ICT Learning Tools for Literacy & Language Development

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DIGITAL IMAGES & DIGITAL CAMERAS

Digital cameras can provide more focus on activities as children can take pictures of themselves and their environments. This can encourage them to take more photos of things. You may also find that each time they do take a photo of something, that they can actually provide an explanation of why they were choosing to take a particular shot. In these situations, the camera helps to clarify and consolidate the children's learning.

Photos also help children to think and talk beyond the hear and now. They provide opportunities to expand understanding of words and ideas that the children are learning by connecting them to what they see in their environment.

POWERPOINT

Continuing on with the digital images theme this program and others similar to it can provide children with a multimedia experience they will enjoy and be able to develop their creativity skills. These programs have colour, movement and sound so it is no surprise that it is quite appealing.

Programs such as this are a great way for children to create their own stories incorporating multimedia elements including their own voice. Children's own stories reflects their own interests, languages, abilities and needs of the children in the classroom.

PowerPoint can make learning meaningful and relevant. Multimedia learning stories can be co-authored by children, educators and sometimes parents.

COMPUTERS

It is important that you always encourage the children to use the computer as a tool for their learning. You need to create a balance between Integrated Learning Systems such Literacy and Maths programs and content-free programs.

Research (Kennewell, Parkinson, & Tanner, 2000) has found that content-free software is the best type in order to be able to develop a child's ICT capability as it challenges them intellectually and there is a high amount of decision making involved thus developing their higher order thinking skills.

Computers in the classroom can contribute to a 'print rich' learning environment.

VIDEO CAMERAS

Your children will enjoy exploring their own playful uses of the video camera so it is important to give them time to achieve this. Try not to structure their uses too soon or too often.

Children can use digital video cameras to capture their friends or themselves reading a story which they can then replay to listen to later.

WEBCAMS

These tools are as cheap if not cheaper to use than digital cameras. If you add a USB extension lead to the webcam it can be moved quite a distance from the computer. You will find that they usually have a button on them for taking still images, if not children can use the webcam software to take photos of video.

WORD PROCESSORS

Word processors offer possibilities for children to compose and write without needing to have mastered the production of letters by hand.

"Talking" word processors support young children's experimentation as they play with language.

MUSIC, SOUND RECORDERS AND LISTENING DEVICES

Music and technology go hand in hand so it is not surprising how easy children can embrace technology to make their own compositions with new techniques and sounds.

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INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARDS &SMARTBOARDS

These are especially appropriate for young children because they operate through finger touch. Children can make drawings, rub them out and move objects together as I mentioned earlier, resize them. It is the large screen that allows for greater collaboration. For this reason, it is important that you become familiar with all its tools.

IWBs have great potential for adults working with groups on focused tasks or in exploring adventure games and simulations.

They can be used to develop writing skills on a large scale as well as to project videos and photos of the children for circle time.

ICT in Early Childhood Education
Online Course

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