

Kindle an Interest in Reading!

I recently received a great idea from teacher Lauren MacDonald that I had to pass along. She uses free “WhisperSync” Kindle software on her classroom computers to provide more flexibility in her reading program. She doesn’t even own a Kindle herself, but she discovered that if you download the free software to your classroom computers, you can buy one copy of a Kindle book and your students can read the book on different computers as well as I pads and laptops. To find the software, search online for “WhisperSync Kindle Software” and you’ll find it, or go directly to Amazon.com. You may be able to use do something similar with other eReader software, but I’m not sure.



With that brief introduction, I’ll let Lauren share the details in her own words. I grouped her comments into categories to highlight all the features she addressed in the email she wrote to tell me about her discoveries. I know you’ll find her ideas helpful!

~ Laura Candler

Lauren MacDonald’s Kindle Commentary

- **Cost Savings for Reading Groups**- *My Kindle books from Amazon.com are cheaper than the books at the stores would be... for example City of Ember is 5.09 but I now have it available on all the mini laptops, the home computer, the ipod, the ipad and the school computer. Reading groups for 5.09?? Oh- I teach at a small non-public school, so reading groups are on me... even five copies of a book becomes ridiculously expensive and so do the library fines when I am late returning five copies of a book – five copies for one group and there are 4 reading groups.*
- **Logging On to Kindle Account** - *When I go to school, I pull up my Kindle account – under my email address on all these components and everyone has access to the book. (Note from Laura: You might want to set up a new Amazon.com Kindle account for this and not use your personal account. Also, be sure you don’t give students your Amazon.com password because it’s very easy to purchase books when you are logged into the Kindle software!)*
- **Absent Students** - *Last week a student was absent two days, and he was delighted to take home a mini laptop to read the two chapters he missed.*

- **Reading Aloud** - The computer hooked to my smartboard brings up the Kindle for Pc account and boom... just like the Kindle except large enough for the class to see is the book to read. It is funny because if I stop to read to explain something I hear the kids that read ahead go OOOOHHHH if something good is happening next. Just like the Kindle it will pull up a page at a time. We can examine the pictures... like in *Chasing Vermeer*, where you can look for clues to the story... or in the *City of Ember* we looked at the map of the city... in *Sister's Grimm* we brainstormed about the cover... then each chapter had some amazing pencil drawings. If I read it aloud from just the book and show the picture... it is hard for all to really see it. This is fantastic.
- **Highlight Feature** - Now with that HIGHLIGHT feature... students can identify new vocabulary click and define. I have the books on the Ipad so at home when I preread a book I can highlight the vocabulary that I think the should be aware of. The highlights I do at home stay in the book so that when I bring it up at school... the kids can be aware of a new word, new character, an idea I think is going to be important to think about... or even if I just highlight a good example of foreshadowing, a simile, or some figurative language.
- **Ease of Getting New Books** - I can get the latest books, ... I just began the *Candy Shop War* with the class. They love it and beg for me to keep reading. They loved the *Sister's Grimm* and wanted more... but together as a read aloud – the subtle inferences the author put in the book can be hinted at – many I think would have missed them otherwise.
- **Love of Reading** - I could go on forever about how I feel this is impacting their love for reading. Let me know what you think. I loved the *Empowering Readers* and have used the daily reading log for both our read aloud and their reading. I also am using the conference sheets and ideas for questions. I hope this all makes sense – I have taught for 17 years and this is the first year that I am using the smartboard with the Kindle for PC software and I think it is amazing for the visual learners to have a chance to hear a read aloud as well as read along.

If you are interested in contacting Lauren about her classroom Kindle ideas, you can email her at lmacdonald@woh.rr.com.