The Teachable Moment at Home: Assisting Families in Choosing and Using Mobile Applications to Encourage Emergent Literacy

Diana Williams

Joanna Grymes

Lina L. Owens

Arkansas State University

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This Session

- In this particular session, we are not going to give a list of the "top 10 Apps"
  - Going to give some background information
  - Give the means to select appropriate apps
  - Practice at selecting apps

Context … Less than…

- 25 years after the birth of the World Wide Web
- 16 years after the launch of Google Search
- 9 years after the first YouTube video & Facebook (2005)
- 8 years after Twitter began (2006)
- 7 years after the introduction of the first touch-screen smartphone
- 6 years after the opening of the first "app" store
- 4 year after Pinterest, Instagram and the first iPad sale

- **the media world that children are growing up in is changing at lightning speed.**
  - Zero to Eight, 2011, p1, www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/zerotoeightfinal2011.pdf
  - http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/files/2012/03/citizen-brando-infographic-11.jpg

Some recent data…

- Most families have smart phone (71%) or tablet (42%) or both (35%)
- Class & Digital divides continue – what is available & use
- Not used more than other things to distract, soothe, educate or reward (TV reward)

Table 1: Parents' Opinions about Media's Effects

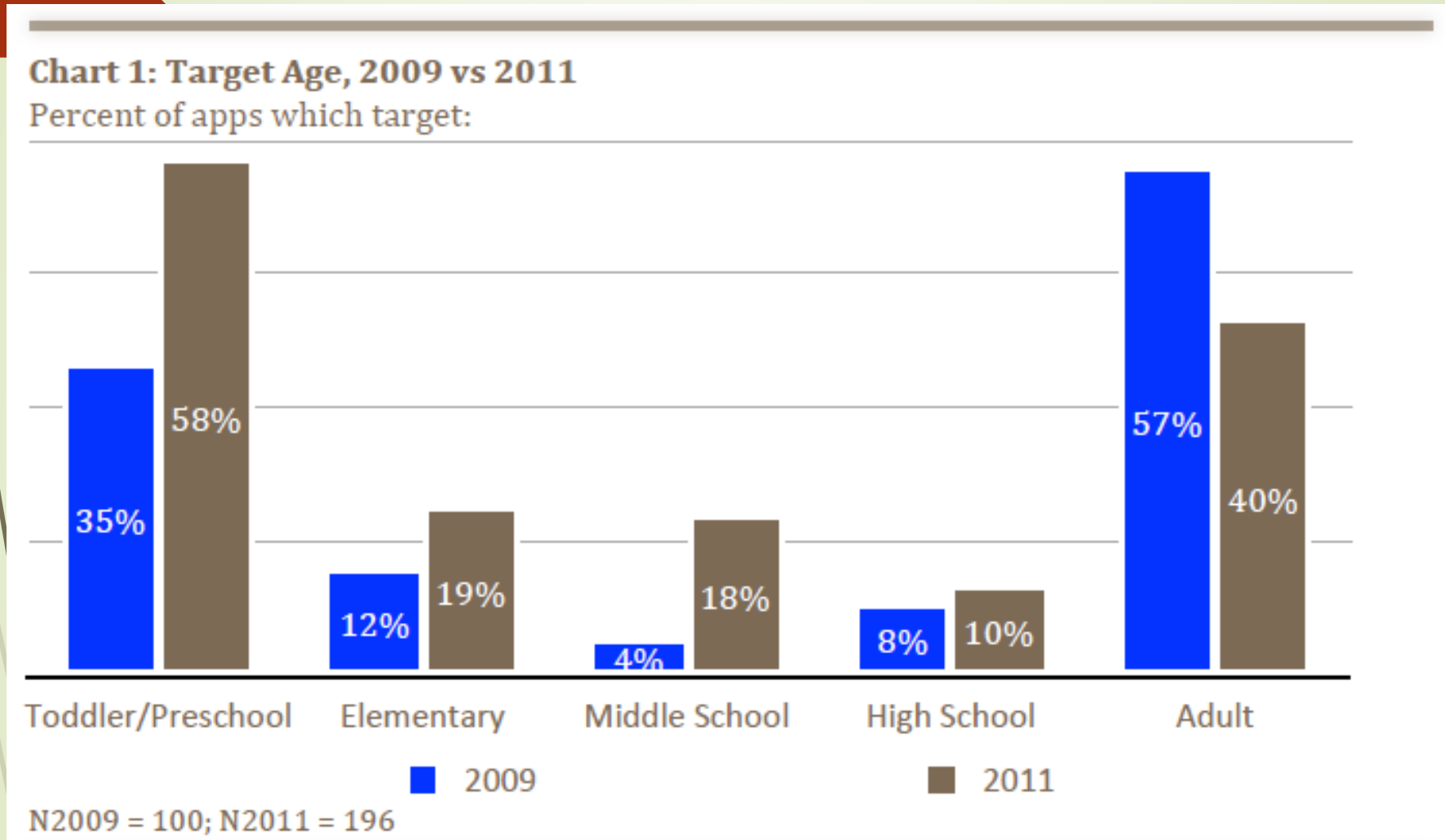
Among parents of children ages 0–8, percent who say each medium has a mainly positive or negative effect on children's . . .

	TELEVISION		COMPUTERS		MOBILE DEVICES*		VIDEO GAMES	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Reading skills	38	25	59	9	37	21	21	35
Math skills	36	17	53	9	30	22	18	33
Speaking skills	56	14	27	20	20	27	10	39
Attention span	27	42	29	26	18	37	19	45
Creativity	47	23	48	14	30	26	26	36
Social skills	33	30	19	35	16	37	11	50
Behavior	22	35	17	20	12	29	8	47
Sleep	10	39	7	29	5	35	3	49
Physical activity	19	58	9	57	7	54	10	61

* Mobile devices were defined as "such as smartphones and tablets."

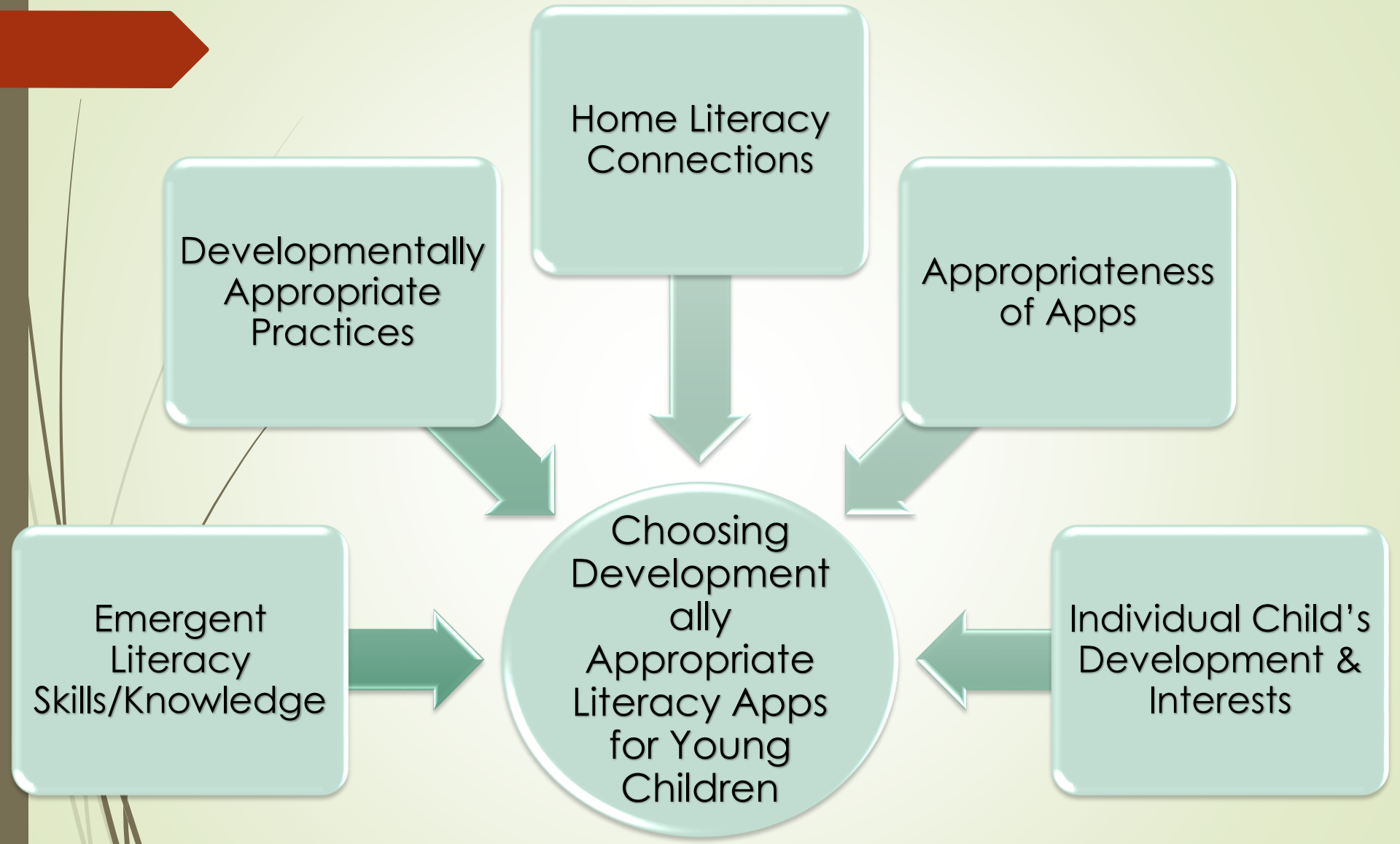
Parenting in the digital age, p. 6, http://web5.soc.northwestern.edu/cmhd/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Parenting-Report_FINAL.pdf

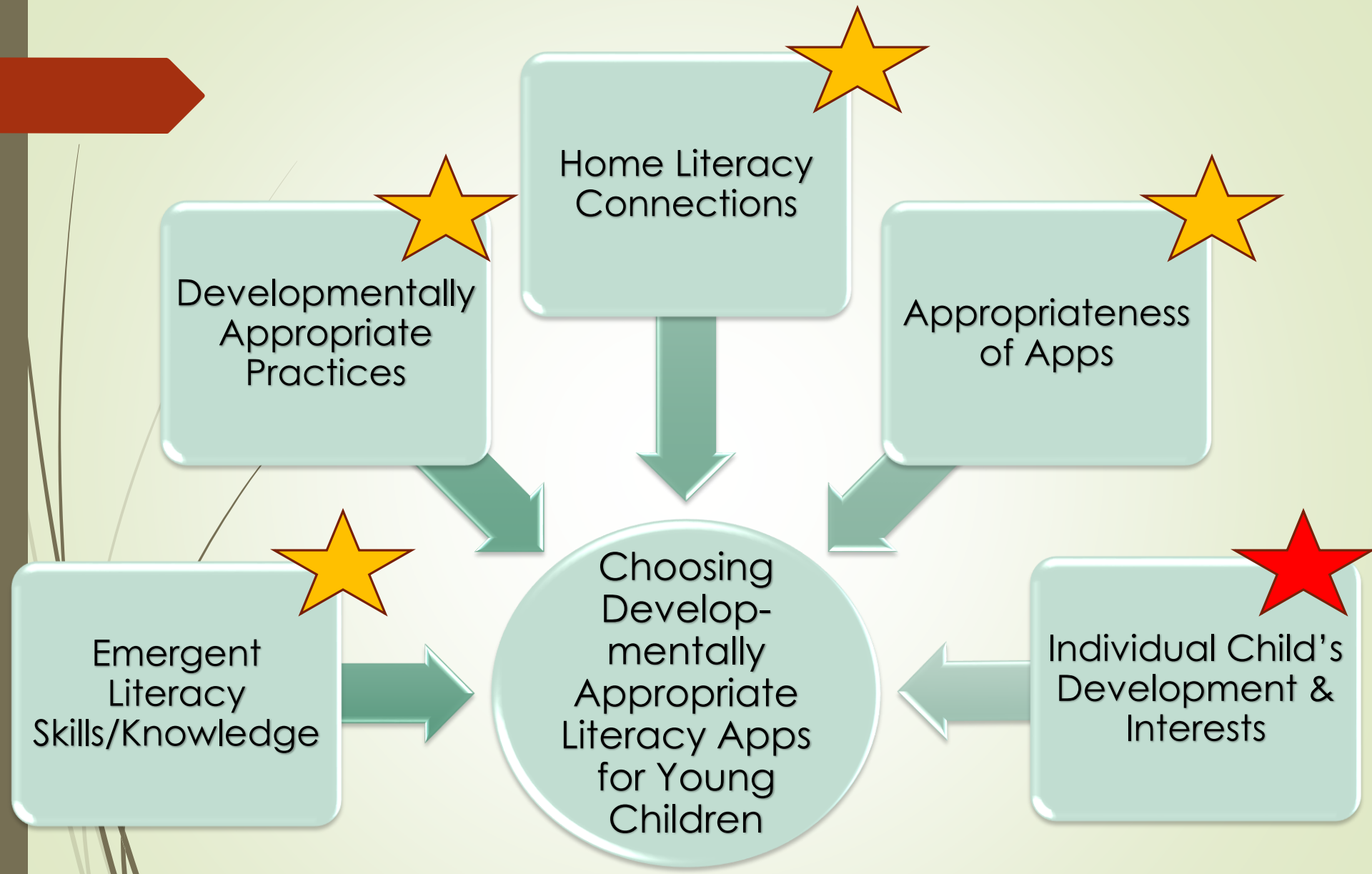
Choosing Media



http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/ilearnii.pdf
iLearn II: An analysis of the Education category of Apple's App Store, p. 13

Research????


Home Literacy Connections
Developmentally Appropriate Practices
Appropriateness of Apps
Emergent Literacy Skills/Knowledge
Choosing Developmentally Appropriate Literacy Apps for Young Children
Individual Child's Development & Interests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Emergent literacy

Emergent Literacy

- Differentiating “emergent” or “early” and “conventional” literacy
- Vocabulary gap & achievement gap

National Institute for Literacy

- Alphabet knowledge
- Phonological awareness
- Rapid automatic naming of letters/digits
- Rapid automatic naming of objects/colors
- Writing/writing name
- Phonological memory

National Institute for Literacy

- Concepts about print
- Print knowledge (alphabet knowledge, concepts of print, early decoding)
- Reading readiness (alphabet knowledge, concepts of print, vocabulary, memory, phonological awareness)
- Oral language
- Visual processing

Developmentally appropriate practice

DAP

- Best practices position paper – NAEYC
- Practices which are
  - Age appropriate
  - Individually appropriate
  - Culturally relevant/appropriate
- Strong emphasis on child development

NAEYC Technology Position Paper

- Context of children lives balanced with concerns for development
- Not supplant important activities, but support learning and development
- DAP principles
- Aspects of play: engaging, child control, exploration or process

(Paper Cont.)

- Digital literacy of adults (teachers, parents, …) broadly and with specific technologies
- Family connections
- Developing children's digital literacy and citizenship

Home literacy connection

Literacy learning at home

- Families are an underutilized resource for ECE program in supporting children's literacy development
- Potential to train parents with skills to support development

- Reese, Sparks & Leyva, 2010.

(Lit Cont.)

- Taking advantage of interest the child has in planning activities to support literacy learning is effective approach
- Baroody & Diamond, 2012
- Encouraging family routines related to literacy development
- Weigel, Martin & Bennett (2010)

Caution:

- "Educators (Families) who lack technology skills and digital literacy are at risk of making inappropriate choices and using technology with young children in ways that can negatively impact learning and development." (Families inserted)

- NAEYC 2012, p. 4

Appropriateness of Apps

Touch Technology

- Allows children to interact
  - Experience is active not passive
- Allows for independence
- Children can interact easier than with traditional computers
  - Adult acts as ‘manager’

Terms

- App
  - Stands for application
    - Software
    - Tends to refer to software for tablets (iPad, iPhone, Android tablets)
- In App Purchases
  - The App may look free but it isn't
  - May need to purchase additional items to continue using

E-books

- Electronic books need an app or software in order to read
- Each E-book is a ‘file’
- Different apps
  - Storia/Farfaria
  - iBooks
  - Kindle/Nook/ Nook for kids

Using Apps

- Using Apps inappropriately can be as harmful as not using at all
  - Encourage proper use
    - Consider time spent on device
  - Encourage selecting appropriate Apps
  - Evaluate objectively
    - Beyond bells and whistles
    - Match needs with apps abilities

Evaluating

- Content
- Ease of use
- Appropriate and has a purpose
  - Meaningful, pacify, use of tech
- Engagement vs Fun

More on Evaluating

- Be selective
- Individual differences of learners mean individual differences in apps
- Read reviews
- Ask colleagues or others
- Play with App

App Evaluation forms

- For Teacher
- For Family

Located:

http://myweb.astate.edu/dwilliam

App Examples

Comparison

- Matching
- Jigsaw puzzles

Now it's your turn

Some of these are good and some are not so good. Some may not be age appropriate. You Decide.

- ABC Alphabet Phonics
- ABC Alphabet Lite
- ABC Tracing
- Alphabet Action
- Alphabet Actions
- Little Writer for Kids
- Little Writing – Tracing
- My Picture Dictionary
- Preschool & Kindergarten Learning Corner
- Puppet Pals
- Spelling 1
- Wurdle

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