



Power Lines



Florida League of Middle Schools
May 2012

Florida League of Middle Schools

www.flms.org



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 From the Desk of the Executive Director
- 2 Membership Form (New or Renewal)
- 3 Great, You Have Access to Technology, Now What?
- 4 Teaching Tips for May and June
- 7 Meet the FLMS Board Members
- 8 Conference Brochure

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Dr. Chet Sanders, Executive Director

Now that you have survived the latest FCAT gauntlet, why not make plans with your colleagues and friends to celebrate the end of the school year with the Florida League of Middle Schools conference in Sarasota at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Hotel June 8-10.

The “Shelter of Strength” conference will be the perfect mix of learning, socializing and relaxing that you need and deserve at the end of a year’s teaching. You will be fully immersed in what I consider to be the 3 essential “R’s” for middle school - Reflection, Renewal and Recreation.

So get a group together now and start making your reservations for the premier middle school gathering of the summer. Hope to see you soon!



MAY 7 is THE LAST DAY TO RESERVE A ROOM AT THE HYATT WITH THE SPECIAL CONFERENCE RATE.

Go to www.sarasota.hyatt.com to make your reservation today!!!!

FLORIDA LEAGUE OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Membership Registration Form, Yearly from July 1 - June 30

Membership Type

Institutional/School Membership

Individual \$25.00

Institutional/School \$150.00
(30 copies of POWER LINES sent quarterly.)

Name: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

County: _____ Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Please mail to: **Florida League of Middle Schools**

c/o Dr. Shirley Fox

10811 Crescent Ln.

Clermont, FL 34711

H (352) 241-9541

foxss@earthlink.net



What is the Florida League of Middle Schools?

The Florida League of Middle Schools was founded in 1972 by a group of individuals who were designing, teaching and working a new kind of school called a "middle school." The association is designed for individuals and institutions dedicated to the cause of quality middle level education for grades 5-9.

The League is the only professional educational organization in the state that opens its membership to interested individuals and professional educators, regardless of subject area of specialization, who focus on students in their early adolescent years (10 - 14 year olds). Quality middle level education is challenging, developmentally appropriate, and available to all students in a middle school.

The Florida League of Middle Schools is an affiliate of the National Middle School Association which has over 30,000 members in the 50 states and abroad.

Benefits of membership in FLMS are many. You will receive the quarterly newsletter with information on current trends and hot topics in middle level education. You will also enjoy the yearly FLMS journal with topical articles and original artwork. Additionally, you will be invited to attend the yearly state conference and have the opportunity to network with experienced middle level professionals.

Mission of FLMS

The mission of the Florida League of Middle Schools is to improve education for middle grade students in the state of Florida. The mission of the League is accomplished by:

- acting as an advocate for middle grade students and education in Florida
- facilitating curriculum improvement and inservice education
- being a clearing house for middle level ideas, materials, and personnel
- coordinating statewide efforts in the School Improvement Process in Florida
- securing support for middle level education from groups and agencies
- representing middle schools in public discussion of education issues
- establishing and supporting regional affiliates of the Florida League of Middle Schools

Great, You Have Access to Technology! Now What?

By Bridget Mahoney

As a middle school Language Arts teacher, using technology was an essential part of my curriculum, increasing my students' motivation and engagement exponentially. Unfortunately, finding quality technological resources for middle school students can be difficult. When browsing the App Store (an online site run by Apple from which applications for Apple devices can be purchased and downloaded), middle school teachers searching for apps appropriate for both their curriculum and their students' academic needs quickly realize that, despite the large number of apps available, very few are appropriate for adolescents.



Most apps available for the iPad, iPhone, and iPod are geared towards young learners. I found a plethora of apps aimed at children not yet in school and those learning at the elementary level. Learning how to read? There

are hundreds of apps. Need practice with simple mathematical concepts? An overwhelming number of apps are available. However, apps for middle school students are hard to find.

After a year of searching, the following are three apps I have successfully used with my seventh and eighth-grade students. These apps aren't discipline specific and can be employed in any middle school classroom.

SnapGuide (<http://snapguide.com>)

I recently discovered this app and immediately fell in love with its ease of use and professional looking platform. With this app, students can create how-to guides and place information in sequential order. Working alone or with a small group, students can create presentations demonstrating how to solve an equation, how chemicals react, or how events are ordered in a piece of literature. This app enables teachers to incorporate students' personal technology use into classroom learning.

The Details: SnapGuide is free. Unfortunately, it is only available for iPhone. Students can create their own accounts through existing Facebook or Twitter accounts. They can also sign up via email. Completed guides are saved on the SnapGuide website and can be shared using the url provided by SnapGuide.

Comic Life (<http://www.comiclife.com>)

I talked my principal into purchasing Comic Life licenses for twenty MacBooks last year and my students and I were thrilled with the program. Comic Life allows students to create their own comics. This app turns student projects into comic strips styled after comic books featuring iconic super heroes like Superman and Captain America. Incredibly customizable and simple to use, with Comic Life students can visually display their learning.

Continued on page 4

The Details: Comic Life is available for iPad, Mac, and Windows. I used the version for Mac. Each license cost \$19.95. Because the program is popular with educators, volume licensing is available and they offer resources for educators online. Comics are saved locally and can be turned into pdf documents for sharing with others.

Pulse (<http://www.pulse.me>)

A news aggregator, this app pulls articles and videos from established news organizations around the world and places them at your fingertips. Users can select the organizations from which they want to receive news. Pulse then organizes text and video in a sleek and simple user interface. My students and I liked Pulse because, by allowing students to browse and choose which articles to read, they were empowered during the reading process. It also enabled me to differentiate the instruction. For example, I could suggest to a struggling reader that he/she select a short article with an accompanying video while requesting that a strong reader select a lengthy article without a video accompaniment.

The Details: Pulse is available for iPad, iPhone, Android, Kindle Fire, and Nook. The application is free. Pulse downloads onto your device with just a few news channels, but many more can be added to the newsfeed. Adding channels will take a small amount of time for each device using Pulse. No passwords or usernames are required.

Bridget Mahoney is a former middle school teacher and current doctoral student at the University of South Florida. She is an active member of the Florida League of Middle Schools, Association for Middle Level Education, and the Middle Level Education Research Special Interest Group. She teaches and conducts research focusing on middle level education. She can be found online at www.standardizedteacher.com and @Standardized1.

TEACHER TIPS FOR MAY AND JUNE

Cinco de Mayo is celebrated on May 5 and is a time to be proud of coming from Hispanic descent. This day celebrates the victory of the battle of 1862 between Mexico and France. 1) Write an acrostic poem about Cinco de Mayo and Mexico using the letters of the word F.I.E.S.T.A. 2) Research when Mexican Independence Day is and write a summary about this Mexican holiday.

Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May and was first observed in 1907. 1) What is special about your mother? 2) Being a mom is the most important job because.. 3) Imagine that you and your mom switched places and you suddenly became "Mom for a Day." What would it be like? 4) Write about the best advice that your mom ever gave you. 5) Write a list of things that you can do to help your mom and then create a Mother's Day coupon book for your mom.



Continued on page 5

May 2 is Brothers and Sisters Day. 1) What can you do to be a better brother or sister to your siblings? 2) Write about a funny memory that you can recall that involved a brother or sister. 3) Make a card for each of your brothers and sisters

National Pet Week, founded in 1981 by the American Veterinary Medical Association is the second week of May. 1) Write about a family pet that is (or was) special to you. 2) Your mother or father has just brought home the most unusual new pet for your family. What kind of pet is it? What would it be like to have this animal as your pet? 3) If you could have any animal as a pet (that you have not had before) what would it be and why? Write about your adventures with this pet. 4) Do you think it is right for people to own wild animals as pets? Why or why not? 5) What would it be like to have a pet parrot that could talk to you? 6) What are the responsibilities involved in having a pet? 7) If you have a pet, how do you help to take care of your family pet? 8) There is a saying that a dog is man's best friend. How do you think this saying came to be?



May 12 is Limerick Day and it honors the birthday of the English writer Edward Lear (1812-1888), who is credited with making the limerick popular. A limerick is a five-line humorous poem in which the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme, and the third and fourth lines also rhyme. Its name comes from the city of Limerick, Ireland. 1) Share some examples of limericks with your students and have them write their own limericks. 4) An Alphabet Trip to the Limerick Zoo is an A to Z poetry picture book. Jeannette Ramirez has written 26 delightful limericks about animals starting with an aardvark and ending with a zebra. After reading all 26 animal limerick poems to your students, have your class create their own A to Z limerick book on animals, countries, favorite books, or a topic that you are currently studying in class.

May 29 (1917) - John F. Kennedy's Birthday. John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born on May 29, 1917 in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was the 35th President of the United States and the youngest president ever elected. At his inauguration, Kennedy challenged the youth of America when he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." 1) Have your students complete a Biography Newspaper Project about John F. Kennedy. These newspapers can be assigned as individual or group projects. 2) Have your students complete a Character Body Book Report about John F. Kennedy. These reports can be assigned as individual or group projects. 3) Write a famous quote by JFK on your chalkboard or whiteboard and have your students respond to this quote. 4) What can the youth of today do for their country? 5) Pretend that you are the President and write a speech that would inspire the youth to volunteer and help in their local communities.

Last Monday of May - Memorial Day. The last Monday of May is Memorial Day in the United States. On this day, Americans remember and honor the brave men and women who have died while serving in the U.S. Military. 1) What does it mean to be patriotic? 2) What makes someone a hero? Write a paragraph explaining what a hero is to you and how an individual becomes a hero. 3) Do you have a parent or relative in the military? How has this experience affected your family? 4) If you do not, how do you think you would feel having a family member in the military? How would you feel if he or she was called to war?

June 8 is Best Friends Day. 1) Who was your first best friend? Describe this friend and what made this friend so special. 2) Write these quotes on the board and have your students respond in writing to them: Gems may be

precious, but friends are priceless. The best vitamin for making friends is B-1.



Flag Day is June 14. In the United States, Flag Day is celebrated on June 14. Flag Day recognizes the adoption of the flag of the United States, which occurred by a resolution of the Second Continental Congress in 1777, on June 14. The fifty stars on the

flag represent the 50 states and the 13 stripes represent the original thirteen colonies that rebelled against the British monarchy and became the first states in the Union. It is said that the color white on the flag signifies purity and innocence, red signifies valor and bravery, and blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice. 1) Design a flag for your school or city. 2) Write a paragraph describing why you chose these symbols and colors for the flag that you designed.

Father's Day 1) There is a popular saying "Fathers Know Best." Write about a time that your father helped you or gave you some good advice about a problem that you had. 2) Being a father is the most important job because...3) Imagine that you and your dad switched places and you suddenly became "Dad for a Day." What would it be like? 4) Write a list of things that you can do to help your dad and then create a Father's Day coupon book for your dad 5) Write about a time that your father helped you or gave you some good advice about a problem that you had.

MEET THE FLMS BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Director	Chet Sanders	Alachua
Chairperson/ Region 5 Director	Janet Spence	Hillsborough
Treasurer	Shirley Fox	Orange
Secretary	Laura Hinds	St. Johns
Membership Chair	Sharen Lewis	Sarasota
State Conference Chair	Kathy Shewey	Alachua
State Conference-Exhibitor Information/ Region 4 Director	Cathy Egley	Volusia
Collegiate Contact	Cheryl Ellerbrock	Tampa
Journal Editor	Paul George	Alachua
Journal Co-Editor	Reisa George	Alachua
Newsletter/Website Editor	Maureen Shankman	Alachua
Board Advisor	Santo Pino	Collier
Board Advisor	Gene Pickler	Seminole
Region 1 Director	Jeff Garthwaite	Escambia
Region 3 Director	Shane Andrew	Alachua
Region 7 Director	Steve Frazier	Broward
FLVS Representative	Terri Golden	Lee

2012 INSTITUTE FOR
MIDDLE LEVEL LEADERSHIP

JULY 8-11, 2012
SAN DIEGO, CA
HILTON LA JOLLA TORREY PINES

JULY 15-18, 2012
ORLANDO, FL
HYATT GRAND CYPRESS

www.amle.org/leadership

