

Chapter VII

Digital Drawing to Digital Graphics: Second Grade

Children need opportunities to make choices about some of their computer experiences. In addition, kindergarten or primary-grade teachers will want to use the computer for more directed activities that match their learning objectives (Haugland, 2000, para. 7).

Do you remember your second grade classroom? I remember it being a rather large room, but then I was quite small back then. There were music instruments in one corner of the room that we used to “make music” every week. There were books along one wall, and small tables in the middle of the room where students sat. Students were grouped at the tables such that there were six to eight at any one table. Projects were done together and work was shared giving encouragement or trouble. There were windows along the wall across from the entrance that looked out onto a tree lined street. The school was a Kindergarten through sixth grade in a middle class neighborhood.

Today's second grade classrooms, for the most part, look quite similar. Rooms tend to be spacious. Most students in the early grades, and through about third grade, want to please the teacher and be liked. They "buy into" the rules of schools and education, such as lining up in order, sitting still until called upon, and doing their work as best they can. They get rewarded for good behavior in many ways, like being the attendance reporter, getting to erase the board (and back in the day, this *was* a privilege), or getting to hand out or collect materials or homework. This is a win-win situation for both the teacher and the students since classroom management is something that does not have to trump learning.

As noted, the second grade classroom has a similar look and feel to the first grade classroom. There are more books and science kits. There is still the carpet in one area of the room for large or small group activities. But these children are becoming "big" students; they are experienced in school and know the rules. They are becoming more sophisticated consumers of knowledge, and therefore require more sophisticated ways to express their knowledge. Again, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1999) plays out well in the second grade classroom with lots of interpersonal learning through working with others in cooperative learning groups, spatial learning through creating and thinking with images and pictures, and logical-mathematical learning through various math problems, among other multiple intelligence frames of mind.

This chapter presents six second-grade teachers who participated in the CPI program. Each teacher is quite different in terms of previous experience with computers, and two of these teachers were interviewed together and are presented together as opposed to individually. In reading their combined stories, I think you will understand why they were presented together rather than separately. What is important in these six stories is that they were all inclined to participate in CPI for different reasons, but in the end changed their classroom practices to provide new and varied experiences for their students.

Table 3 gives the reader an overview of the teachers presented in this chapter. The information provided includes how many years of teaching experience they had

Table 3. Kindergarten teacher summary

Name	Years teaching	Grades in school	Prior computer usage	CPI teacher
Sarah	15+ years	K – 8	Novice user	VT only
Sally	30+ years	K – 5	Some experience	VT only
Debra	20+ years	K – 5	Novice user	VT only
Jo	10+ years	K – 8	Some experience	Both
Gina	10+ years	K – 8	Novice user	Both
Bea	16 years	K – 4	Novice user	Both

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