Chapter 4: Supporting Writing with Technology

*Things to think about: How can I use the writing process to diagnose students’ writing difficulties? How can I make the best use of my limited teaching time?

Ways to Incorporate Technology into Writer’s Workshop:

1. Use a concept map (AKA semantic networking tool).

   ![Concept Map Example]

   Use Kidspiration! *Examples on pages 64 & 65 are fantastic. **Important:** have students generate their own maps to cement learning. Ways to use concept maps: When teaching dinosaur unit—what types of tools do paleontologists need? When learning about the 5 senses—what do you observe with your 5 senses when you see, smell, taste, hear, and touch an apple?

2. Use PowerPoint to present writing (this writing presentations help students practice prewriting, sequence ideas, compose a message, and edit the message). **Important:** try not to let your students get too distracted by the flashy aspects of PowerPoint.

3. Use the power of the Internet. Have students compose a piece of writing and submit it online for peer review/commenting (this may require teacher help in K). *I did this in college for a creative writing class and a rhetoric class and LOVED it. What a great way to get feedback/ensure your student tries your best! Peer editing may be more powerful than teacher editing. **Important:** check out [http://www.kidscribe.org](http://www.kidscribe.org) and Scholastic’s “Writing with Writers” section. [http://poetryforge.org](http://poetryforge.org) also has a multitude of resources.

4. Use collaborative writing as a tool. In groups, have students work together, write separately and then bring it together, and finally, sequence their activities together. Have students pick the role they would like to play in this collaborative process (editor, reporter, or leader). This gives students a sense of leadership and promotes authentic learning because it gives them more experience in handling responsibilities they may have later on in a “real life” context. **Important:** in these tasks, students will brainstorm ideas, structure flow of writing, generate text, edit text, and negotiate the meaning of these tasks. Wow! Think of how many TEKS you’ll hit with this one activity! *You could even have students do these tasks during workstation time. **Tools to refer back to:** [www.writely.com](http://www.writely.com), [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) (be careful of what you find).

5. Use peer feedback to generate writing. Reciprocal peer assessment helps students develop evaluation skills that also help them to take more responsibility for their own learning. **Tools to use:** [http://ladybug.Irdc.pitt.edu](http://ladybug.Irdc.pitt.edu) (download SWoRD). This is more appropriate for higher education. How could revision take place in kindergarten? Maybe pair a higher learner with a lower learner and have them work together. High learner could help lower learner make sure writing is all on same topic. Could revise spelling, use of WWWs. Does your illustration match your text? Give them opportunities to help and learn from one another!