

AlphaSmart

Basic Tips for Classroom Use

Entering text into the AlphaSmart

- Be patient. Don't get upset if something goes wrong. Don't be afraid to make mistakes.
- Students should always work from a hand-written draft. Elementary students have difficulty composing stories and narratives into the AlphaSmart or computer without a draft to work from.
- Have all students clear out all files before they begin. Open each file, then press clear file, and then "y" for yes.
- Have all students work using the same corresponding file; first File 1, then File 2 for a second title, and so on.
- Students should always type their full name on the first line in the display window, press return once, then type title of document. Press return again, then press tab to indent, and then begin typing story.
- Between paragraphs, press return twice, then tab.
- Spell-check work on the AlphaSmart, or wait and use the word processor's spell check feature after all typing is completed. Using spell-check before the end is a waste of time. In either case, do be

aware of homophones and proper nouns that cause students problems when using spell-check.

- Typing can be done from student's own seat during Open Court IWT, or other independent work times during the day. Always having AlphaSmart and draft out on desk ensures that students always have something to work on if other work is completed.
- Try to train monitors to pass out and manage AlphaSmarts, and those that are most responsible can also learn how to transfer stories to the computer and save.

Transferring text into the Computer:

- Open a blank Microsoft Word or other word processor document.
- Set the text size to a size appropriate to the grade level of the student; i.e.: size 14 – grade 5; size 18 – grade 3; size 24 – grade 2. (The text size can always be changed later, but this tip is a time saver).
- Turn AlphaSmart on, open the file number you want to transfer, connect the AlphaSmart using the USB cable, then press send on the AlphaSmart.
- Disconnect the AlphaSmart once all text is entered, then save the file on the computer, using title of document and child's name. Ideally, this is done in organized folders that are easy to identify and locate on the computer; i.e. "Dinosaur Story-Freddy". Repeat process.