

ELEMENTARY KEYBOARDING ACTIVITIES

GRADES K-6

Elementary Keyboarding Practicum
Dr. Harriet Rogers

Submitted by Lori Mathias
May 2002

ELEMENTARY KEYBOARDING ACTIVITIES

GRADES K-6

The following are suggestions for activities that could be incorporated in an elementary keyboarding course for student's grades 4-8, as well as possible pre-keyboarding activities for students grades K-3. This project includes suggestions I have used for the technology curriculum at the two parochial elementary schools I currently teach at. Basic technology instruction is given to all children, grades K-8, as well as keyboarding instruction in grades 4-8. The project begins with ideas for general exercises, and then is broken down by grade for actual keyboarding activities. Examples of most activities are included. Many of the activities coincide with content being taught in the regular classroom.

General Suggestions for Keyboarding Activities

- When recording warm up lines that have been completed, have students record each other's rather than their own. This ensures a little more honesty in students as well as allowing the students to see how others are doing with warm up.
- After the instructor has evaluated students at least once on their technique, have students evaluate each other on their technique.
- Have students key an activity, and then have them switch seats. They will then proofread and edit another student's work.

Activities for Kindergarten

- At the Kindergarten level, emphasis should be in pre-keyboarding skills: introduction of space bar, location of backspace and delete keys, mouse operation, and use of two hands on the keyboard.
 1. Thank You Sign – Students can key the letters for Thank You on the screen, change font size and use centering. I used this activity to thank parents for their volunteer work at school. They printed their thank you signs, and then I took a picture with the school's digital camera. The picture could either be sent home or displayed at school.
 2. Numbers Booklet in Kid Pix – If the Kid Pix program is available, students will create a picture for each number 1-10. The Backgrounds selection is used with the "Numbers" category. With each background on the screen, the students will need to find a stamp and place the correct number of stamps with the corresponding picture. Each picture will be saved under a different name. Pictures are then transferred to the Slide Show screen and printed in booklet form.

3. Alphabet Book with Kid Pix – Again if Kid Pix is available, this activity reinforces their knowledge of the alphabet, sounds, mouse operation, and saving. Students are assigned at least two letters of the alphabet. They will retrieve the correct lettered Background in Kid Pix, and then will need to find at least two stamps or sticker pictures that begin with that letter. They will also have to include their name using the Text Box feature. Ex.: if they were assigned the letter Z, they would try to find a stamp or picture of a zebra.
4. Rhyming Activity with Kid Pix – Using the attached example, students will key the rhyming words in two columns with the Text Tool in Kid Pix. They will then have to find a stamp that corresponds with each word in the second column.

1st Grade Activities

- At the 1st Grade level, pre-keyboarding skills need to be reinforced from Kindergarten, as well as emphasizing the use of the right thumb for the space bar and introduce a few other word processing features.
 1. Example of review of Word Processing features – Various exercises such as this one can be used at the beginning of the year to review word processing features covered in Kindergarten. This exercise would be a file saved to the hard drive or on the network, and students would access it, make the necessary changes, resave and print. The instructor would lead the students through the exercise and features.
 2. Thank You Letter – As with the Kindergarten class, a small thank you letter could be created to thank volunteers at the school. Students would be introduced to beginning formatting of letters, complete some small composition, begin using spell check, and proof their work.
 3. Christmas Poem – Depending on the type of school, a Christmas Poem could be created using a font of their choice. Again, they would need to proof and spell check their work, as well as save it.

Grade 1

Highlighting and Text Formatting

Follow directions by your instructor to change the words using the backspace and delete keys, and the mouse.

Frog
Skip
Packers
Fudge

Change the font.

Arial Black
Garamond
Socket

Change the size of each line to the number given.

Size 10
Size 16
Size 33

Change the color of the words to the color stated.

Blue
Yellow
Purple
Red
Green

2nd Grade

- Many of the same skills covered in 1st Grade are continually reviewed in 2nd Grade. More proofreading of work should be emphasized as students become better readers. It is fun for the students to create activities at this grade level that relate to the content being covered in their regular classroom.
 1. As in Grade 1, create activities where the file is saved on a hard drive or server so the students can access it, make the necessary changes, resave, and print. It is a good review at the beginning of a school year in working with the mouse, correct spacing, and backspace and delete keys. An example follows.
 2. If the software program KidWorks is available, 2nd Graders can create short stories. Using a topic of content they are covering in their regular classroom is helpful. The instructor should indicate what each page of their story should include. An example follows.
 3. PowerPoint Presentation – With a topic that 2nd Graders have researched, and after introduction to PowerPoint, students could create a short slide show. I used the topic of penguins and students created slides on: Title Page, two (2) facts on penguins, what they looked like, what they ate, etc. They had to copy and paste one picture from the Internet. This activity would require students to come to class with a rough draft on the topic, and then key short phrases on the slides. An actual presentation is included.

Grade 2 Word Processing

When keying remember:

- Put **one** space between words
- Put **no** space before a punctuation mark
- Put **one** space between sentences.

Separate the words with one space.

Fathermothersisterbrotheruncleaunt

Add correct spacing to the sentences.

WashingtonD.C.isournation'scapital.Whatisthecapitalofyour State?

Delete the extra spaces.

The tree is very tall. The leaves of the tree turn many colors in the fall .

3rd Grade

- At this level, reinforce pre-keyboarding skills as in the previous grades. Word processing features such as double spacing and page break should also be introduced.
 1. Rainforest Animals – Each student is assigned an animal of the Rainforest to research. They can use text from the library and the Internet if available (Internet introduction should be given before this exercise). Students should create a rough draft of facts on their animal before entering the computer lab and the regular classroom teacher can determine the content. In the lab they should be instructed to copy and paste a picture from the Internet of their animal for a cover page. An example is on the next page.
 2. President’s Day Report – Each student chooses a President to research and gather facts on. What facts they would need to find and include on their President could be determined by the regular classroom instructor. Again, the Internet could be used for research as well as for copying and pasting a picture into their document. Students should also come to the computer lab with a rough draft that has been reviewed by the instructor. An example is on the following pages.
 3. Poetry – Students would create two different types of poems on their favorite color. The program Kid Pix could be used with its Backgrounds feature. Students should come to the lab with their poems in rough draft. This activity would coincide with a 3rd Grade poetry unit. An example follows.

4th Grade

- Keyboarding instruction begins at this grade as well as reinforcing previously learned word processing skills and adding a few new ones.
1. Easter/Spring Break Keyboarding Rally – Create a keyboarding rally for students that incorporates the keys covered up to that point, and also includes some ideas for this specific time of year. Having the students compete in three different teams works well. An example follows.
 2. Words With 4 Letters and Tab Key Practice – Students will key a list of words, all with four letters. The instructor will work with the students in setting up tab stops. The list of words used can vary depending on keys covered.
 3. Life Without Electricity – After all keys have been introduced and students know how to set up a basic word processing table, they should compose a list of the Pros and Cons of life without electricity. 4th Graders will also need to know what is a “Pro” and what is a “Con”. An example of the handout given to the students follows. From the table, the students could also use their lists to create a short essay on the topic.

TAB EXERCISE

Complete the following exercise after instruction from your teacher in setting tab stops and double spacing. Be sure to proof your work, save, and print one copy.

four	desk	dock	left	talk
said	site	late	lake	tick
coal	lock	coat	cuff	sick
code	jack	luck	jute	suit
duet	soft	talk	side	fold
fled	call	stir	fork	hurt
wish	then	work	corn	jack
luck	inch	sign	high	lawn
disk	hand	call	cash	pack
pick	keep	naps	buff	cold
turn	lows	bike	herb	pace
plan	want	curb	torn	pick
cost	clip	jest	gold	silk
work	just	name	born	form
flax	curl	high	soap	such

5th Grade

1. Key Antonyms – For composition practice, have students key antonyms (opposites) after the instructor dictates a word. Ex.: Instructor says **up**, the students would key **down**; the instructor could say **left**, the students would key **right**.
2. Reinforcing Spell Check – Students will be asked to edit a paragraph that includes many errors – spelling, grammar and punctuation. This file could be downloaded from the network to each station or copied to each desktop, depending on the lab situation. The instructor will need to work through this activity with the students if there are unfamiliar words in the paragraph. This activity emphasizes the importance of carefully proofreading their work as well as instruction on use of the Spell Check tool. An example follows.
3. President’s Report – This activity differs slightly from the 3rd Grade. Students in this grade will also research their facts on a chosen President from the Internet, but instead of writing a rough draft on paper, they will be asked to compose a paragraph on the facts they found. They will also have to copy and paste a picture of their chosen President as well as incorporate more format features: double spacing, cover page, etc. Obviously this exercise would be completed after all keys have been introduced and their keyboarding skill level is fairly good.
4. Someone You Respect – After a discussion on what respect is, 5th grade students will be asked to prepare a report on someone they respect. They will first compose their ideas with a bulleted list. From there, they will prepare a report they will compose at the keyboard and utilize various format features. An example of the assignment follows.

WORKING WITH SPELL CHECK

Use the spell check tool to correct the paragraph below. Be sure to read the paragraph carefully to find any more errors that spell check did not find. Resave and print one copy of the document.

Expetience U.S. history firsthand. With the Oregon Trial software program, you well travel the the Oregon, Califfornia, and Mormon trails as an emigrant, facing daly dangers and bringing your wagon party across the continent. Just as the emigrants fo 1840 – 1860, you'll rely on a handboo for guidance and record your thoughts and impressions in the built-in dairy.

6th Grade

- Many of the activities for 6th Grade students assume they have been keyboarding since 4th Grade. Therefore, the activities involve review and composition.
1. Composition Questions – Once all the keys have been reviewed, the instructor could dictate or have printed, questions for students to compose answers. The questions could relate to activities happening at school, current news, or an upcoming Holiday. Emphasis should be made in proofreading their work.
 2. Family Vacation – Students could create a document describing a recent family vacation. The instructor would determine the format used, and this project would also help develop composition skills.
 3. Easter Keyboarding Rally – The keyboarding rally used for the 4th and 5th grades could be updated to include more challenging items for 6th graders.
 4. Newsletter Assignment – Students will be placed in groups to complete this assignment. The class will discuss and come up with topics they wish to include in the newsletter. This assignment can have each group submit their files to be incorporated into one newsletter for the class, or each group can be responsible for their own newsletter. This project could also be done monthly throughout the school year. An example of a possible handout describing the project follows.
 5. Halloween Haunted House Poster – Around Halloween each student would be asked to create a poster advertising a haunted house. The instructor should discuss what a poster should include before beginning this assignment. It allows creativity by all students and is also a good review of word processing features. Example of handout follows.
 6. Dream Vacation – Using the table feature in a word processing program, and the Internet, students would be asked to create and gather information on their Dream Vacation. After they choose a location, they will need to research it extensively on the Internet. Their information would be input on a table. This project could be taken further if a program like PowerPoint were available. Students could then integrate items from their table into slides for a presentation. A possible handout for this project follows.