

Chapter 3

Using Picture Books With Instructional Strategies to Address New Challenges and Teach Literacy Skills in a Digital World

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ABSTRACT

This chapter highlights new challenges that have developed over time in a digital world and use picture books with research-based instructional strategies to help teachers, K-8, address these challenges and develop student literacy skills at the same time. It identifies and describes picture books that teachers, K-8, can use as well as present instructional strategies that might be utilized to address these challenges and teach literacy skills in our ever-evolving digital world. This chapter consists of seven sections: 1) major technologies in the history of mass communication, 2) the digital world and pop culture, 3) using picture books to address new challenges in a digital world, 4) picture books and instructional strategies to support literacy skill development, 5) digital storytelling, 6) the need for caution, 7) suggested additional resources to address new challenges in a digital world.

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INTRODUCTION

The other day I was at one of my favorite restaurants. It happens to be off the beaten path without a lot around it. A family of three was sitting by me: a mother, father, and son. The boy, who appeared to be about ten-years-old, asked the waitress for the Wi-Fi password. She jokingly said, “I am sorry that I am about to potentially ruin your day, but there isn’t one. We do not have Wi-Fi.” Jokingly, she continued, “See these people across the table from you? You could actually talk to them.” The family laughed, and the boy put his phone down. The interaction made me think of how “connected” and dependent our youth actually are... -Lisa Ciecierski

This experience made each of us pause and think of many other experiences which seem to illustrate how many children and young people are “connected” to and dependent on technology. This connectedness has led to new and exciting, albeit unimaginable, technological potentials and possibilities. It has also led to new challenges, albeit unintentionally, over time in our digital world. These challenges have had, and are continuing to have, deleterious effects on users and their friends and family in the digital world.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight new challenges that have developed over time in a digital world and use picture books with research-based instructional strategies to help K-8 teachers address these challenges and develop student literacy skills at the same time. Picture books that K-8 teachers can use are identified and described. Additionally, instructional strategies that might be utilized to address these challenges and teach literacy skills in our ever-evolving digital world are presented.

This chapter consists of seven sections:

- **Section One:** The Digital World and Pop Culture
- **Section Two:** Major Technologies in the History of Mass Communication
- **Section Three:** Using Picture Books to Address New Challenges in a Digital World
- **Section 4:** Picture Books and Instructional Strategies to Support Literacy Skill Development
- **Section 5:** Digital Storytelling
- **Section 6:** The Need for Caution
- **Section 7:** Suggested Additional Resources to Address New Challenges in a Digital World.

Section one, “The Digital World and Pop Culture,” is the foundation for the chapter. Section two discusses “Major Technologies in the History of Mass Communication” and presents picture book biographies to showcase major technologies in mass communication and the people who invented, created, or discovered these technologies. Characteristics that all of these people have in common are described as well as how these technologies have actually led to new challenges. In section three, “Using Picture Books to Address New Challenges in a Digital World,” several picture books that might be utilized to identify several new challenges in a digital world are presented. These challenges include:

1. Understanding the nature and language of the digital world as well as computer programming.
2. The disappearance of picture books.
3. The importance of staying safe in this digital age.
4. The challenges of *unplugging* for young children, adolescents, and young adults.
5. The concerns of using internet inappropriately in terms of how the internet can influence what we buy, how to vote, and how we communicate.

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