (2012) FigApps.Net Limited (version 2.5.1) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

² Guidance Suggested

“Based on information provided by the developer, the content of this application has material that is appropriate for most users. The app may include account creation, location detection, user generated content, advertisements, infrequent or mild references to violence, profanity, or crude themes, or other content not suitable for all ages.” <http://www.amazon.com>



10 LectureNotes (Trial Version)

(Free)

- This app is a virtual notebook for students. It allows a user to create a number of notebooks that the user can then personalize, employing different sizes and colors. Each notebook can be visualized with different formats, and the user can either use a stylus or a keyboard to write. There is a word suggestion option to help speed typing and improve spelling accuracy. The app allows learners to send the notes as “.PDF” or image files. The app also allows a user to save and store notebooks for further editing and reference. It can be used with all levels of ELL students who are learning to write or are still struggling with spelling when taking notes.

The app can also be used as an interactive journal, for learning logs, and for science classes using the graph paper option.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

LectureNotes (Trial Version) (2013) Acadoid Developer (version 2.3.11) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

Teaching Resources

- This website provides details on the app and how to use its features.

Educational App Store Ltd. (2013). *Lecture Notes*. Retrieved from

<http://www.educationalappstore.com/app/2929/lecturenotes>



11 Story Plot Generator

(\$.99)

- This app is a useful tool to foster creativity in writing. The app selects a story plot based on the following genres: Action, Drama, Science Fiction, Murder Scene, and Fantasy. Students are provided you with four key elements of a story: a location or situation, a detail, a complication and an objective. The app works also offline, therefore it can be used in any location and it includes over 530 000 possible combinations and provides ideas for writing. The app is a functional app that will help ELL students in their writing as it sparks imagination and provides a frame for the writing.

Platform: Android Rated: All Ages

Story Plot Generator (2013) ARC APPS Developer (version 0.1) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>