

The Home/School Connection:
Collaborating to Promote Best Practice in World Language Education, K-8
Issue 19

Creating an Electronic Resource Library for Parents

Dear Parents,

The Internet is full of resources related to early language learning. In this issue of *Home/School Connection* we will focus on how to find and bring together those materials to create an electronic resource library for parents.

Planning

Consider creating a team of at least three parents to share the responsibilities of the electronic resource library: managing the library, looking for new resources, and informing other parents of updates. One person performing all three duties could be overwhelming and too much work.

Contact your child's language teacher to see what resources he/she knows of and has already created. Stay in touch with the language teacher so summaries of current and past units and lists of current and past vocabulary can be added to the resource library.

Managing the Resource Library

Setting up a wiki or a blog is an alternative many people choose over creating a website. Wikis or blogs are free, low maintenance ways to bring many online resources together in one place for easy access by many parents.

When organizing your website, wiki or blog, include:

- links to online articles about the benefits of early language learning

- language learning opportunities in your community
- language related quotes
- links to language organizations
- materials related to the language your children are learning
- updates related to language class
- pronunciation guides
- online games

Check out the wikis below to get ideas on how to set up your own electronic resource library.

<http://ialanguagelearning.wikispaces.com/>

<http://crestviewspanish.wikispaces.com/>

Finding the resources

National Network for Early Language Learning (NELL)

The NELL organization has been unwavering in its support for early language learning by creating a variety of resources for teachers, parents and the general community over the past 20 years.

NELL's website, www.nell.org, is full of free resources you can access. Linking the NELL website to your website gives all parents access to past and current issues of *Home/School Connection*, a collection of newsletters with language related topics.

Every month NELL publishes a collection of websites and online articles called

Newsworthy. Many issues include a “Languages in the News” section that features language related online articles. There are also language specific websites that could help your child practice his/her second language.

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)

CAL has a variety of online resources available on their website, www.cal.org.

- “In the News” links visitors to news articles from around the nation related to CAL’s work and mission to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture.
- *Digests* are free and downloadable. They include research reports about a variety of subjects related to language learning, cultural orientation, and linguistics.
- *Informational Brochures* are also free and downloadable. They highlight the importance of language learning and provide information for those interested in advocating for language education.
- The *Resources Archive* gives visitors access to older, but still relevant, materials related to language learning.

The resources listed above can be found by searching:

<http://www.cal.org/about/news.html>

<http://www.cal.org/resources/onlineResources.html>

Informing Parents of Updates

When new information or resources are added to the electronic resource library, send an email to parents informing them of the update. Google Groups are a quick and easy way to send emails to all parents at once. To set up a Google Group, go to www.google.com. You will be provided with step-by-step instructions for setting up the group. Once the email addresses are inputted, messages can be sent out to all simultaneously with the click of a button.

Conclusion

With so many free resources available on the internet, supporting early language learning is easier every day. We are in an age when online resources are almost limitless, but not all parents have time to look through everything available. Take time today to create an electronic resource library that you and other parents can use and share to become better informed about early language learning.

 NNELL can assist teachers, parents and administrators with learning and advocacy efforts. Contact your State Representative today. We would love to hear from you!

This issue of Home/School Connection was written by Tammy Dann. It is full of tips and resources that can be found at www.nnell.org. Teachers may reproduce it and send it home in their students’ backpacks. Send suggestions/comments to Tammy Dann, NNELL’s Early Language Advocate: trdann@q.com