iPad Apps in Storytime at Upper Hudson Library System

Developed by
Mary Fellows, Youth and Family Services

With assistance from
Rawdon Cheng and Diane Riganti

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Digital devices are an increasing part of the lives of many young children we serve. Adults, even in low income areas, are relying on smart phones and tablets for communication, connection to the Internet, and more. Children observe adults’ frequent engagement with digital devices and clamor to be included in these activities.

At the same time, experts warn about the perils of screen time for very young children. The American Academy of Pediatrics continues to discourage parents from using media with children under 24 months of age.

What, then, is the public library’s role in modeling engaging young children with digital resources? What role should we play in advising parents about current screen time thinking and in the best apps to use with children?

First, we must be informed about current research and thinking. Currently, the thinking is:

- No screen time for children ages 0-2
- Considered, appropriate, limited use of technology with children 3 and up

Next, we apply this current thinking to our practices. This means:

We shouldn’t be using apps meant for children in our toddler or baby programs. Using Keynote to display song lyrics or Adobe Reader to project a tell-and-draw story that everyone in a large room can see is okay. These apps are not engaging to kids and serve a larger early literacy purpose.

We should make careful judgments about using apps meant for children in family programs where there may be lots of toddlers and babies. Using one app occasionally allows the librarian opportunity to talk to the parents present about apps and young children.

In programs where we use apps, we alert parents to the current thinking about children and media. We take care to do this gently and diplomatically,
understanding that parents in the room are at various degrees of awareness about children and screen time. We refer back to the Every Child Ready to Read® five skills that help children prepare to learn -Talk, Write, Read, Play, Sing – and how the app we use reinforces those.

Finally, we share clear messages about using apps with children.

We start by acknowledging how compelling digital devices are to children. We mention that, as adults, we often have them readily at hand, so when our child is in need of attention or distraction, our tablet or phone is an easy go-to.

We mention the recommendation against screen time for children under two and offer the analogy of chewing gum: we may have it in our purse or pocket for our own uses. We know that a young child will be interested in the wrapper, the smell, and the taste. And we also know that young children are apt to swallow the gum, and that can cause health issues for them. So we safeguard our children’s health by withholding gum until they are old enough to unharmed by it.

We introduce parents to the three C’s to consider with apps and children three and older: context, content, and child. We say just a little about each of these, and then invite parents to talk with us afterwards if they want to know more.

1. **Context**: the purpose of the activity, and what happens before, during, and after your child uses the app. Screen time should lead to interaction, not replace interaction.
   Ask yourself: What will my child learn from this app? Will I make the time to talk with my child about the activity? Can my child and I play together?

2. **Content**: the theme and activities of the app.
   Ask yourself: Is the app child-controlled? Is the activity one I want my child to imitate? Does the app promote questions, playful reenactments, joy?
3. **Child**: children need a variety of active, sensory, and language experiences to maximize their brain development and learning.

   Ask yourself: Does my child spend more time with media and technology than other activities? Is she getting enough time for pretend and active play? Do I provide clear boundaries for screen time so that my child is not becoming dependent on devices?

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**App advisory is part of our jobs now.** We may not have apps to loan, but we must nonetheless have information on them. We can inform ourselves by reading app reviews in *School Library Journal, The Horn Book*, or other respected, independent review sources. We should keep a list of recommended apps handy for when we’re asked by parents for the best apps to use with their children – and we must offer that help, as we do in all patron interactions, without judgment.

Most of all, we must practice sharing the information about how to choose and use apps until we’re comfortable and authentic discussing it. This is a key way to demonstrate our currency (we’re not just about books) and our value (as a source of parenting help) to our customers. Children live in a digital world, and the vast majority will have screen time every day. Our job is to help parents make considered decisions about how and how often their child uses media, and to help them to choose media wisely.

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**Sources and further resources:**

Blog entries by Lisa Guernsey on *The Huffington Post* blog:


The Three C’s for Choosing the Right Technology (Mobile Apps) for Children:


iPad/ Apple TV Setup

PLEASE NOTE: This setup allows access to and projection of all storytime apps on the iPad. It does not allow Internet access.

**Set up projector**

Remove from case and plug power cord into projector and outlet. The projector light will glow orange.

Slide lens cover position from “A/V Mute” to “Open.”

Press Power button once. The projector light will now glow green.

Plug red cord into HDMI port on projector.

**Set up Wi-Fi**

Plug LINKSYS (SSID: Storytime Connection) into power outlet, raise antennas.

**Set up Apple TV**

Plug black cord into power outlet and the back of Apple TV.

Plug the red cable from the projector into Apple TV.

You should see a screen of icons. Focus using the slide on the projector lens.

Using slim remote control, press dots on black circle to go up, down, right or left. Move cursor (blue rectangular frame) to Settings. Press Enter (silver middle of black circle).

Move cursor to General, press Enter.

Move cursor to Network, press Enter.

Move cursor to Wi-Fi. Press Enter. Setting should be StoryTime (uhls).

Press menu button on remote four times to exit several screens, returning to opening screen of icons.
Connecting to iPad to Apple TV

Turn iPad on using the black power button at the top. Press the “Home” button: white box icon at bottom of screen frame. Swipe to unlock.

Press “Settings” button at bottom center of screen.

Press “Wi-fi” on left menu bar.

On right menu bar, press the button for StoryTime (uhls). Press Home button.

Swipe the bottom of the iPad screen upwards. A box will display saying “Airplay.” Tap Airplay, then Tap the Apple TV.

Slide “Mirroring” to turn on the feature allowing your iPad screen and the projector to show the same image. Press the iPad’s Home button.

Press the Story Time icon to see the first page of loaded apps. Swipe inside the blue square to see additional pages of apps. Tap on the one you want.

To get the loudest sound, turn both iPad and projector speakers to maximum volume. Projector control is on top; iPad volume control is on the side of the iPad.

When finished, turn the projector off. Slide lens cover back to AV mute position.

Packing up to return

Place the projector in the black bag with the black and orange cords.

Place the APPLE TV, remote and cord in the black bag.

Place each iPad and its power cord into its box.

Put the projector case, the two iPads in their boxes, the Apple TV black bag, and the Wi-Fi LANKSYS unit in the bin.

Your care in packing this delicate equipment for return makes this service work for all UHLS libraries. We appreciate it and thank you!
Using iPad Apps in Storytime

Apps on UHLS iPads

**Books**

The Cranky Bear
Go Away, Big Green Monster
The Going to Bed Book
Hugless Douglas
Moo Baa La-La-La
Wild About Books

**Songs/Chants**

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed (also book)
Old MacDonald
The Wheels on the Bus

**Tools for sharing**

Felt Board: create your story without any cutting!
Adobe Ideas: tell-and-draw stories
Keynote: lyrics for fingerplays and songs
Finger Paint: drawing a letter or symbol relating to story
Extensions/games/activities

My A-Z: create a library alphabet to share
Animal Sounds: photo plus animal noise
ABC Go: photos and videos of transportation
Don’t Let the Pigeon Run This App: draw the pigeon together
Feed the Animals: game
Robot Lab: game
Sock Puppets: create your own video
The Cranky Bear:
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Choose Read to myself on the title page screen.

2. If you choose, turn off the sound by moving the tiny black button toggle on the right side towards the volume control bar. The screen will say Ringer Silent. Doing this will also mute the animal sounds on the pages if you tap various characters and they happen to make a noise. (But in storytime, it’s better to keep the focus on the story anyway.)

3. Read it through a couple of times to learn where the app has pauses.

4. When reading it in storytime, be sure to let kids join in on the ROARRRR!

5. If you like, you can record the kids roaring and play it back. When you’re on the page where you want them to roar, press the microphone icon at top left. It will change to red to indicate recording. Press it again to stop recording. Then turn up the volume and press the earphones to hear yourselves!
6. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Read and Talk. Options: do a “story walk” before reading the book (look at pictures and ask children what they think is happening in them.) Then read, and as you go ask children to predict what will happen.
Big Monster (Go Away, Big Green Monster):
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Turn off the sound. (Turn volume button on bottom right edge of iPad down to nothing.)

2. Read it through a couple of times to learn where the app has pauses.

3. When reading it in storytime, be sure to let kids join in on the You Don’t Scare Me!!! and the GO AWAY! Refrain.

4. If you like, you can record the kids saying Go Away and play it back. When you’re on the page where you want them to say that, press the microphone icon at top left. It will change to red to indicate recording. Press it again to stop recording. Then turn up the volume and press the earphones to hear yourselves!

5. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Read and Talk.
The Going to Bed Book:  
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. On the home screen, choose the option “I want to read it myself.” Then click the cover of the book to get started.

2. There seems to be no way to turn off the background music.

3. On most of the pages, tapping an animal or an object will cause a sound and a movement. (Have kids predict the sound.)

4. Words are interactive, and tapping them will cause them to be spoken aloud by narrator.

5. On toothbrushing page, make the scene fog over by turning hot and cold taps.

Hugless Douglas:
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. An animated ebook to read. On the home page, choose Read myself. Tapping the red notes on the home page turns off the music but not the other sounds.

2. On each page there is something that makes a sound or a movement when tapped. Use these add-ons selectively to keep the focus on the story.

3. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Read and Talk. Options: do a “story walk” before reading the book (look at pictures and ask children what they think is happening in them.) Then read, and as you go ask children to predict what will happen.
Moo, Baa, La La La: Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. On the home screen, choose the option “I want to read it myself.” Then click the cover of the book to get started.

2. There seems to be no way to turn off the background music.

3. On most of the pages, tapping the animal will cause a sound and a movement. (Have kids predict the sound!)

4. Words are interactive, and tapping them will cause them to be spoken aloud by narrator.

5. On the duck page, tapping each new duck that appears will cause another duck to join the flock. Have kids count!

1. Start the app. Choose “beginning.”

2. On the title page of the book, press the monkey icon in the middle bottom. Turn off the “read to me” feature on the page that pops up. Background noises (jungle sounds) also toggle on and off here.

3. Read it through a couple of times to hear the background noises and learn where the app has additional text on the same page.

4. Participation options: let the kids join you when the work “books” is used; let kids imitate hyenas and red-bellied snakes howling and hissing “until their funny bones ached.” Second-to-last page: “Hip Hip Hooray!”

5. If you like, you can record the kids saying a phrase and play it back. When you’re on the page where you want them to say that, press the microphone icon at top left. It will change to red to indicate recording. Press it again to stop recording. Then turn up the volume and press the earphones to hear yourselves!
Five Little Monkeys:  
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. This app has background music and sound effects. Leave it on, or turn off the sound by turning the volume button on top right edge of iPad down to nothing.

2. On the main screen, choose Read It Myself.

3. Move through the book by pressing right hand arrows at bottom of screen (on app).

4. Tapping objects on the screen makes their written name pop up.

5. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Reading and Talking.
Old MacDonald:
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. From the main screen, press arrow to move into app.

2. On first page, press purple box of musical notes to choose what sound (or none) to have singing/playing the song.

3. Move through the book by pressing right hand arrows at bottom of screen (on app).

4. If you like, tap objects on the screen to make them move or sound.

5. Record the group through the record button on the sound page. (Get to through pressing purple box of musical notes on any page.) Then play it back to hear yourselves!

6. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Singing!
Wheels on the Bus: Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. From the main screen, press arrow to move into app.

2. On first page, press purple box of musical notes to choose what sound (or none) to have singing/playing the song.

3. Move through the book by pressing right hand arrows at bottom of screen (on app).

4. If you like, tap objects on the screen to make them move or sound.

5. Record the group through the record button on the sound page. (Get to through pressing purple box of musical notes on any page.) Then play it back to hear yourselves!

6. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: singing!
Felt Board:
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Use this app to create a felt board that everyone can easily see.

2. Pull out the left sidebar by tapping the arrow on the left. Explore the eight categories of felt objects. Tap to pull an object over to the felt board. Move it around with your finger.

3. Delete a felt board by clicking on the recycle button and then on the object you want gone.

Adobe Ideas: Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Press Play button to get started.

2. Use for draw-and-tell stories.


4. Undo and redo arrows on menu bar help with mistakes, as does the eraser!

5. Use the hand to move your drawing to a different part of the screen.

Keynote: Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Use Keynote to post lyrics to songs or fingerplays.

2. Choose Create Presentation to make a slide or slides.

3. Type in the text box the app pops up.

4. Tap the + box at bottom left to add pages.

5. There are many ways to customize slides. For example, change text color or slide fill by tapping text and then tapping paintbrush on menu bar at top right.

6. Tap your test, then try the Animate button to see other effect options.

7. To make it useful for you, play and explore!

8. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Read.
Finger Paint: Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Choose Play, then choose whether to use music, sound effects, or nothing.

2. In a drawing, tap twice with two fingers on the upper left corner of the screen to exit. Then choose Settings to get back to main screen.

3. Use this app while learning about letters, drawing the letter on the screen. (Ask kids what color the letter is too!) Or use Finger Paint when learning about colors, drawing designs in the different color choices.

4. Every Child Ready to Read® five skills tie-in: Writing. Mention to parents: kids who can’t yet grasp a crayon can write with a finger on a tablet.
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Use this photography app to make letter flashcards with your own images and record 30 seconds of audio to go with each image.

2. Ideas: make a library alphabet, then show it during your program. Or here’s what one librarian does: “In storytime, we take a snapshot of an action that matches the letter of the day, and I show the kids the completed flashcard the following week, before taking that week’s snapshot.”

3. Instructions: On the home page, tap the settings gear. Tap Instructions on the page that pops up and read through them.

4. In the app, tapping the padlock on the bottom right of the page disappears the menu icons. Get them back by tapping that spot (which now says A-Z) again.

5. Tap the pencil icon to start the process of adding your own photo. Tap the camera icon on the pop-up menu bar and take a photo. Tap the microphone to record a caption.

6. Within a letter, swiping up and down shows you additional cards you may have made for that letter. (Try “T”)
7. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Talk and Play. Parents using this app can create various alphabets with their kids. You can make multiple cards for the same letter, so think an “our vacation” alphabet, “around the neighborhood” alphabet, “our house” alphabet, etc.

Families might also make an actions alphabet, challenging the child to come up with a verb for each letter and taking a picture of the child or family engaging in that action.
1. Choose an animal and the iPad will display a photo and play the animal’s sound.

2. Line up your animals in advance. Choose an animal, then press the star icon in the upper right corner. Once you’ve chosen all you want, go back to the home page. Swipe the home page to get to the second page, tap Favorite, and your first animal will display and play. Swipe left to go onto the next animal.

3. To delete an animal from Favorites, within Favorites, touch the star icon in the upper right corner. It will become transparent, and the animal is gone from Favorites.

ABC Go:  
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Press Play button to get started.

2. You can turn off the music on the settings area (gear in lower right corner of screen). There appears to be no way to turn off sound effects or voice announcing letter and word.

3. This app offers photos and videos of transportation modes. Use it to provide a photo and/or video of (for example) a real bulldozer when reading a book with a bulldozer in it.

4. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Talk.
Don’t Let the Pigeon Run This App: 
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Turn off the sound. (Turn volume button on bottom right edge of iPad down to nothing.)

2. For an after-storytime activity, give kids a piece of paper and a crayon or pencil and teach them (along with Moe) to draw the Pigeon step by step.

3. Choose Create Your Own Story to make a series of choices that results in a customized “Don’t Let the Pigeon_______” story shown and read to you.

Feed the Animals:
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Turn off the sound by moving the tiny black button toggle on the right side towards the volume control bar. The screen will say Ringer Silent. Or simply turn the volume button on bottom right edge of iPad down to nothing. Or go into “More Stuff through button on home page and toggle the music off.

2. Have the kids guess what food each animal will eat. Slide the food icon to the animal. The correct food will be eaten. If sound is on, the narrator will say something like “yucky” if the wrong food is chosen.

3. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Play and Talk. As kids select food, adults can initiate a conversation about the animals, what food the child likes to eat, colors, etc.
Robot Lab:  
Using the iPad App in Storytime

1. Turn off the sound. (Move the tiny black button toggle on the right side towards the volume control bar. The screen will say Ringer Silent.)

2. Start the app by pressing the play button on the screen. You will have three choices for the robot’s legs. Ask kids which legs to choose. Ask them questions – for example, about the color of the legs, what they look like they’re made of, and what they think a robot could do with legs like those. Swipe to move the legs of choice to blinking white box.

3. Follow this same process for each part of the robot.

4. When the robot is built, have kids cheer for the robot as you move it up to the magnet (follow the white arrows). There it will be moved to a “testing area” and get approved. The game is done.

5. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Play and Talk. As kids select and manipulate their puppets, adults can initiate a conversation about puppets’ colors, facial features, actions, and more.
Follow-up activity: use shapes, magazine photos, old boxes, or any recycled materials to encourage kids to assemble a robot.

Reference: http://littleelit.com/?s=robot+lab
Sock Puppets:
Using the iPad App in Storytime

NOTE: This app sometimes loses its connection with the projector. We’re consulting with the developer to see if there is a fix.

1. Use this app to create and animate videos. You can take photos with the iPad and import them as backgrounds. So you might use your library as the setting to an exciting story!

2. Under About on the home screen is a Help button. On the Help screen, read the tutorial or view the video.

3. Ideas: http://littleelit.com/?s=sock+puppets
   Three different program ideas here, so scroll down!

4. Every Child Ready to Read® tie-in: Play and Talk. As kids select and manipulate their puppets, adults can initiate a conversation about puppets’ colors, facial features, actions, and more.