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# November iPad Update

Highlights, Tips, and Clarifications - November 19, 2012

Sherwood iPad Implementation - *Innovation, Motivation, Collaboration, and Efficiency*  
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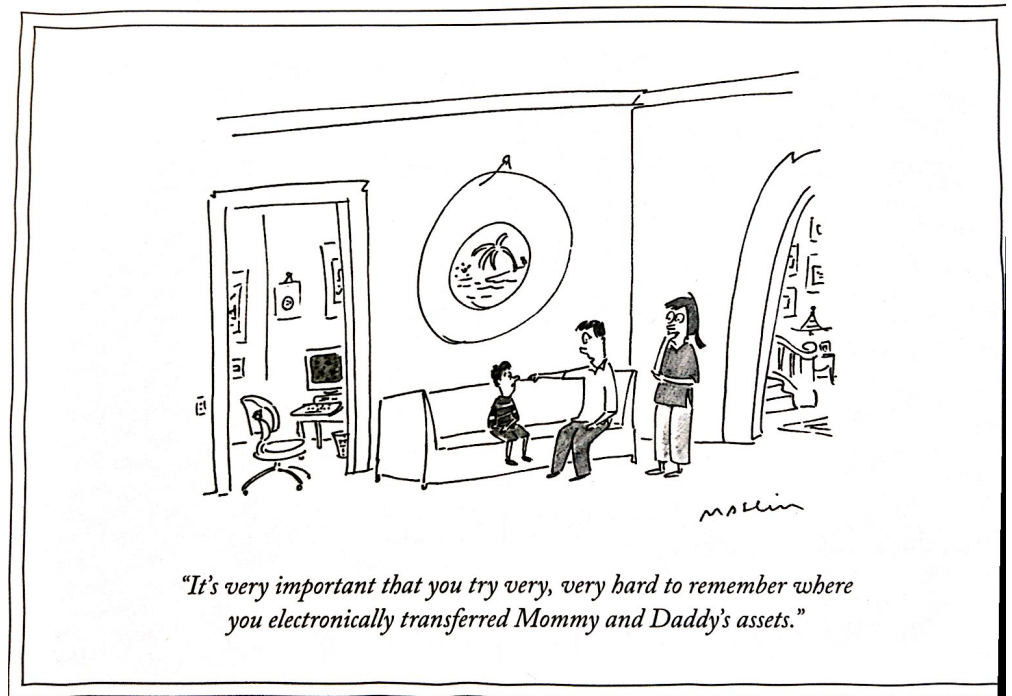
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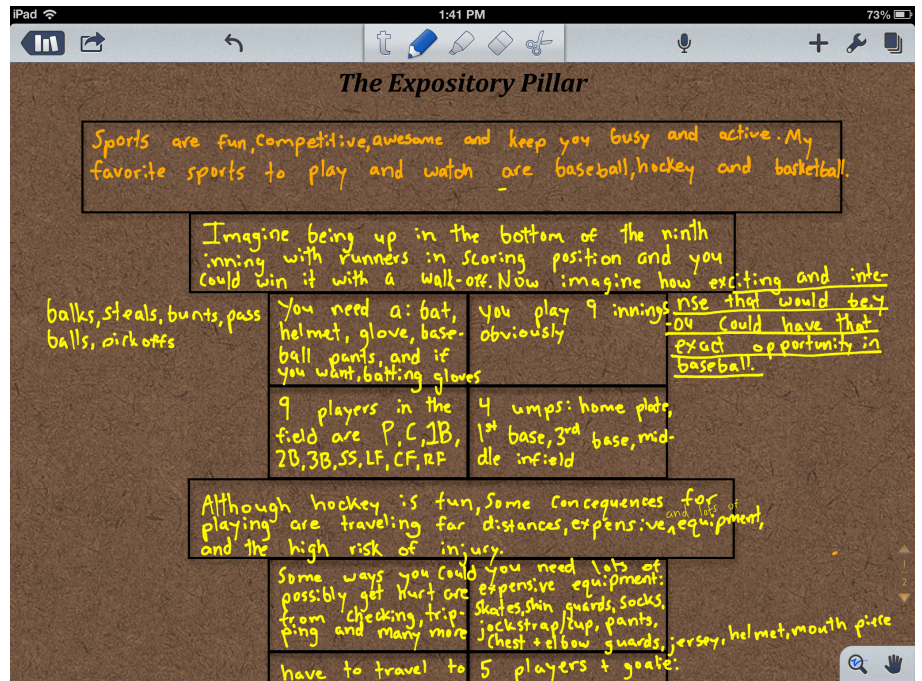


Source: *The New Yorker* magazine

## FOCUS ON WRITING:

One of the questions that is currently being discussed in our parent community centers around how the iPad implementation is affecting the writing program at Sherwood Middle School. In this edition of our iPad Update, Lisa Daly, our ELA Curriculum Coordinator, talks about the writing program

at Sherwood and our early understandings around how the iPad can enhance the writing process.



## WRITING IN A 1:1 ENVIRONMENT AT SHERWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

by Lisa Daly

### The Writing Curriculum

The goal of the writing curriculum at Sherwood Middle School is to develop confident and thoughtful writers who think deeply and critically about a subject or topic, and then communicate their ideas in well-developed and organized pieces. To this end, we have designed a rigorous and comprehensive writing curriculum that builds from the writing skills taught in the elementary level and prepares students for the demands of writing at the High School.

Students write about a range of topics from personal experience, to literary analysis, to topics from content classes or research. A focus of the middle level writing curriculum is on exposition and persuasion. Students learn the components of an organized essay, how to introduce a topic to the reader, state the main idea of the piece clearly, develop those ideas using credible and relevant evidence, and conclude the piece in a satisfying and appropriate way. In addition to writing compositions of varying length throughout the school year, students' writing is assessed commonly at two points in the year when they complete an essay on-demand.

Regardless of the topic or purpose of the writing piece, students are taught how to use the writing process effectively and with increasing independence. Students will learn how to develop and gather their ideas, to organize those ideas logically, and then to compose pieces that develop those ideas fully through specific examples, explanations, descriptions, or evidence from text. Students also revise and edit their work using combinations of self-assessment, and teacher and/or peer feedback.

### **The Writing Process and the iPad**

The curriculum and expectations for writing have not changed now that Sherwood has moved to a 1:1 environment. However, students may now use technology to a greater degree in places where they feel that it may help the writing process by making it more efficient, organized, and effective. Below are some ways that you may see technology being used at varying stages of the writing process:

*Brainstorming / Gathering Ideas:* Students are taught a specific strategy to develop their ideas called Pick-List-Choose. In this strategy, students pick their topic, list everything they know about that topic or gather evidence from texts or class notes, categorize that information into logical groups, and then choose their main ideas for their essay from those categories. Students are often provided a Pick-List-Choose Scaffolding Sheet to complete this work. Students may find the iPad useful during this process. By open their Pick-List-Choose Scaffolding Sheet in their Notability app, students can create their lists by using the typing or pencil tool, and then categorize the information using the highlighter tool. In this way, students can keep this organized in a Notability file, may find that listing is easier when using text boxes to type neat lists, or may find that using the highlighter function is more efficient because they can easily erase something that they have highlighted to change the category that an item is placed in.

*Organizing:* The Pillar graphic organizer is the basic organizational structure that students are taught to use for both exposition and argumentation. The structure helps them to create a logical order of ideas, to identify a topic sentence for their piece, as well as create main idea sentences for each paragraph. Students are taught not to overlap ideas (or repeat similar ideas) within or across paragraphs, to use sufficient details to develop or explain an idea, and to make sure that details relate back to the main idea of the paragraph. Students may find that using the Pillar in their Notability app will help to make changing or revising their Pillar easier. Students

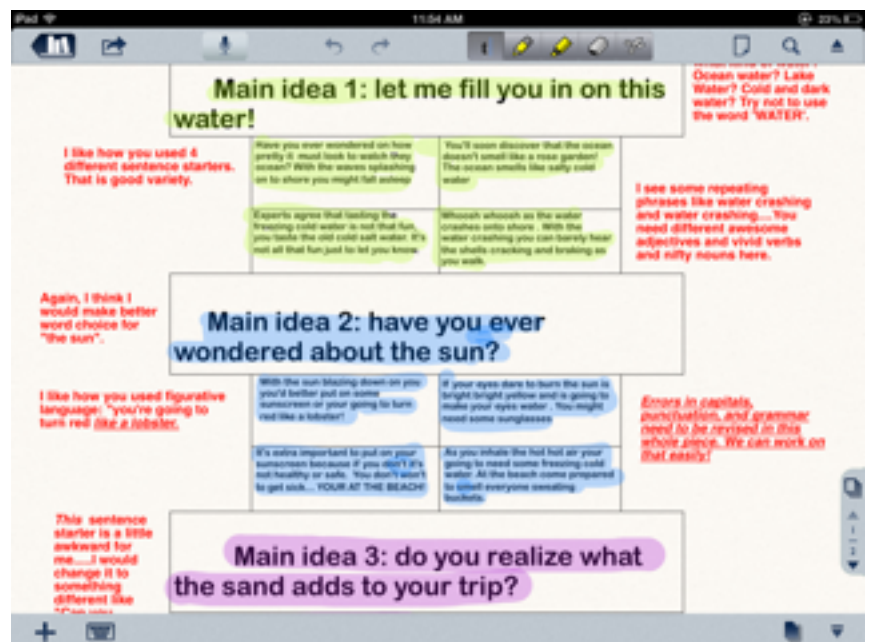
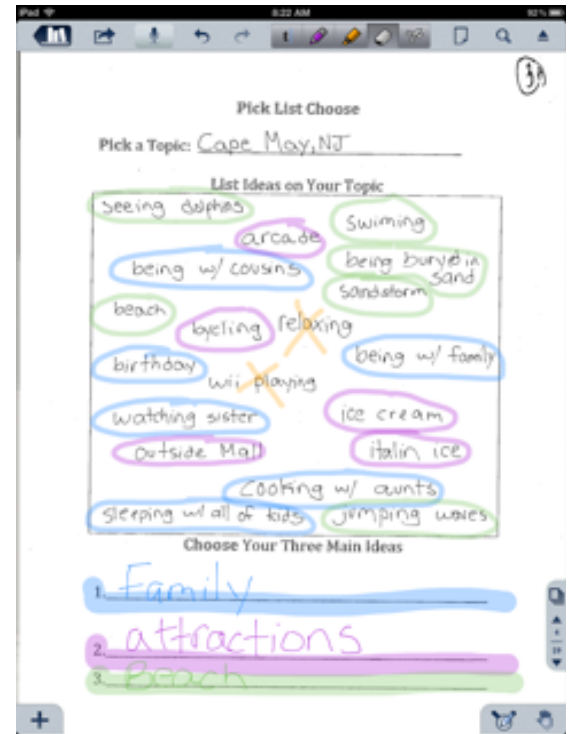
who have difficulty fitting their handwritten ideas into the boxes may find that the typing function in Notability is helpful.

*Composing and Revising:* Another benefit of the iPad is being able to compose writing electronically. Some students may find that they tend to write more developed pieces when they type their first draft, while other students may benefit from writing out their pieces initially on paper, and then creating a typed draft from there.

Once the piece is typed, students can easily revise their work by moving, changing, adding, or removing text. This helps to avoid the potential confusion of multiple cross-outs, notes in a margin, or arrows indicating where information will move, and can make continual assessment of the piece by the writer

or a peer easier, as drafts do not need to be continually re-written. There is also power in the use of a cloud-based collaboration tool called Google Docs (now located within Google Drive) where students can share a typed document with a teacher or their peers electronically. This allows multiple users to see the piece simultaneously, and provide feedback on the written piece in an efficient way.

By composing drafts electronically, students are also developing their keyboarding skills. It is important that they develop their capacity to type long pieces of connected text. As the Common Core State Standards indicate, students in grade five should be able to produce two typed pages in a sitting, and students in grade six should be able to produce three typed pages in a sitting.



*Editing and publishing:* Students need to check their work carefully to ensure that their writing contains correct spelling, usage, grammar, and conventions. Editing can be easier for students and their peers when they are looking at typed work. Also, by turning the “Auto-Correction” setting off and keeping the “Check Spelling” setting on (located in Settings: General: Keyboard), students can see where they have made a spelling mistake without the word being “fixed” for them. This can also be done with “Auto-Capitalization”. Please click the link below to watch a video on how to turn off the “Auto-Correction” and “Auto-Capitalization”.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqen\\_2uoLJg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqen_2uoLJg)

### **A Balanced Approach**

One of the goals of using technology when writing at the middle level is to help students to know when to insert the use of technology into the writing process to make their writing stronger. Students will likely move back and forth between the iPad and pencil and paper tools through the creation of a writing piece. Teachers and students will make decisions about when to insert technology into the writing process based upon when its use provides the greatest benefit to the writing piece and the teaching process.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [ldaly@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us](mailto:ldaly@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us)

### **MANAGING GAMES ON MY CHILD’S IPAD**

The Shrewsbury Public School district believes it is important to maintain parents’ rights to make decisions for their children according to their family values. Given this, we do not want to dictate what families can and cannot allow their children to do on the iPad in their home environment. This being said, one theme that came out on our recent parent survey was frustration around students’ use of non-academic games on the iPad at home. Parents communicated that they are looking for ways to limit/eliminate their child’s access to non-academic apps on the iPad. **It is possible to take all/some non-academic related apps off a child’s iPad, and to prohibit a child from installing any apps in the future without parent permission.** Below, please find both written directions and a link to a video that will explain how to do this.

1. Delete any unwanted apps from your child's iPad (touch and hold on the app and a white x in a black circle will appear). Tap the white x and the app will be removed from the iPad (if it's a paid app, you can reinstall it another time because it is still in your Apple ID account).
2. Tap on the Settings (gears) on the homepage.
3. Under Settings (on the left hand side of the page), tap "General"
4. Tap "Restrictions"
5. Tap "Enable Restrictions"
6. You will be prompted to enter a password (do not share this with your child). *It is important that you remember this password because if you forget it, there is no way to recover or reset the password without erasing all content from the device and starting all over again from the factory settings, which will lose all of your child's saved work that is not backed up online.*
7. Tap the "On" button next to "Installing Apps", this will turn it to "Off".
8. Tap the home-button at the bottom of the device and this will bring you back to the home-screen, you will notice that the app store icon is now gone.
9. If you or your child wants to download an app, you, as the parent, will have to go back to the settings, enter your restriction password, and turn "Installing Apps" back on.
10. Link to the video showing how to do this:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfWiR4vtOEA>

## **I'M UNCOMFORTABLE WITH MY CHILD MESSAGING OR CONCERNED THAT IT IS DISTRACTING HIM/HER DURING HOMEWORK TIME. WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?**

By using the "Settings" options on your child's iPad, you have the capacity to turn off Messaging and Facetime. It can be turned back on again, but only when you as a parent give your permission. It is also possible to keep Messaging and Facetime on your child's iPad, but remove notifications so your child is not be distracted by incoming messages/calls when working on

homework. Below, please find both written directions and a video link that explains how set up both of these options.

**I do not want my child to have access to iMessage on his/her iPad (Facetime can also be eliminated)**

1. If restrictions are enabled, you need to turn off restrictions before you can perform this task
2. Go to Settings and turn “Messages” off
3. Got to “General” settings and choose “Restrictions”
4. Enable restrictions
5. If you want Facetime off, you can shut it off here
6. Next, under restriction settings go to “Accounts” and then to “Allow changes”
7. Select “Don’t Allow Changes”
8. If you or your child would like to enable iMessage and/or Facetime, you, as the parent will have to go back to “Restrictions” and select “Allow Changes” and then turn “Facetime” back on. Then under “Settings”, turn “Messages” back on.

**It is okay for my child to have access to iMessage, but I do not want my child to get an alert on his/her iPad every time an iMessage is received.**

1. Go to Settings and tap “Notifications”
2. Tap on “Messages” inside of “Notifications”
3. Turn “Notification Center” off
4. (Optional) Go back to “Notifications” and tap on “Facetime”
5. Turn “Notification Center” off
6. Your child will no longer receive notification when an iMessage is received or when a Facetime call is received

\*Note if you set your restrictions to “Don’t Allow Changes” you will have to switch to “Allow Changes” to make this adjustment to Notifications

Link to video to show how to do this:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjSdmp4yE-8>

## ADDITIONAL TIPS AND RESOURCES AROUND MESSAGING

As noted above, it is the parents’ decision as to whether or not they want to allow their child to be able to use an electronic messaging feature. If you choose to let your child use this feature, please be aware that the downloading of other messaging apps is unnecessary because the Messages app is preinstalled on your child’s iPad.

Most messaging apps are not blocked by our filters because they have very low age ratings, due to the fact that the app’s only function is to send and receive texts. Each app tends to lend itself to certain topics of discussion, and it is possible for a community to develop that could encourage on-line conversation that would be inappropriate for 5th and 6th graders. One example of this type of app is called Kik, and according to our management system 130 Sherwood students currently have this app on their iPads. Common Sense Media, an organization dedicated to building digital citizenship has this to say about the Kik app, “*Kik Messenger* wasn’t created with educational intent, and we do not recommend it for learning.” To see additional commentary on this particular app, please click here <http://www.commonsensemedia.org/mobile-app-reviews/kik-messenger>.

As stated above, we respect parents’ right to make individual decisions for their children. We want to be clear that additional messaging apps beyond the Messages app are not required for any educational purposes at this point in our program. If you choose to allow your child to install additional messaging apps on his/her iPad, we strongly recommend that you monitor these closely, just as we recommend that you monitor your child’s iMessage communications if you choose not to restrict that feature (see above).

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

Common Sense Media, cited above, offers a tool called the “Family Media Agreement”. While you may want to use the entire agreement, or just parts of it, this document helps outline some of



the important talking points that you may want to review with your child around your family values and media use in your home. There is an elementary, middle school, and high school version of this agreement. To find these resources, please follow the link below:

<http://www.common sense media.org/educators/parent-media-education/family-media-agreements>

Recently, Mrs. Gablaski has been working with students around better understanding the proper etiquette around messaging. Please follow this link to see a video she created to review some important considerations that students should take into account before messaging a friend. Watching this video together with your child is a helpful way to start a “messaging” discussion.

<http://www.xtranormal.com/watch/13876568/ipads-and-friends>

## UPCOMING PARENT WORKSHOP AND DIALOGUE: NOVEMBER 27TH TEACHING AND PARENTING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

On November 27th, from **6:30 pm to 7:30 pm** at the **Oak Auditorium** there will be a presentation on the value of personal electronic devices in schools and navigating the opportunities and challenges of these devices in the home environment. Peggy Harvey, the technology integration specialist for the Boxborough Public Schools, will be presenting on these topics.

Directly following this presentation, from **7:30 pm to 8:30 pm**, we will have an open discussion to provide parents with an opportunity to ask questions and engage in conversation around the benefits and challenges associated with the Sherwood iPad Implementation.

## PARENT SURVEY

Thank you to the over 500 families who took the time to complete our initial Sherwood iPad Implementation Survey. Our iPad Study Group has been reviewing this data, and several members of our study group have spent time talking with individual parents around their initial experiences with our 1:1 iPad Initiative. We have collected valuable information from parents,

teachers, and students alike. We are currently working to respond to questions and concerns that have been identified, and to build upon the early successes parents have cited with this implementation. At a future date we will publish parent survey responses that do not compromise identities. We will be presenting our first update report to the School Committee on November 28th during which time we will summarize what we've learned this far into the process and outline "next steps" for moving forward.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions, comments, or concerns about the Sherwood iPad program. My contact information is at the top of this document.

- Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent of Schools