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# AT&T Classroom

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36 Moulton Hall  
Kent State University

## Students Debate the Lizzie Borden Trial

The students of Cuyahoga Falls Roberts Middle School and their teacher **Debi Bolls** elected to do a study on the elements of nonfiction while attending the AT&T classroom. The focus was on plot and conflict. Students examined various Little Golden Book stories to identify problem, action and result. Using Inspiration, graphic organizers were prepared outlining the characterization of the characters in the script. These formed the basis for the construction of a conflict journal. The students then did a Reader's Theater reading of the "Murder On Second Street" by Suzanne Barchers, published in Read Magazine. This provided a good background on the Lizzie Borden trial. Additional information was collected online from a large variety of bookmarked websites. The students were addressed by a professor from the Department of Justice studies. Being both a former prosecutor and a defense attorney, he was able to instruct and inspire the students with an understanding of what a real trial is like and what a lawyer can and can not do. Another source of information came with a conference call to the Lizzie Borden Bed and Breakfast and Museum located in the actual house where the murders occurred. Students prepared questions that were answered, and alternate ways of viewing the Lizzie Borden case were discussed. The culmination of the unit was a mock trial with half of the class presenting the prosecution point of view and the other half the defense. Each student was required to present and defend a portion of the case. During the trial the students voted on the points to ponder with the personal response system. The final project for the unit was the preparation of a paper.... I (student's name) find the defendant Lizzie Borden (not) guilty of the crime of murdering her parents because .....



Conference Call with the Lizzie Borden Bed and Breakfast



## Podcasting Workshops in AT&T Classroom

**Tom McNeal**, project director of Desktop Videoconference Collaboration at the Research Center for Educational Technology, presented a workshop to a full house in the AT&T classroom on October 25. This is the third group of mentor, cohort and pre-service teachers who have elected to learn about the exciting role podcasting can play in teaching and learning. Tom uses an approach to podcasting which is "teacher-friendly" with many suggestions for free and inexpensive software and equipment. If there is enough interest, another workshop will be offered in January 2007. Please indicate your interest by contacting Tom McNeal at: [tmcneal@kent.edu](mailto:tmcneal@kent.edu)



## Excel Spreadsheets on the Palm Handheld Computer

Nancy Pittner's fourth grade students from Riverview Elementary School in Stow, Ohio spent six weeks in the AT&T classroom learning about how to collect, organize, represent and analyze data. Children used ordinary materials like raisins and M&M packets to estimate and then find precise counts. Line plots were constructed and the terms associated with statistics were defined. Students were soon picking out the mean, mode and range on measurements of their height and that of a group of first graders. Each day a group of students acted as editors and took pictures, interviewed participants and wrote articles describing classroom activities. Students gathered data based on surveys of questions they posed in the classroom as well as from their home when they did a home population study. A living plant served as another vehicle for collecting data when the students planted bean seeds and registered the growth of the plants daily. The theme being investigated was to show change over time. Greg Orr from the Ohio EPA visited the classroom and did a presentation on how scientists collect, display and analyze data using a study of California seals he recently participated in. A teleconference with Dr. John Finer of the Department of Horticulture and Crop Science/ Ohio State University at Wooster gave the students an opportunity to learn how plant experiments generate data that can be used to improve growing conditions and the production of crops. The students had many questions about his role as an investigative scientist. Several fun activities involved mystery data where the students used their mental strategies to examine the relationship between grouped and ungrouped data. Clues in the data set allowed students to hypothesize as to what the data represented. The students gathered and organized data from surveys, read and interpreted tables, charts and graphs, constructed spreadsheets in Excel both on desktop computers and on their Palm Handheld Computer. A final project gave the students an opportunity to utilize a variety of technology options to demonstrate what they learned. Several of the student groups employed animation, using PowerPoint and Digital Blue cameras to show the change over time. Whether it was raisins on a graph or a clay flower growing and blooming, the students demonstrated that their understanding of data analysis had grown and developed over this six week unit.



## Nominations for AT&T 2006\_2007 Cohort

Nominations for the 2006\_2007 cohort of AT&T teachers are being accepted at this time. Administrators of school districts in Portage and Summit County are encouraged to identify exemplary teachers who are willing to integrate technology into their classroom teaching. The school district must fund bus transportation for the teacher and his/her students for a 6 week period enabling the teacher to transport the students to the AT&T classroom each day. The teacher is asked to attend a one week training and orientation workshop in June after school is dismissed for the summer. A \$500 fee is requested from the school district for participation in this project. University researchers will take the opportunity to investigate how technology impacts teaching and learning. Send nominations to [fseman@kent.edu](mailto:fseman@kent.edu)

