

## **12 Texts a Day – Maximizing Down Time! (Musselwhite, 2008)**

### **12 Texts A Day: Background Information**

Did you know . . . 'good kindergarten teachers' (nominated-effective teachers) read from at least 12 different texts a day!! (Pressley et al, 2001). This is often NOT true in self-contained special education classrooms. This tip will suggest several quick and painless ways integrate text into classrooms for students with significant disabilities.

### **Making the Most of 'Down Time'**

One concern for students with complex communication behaviors (CCN) is that less time is available for literacy instruction. Instructional time is frequently lost to other activities such as repairing technology, moving in and between classrooms, toileting, eating, and attending therapies (Koppenhaver & Yoder, 1993). For example, Koppenhaver and Yoder found that three boys aged 10 - 14 years with CCN and found that, during instructional time, the students spent more time involved in off-task activities (34-38%) than they did participating in any single literacy activity (augmentative and alternative communication, 6-9%; writing, 10-16%; listening, 15-22%; reading 23-39%). We must ensure that more time is spent on instructional tasks, while also maximizing 'down time' as much feasible.

**Down  
Time!!**



**Making the Most Out of  
'Dead Time'  
a.k.a. MultiTasking!**

### **Issues In Maximizing Down Time**

Strategies for maximizing down time will vary significantly depending on the physical needs of students as well as their academic needs. Generic suggestions are provided below, and should be modified to meet the needs of individual students and classes.

## Books in the Bathroom!



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The appropriateness of this suggestion must be considered on an individual basis - just note that reading in the bathroom is a highly normative behavior in many families!

## Poems / Chants / Songs

Simple texts can be made available in places where students will see them, such as: the wall where students line up for lunch, playground, or the bus; the wall next to the changing table. Adults and students who are readers can be encouraged to read these texts at appropriate times.

### Poems on the Wall!

#### The Ocean

The ocean is blue

The ocean is deep

The ocean is where I want to be,

To swim with the fishes in the deep blue sea.

*Anonymous*

## Computer Stories

Many computer-based stories take 5 minutes or less to listen to.

Stories are available on CDs or downloads from multiple sources:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Time It!!



Poetry  
Power  
CD

Remember . . . This must be EASY!!

## The Musselwhite 30-Second Rule



If you can't set it up  
in 30 seconds . . .

It's NOT  
gonna  
happen!

### Brainstorm Your OWN Ideas!!

Meet as a team to determine ways to make the most of down time, offering text, chants, tongue twisters, etc. as appropriate for your setting and students. Try to think of at least 5 ideas that offer maximum bang for minimum buck!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## Resources & References

Hall, D., & Cunningham, P. (2007). *Month-by-month Reading, Writing, and Phonics for Kindergarten: Systematic, Multilevel Instruction for Kindergarten*. Greensboro, NC: Carson-Dellosa.

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

Koppenhaver, D. & Yoder, D. (1993). Classroom literacy instruction for children with severe speech and physical impairments (SSPI). What is and what might be. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 13(2), 1-15.

Musselwhite, C. & King-DeBaun, P. (1997). *Emergent Literacy Success: Merging technology and whole language for students with disabilities*. Park City, UT: Creative Communicating.

Pressley, M., Allington, R., Wharton-McDonald, Block, C., & Morrow, L. (2001). *Learning to Read: Lessons from Exemplary First-Grade Classrooms*. New York: Guilford Press.

See Also:

<http://www.turnthepage.com/>

(the official website for Bev Bos!)