

>> Hi everybody. Thanks for joining us this afternoon.

My name is Torrie Turner and I'm the Curriculum Support Specialists here at Don Johnston.

Our title today is Our Favorite Remote and E-Learning

Strategies for Engaging Students With Autism and Other Complex Needs.

It's a mouthful, but it's a fun topic.

We have lots of cool stuff to show you today.

I've been with the company for approximately four-and-a-half years.

Actually, exactly four-and-a-half years.

I really enjoy what I do.

I love the fact that I'm able to help students and teachers be the best that they can be.

I come from a background in social work and psychology,

so this is a great way for me to be able to help

people without getting chased from my car by angry parents.

[LAUGHTER] On that note, I'm going to let Laura,

my partner in crime here share a little bit with

you about herself, and then we'll get started.

>> Hi, everyone. I'm Laura Cuthbertson.

I've been with Don Johnston for almost a year now.

I am a Curriculum Support Specialist.

I'm behind the scenes creating the curriculum that gets used in the classroom.

Before this, I worked as a special education teacher for five years,

and in the last three of those years,

I was able to use Readtopia in my classroom.

Then the last few months of my teaching career,

I was doing remote learning.

I've had to do it all.

We're excited to share some of the things that learned through our difficulties with you.

>> I'm going to go ahead and stop sharing my camera

while we're going through the presentation,

so you guys can focus on the lovely slides that we have for you.

If you do have any questions for us,

we have the questions channel being monitored.

Feel free to type them in there and if they

need to be answered immediately, we can do that.

Otherwise, we'll save them for the end.

Thanks so much. Here we go.

As educators, we always want the best for our students.

We know that when students are engaged and

emotionally invested in their learning, they achieve better.

Engaging high-interest instructional materials can make all the difference

for your students and provide you with better outcomes and overall achievement.

Last spring, we were hit with the pandemic that essentially brought the school year, as we know it to an end.

Educators were left scrambling,

trying to find ways to continue to provide instruction and

stay connected with students in something that was unprecedented.

We thought it would be a temporary situation.

It's not okay, it's just a couple of weeks, whatever.

Now we realize that that's not the case, obviously.

Here we are almost a year into this since everything happened.

We are now finding that we really need to identify

long-term flexible strategies to engage our students with complex needs,

whether they're here in person or at home,
or wherever they are.

We really need to be even better.

We need to understand that we need to meet
their needs where they are at regardless of where that is physically.

[NOISE]

>> As Torrie was saying, we had a big change
that came overnight at the end of last school year.

I had to take what I was doing within my classroom and change everything.

They gave us spring break off and then told us,

"Hey, you're coming back and we're doing this all online."

I had to take all these bridge learning experiences
and explorations that were happening within

my classroom and find a way to replicate
this same delivery through an e-learning platform,

which had never been done before for most of us.

It's much easier said than done,

as we've all learned.

It's especially difficult for parents,

I feel like who are learning technology on the spot.

We have so many learners with a variety of complex needs

and we had minimal support from administration.

They just told you,

"Here's what you need to do,

go and do it" with no support or instructions or anything.

We were all struggling to determine how to get

this done and best support our students with complex needs.

It was left up to us teachers.

It was really hard to take what we were learning in the classroom and move it over, especially our favorite components of Readtopia, like the word lessons that we have.

That was one of my favorite things to do in the classroom and

I was struggling to figure out how to do that via

the internet while also continuing our growth

and exploration and that passion for inquiry that my students had developed.

We were balancing the rigor of instruction,

while meeting all of the needs of my students,

and facilitating good language partners and

adding eating language and so many other things.

Balanced learning with teaching,

the new technology elements of it.

That was not only for us and our students,

but for the parents as well.

I felt an enormous amount of pressure,

stress, and anxiety with this.

But having Readtopia helped ease some of

that stress and made it so that it was a smoother transition.

Let's discuss the elements of Readtopia and how they benefit

our students and how we can still engage our students through remote learning.

>> In most classrooms that serve students with autism and other complex needs, there's a wide range of ability levels and social-emotional needs.

Kids are all over the map in the classroom.

Some of our students are already readers,

others are working on foundational skills,

and others still are working on basic communication and interaction skills.

This oftentimes leaves teachers scrambling.

In pretty unique situations where you're trying to either adapt the materials, you do have to meet the needs of all your students or you're

juggling multiple programs in a classroom to meet the different needs, in either case, it's super challenging.

This is where Readtopia comes in for teachers.

If we go to the next slide,

Readtopia has a comprehensive reading and ELA curriculum for upper elementary, like 3rd grade, middle,

high school, and beyond students.

So your 3rd grade through senior and high school and the transition.

We even have Readtopia being used in some adult programs across the country right now.

It includes science and social studies and foundational math, and all of the materials are at multiple levels.

This allows you to provide the same content to your kiddos, but meet them at their levels.

Readtopia is aligned through the MSAA core content connectors, as well as the DLM essential elements,

and the instructional design of Readtopia was developed by Dr. Karen Erickson.

I'm sure that some of you are familiar with her book that came out last year;

Comprehensive Literacy for All with Dr. David Koppenhaver.

Everything that's talked about in that book,

has been incorporated into Readtopia.

It's really an exciting proposition at this point.

Go onto the next one.

Readtopia is continuously cycled through five different components of effective instruction.

These include videos, literature, informational texts that are up to four different levels, graphic novels that are up to seven levels, and three different levels of phonics, and word study lessons.

We also have foundational math within the unit at multiple levels as well as functional life skills in our middle and high school unit. So it's really a comprehensive full package.

The cool thing about it is that everything is tied together under a common theme. We're working on reading in different ways, but using the same type of content.

We're going to talk a little bit more about each of those components.

The first one is videos.

These provide background knowledge to your students, they introduce new vocabulary, they help students to build visual mental models.

This is really your introduction.

This is where we bring the world into your classroom.

It's like a virtual field trip for your kiddos.

Some of the videos that we have, and I'll show you.

We have a short compilation video that we'll show you next.

But some of our videos include Don Johnston himself traveling into a live volcano and active volcano.

Then we also have Don traveling to the bottom of the ocean, not quite the bottom, but traveling in the ocean in a tiny little yellow submarine.

We really work to bring experiences

to students through video that they would normally never have.

Don just got back before the pandemic from Africa filming for Jane Goodall.

It's very exciting, the rich content that we have in the videos.

We'll show you that nice video with the clip.

[MUSIC]

Plants soak up water from the ground through their roots.

[MUSIC]

>> Please stop with the video.

We don't have that music in the background.

That's just the short compilation that we have for you today. [LAUGHTER]

>> A great tool that supports using Readtopia in

the remote learning setting is

Loom because we have these amazing videos that are such an incredible part of Readtopia.

Loom allows you to screen record the Readtopia videos and the audio book presentations.

It lets your videos be in a video of yourself, if you want,

be in the corner of your presentation so that

your students can still see you as they watched the video.

It mimics you being in the classroom again.

There's plenty of others screen recording software out there.

There's also like Screencast to buy and everything.

The main important thing is just using

a screen recording program

so that you can share these videos with your students in the classroom.

I also like Loom because you can pause partway

through the video and with the chapter videos,

that's important so that you can remind the students of their purpose in listening to and watching this video.

These videos can also be put into Google Classroom.

You can put the link right in there,

or you can even embed them in Google Slide presentations

if you want to share those with your students through your remote learning site.

It can even just be shared in your virtual meetings like we just showed you.

Here's a short example of how I use Loom to share a Readtopia video with my students.

>> We just solved a problem in [inaudible 00:13:32] coffee.

Now we are going to listen to Anne of Green Gables Chapter 1.

In this chapter, Marilla decides to solve the problem with Matthew.

[inaudible 00:13:43] we listen to find

Matthew's problem then we'll certify Marilla's solution to Matthew's problem.

>> Anne of Green Gables by LM Montgomery.

Chapter 1, Matthew is surprised.

In Canada, there's this island called Prince Edward Island.

>> As you can see,

I started off the video with my video in the corner so that the students could see me, and I wasn't just some random voice telling them what to do.

I was also able to introduce the video just like I would've in the classroom.

Then partway through, I paused the video and

pop in again and remind them of that purpose,

so that I'm keeping them focused on what they should be listening for,

just like I would if we were in the classroom.

>> We just solved a problem in [inaudible 00:14:47] coffee.

>> Let's not watch that again.[LAUGHTER]

>> Teachers have the option to deliver the text in two different ways.

The next component of instruction is our authentic text.

Each of the semantic units in Readtopia is anchored by a pact,
and then we tie all the rest of the content into what's in that book.

In our middle and high school unit,
we utilize an anchor read apply strategy.

These are whole group comprehension lessons.

We start by anchoring an activity
in common knowledge and background knowledge that students have,
then we read the chapter,
and then we apply what we already know to what we're learning.

In our upper elementary units,
they're a little bit different.

We use those certain guided reading strategy
and interactive read aloud strategy for the books.

But in either case, you have two different options on how to share the stories.

The next slide, I'll show you an example of the PDFs that we
include so teachers can actually read aloud themselves.

Students can have, if they're virtual,
they can have a PDF of this and follow along with the teacher.

If you're in classrooms,
we give you a couple of different formats to print out the books.

You can either print it out in a booklet format
or in a single page format, whichever's easier.

Students can follow along that way regardless of what their reading ability level is.

This is a whole group activity.

The other option is to share that professional narration

recording that Laura just showed you an example of.

The cool thing about that is that,

not only are there visuals in there,

but the narrator, as you get into the story,

uses different voices and different accents to bring characters to life.

Students have a tendency to respond really well to that.

Not only are they modeling oral fluency for the students,

but they're keeping the students engaged with the different accents and voices.

The next component of Readtopia is our graphic novel.

The content from our book that anchors the semantic unit is broken

down up to six lower levels in a graphic novel format for independent reading practice.

I'll show you what the levels look like.

That first one is our level 1, 2,

3, it is in upper middle high school unit.

If you notice our level 1 emerging,

one is a very simple text.

On the page, it's noun, verb, noun, essentially.

As we move up, the text becomes more complex.

There's more content on the page and then if we go to the next page,

I'll show you the next three levels.

This particular unit has seven total levels.

The book is taught to be a level seven.

Again, we are increasing the amount of text,

we're decreasing the visuals on the page.

The great thing about this,

again, metric units for independent reading.

This is working on building voice [inaudible 00:18:28] for

most emergent student that's learning that we read from top to bottom, left to the right.

The cool thing about this is that your students are making progress.

You can give them the next level graphic novel right there, right away in the middle of the unit.

You don't have to wait to the next unit to do that.

You can continue to challenge them and help them build those skills.

On the flip side of that,

if your student is struggling,

you can always move them backwards so that they can practice and reinforce skills and then work towards moving up again.

You have a lot of flexibility in that.

Again, all of your students have the same story just written at their level to build those skills.

>> My favorite way of introducing the students to the authentic texts and getting them

to participate in the Inker portion

of the chapter comprehension lessons was using Pear Deck.

This is an online extension program that allows you to turn your Google slide presentation into a student interactive activity.

I don't know about you,

but my students were the absolute best at the silence,

long pauses, no answer,

[NOISE] hearing crickets in the background.

In the classroom, it was different.

I could walk next to them and encouraged them and everything, but online, it was just back to square one.

I couldn't get them to answer questions to save my life,
and so Pear Deck really helped me with that.

You create your presentation and if you prefer to use PowerPoint like I do,
you can create them in PowerPoint and then transfer them into Google Slides,
and it still works.

The great thing about Pear Deck is you can have students
answer questions throughout your presentation.

You have multiple-choice questions,
you can have them draw,

you can have them vote by dragging the symbol of
your choice to where you want them to on the screen.

You can even have them type out answers.

You can set the pace of your presentation if you are doing it live with your students,
or you can have the students set the pace and go through it on their own if you
assign

it as an assignment in Google Classroom or whatever you're learning platform is.

You can do all these different things with it,
and you can also lock the screen.

So on those drawings slides,

if you have a student that's just a little too excited or a little too
eager or likes to show off for the rest of the class,

I had a couple of those.

You can lock the screen so that they
can't do anything with that page until you want them to.

The great thing too,

it also allows you to see who's answering what at what times,
and who hasn't answered yet,

and all these great things so that I could then encourage those students who were hesitant to answer, I could encourage them to answer.

I was the only one that can see what they answered until I revealed the other pages. If a student got an answer wrong on a drawing page or something like that, I could just not scroll through all the images and not show the rest of the class.

With the voting ones,

it didn't show who said what to the students,

so no one had to get embarrassed about getting the answer wrong.

But I could still address their misconceptions and teach on those.

Then it was just so great to see the engagement of my students, and they were engaged because it was something new and exciting.

Like I said, they didn't have to worry about getting saying something wrong in front of their peers.

Because sometimes, our peers can be mean

and not necessarily maliciously laugh at your wrong answer,

but that can completely shut down one of our students.

It was really nice to be able to have that anonymity.

The great part too was I had two other colleagues.

We were in an autism program.

There were three classrooms when we were at school and we collaborated together and

joined our classrooms and co-taught for the end of last school year.

For a whole quarter,

we co-taught and we use this for all of our students.

We had students from the emergent all the way up to the conventional learners that were

equal participants in this presentation because it was that easy to use.

They learned it quickly and it was that engaging and exciting for them.

That brings us to our next component,

Readtopia and that's our informational texts site.

These are used for close reading practice.

This is where we try in our science and social studies and social-emotional profit.

I have examples up there of a middle high school lesson.

It was upper elementary,

left on the upper elementary. One is the orange one.

In middle high school,

we offer four different levels.

One emergent, one transitional, and two conventional.

In the upper elementary units,

we offer three different levels of

informational texts and emergent transitional conventional.

The cool thing about this is,

is not only do we address all of the text types that are looked at in the standards,

but each of these has an on-the-back activity [NOISE] that is level for your students.

The reason we call them on-the-back activities,

it was a very deliberate decision.

Not only do we want students to

know where to find information and how to find information,

but also to retain that information long enough to complete a task with it.

[NOISE] When you're in a classroom and you have printed materials in front of you,

the student would have to flip the page over.

They would locate the information on the front side of

the informational texts and then answer question on the backside of the form.

When we're working virtually,

that may not be the case.

But the way that these are laid out,
you can have them where they would either scroll up and down,
back and forth or right to left,
however, their PDF reader is set-up.

But again, you would still have
that brief moment where students would have to find the information,
retain it until they get to page the answer to the question.

That was, again, a very deliberate decision
on our part to help with building that confidence around reading.

Once again, with the informational texts assignments,
the important part is trying to keep the students engaged with that.

We don't want to just toss them a PDF of a worksheet and have them go at it on
their own.

We really wanted to be able to leverage
the relationship that we've developed with our students and hold their engagement.

[NOISE] The ways that we can do that is to have elements of surprise.

In your presentations, you can have objects that move or on
cover or hidden images that all of a sudden popup.

You can have game-type activities like Spinner,
or you can have them complete a puzzle or
role of virtual dice so that they can take turns.

Green screens are big now.

There's so many online resources and
social media groups that you can join to help you set those up.

Then another concern is communication and taking
that natural dialogue that we had in the classroom and those communication
exchanges,

and now make those just as effective in the remote setting.

We know it's not the same,

but we do our best to make it feel the same.

We still want to work on those aided language opportunities and that modeling, and most importantly that wait time.

Like I said a couple of slides ago,

my students were so good at weeding me out

because I got uncomfortable and impatient with the silence and so I would just jump in.

But we really do now more than ever need to give them

that wait time between our questions or comments and letting them speak.

Especially students at home that maybe have an aided language device might be searching with less help at home so that wait time is very important.

We also want to keep those aha moments from

the classroom and let the students have those here now.

Making those connections throughout multiple content areas,

taking what we've read in the text and applying it to our math lessons,

or taking a word that we were introduced to into the text and working on it on

a word study lesson or even those informational texts that we were just looking at, seeing how they tie in with the book that we're reading.

It's a lot of what we need to do is just use what we already

have and tweak it just enough that our students can access it and remain engaged.

[NOISE] My district that I

came from used Google Classroom and I know it's a fairly popular one.

What I touch on a lot in here is related to Google Classroom.

I'm sorry if you have another learning platform [NOISE]

but I'm sure it can translate over to those.

Google Classroom really helped me deliver these assignments to my students and give the directions and supports to the students and to the parents at home. But this still left our hour-long meetings empty and full of those long awkward silences.

My students, I could tell were distracted and unfocused, and some were only there because their parent log them in and was sitting right there next to them and others, the parents sitting next to their student was more engaged in our meeting than the actual was.

>> I liked being able to take the PDFs of the informational text and put them in Google Classroom and use them to create assignments.

My students would use Snap&Read and Co:Writer to annotate the PDFs. You can use any annotation software out there.

But I will say we have some really exciting stuff going on with Snap&Read. You can now from the website,

if you have Snap&Read, open it directly into there and assign it to your Google Classroom from the PDF.

The students can annotate the PDF and directly save it to their Google Classroom assignment and turn that in.

It's so much simpler and less complicated than anything I've used in the past and it's really amazing.

It's been a game changer these last couple of weeks.

Having these PDFs and being able to annotate them and then turn them into Google Classroom was a great way of bringing that element from your classroom into the e-learning settings.

As you can see, they're able to highlight on there.

They can type on there.

They can use their mouse to write on there.

They can change the font size and the color.

I had students who did so many fun things and went a little crazy with the annotation,

but they enjoyed it.

We weren't confined to the classroom hours,

so why not let them play around on

the PDF and turn it in and have that excitement moment for them.

>> This brings us to our last component

of effective instruction in Readtopia and that's phonic.

It's an integral part of Readtopia.

We purposely took a systematic and sequential approach to building skills for students.

To that end, we offer three different phonics programs within Readtopia.

We have learning letters,

which is based on enhancing alphabet knowledge by [inaudible 00:32:30].

That's your single letters and letter

sounds for your emerging students who are just starting out,

just starting to build skills.

Then we include making words by Patricia Cunningham.

These are, again, simple phonic lessons we focused on single syllable words.

Both learning letters and making words are a collection of

generic phonics lessons that are designed to be done in sequential order.

Then we have our word study lesson.

This you'll find in our middle high school unit,

these are tied to our actual book that anchor the semantic unit.

We use vocabulary from the book for the sheets.

These are more complex lessons.

We have few more conventional students.

We have five different word study lesson per unit with seriously cycle through five different types of lessons.

It is 15 lessons altogether in the middle high-school units, but we cycle through five different types.

Those include word builder,

word in a word,

slice and dice, there's couple of others.

But they require more effort on your part to complete the task.

They are more difficult than our learning letters and making word.

>> I will say those words study and making

word and word builder lessons are so my absolute favorite to do with my students.

I had both transitional and conventional students in my classroom.

I would do a making words lesson and then take that right into a word study lesson, so that I could,

those students that were more conventional got

the practice of building words and sounding out letters and all that.

Then my transitionals got pushed a little bit,

but with lots of support so that they could start into that more complex part of study.

I will tell you, I was amazed multiple times by the word and a word.

They give you a big word and we have to flop.

Use those letters to make smaller words.

I was amazed time and again by the words that my students came up with out of them.

Sometimes they were not so appropriate,

like pee or poop,

but [LAUGHTER] I guess that's an engaging thing for these students.

We just rolled with it.

Taking that over into the e-learning setting,

Google has this wonderful thing called Jamboard.

You can create a whiteboard that all of your students can see.

You can have the students create their own and then can create these wonderful sticky note letters and pointing to my screen, like you guys can see that.

But you can make these sticking out letters that they can move around just like they would if they were in the classroom.

As you can see, we've got the vowels in a different color and then the consonants in a different color.

The students still have that way of differentiating.

Then they're able to manipulate those just like we would if we were in the classroom and I can see what they're doing just like we were in the classroom.

This allows them to create those words for those words study lessons and even those learning letters lessons as well.

Again, Snap&Read is a great tool that allowed us to do those words study PDFs that we assign the students.

They're able to look at what we're doing and type or they can circle the answer or any of those things and I can see what they're working on.

>> Another piece of Readtopia outside of the reading and ELA components is our map.

We do provide instruction and foundational math in Readtopia.

When we initially released Readtopia June of 2017,

it was not a piece,

we added it about a year later and I think we're just about done with adding it to all the units that we had available when

we decided to add map so we've been working in both directions.

But we cover eight different math domain in Readtopia.

They're a little bit different between the upper elementary and middle high school.

The ones that you see on your screen,

these are the middle high school domains that we cover.

For upper elementary, we cover operations and algebraic thinking, addition, subtraction,

geometry, numbers and operations in base 10,

numbers and operations, fractions,

and then time and money as well.

We covered different topics.

We have [inaudible 00:38:06] the next lesson,

the next slide, and all drive.

We have several different types of math lessons in Readtopia,

we have video and vocabulary lessons.

These are whole group activities.

We're using content from the book to introduce

different math domains and vocabulary surrounding math.

Then we have hands-on application lessons at up to four different levels.

These are small group activities for your students would break

into groups based on their level.

Then we have independent practice lessons and up to six different levels.

Then we also offer an end of unit assessment that ties back to all of

the different domains that were addressed during the unit.

Now, here's another really cool piece about

Readtopia is that you have flexibility not only within math,

to shift where your students are,

for example, time and money.

They might be at a level 5 because it's something that we practice and work on on a regular basis.

We're exposed to more often.

But they might be on a level 1 or 2 in statistics and probability because it's something they don't have a whole lot of experience with.

You've had that ability within the unit to give them the materials that they need at their level.

Not only that, but you're not tied into one level across the board.

We have students that excel in math but struggle with reading, and then vice versa.

You can have the flexibility to have your students as either a higher reading level and lower math level or vice versa.

It's really a nice feature to be able to add that extra bit of differentiation and personalization for your students.

You're really able to get them the same content as their peers.

You're able to be as flexible as they need you to be in delivering instruction.

Laura can talk a little bit more about math and her students.

>> Yes.

Math can utilize all the same tools that we've discussed earlier.

Pear Deck and Loom can really help with presenting the information.

Pear Deck has math symbols,

as I was saying, you could move symbols around to vote and everything.

They have those, the addition,

multiplication, subtraction, all those symbols.

You could write a math sentence on

your PowerPoint presentation and have your students put the symbol that makes sense.

Or you could have them do so many different things.

Then with the unit assessments and the independent practice activities, again, we can use Snap & Read to imitate those PDFs and show our work and everything.

You can utilize Jamboard,

the online whiteboard where your students can work together or they can see you working through things.

Part of the hands-on math lessons is another anchor activity.

So the Jamboard would be a great thing for you to

utilize to show the students your anchor work and have them work together.

Breakout rooms are another great strategy to use when working on the hands-on activities.

Those activities start with,

like I said, an anchor activity,

and then you break into up to four groups based on your student's abilities.

You teach the same concepts,

just add a scaled and structured scaffolded level.

Students that are working on money,

if you're in group M1,

you would be more focused on identifying coins,

their names, their values,

looking at the things that differentiate the coins from each other so that students can really learn what each one is.

Then you go all the way up to M56,

students who would be more looking at,

I want to purchase this pencil.

It's 35 cents.

What coins would you use to pay for that?

The great thing about breakout rooms is it allows you to still break into those groups with your students, especially if you have classroom assistance that help you out on your virtual learning lessons and so you can have all four rooms open.

Some math topics, I only had two or three groups, which made it a lot easier for me to utilize my assistants.

You can create as many rooms as you need and have those links on a slide in your Google Classroom assignment or as you're presenting to your students. I have a couple of examples up there.

You can make it as simple as a list with the link embedded.

Or you can have it as fun as there's different doors showing you what room you should be in and you can add your bitmoji, your student's bitmoji to it and just really get fun and creative with those things because that again, plays into the engagement portion.

So to end, we just want to talk about some other things that we've either used ourselves or we've heard from parents and other educators that they recommend a lot.

I also wanted to give you guys a few laughs because I know teaching is stressful and teaching online is even more so.

So I knew you guys could all use something to laugh at.

Keeping track of class times and assignments can be difficult, especially for parents who have more than one student in the house.

Or as teachers, if you have students in your house that you're trying to balance your teaching with their learning.

We encourage parents to work with their kids to create a schedule at home.

The students can have the schedule and routine that they had at school, at home, which we know is really beneficial for them.

They really thrive on that structure and that routine.

It only makes sense to help them have that at home where things are maybe not as structured.

You could either have the parents work on that, or you could also do it individually with your students, or you could do it in small group and have it be a little bit more basic.

I will say it makes a great hands-on time lesson for your students to work on their schedule.

Then just have them put it wherever they like.

You can have them write it down on a piece of paper.

You can help them make an electronic version.

You can tell them to go write it with a whiteboard marker on their mirrors so that they can see and cross it off every day.

There's so many different things that you can do with that and that visual really helps them.

Another thing that I really focused on was to still have fun with my students.

I prided myself on being a fun teacher.

We had serious moments and everything, but we had fun in my classroom.

We did in escape room with math around Halloween time and all this other stuff and I wanted my students to still be able to have that fun time while they're with me.

So that school wasn't just sitting in front of a computer being bored.

You could do some great things.

I used Pear Deck and created a five-by-five grid,

and then had my students put the numbers 1-25 in the squares and we played Bingo.

They had a lot of fun with that,

and with drawing on the Pear Deck,

I could see who needed some more supports with creating their grids and who didn't.

You could do words and all this other stuff.

We did Bingo.

You could also do Mad Libs and Pictionary.

There's so many great sites like GoNoodle where you can just have fun and dance or do

yoga and get your students up and moving and use that as another engagement component.

It also helps you work on communication skills.

It means like Pictionary.

Finally, the students don't have to be combined to one area all day.

They're not at school,

they don't have to stay in the same room all day and even at school,

they would get the chance to move around throughout the day.

They'd have other classes to go to

maybe or at the very least they'd get to go out for lunch and everything.

I encourage you to encourage your students to go outside for

part of the day or have them pick a different place in wherever

they live to work for

each different meaning time and give

them that flexibility that you would give them in the classroom.

I know a lot of teachers have flexible sitting,

so continue that flexibility into the online platform.

[NOISE]

>> We have a lot of support for teachers that are using Readtopia or not.

We have a lot of free webinars that are available to watch on-demand on our website that cover all different types of topic, not just relating to curriculum,

but also to accommodations for students, dysgraphia, dyslexia.

We have tons of information on our website about the COVID funding that was released earlier this year.

There's lots of great resources that are available on the website for free.

That's learningtools.donjohnston.com.

Then the other piece that we have for people that are using Readtopia,

we have our Don Johnston Learning Academy,

which is a great tool for teachers to get started using Readtopia.

Go into the learning academy,

select your teacher and select Readtopia,

and then whether you want upper elementary,

or middle high school.

It will take you step-by-step through information behind the types of lessons.

There's some videos in there, some supporting documents.

It's a great self-directed tutorial that goes

through how to support you as you're getting started.

You have access to that.

You choose to take advantage of the free demo site that we have for Readtopia.

The demo site is amazing.

It provides you access to

the entire first three chapters of two different units: our upper elementary units, which is Dr. Doolittle,

and then our middle and high school unit, Anne of Green Gables.

What's this gives you is access to see and compare the different levels of the material for those entire first three chapters of both of those units.

You get a sampling of the videos, the math lessons, one of the comprehension assessments.

It's really a whole lot of material for you to take a look at and use with your shows if that's something that you want to try.

Each unit is probably about 3-4 weeks worth of instructional materials depending on how much time that you're spending per day using it.

Could be a little bit less, could be a little bit more, just depends.

When teachers are using Readtopia as a regular curriculum in a regular day, prior to the pandemic when everybody was in classroom,

we were recommending 90 minutes of literacy instruction per day,

and if you're doing that five days a week,

then you probably looking at 4-6 weeks to get it through a full thematic unit.

Let's face it, that's not really realistic.

Even when we were in the classroom,

it was probably unlikely that we're doing 90 minutes a day every day.

You could take anywhere from 9-12 weeks to get through thematic unit.

Maybe you're not doing lessons every day or not finding that 90 minutes every day.

What we were finding before

all this happened was that people are getting through 3-4 units per year on average.

I've now lost my train of thought of where I was going with that.

We are constantly adding additional thematic units.

We've added three or four in the last year.

There are more that are slated to be released in

the coming year. I knew what I was going to tell you.

Each of the lessons in Readtopia is designed to take approximately 20-30 minutes.

It allows you a lot of flexibility.

So you don't have to do that 90 minute altogether,

you can break it up throughout your day.

Take a look at those samples that are available.

They are amazing.

It's an unlimited trial,

so it's not like if you sign up today,

you can only look at it for a week,

you can look at it for as long as you need.

With that, I think that about covers it.

Thank you so much for taking the time to join us today to learn more

about how to engage students while distance learning.

We know that it's been a challenge and kudos to all of you

for sticking to it and making the best of a pretty stinky situation.

I have to tell you, I have family members that are teachers,

have friends that are teachers,

and the struggles that they faced

and have overcome over the last year is amazing to watch.

I know that that's true for all of you,

so just keep going.

We may not always show appreciation for [inaudible 00:53:38] kiddos,

and parents really do appreciate everything that you're doing.

Were there any questions [inaudible 00:53:45]?

>> Yeah. Sorry, it took me a second to turn my microphone on.

[LAUGHTER] Technology.

>> [inaudible 00:53:58] [LAUGHTER].

>> I do have some questions for you.

In the first part, you have been sharing lots of links throughout the course of the webinar that can help you reach either Torrie or Laura plus all the links that involves how to get access to the demo site or where to find the learning academy for Readtopia to help you get started. There's lots of links there.

One of the questions that came in is regarding student privacy compliance.

I know states usually have their own individual, such as the AB 1584 student privacy policy in California, excuse me.

Torrie, can you speak specifically to how Readtopia in general meets student privacy policy?

>> Absolutely. It's real simple,

we don't collect any student data whatsoever at all.

Student privacy laws don't really apply to Readtopia.

Readtopia is a teacher facing tool.

There's the curriculum, the teacher logs in with their email and associated password, and then all of the student materials are downloadable or printable, accessible PDFs.

You can either download the materials and push them out electronically to your students.

You can put them in Google Classroom like Laura showed,

or you can email them to a student or put them in

a Google file and Drive for them to access,

or you can print them out and hand them to a student.

But we don't collect any type of student information.

There's no student login or anything along those lines for Readtopia.

You can see more on our privacy

[NOISE] if you go to myreadtopia.com and then scroll all the way down to the bottom.

You'll see what our privacy policy and license agreement information is.

You don't have to worry about anything with

student security because we don't collect any student information with Readtopia.

>> Great. I'm going to share that link,

the myreadtopia.com link, so people can check their privacy policy.

Great. This one also, good question.

Are their benchmark assessments or does the teacher determine the levels?

>> Another great question.

There's a couple of different things.

First of all, we include student placement tool for Readtopia,

for the reading in ELA part of the curriculum.

What you would do is you would answer a series of several questions with your student in

mind and then that would give you a suggestion of where to start your student E1,

E2, T3, T4, C5, C6, C7.

Based on how you answer the questions about

the students around what their verbal skills are,

what their reading skills are,

that would give you a starting point.

Now, it's a suggestion.

You know your students better than we do.

If you find that your student is struggling,

where the suggestion is you would obviously move them down a level.

If they're breezing through the work,

you'd want to move him up and push them a little bit.

As far as benchmark assessments,

we do have comprehension and vocab assessments.

We have close reading assessments that tie back to all of the close reading activities.

At the end of unit, assesses,

tie back to all the post reading activities in a unit.

All of these are offered at multiple levels,

and depending on which type of assessment it is,

it determines how many levels there are.

There's the individual end of unit assessment for math.

On top of that, we also have oral fluency check, writing rubric.

We also have opportunities to track data within units as well as across units.

There's lots of opportunities for assessment in Readtopia,

both formative and summative.

>> Looks like that's all the questions that are coming in for now,

although there's some very nice compliments that I'd love to share.

Brandy says, "Thank you for the wealth of information."

Carrie Lee says, "Thank you for the great tips."

Alexis says, this just so sweet,

"The graphics alone show me how much you care for this population.

The selection of literacy makes me so happy for our learners.

I'm a believer in serving communication needs and

your curriculum definitely is based around that. Thank you."

>> That's awesome. Thank you so much.

Thank you for taking the time to share that.

>> Well, it looks like that's all the questions for now,

so I'll turn my microphone back off and let you guys wrap up.

>> Thank you all for joining us today.