

Promoting Family Engagement with Virtual Family Writing Journals

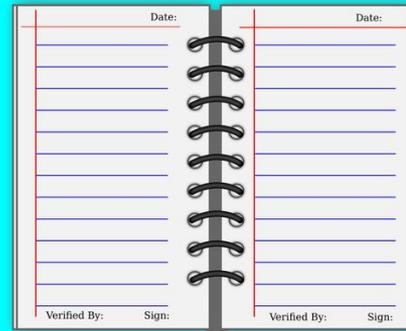
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Virtual Kindergarten

Take a peek into a virtual kindergarten classroom! Sounds a little daunting right? Virtual? Kindergarten? You read that right! Get ready to be even more amazed while we explore the idea of promoting family engagement with an interactive family writing journal. See a family writing journal be used to capture kindergartners' imagination, creativity, opinions, and emotions all while giving parents and guardians a chance to read, reply, and get a deeper glimpse into their child. Students write, parents respond, teacher replies; so simple yet so effective. What a great opportunity for collaboration and communication. Not only are we growing reading and writing skills, but also and just as importantly, family interaction and engagement. See how all of this can be done and virtually at that! It's pretty amazing!

My Plan

My plan was to implement a family journal in my kindergarten classroom. Students were to learn their alphabet, learn to write (with scribing partial used when needed) and start a family journal. The students would write in their journals, parents would respond to the journal response, and I would respond to both as well. The focus was to help families engage with their children as their reading and writing develops.

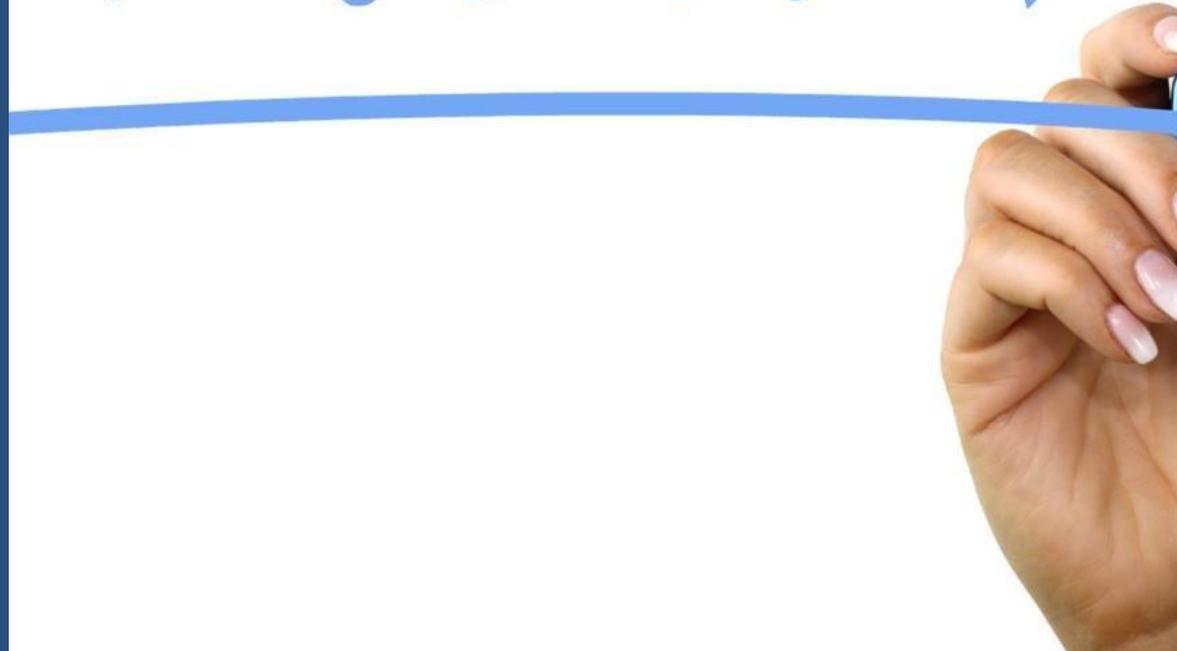




Here's what actually happened

Plans had to change some due to covid. Most students started NTI and some became completely virtual. I was given the virtual class. It seemed a it daunting to teach kindergarteners virtual, yet alone somehow incorporate a family journal. I still thought students would be capable and the plan could be successful...with some modifications, even being kindergarteners, even being virtual!

VIRTUAL



So....this is what my literacy practice looks like now

Students do all subjects in the virtual class, just like they would if they were in person. They attend schedule lessons for phonics, comprehension, an writing. They take the skills learned in the lessons and apply them to writing assignments that have to be completed and turned in. We practice writing with the family

literacy journals. Since the students are virtual, they

my do each journal entry at home, let parents scribe

as needed and respond, take a picture, then upload

it so I can read the responses and make my own

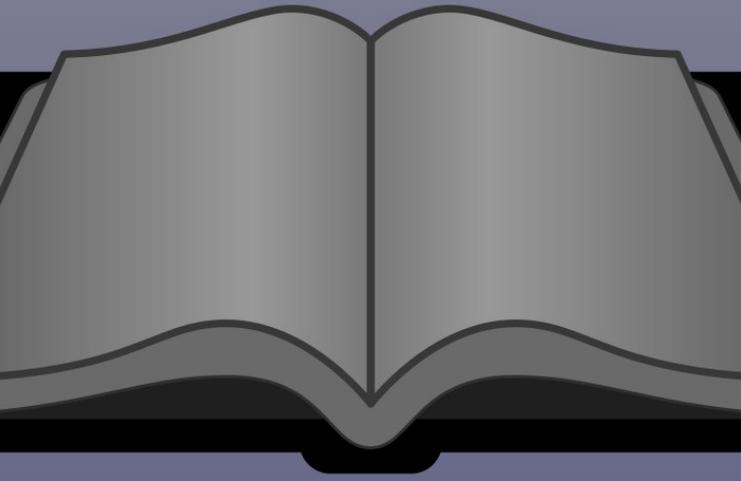
response. I communicate with both parents and

students when grading the entries. I think it has actually

allowed for more family engagement.



How it relates to Literature



Literature

Within my virtual class, I teach both phonics and comprehension. In phonics we focus on the letter recognition, letter sounds, and building words. In comprehension we work on reading strategies such as visualizing, monitoring, making inference, etc. We apply the literacy skills that are learned to our writing.



Here is what my family engagement looks like:

The families have been pretty involved. There are some guardians who do not respond as requested and even a few students who do not complete the assignments, but for the most part, most families have been engaged in the family writing journal activities by completing most entries.



Why it is
important and
how it can
lead to
success

So much
creativity,
personality, and
emotion can be
shown through
writing!

I believe the family writing journal can help lead to success by showing families the joy of being involved with their children's learning, teaching them the importance, and giving them experience to be involved, so that hopefully it becomes more natural in the future.