Jam-PACT Ideas for Building Solid Curriculum Knowledge:

The Evidence-Based "Cure for the Common Core"

As we know, the Common Core Initiative in American education today is a wonderful and noble idea. Basically, it is the idea that all students, regardless of geographic area or zip code, have not just a common body of knowledge, but more specifically, a common skill set.

But I think it is safe to say, based on the countless conversations I have had with the thousands of teaching staff and related service providers that I have consulted with and trained across North America, that there is a great deal of CONFUSION at the CORE of the Common Core.

CONFUSION AT THE CORE OF THE COMMON CORE

Here are the two key problems:

1. Teachers are not feeling fully supported or equipped to teach this skill set during school days filled with multiple things to do and simply not enough time to do them; and

2. Teachers are struggling with "reaching and teaching" those

Reaching and teaching every student

students in their classroom receiving special education services related to the Common Core in a meaningful model for inclusion and integration.

I am brought in to help teachers learn how to instruct students receiving special education services in their classroom in this common skill set. I am able to successfully do this using the evidence-based teaching frame-

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work called T.H.E. P.A.C.T.™ that I have authored, in addition to the fact that my main area of expertise since completing a fellowship at Johns Hopkins Hospital's Kennedy-Krieger Institute in 1988 has been in the field of special education.

"THE CURE FOR THE COMMON CORE"

I share with teachers hundreds of ways of imparting this common skill set to the special education students in their classroom using the research-based teaching strategies of T.H.E. P.A.C.T.™ framework.

The results?

- The teachers are thrilled.
- I, too, am thrilled when they say to me, "Wait a minute here, Phyl. The strategies that you are giving me here are working really well with ALL THE STUDENTS in my classroom!"

In fact, T.H.E. P.A.C.T.™ is now being called "The Cure for the Common Core" and is a four-step roadmap for teaching anything.

These steps are the vital four components of the Common Core Standards, presented in this framework in a four-module approach to teaching:

As educators, we need to do these things in this order, based on the long-standing research of how the brain works

Learn About™

Read About™

Write About™

Talk About™

- which is to teach an understanding of content before we test what was learned.

THE IMPACT OF T.H.E. P.A.C.T. - THE EVIDENCE BEHIND THE CURE

Longstanding research shows that a great amount of time and brainpower are required to learn new information. Time and time again, learners spend too much cognitive focus figuring out "how" they are supposed to do something instead of concentrating on "what" the content is that they are learning.

In an IRB approved research study in both the United States and Canada, our 18 research sites are finding the same things. Simply put:

- Learners are learning faster with instruction time decreasing
- Teacher prep time has drastically reduced

In this multiple, single-subject design research study, titled - The Impact of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. - learners in special education, across a variety of grade levels and disabilities, are succeeding with building a solid understanding of what they need to learn and are eager to share what they know.

Students participating in the research study include those with developmental disabilities, varying verbal and nonverbal learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, complex disabilities and intellectual impairments. The locations of the research sites across North America include public school settings, autism programs, preschools and school-to-work programs. Topics of instruction include academics, life skills, social communication and vocational.

The study includes both the measurement of learning outcomes and class participation of learners, along with staff satisfaction surveys regarding the use of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. and learner outcomes. After obtaining baseline for each curriculum topic, teaching staff methodically provide "connect-the-dots" teaching, so that both students and teaching staff

Anchoring students with consistent tools decreases cognitive load

Explicitly teaching all components of the curriculum

understand WHAT they are doing and WHY.

Regardless of subject or topic of study, teachers walk their students through learning about it, reading about it, writing about it and talking about it - across a total of 10 instructional activities in the research study related to the four modules of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. They do this in a way so that the students feel anchored with the "how-to-do-it" part - by using these consistent teaching activities - so the students focus on WHAT they are learning, instead of HOW they are learning it.

These teaching activities are used over and over again - with each topic of instruction - to anchor students and streamline lesson planning. Students know:

- What to do;
- How to do it; and
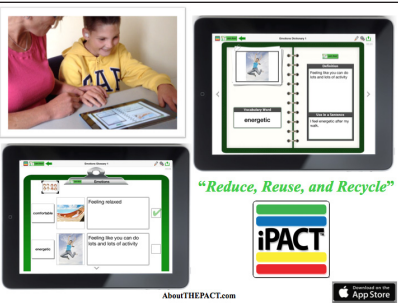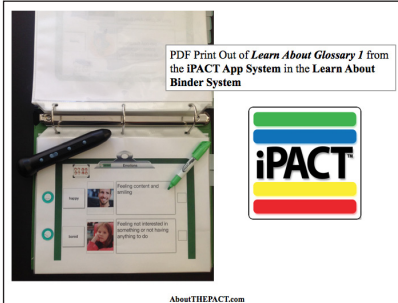- How to then share it
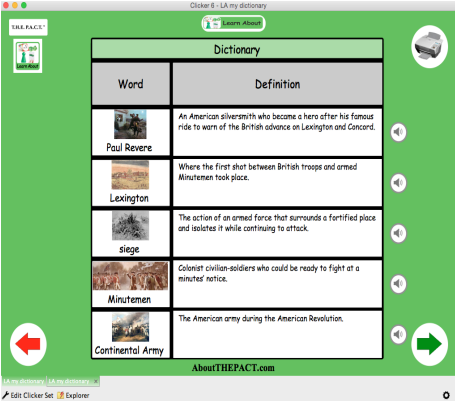
The result has been that teaching staff know how to focus and organize their time - receiving jam-PACT ideas for creative activities and teaching tools - so that they have true clarity of an instructional roadmap.
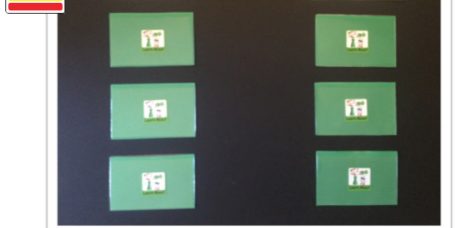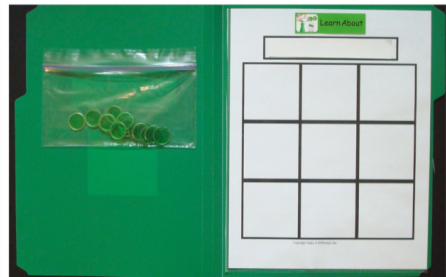
This article will share information related to the first two modules of the T.H.E. P.A.C.T. – the Learn About™ Module and the Read About™ Module - to build curriculum knowledge, directly aligned to the Common Core Standards, as shown in the research study, The Impact of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. It will outline consistent teaching activities and multiple examples of creative teaching tools that you, too, can replicate in your own geographic area, using any tool of your choice!

LEARN ABOUT MODULE - THE LANGUAGE STRAND OF THE COMMON CORE

The Learn About Module focuses on building word knowledge and improves understanding of word meaning. In our research study, there are three vocabulary-building activity sets that teams are implementing using very creative teaching tools:

Learn About Activity Set #1	Example of Common Core Standard
"Listen to a Definition & Make a "My Words" Dictionary	Consult reference materials and glossaries to find the pronunciation and precise meaning of key words and phrases

Learners help create reference tools

Text made accessible using *Pen Friend* from IndependentLiving.com
Created using green poly folder, metal rings, and photo sheet protectors from **Shoplet.com**

Create an activity once – then clone or convert in seconds!

"Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle"
iPACT
AboutTHEPACT.com

Inexpensive office supplies + iPACT PDFs = learning for all

PDF Print Out of *Learn About Glossary 1* from the iPACT App System in the **Learn About Binder System**
iPACT
AboutTHEPACT.com

Clicker 6 + T.H.E. P.A.C.T. Power Tools = differentiated instruction in 341 templates

Learn About Activity Set #2	Examples of Common Core Standards
Match Vocabulary Cards & Match Vocabulary Cards to a Definition in Memory Game Format	Demonstrate the understanding of words and word meaning Demonstrate the understanding of word relationships

Created using green cardstock and plastic pouches from **VinylEnvelope.com** along with PDF Print Out (reduced size) of *Learn About Flashcards 1* from the **iPACT App System**

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Created using green cardstock and plastic pouches from **VinylEnvelope.com** along with PDF Print Out (reduced size) of *Learn About Flashcards 1* from the **iPACT App System**

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Insert changing curriculum topics using low-cost, reusable pockets

Cost-effective materials are an answer for shrinking school budgets

Learn About Activity Set #3	Examples of Common Core Standards
Identify Vocabulary by Label & Identify Vocabulary by Definition in Bingo Game Format	Demonstrate the understanding of words and word meaning Demonstrate the understanding of word relationships"

Created using green poly folder from **Shoplet.com** and Bingo Templates from *T.H.E. P.A.C.T. 2-Day Make & Take Lab Resource CD*

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Reusable vocabulary formats streamline lesson prep time

"Edu-friendly" solution allows all content to be reused and recycled

"Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle"

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Vocabulary pop-ups allow content creation in "run mode" in Clicker 6

BACK TO CONTENTS

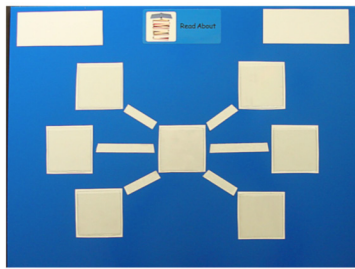## READ ABOUT MODULE - THE READING STRAND OF THE COMMON CORE - INFORMATIONAL TEXT & LITERATURE
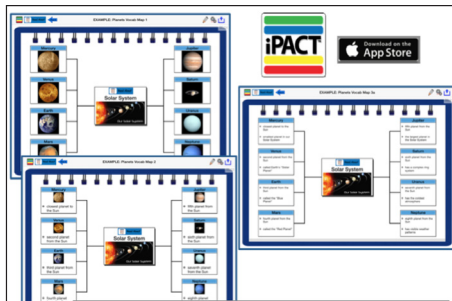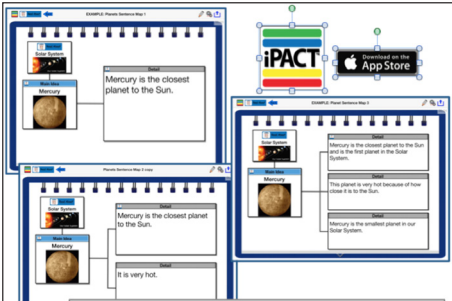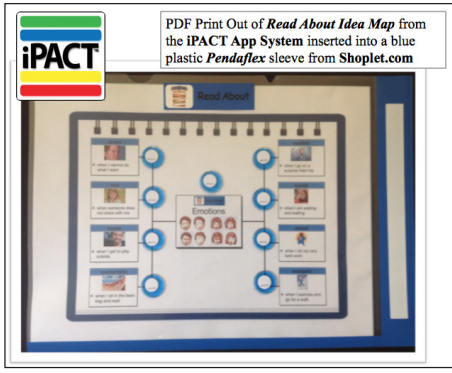
The Read About Module focuses on expanding an understanding of content to gain more knowledge about main ideas, details and summary points. In our research study, there are two literacy-based activities that teams are implementing using engaging instructional tools:

ALL EDUCATION IS SPECIAL

I recently had a conversation with a classroom teacher who said that she had 50 minutes each day to teach math to her middle school class and that 70 percent of her lessons were explaining what the lesson was and how the students were going to do it - and not about actually doing the math content at all. She was constantly looking at the clock and panicking, knowing that time was running out and that the bell was about to ring at any minute.

This educator just never had enough time to get to what she most wanted - and needed - to teach. She felt like she was failing her kids. But after she, and other teachers at her school, were exposed to the principles of this framework, she had an "Aha-moment" about how she could use a handful of engaging math activities over and over again – so that they became truly intuitive for the students to use - with each different math concept they needed to grasp aligned to the Common Core Standards.

Math, science, social studies, language arts, humanities, life skills, social communication . . . no matter what the subject or setting:

Read About Activity #1	Example of Common Core Standard
Listen to an Idea Map	Interpret information in charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, animations or interactive elements

Created using blue foam board, adhesive 2 ¼ X 2 ¼ plastic pouches from **VinylEnvelope.com**, white artist tape, and self-adhesive dry erase strips from **Shoplet.com**

Consistent formats increase learner engagement . . . regardless of ability

205 Differentiated Templates

Building solid comprehension of main ideas and details

From Bullet Points to Sentences

Increasing text complexity in the Read About Module

PDF Print Out of *Read About Idea Map* from the **iPACT App System** inserted into a blue plastic *Pendaflex* sleeve from **Shoplet.com**

Making print materials accessible

- Teaching staff can teach anything using this instructional roadmap
- Learners can learn anything using this brain-based framework

I am excited about the application of these instructional strategies to all students in the classroom - from gifted to special needs, and every student in between - because I firmly believe, just like I am sure you do, that all education is special.

RESOURCE INFORMATION:

iPACT™ App System: Apple App Store. For more information, go to: theiPACT.com

Development Team: Mark Larson, Fio Quinn and Phyl T. Macomber

Produced by Marblesoft for Make A Difference, Inc.

T.H.E. P.A.C.T. Power Tools Collection for Clicker 5 & 6. For more information, go to: About-THEPACT.com/store/

Development Team: Fio Quinn, Phyl T. Macomber and the Crick Software Technical Support Team

Clicker 6 by Crick Software. For more information, go to: CrickSoft.com

Macomber, P. (2010). The Power of T.H.E. P.A.C.T: The Solution to Adapting the Curriculum: Book 1. West Windsor, VT: Make A Difference, Inc.
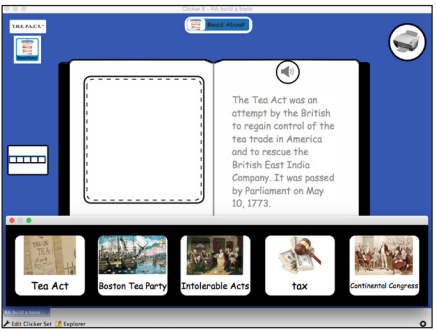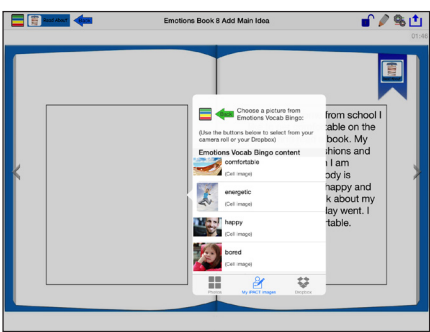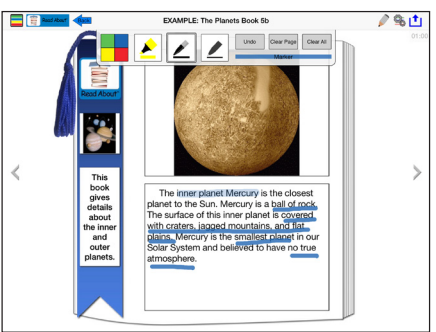
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Macomber, P. and Bardole, Y. (2015). Your UDL Blueprint: WHAT, WHY, & HOW of Evidence-Based Instruction. Session presented in the Research Strand at the Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, Orlando, FL.

Macomber, P. (2014). Real-Life Success Bridging the Gap Between General Education and Special Education: The ImPACT of Universal Design for Learning. Published in the Closing the Gap Journal, June-July Issue.

Macomber, P. and Emerson, J. (2014). Jam-PACT Ideas for the What, Why, & How of Research-Based Instruction for Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities. Session presented at the Closing the Gap Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Macomber, P. and Woods, C. (2014). Real-Life Success Bridging the Gap Between General Education and Special Education: The Impact of Universal Design for Learning. Session presented at the Closing the Gap Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Read About Activity #2	Examples of Common Core Standards
Listen to and/or Read a Book – Identify the Main Idea of a Passage	Determine a central idea of text and analyze its development over the course of the text Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text"

Expanding knowledge of main ideas and details

Selecting the main idea of a passage using T.H.E. P.A.C.T. Power Tools for Clicker

Learners build books and determine the central idea

Highlighting and underlining using built-in annotating tools

Macomber, P. and Quinn, F. (2013). App-timize Your Core Curriculum Instruction and Move Beyond "Here an App, There an App, Everywhere an App, App!" Session presented at the Closing the Gap Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Macomber, P. and Court, L. (2013). Systematic Structured Teaching to Support Students with Complex Needs in Inclusive Settings. Session and Paper presented at the Council for Exceptional Children Conference, San Antonio, TX.

Macomber, P. (2012). Adapting Academics, Life Skills, & Social Language Curriculum Using Systematic Structured Teaching. Session and Paper presented at the Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Denver, CO.

Macomber, P. and Hall, N. (2012). A 4-Step Framework for Teaching Social Language.

Session and Paper presented at the American Speech-Language Hearing Association Conference, San Diego, CA.

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Macomber, P. (2009). T.H.E. P.A.C.T. – Technology Helps Easy & Practical Adapted Curriculum Teaching. Published in the Closing the Gap Journal, June-July Issue.

For more information on T.H.E. P.A.C.T., please go to: TheCureForTheCommonCore.com ∎