

It's *ELEMENTARY!*

RANKIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER

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RCSD ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM DEPARTMENT

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Elementary Curriculum Specialist

Mindy Stevens

Elementary Curriculum Specialist

Marcoe Walker

Elementary Mathematics Curriculum Specialist

Cassie Weaver

Elementary Curriculum Specialist

Lorie Yates

K-12 Science Curriculum Specialist

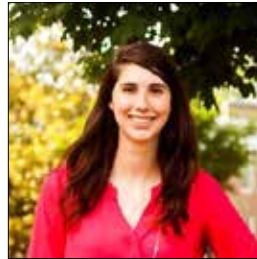
GUEST CONTRIBUTORS

Katy Craig



Katy Craig received a Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education with concentrations on middle school Language Arts and Social Studies from Mississippi State University. She is currently teaching 6th grade at Pelahatchie Elementary School where she serves on the leadership team, as grade chair, new-teacher mentor, and Jr. Beta club sponsor. Additionally, she is a member of the Mississippi Association of Educators, National Association of Educators, and National Council for the Social Studies. She was recently named Rankin County School District Outstanding New Teacher of the Year.

Kaylie Hight



Kaylie was raised in Olive Branch, MS from the age of two. She went to Olive Branch Schools for grades K-12. Following graduation, Kaylie went to Ole Miss, where she graduated with a degree in Elementary Education.

Lexie Gosselin



Lexie Gosselin teaches 5th grade Language Arts and Social Studies at Brandon Elementary. This is currently her eleventh year as an elementary school teacher. She has taught 3rd-5th grades all subject areas, but Language Arts is her true love. A product of Rankin County, Lexie is proud to teach for this school district. From an early age, she knew that teaching was her calling.

Lexie graduated from Mississippi State University with a BS in Elementary Education where she earned certifications k-12 in Language Arts and Social Studies. As a life-long learner, she realized the importance of continuing her education to ensure best practices in her classroom. In 2009, Lexie obtained a Masters in Education from Delta State University. She then received her National Board Certification.

As a practitioner, Lexie consistently provides her students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning through critical thinking, inquiry, self-motivation, and student choice. When students are confident, actively engaged and excited, and having FUN, amazing learning takes place. She believes teaching is the most rewarding profession and that there is nothing like seeing a student's face light up when the light bulb goes off.

Elizabeth Sistrunk



Elizabeth Sistrunk is currently one of the librarians at Brandon Elementary School. This is her first year in the library; however, she has been a classroom teacher for the past 11 years. Most of her teaching experience was in 4th grade language arts. She is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and is also a National Board Certified teacher. Mrs. Sistrunk chose her career in education as a young child. Many teachers inspired her, but she loved when teachers let her tutor peers in her free time. She says she cannot think of any other profession she would rather be a part of. Mrs. Sistrunk said her favorite part of her job is reading to children to create a passion for reading independently. She hopes that after reading to the students, they can see the places books can take you, the things books can teach you, and the experiences books can help you overcome.

Race to Ron Clark **WINNERS!**


























The following teachers will be participating in The Ron Clark Academy, March 8-9, 2018. They will learn about strategies for effective classroom discipline including:

Integrating music into the classroom | Increasing student engagement through higher order questioning | Teaching creatively while achieving high standardized tests | Implementing games that promote student engagement | Promoting academic rigor while meeting the needs of all learners | Creating a climate and culture that promotes student success

Sarah McClellan, *Northshore Elementary* | **Michelle Land**, *Pisgah Elementary* | **Allison Campbell**, *Florence Elementary*
Stephanie Goad, *Steen's Creek Elementary* | **April Massingill**, *Steen's Creek Elementary* | **Leigh Jackson**, *Flowood Elementary*
Kathleen Smith, *McLaurin Elementary* | **Stephanie Baine**, *Richland Elementary* | **Rachel Murphy**, *Northwest Rankin Elementary*
Kylie Evans - *Florence Elementary*





Ron Clark	B	I	N	G	O
B	Present a Professional Development for the Entire School or District 	Invite a Guest Speaker that is tied to lesson plans 	Incorporate New Technology and record a demonstration 	Promptly meets set deadlines, provides organized and efficient environment, and communicates effectively with parents as verified by principals. 	5 Hours of FREE After School Tutoring 
I	Video a Lesson and Debrief with a Curriculum Specialist 	Shares at District Grade Level Meeting 	Write across the curriculum Submit a plan and work samples 	Submit a lesson plan based on Comprehension Toolkit Strategy using any content area 	Community Outreach Project 
N	Current and Professional Website 	Submit a lesson plan based on Comprehension Toolkit Strategy using any content area 	Free Spot 	Lead a Committee 	Host a Parent Night for your Room Community Outreach Project 
G	No absences for a Nine Weeks 	Record a reflection on how technology is used in your classroom to impact student learning 	Perform Duty for a Co-Worker 	5 Hours of FREE After School Tutoring 	Invite a Guest Speaker that is tied to lesson plans 
O	Leads 2 PLCs at Your Local School 	Submit an article for the district newsletter 	Video a Lesson and Debrief with a Curriculum Specialist 	Participates in service activity in conjunction with the PTO 	No Late Arrivals for a Nine Weeks 

A LOOK AT COMPREHENSION TOOLKIT

by Lexie Gosselin

Comprehension Toolkit is a series created by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis. It offers a multitude of resources and strategies to help students become successful readers. Ready-to-teach lessons aid teachers in delivering meaningful and effective instruction across content areas.

Comprehension Toolkit provides students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning through strategies to monitor comprehension and deeply understand nonfiction text while tracking thoughts. The strategies engage students while bringing text to life. Students improve comprehension skills by concentrating on reading, writing, talking, listening and investigating.





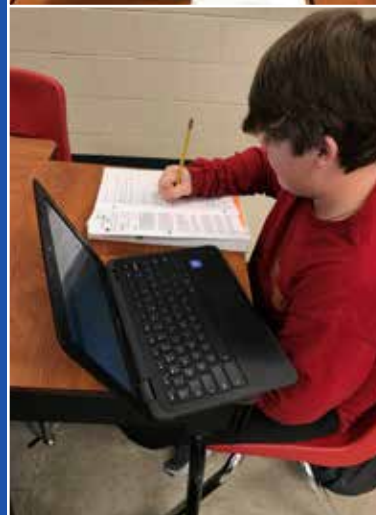
ACHIEVE3000

by **Katy Craig**

Achieve3000's Five-Step Literacy Routine is designed to improve reading comprehension, writing skills, and vocabulary development when used in the Reader's Workshop model. This serves as an invaluable tool for supplementing many of the First Things already taking place in your classroom. One advantage of using this program in your Reader's Workshop is that it allows each student to read a version of a shared topic that is precisely matched to his/her reading level, automatically providing differentiated instruction while enabling students to participate in collaborative discussions and investigations to deepen comprehension.

Achieve3000 articles and activities are grounded in comprehension strategies such as activating prior knowledge, generating questions, and summarizing; a reading comprehension strategy lesson is attached to each article to help you directly and explicitly teach these strategies. These lessons can be seamlessly coupled with the lessons in Comprehension Toolkit and are a great resource for reinforcing your current strategy focus. The Thought Questions accompanying each article challenge students to extend their initial impressions, apply what they have read, and form generalizations to deepen their comprehension of the text. Additionally, these questions provide opportunities for students to demonstrate, apply, and extend their learning from Writer's Workshop, when used in synchronicity with Lucy Calkins' Units of Study in Writing.

Opportunities for student engagement with Achieve3000 will vary depending on instructional goals. At times, you may use the program during whole-class instruction, allowing students to see skills expertly modeled on stretch articles before practicing on their independent leveled texts. Other times, you may pull small groups of students to reteach a strategy or work on a particular skill or state standard. The reports embedded in Achieve3000 will provide the data needed to make these instructional decisions, patently helping you to foster gains in reading comprehension, writing skills, and vocabulary development across disciplines.



U G I E!

I Can Never Find Good Quality Articles

by Elizabeth Sistrunk

As teachers, much time is spent searching for quality text. Mississippi State University sponsors a site called Magnolia, which is free to public schools in Mississippi. This website offers access to non-fiction texts. You can even search the texts by topic, Lexile level, or source. You can find non-fiction articles from the following: Cobblestone Magazine, Scholastic Jr., Scholastic News, Cricket Magazine, just to name a few. The articles are available in PDF or HTML. Picking a PDF would allow you to see the article just as it was printed in the magazine. Selecting HTML gives the option to read the text, great for your struggling readers. Accessing this information is simple.

1. Go to <http://magnolia.msstate.edu/>. It should log you in automatically at your school. If you need an off-site password, check with your librarian.
2. Click the grade level for the text you want.
3. Scroll down and select Explora.
4. At the top is a search box. Once your search results arrive, you will see the Lexile selection on the left. Each result will also have an icon to show if the text is available in HTML, PDF, or both.

This wonderful resource also has an area to find quality websites for kids that correlate to the curriculum.

Spend the time exploring on Magnolia to save time and find better quality texts.

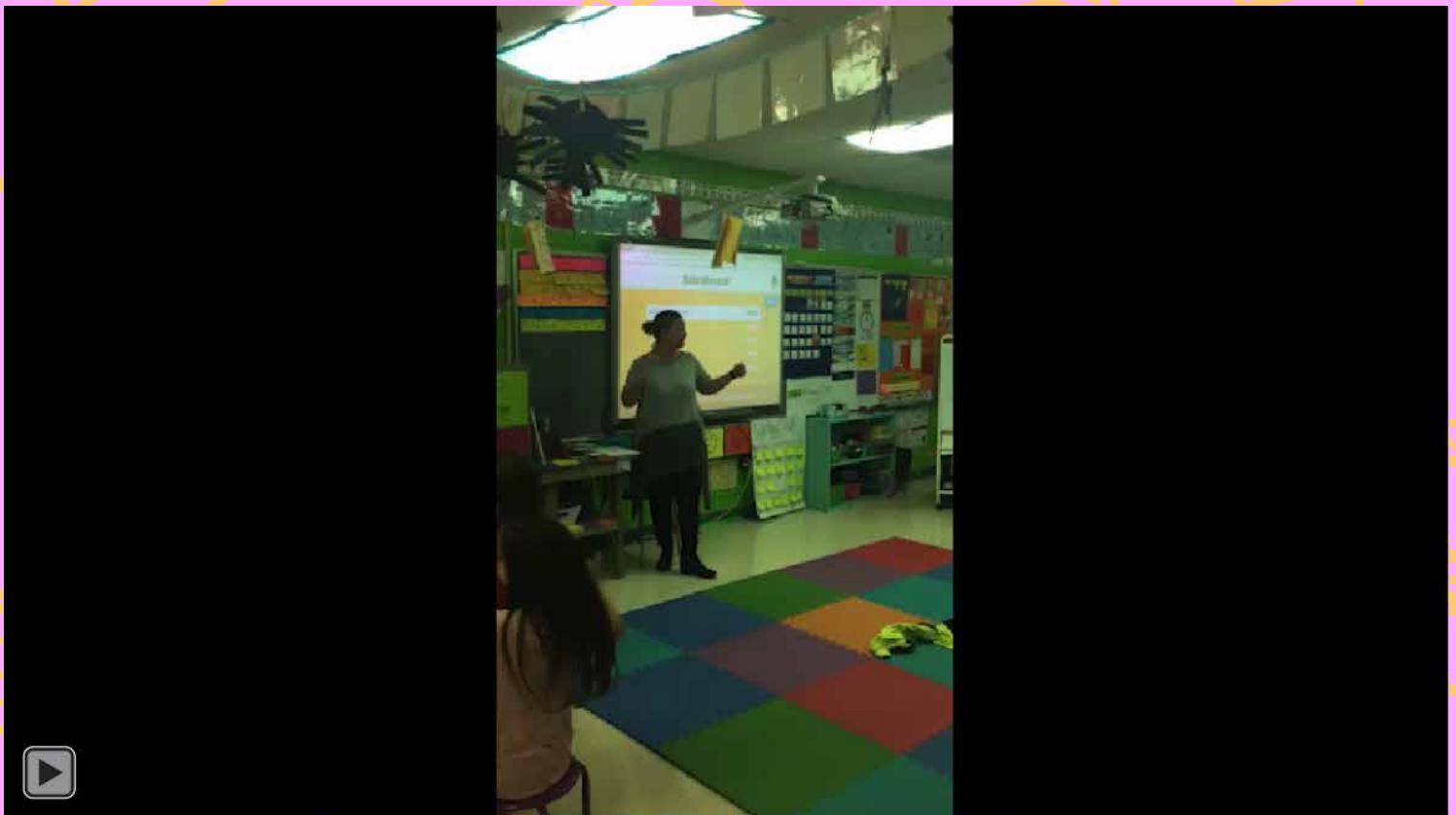


Technology in Math

by Angie Abernathy



As we focus this month on Technology in the Mathematics classroom, we take a deeper look into the 8 Mathematical Practices. As we know, it is not often that we incorporate one individual mathematical practice during instruction. More often several will be intertwined throughout the lesson. In the video, students are working together to solve problems by Making Sense of Problems (SMP # 1), Critiquing the Reasoning of each other (SMP # 3), Attending to Precision as they work on their slates (SMP# 6), and Looking for and Making Use of Structure (SMP # 7). Successful math students are able to find a way to attack a problem, talk about the math with exactness, break apart numbers into familiar relationships, and generalize their thinking.





USING PLICKERS IN THE CLASSROOM

by Kaylie Hight

In 2013, Plickers joined the educational market opening a brand-new avenue to assess students of all ages. Plickers are designed in a multiple choice or true and false style, and can be used across all subject matter and all grade levels.

In kindergarten, the assessments can be in the form of children counting syllables or determining rhyming words. In high school, Plickers can be used for higher level thinking such as central themes in novels. Using Plickers helps keep students involved and engaged during the assessment process. This can lead to students retaining what they are learning at a higher rate. Plickers instantly gives the teacher easy to read data showing if the students have mastered the assessed skills. Embracing this technology could be a game changer in assessment practice.





Resources to Help You Design Amazing Science Lessons

by Lorie Yates

One of the biggest challenges we face as science teachers is finding quality, affordable (preferably FREE) resources that help us design and deliver engaging and rigorous science lessons in a busy elementary day. I've already shared with you the great lessons found in [Mystery Science: Lessons for elementary teachers](#), and of course, all the fantastic [ExploreLearning Gizmos: Math & Science Simulations](#). Below are a few other resources that I hope will make it easier for you to plan great lessons aligned with the *MS College and Career Readiness Standards for Science*

Adventures in Chemistry

Includes games, science activities, Science ABCs, and videos. Explores common chemistry topics like physical and chemical changes in matter and the chemistry behind everyday materials like gum, ice cream, and soda.

Inquiry in Action

Inquiry-based activities that explore elementary chemistry and physical science concepts. Download *Investigating Matter Through Inquiry* - a FREE resource book of science lessons and activities!

National Science Teacher Association Classroom Resources

These classroom resources—over 600 lesson plans, book chapters, videos, simulations, and more—are vetted by NSTA educators and scientists. Narrow your search by grade and/or science strand.

Lawrence Hall of Science KidsSite

In these interactives, use your hands, feet, eyes, ears, brain, imagination and cool tools to experiment, design, test and discover amazing things about the world around you. It's science and it's fun!

Wonderopolis | Where the Wonders of Learning Never Cease ...

Welcome to Wonderopolis®, a place where natural curiosity and imagination lead to exploration and discovery in learners of all ages. Each day, an intriguing question is asked and explored in a variety of ways. Platform extensions include the gamified [Camp Wonderopolis](#) and the [Wonder Ground](#) educator network.

National Geographic Kids: Kids' Games, Animals, Photos, Stories, and More

Includes articles, videos, games and lesson ideas on a wide variety of topics related to animals and their habitats.

ReadWorks

A large library of nonfiction and literary articles curated to support reading comprehension in all content areas. Cognitive science based question sets, vocabulary, paired texts, StepReads, Article-A-Day™, ELL supports, audio, aligned to standards, and more. Click on "Find Content" to narrow down by science and grade level.

ReadWriteThink

Reading and language arts strategies embedded in science lessons. Click on "Classroom Resources" then choose grade level and Theme (science) to search for lessons that blend literacy skills and science.





RANKIN COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

GREAT TO BEST