



Kent State University AT&T Classroom

Portage Path Elementary Students Explore Learning in the AT&T Classroom

RCET
Research Center for
Educational Technology

Winter 2007

Mrs. Karen Grindall's fifth grade students from Portage Path Elementary School in Akron have had a rich experience attending school in the AT&T classroom at Kent State University. They have produced many PowerPoint projects on the major continental US regions. On the first day of class the Kent State University archivist, Stephen Paschen, gave the group an orientation to the University stressing the importance of using primary source information. Students were required to fill out a planning document outlining the presentation they were formulating, and directions were given as to the construction of the slides to get maximum instructional value.

A trip to the Map Library gave students a look at a wide variety of maps and upon returning to the classroom students reviewed the information learned. Online research for presentations included a challenge to find products that could honestly proclaim, "made in the USA", from that region. Students were encouraged to use GarageBand software to create original hip hop music to correspond with the subject matter.

A teleconference was arranged with the Chemistry department of Old Dominion University in Norfolk VA. Using a KWL chart format, students formulated and then presented questions about their regions to an environmental chemist and an environmental toxicologist. The "conversation" between the scientists and students was a meaningful experience. A trip to the psychology college classroom of Dr. John Dunlosky proved to be the highlight of the week for students. The importance of exploring a large variety of careers and attending college were stressed. Students had an open conversation with the college students in attendance and learned a great deal about college life. Mrs. Grindall and her students used a variety of technology and during their last week in the classroom an open house was scheduled with distinguished guests from the community to witness the AT&T classroom under the direction of Mrs. Grindall and Mr. Bennett.



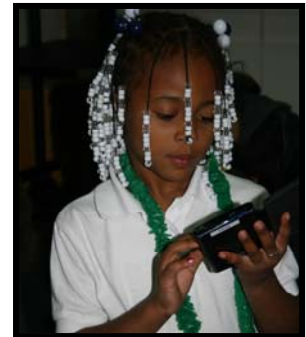
First Graders Develop Technology Skills in the AT&T Classroom

The bus rides back to Akron's Portage Path Elementary School from Kent State University were both educational and fun thanks to mobile technology in the form of the Palm handheld computer. Mr. John Bennett, their first grade teacher, digitized children's alphabet programs and put them into *Quick Time* movies. Along with *Math Ace*, a free software for the handheld, the children entertained themselves and improved their language arts and math skills at the same time. The unit of study was about how "I Will Share ME and MY World With You". Mr. Bennett created a Wiki for a collaborative project with a class in Malaysia, to share information between his class and the class in Malaysia. He incorporated websites, curriculum standards, lesson plans, photos and some of the children's work to be shared with teachers, parents and children. The Wiki may be located at the following URL: <http://tdfactory.pbwiki.com/>

The first activity in the AT&T classroom involved Digital Blue cameras. Photos of "self" were taken by each student of their many moods, happy, sad, angry, mad, sour, glad, excited, thinking and dreaming. Students learned how to manipulate the photos and create a collage using *Microsoft Word*. Students also brought in photos of themselves taken at various stages of their lives to scan and save for a timeline project. Using Tom Synder software, *Timeliner*, they constructed a representation of their six years of life.

Another project involving self was the location of first their school and then their home using *Google Earth*. Students printed this assignment and used it as a reference for the creation of their own map using Tom Snyder's *Neighborhood Map Machine*. Students included schools, churches, homes, other buildings and roads in these representations. The saved maps were exhibited on the SMART Board, and each student explained to the class how they constructed their maps and what they included. Mr. Bennett asked them to explain several aspects of their maps. This was recorded on the SMART Board giving Mr. Bennett an accurate record of the presentation.

The focus shifted from self to neighborhood and then to community. The students were taken on a field trip to Kent State University's map library where Edith Scarletto, the director, allowed them to examine topographic relief maps of Ohio. This hands-on activity gave the students a look at the bigger picture of where they are in time and space. During this seven-week time period these first graders had many challenges and progressed daily with their technology skills. Their on-going study on community continued when the students returned to their home school.



Map of Where I Live!



Timeline of My Life!

