iPad Thoughts from Maile Kane, CALT

I recently purchased an iPad because two of my students got them over the summer. I had to learn more about this device and how I could use it in therapy. I attended a class in Albuquerque and went to a session at the IDA Conference. I have also talked to other people who have iPads and I am in a constant stage of "learning". Please feel free to give me feedback and tell me about your favorite apps.

After "playing with device", I have come to some **conclusions**:

- This device will not take the place of a teacher nor will it take away the importance of using paper and pencil.
- I have discovered some wonderful apps but I don't feel confident enough to just let my students do the apps independently. I feel that I need to present it and then observe them as they use the app. I am finding that adjustments need to be made just as in a good therapeutic situation, we observe, adapt and think through the appropriateness of the activity.

Shopping for apps – things to be aware of:

- Look at the ratings: Be careful if only 2 people rated it. Make sure that this rating is current.
- Look for updated information: How current is this app? What did they change in the update?
- How well does this app tie in with what you are teaching?
- Does the app give feedback to students? Can you change the app for different students? Is it motivating and user friendly? Or is it distracting?
- Look at the research base of the app.
- Does the app have more than one activity?

Word of **Caution**: You will need to evaluate each app and realize that not all apps will be a perfect fit. Look at the overall design, does it just have a couple of issues (such as giving the x the /z/ sound?). You can write to the company and voice your complaint and they will change it if enough people bring it to their attention.

Where to begin to look for educational apps:

www.appitic.com This is a site that was created by educators that were looking for appropriate apps. They have looked over and selected apps that they thought were good. You can browse collections such as Multiple Intelligence and Bloom's Taxonomy.

*Note I have not used these other sites but they look interesting. I got this list from MJ Bilgrav of Durango Mountain Camp.

http://www.apple.com/educaion/apps/: This site summarizes some of the popular apps for education.

www.iear.org: A community of over 500 educators, administrators and app developers evaluate apps for overall educational value and how they may or may not make a difference in the classroom.

: This site is maintained by an elementary school teacher who has tried and reviewed many apps.

Apps on my iPad:

Pages ($9.99) <logo is ink jar with pen> Apple's word processor for the iPad is able to read and write in MS Word formats. It is also compatible with Apple's iCloud service and text-to-speech capability. I have a third grade student that uses this app and likes it.

Notability ($9.99) <logo is a pencil with a microphone> A very good note taking app. It offers excellent inking, multimedia insertion, audio recording and syncing among other features. I have used this for taking notes at the conference. It is powerful and easy to use. I have not tried it with a student yet.

SoundLiteracy ($24.99) <logo is schwa – upside down e> You can use this for phonemic awareness, phonological processing and morphologic awareness. One can start with just colored tiles (similar to our felt squares), move on the letters of the alphabet, consonant terms, vowel teams, ending/rimes, prefixes, suffixes and bases. This can be used with a beginning and advanced student. I pulled it up to reinforce final consonant blends the third day after blends were introduced.

Rootology (???) <logo is black background with red PI and word roots > The student learns roots, prefixes, suffixes and Greek and Latin Roots in 9 different ways. Two activities: study flash cards and completing Q & A timed drills. It tracks your progress and grades you as you gain Experience Points and advance from level 1 to the last. I played around with this app and liked it for me but feel that I will have to be careful in using it with a student. I envision my 14 year old student using this app with me in the spring before going to high school.

SpellingCity (??) <logo is a yellow background with city skyline on bottom> This is my current favorite. You can use their many word lists or create your own and create sentences that are meaningful to your student. The app has lists of ten or more words that are used in various game situations such as Hang Mouse, Unscramble, Alphabetize, Missing Letter, Audio Word Match. I was surprised that they had some words from The 1000 Most Common Words. I have created my own list for my students and have liked the results.

WordWizard (???) <logo is Colorful background with "I Speak Word"> . This was created by French Company and they have done a good job with pronunciations. There is a moveable alphabet, that you use it to pull sounds up – WARNING the sounds are not always accurate- once all the sounds are pulled up the word is pronounced correctly. There is an extensive word list to choose from. This app has possibilities but be very careful in using it. Perhaps we can all write to the app designers and they will correct the sounds.

SoundSorting (???) <logo is yellow background with purple and the words Sound Sorting). This only goes over beginning sounds. Student picks three beginning sounds, he drags the items into the proper space, if correct, it stays; if wrong it is put back and he can try it again. Student will hear the

name of the picture when it is tapped. Nice little app for a very beginning student; I have not tried this with anyone because I have no students at this level.

LetterFind (free) <logo is brown bug with eyes on it > Beware that the negative response has a sound that is more fun than the positive one. Student selects the target letter and is rewarded with a sound and the letter lights up. I used this for a quick review (less than a minute) of the letters <u>b</u> and <u>d.</u>   The student loved it and he did not have errors with reading his cards that contained these sounds – but the next day, the error with b/d reared its ugly head.

Toontastic (free) <logo is monkey with a board > This app was recommended to me as a way to get students to write their own cartoon. I am not a big fan of this site but perhaps you might have a student that this would be an appropriate way to get him to write.

Pocket...cslite (lite version is free) <logo is blue background with abc> This is the first app that I found. You are given 6 letters in this lite version. You may choose how you want your student to write it – manuscript or cursive. The student is taught to write the letter while saying the sound, once three sounds are learned they use these letters to write words. Although the formation of the cursive letters is not perfect, it is good. You might use this with a beginning SIS student.

SparkleFish (free) <logo is fish with a light dangling from his head> I am not a big fan of this app but a student I have loves it because he can make up his own silly story and then it reads it back to him.

LetterSchool (lite version is free) < logo is red circle with a star> Some of sounds are not great such as the x that has a /z/ sound. Use with caution and write to the app developers with your complaints. For fun, I have used with this with one young student. We did <u>b</u> because he was having trouble with this sound. He really thought that it was fun to trace the printed letter and hopefully it helped with his reversal of b/d.

QuickVoice (free) < logo is blue background with microphone> You can speak your emails and record anything. I am using it to record my student reading and then we both listen to what he has read and note accuracy and prosody.

Inspiration (lite version is free) <logo is green background with orange objects > This organizational tool has many different templates to use. I have not used this with a student but I have heard of many teachers using this very effectively with their students.

ExplainEverything (??) <logo looks like a piece of film with an exclamation mark on it> You can use this tool to explain concepts. You can create dynamic interactive lessons, activities, assessments and tutorials. I think that this would take me awhile to figure out but once done might be a very useful tool. For example, you could explain the /k/ rule and create activities around it. You could then email it to the student so that he could practice. This has potential, now to just sit down and figure it out!

Word Games for you:

Letterpress (free) <logo is white background with a blue and red square> You can play this with a friend.

SpellTower (free) <logo is colorful tiles with letters > Making words with tiles. There are different formats.

7Words (free but you can purchase more games) <logo is a big smiley face on tan background> Seven words are broken down (not in syllables) and you are given hints. You discover what the word is – very addicting game!

Wordwarp (free) <logo is black background with green lines and the words Word Warp> The player is given letters and must create words with those letters in two minutes. I am not very good at this but I am working on getting better.

Words free (free) <logo is yellow square similar to a scrabble piece with a W> This scrabble game is played with friends. I will play with you and you will feel so successful because I always lose. Warning: watch out, I am improving!

Resource:

WordBookXL ($2.99) <logo is red background with white feather like symbol and word dictionary > Great dictionary with word source, pronunciation, thesaurus, link to synonym, more generic terms, or more specific term, Wikipedia, even crossword clues and a goggle link. This is really worth the $2.99.

LivingEarth (free) <logo is the earth>. I just like to look at this site and watch the world go around. I have used it with students to talk about different parts of the world. One student has grandparents who live in Switzerland, he could see that when it was day here, it was night there.

Nat Geo Today (free) <logo is white background with yellow rectangle > I just love looking at the pictures on this site. There is an explanation of each picture. I have used this as a language activity and then gone to Living Earth to find where this picture was taken.

Other apps I have heard about but not explored:

- Raven
- Chicktionary
- Build a word
- The follow are word games: wordology, scrabble, scramble cd, wurdle, letris (stressful not good for kids), free bug, word search, wordjewels2, moxie, quoth hd,pow-word, popword.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW YOUR FAVORITE AND/OR INTERESTING APPS.