



The Gaggle

Bringing You a Gaggle of News Monthly

Volume 2, Issue 2
September 2006

Connecting the World Through Gaggle

Using email pen pals (or epals) is the greatest way to connect your students to other students around the world and across the country, and it can be one of the most rewarding email experiences you can offer your students. One of our Gaggle educators was kind enough to share her experience using epals with her 5th graders for this month's newsletter.

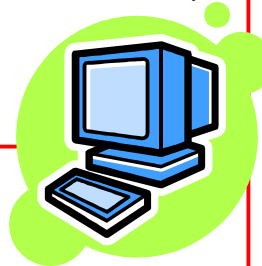
Linda Laneback, Frank Elementary, Guadalupe, AZ

"With each introduction to another student from another country, my students are given the opportunity to develop a connection that will teach them about the world they live in, and the remarkable comparisons that weave through the traditions and experiences we share as a global community.

When my district provided us with Gaggle.Net accounts they gave my students a portal to the world. This form of communication has assisted in integrating technology into the

curriculum, helped to develop language arts skills, and given us the opportunity to explore global cultures and customs. As they walk through this doorway perhaps the greatest impact will be the concept that they are planting the seeds for a lifetime of global understanding.

As we integrate technology into our curriculum, my students have begun working on a project called, 'The Global Exchange.' We are making as many epal connections as we can, while honoring our commitment to quality correspondence on a regular basis. These fifth grade students, from a small Native American community, send email to students in countries around the world, and across the country. They have also formed 'e-partnerships' with mentoring adults, who offer advice and share life stories. The students keep a journal and log in their letters, converting their favorites into a word document for publication in their 'Books of Friendship.'"



Curriculum Corner

Epal Project – Linda Laneback, Frank Elementary, Guadalupe, AZ

As my class studies Aviation, one of our activities will include having the students construct 5 ft. hot air balloons. As they learn about the science of flight, they will work in teams to construct multi-colored tissue-paper balloons. They will then join with their epals around the world, to launch them on the same day (in April), and document the lift-offs with digital cameras. These images will be posted to each other on the web. Using the concept of "rising to high expectations," we will attach a letter of inspiration to the children of the world signed by all participating classrooms.

Training Tips

Gaggle has provided two places where educators can find epals for their students within the Gaggle system.

Epal Message Board

There is a message board created especially for educators who want to connect their students with epals. If you visit the Message Board section under your Jump To menu, click on the Educator Message Boards category. There is a message board titled "Find Classroom Email Partners." Educators can post requests for epals to this message board, or reply to a request made by another teacher.

Profile Pages

Educators can find a list of all schools using the Gaggle system from the Profile Pages. Click the Profile Pages option under your Jump To menu. There will be a new window that opens containing two boxes, "Quick Jump" and "Browse by Location." In the "Browse by Location" box, you can select a state and country in which you wish to search. After you have made your selection, a list of all of the schools in that area using Gaggle will appear. You can click on any one of the school names to view their Profile Page and access their contact information.