



# The Gaggle

Bringing You a Gaggle of News Monthly

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## Overcoming ELL Challenges With Gaggle!

One of the challenges facing many schools today is how to teach and engage their ELL population of students. One teacher in the Chicago, IL suburbs shared with us her experience using Gaggle with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELL students. We hope you enjoy her testimony as much as we did!

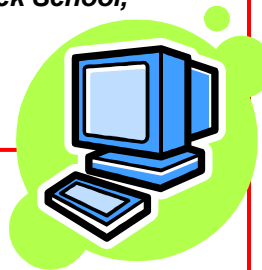
“Spelling assignments trickled in half-heartedly week after week. While my 5th and 6th grade students knew the importance of doing their spelling homework, the motivation simply wasn't there for most of the class. Just as I reached a new level of frustration in my chase for missing assignments, my students were introduced to Gaggle. None of the students had experienced email before, but they were quite eager to learn. I used their excitement as the key to our spelling homework and invited the class to send me an email with their spelling words and sentences. That first week generated 100% of the assignments and this level of enthusiasm and responsibility has continued throughout the school year. In fact, some students - with their passion for Gaggle email - will even do their spelling more than once on a given week! These students are English Language Learners in a large 5th/6th grade building

in the Chicago suburbs. Their language proficiency ranges from newcomer to intermediate and they represent a multitude of home languages - such as Korean, Lithuanian, Spanish, and Polish. Very few of the students have computers at home, so technology experiences have been limited to the school setting. And while teachers constantly use email, this form of communication is not often used with students.

In fact, my ESL students are the only 5th and 6th graders in the building using Gaggle, as it was initiated as a pilot program. The students have been the envy of their peers, which has boosted the self-esteem of my English Language Learners. The fact that this Gaggle email experience is special and 'cool' has given my class self-confidence and value in the educational setting, where they often feel confused or uncertain.

Gaggle has made a huge difference in my classroom and I encourage all teachers to give it a try!”

~Cathy Mack - Frederick School,  
Grayslake, IL



## Curriculum Corner

### Classroom Riddles – Cathy Mack, Frederick School, Grayslake, IL

I have used Gaggle for a variety of language arts and reading experiences. For example, I will often email the students a riddle which they must use inferential skills to email me an answer. If they are wrong, we simply email back and forth, as I offer more clues or hints. Students who might normally be frustrated if something is “wrong” do not so easily give up when we are using this fun method of communication.

## Training Tips

ELL teachers have found the following Gaggle tools especially helpful in their classrooms:

### **Auditory Feedback System (AFS)**

Gaggle's AFS allows you and your students to hear all outbound and inbound emails, blogs and message board posts read out loud. In teaching ELL students, you must speak to them in English to help them learn the language. By using the AFS, these students will be able to see and hear a word at the same time!

### **Language Translator**

Gaggle's Language Translator can translate bi-directionally from English to 13 different languages! Our Language Translator has the ability to translate incoming and outgoing email messages to allow for easy communication between students. This tool allows ELL students to communicate more effectively with their classmates and teachers and thus enhances everyone's education!

*We would love to hear success stories from other teachers using Gaggle as well! Please email your success stories to [elizabethc@gaggle.net](mailto:elizabethc@gaggle.net)*