VIRTUAL REALITY: SUPPORTING DIVISION I STUDENTS IN YOUR VIRTUAL LEARNING COMMONS

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THE VIRTUAL LEARNING COMMONS: GOALS

THE WHO AND WHAT
A Learning Commons (LC) is a common, or shared, learning ‘space’ that is both physical and virtual. It is designed to move students beyond mere research, practice, and group work to a greater level of engagement through exploration, experimentation, and collaboration.

It is a SPACE that...

- recognizes students are becoming not only better thinkers, but also makers, doers and problem solvers;
- promotes inquiry, collaboration and active engagement;
- empowers students and teachers to frame problems, generate ideas, refine solutions, collaborate with experts (locally and globally), and share results.
What are the features of a Virtual Learning Commons?

- Learner-Centered Environment with a variety of resources with multiple entry points and modes of access for diverse learners.
- Online access to authoritative and vetted resources
- Flexible anytime, anywhere access from home or school or mobile devices
- Collaborative learning environment
- Fresh and timely – information regularly updated

VLC RESOURCES

* Alberta Education Learning Commons Policy & Guidelines
  [https://education.alberta.ca/learning-commons/learning-commons/]

* Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada
  [http://llsop.canadianschoollibraries.ca]
Q: WHAT IS THE ORC?
A: $1.2 million collection of curricular aligned authoritative digital resources licensed on behalf of all Alberta:

• K-12 students and their parents
• School staff
• Pre-service teachers
• Public library staff*

A: Funded by a yearly Grant-in-Aid from Alberta Education to the Alberta Library (TAL)

*for the purposes of supporting K-12 patrons

HOW CAN THE ORC HELP YOUR VIRTUAL LEARNING COMMONS?

• Provide access to engaging, age-appropriate and authoritative virtual resources
  • provides access anytime, anywhere with an internet connection
  • includes embedded supports for diverse learners like listen, text translation, citation tools, vetted websites, copyright friendly pictures and videos
  • vetted information/articles with citation information included
  • Consistent and explicit update schedules
  • Access to journals like Walrus, National Geographic, School Library Journal, Men’s Health, and Maclean’s

• Easily incorporate resources into lessons and student work
  • Direct links to content (articles, videos, experiments, etc.)
  • Embed in learning management systems or within Google Classroom & Microsoft
  • Access to adaptive & assistive technologies within the resources (read-aloud, larger font, mp3 files, etc.)
  • Access to curriculum maps for K-12 science and Social Studies
  • Are time savers once users are familiar with the resource

HOW can the ORC help? (ctd.)
Enable schools to fulfill the requirements of Alberta Education’s Learning Commons Policy & Guidelines (2014)

**Policy Statement:**
To support students in attaining the goals and standards as stated in the Ministerial Order on Student Learning, school authorities must ensure that students have access to a learning commons. A learning commons is an inclusive, flexible, learner-centred, physical and/or virtual space for collaboration, inquiry, imagination and play to expand and deepen learning.

**In future slides, the acronym ‘VLC’ will be used to showcase how the ORC can be used to meet the virtual portion of the guidelines of Alberta Education’s Learning Commons Policy.**

**Q: HOW CAN THE ORC HELP? (ctd.)**

**Q: HOW DO YOU ACCESS THE ORC?**

- Go to LearnAlberta.ca
- Select English or French
- Click “Online Reference Centre” in the tab along the top of the screen
- In school automatic authentication should occur
- Outside of school access requires a district username and password
  
  LA___________ (username) ___________ (password)

- Share your district username and password using low tech methods - do not post on an open website
- Email barnesoul@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca for your remote username/password

**QUESTIONS?**
RESOURCES THAT PROMOTE AND SUPPORT LITERACY LEARNING

- Early World of Learning (Grades K-2)
- BookFLIX (Grades K-3)
- TrueFLIX (Grades 3-6)
- TeachingBooks.net (Grades K-12)

*VLC = Using the ORC to meet the guidelines of Alberta Education’s Learning Commons Policy

EARLY WORLD OF LEARNING

- Designed for very young learners with human voice read-aloud embedded throughout
- Stories, pictures, videos, songs and activities build literacy skills
- Related content to Science and Social Studies curricula
- Fun and interactive, works well on iPad or tablet
- URL at the top of the screen acts as a permalink **only for this resource
- VLC – provide high quality learning resources in English, French and other languages, as applicable, in order to support instruction and self-directed reading

‘HOW DO I USE THIS’ IDEAS: EARLY WORLD OF LEARNING

- Begin a library class/lesson/unit introduction/welcome to the day with a sing-along and/or nursery rhyme to get the students set up for learning/reading/read aloud/book selection
- Have Early World of Learning running on iPads in the library, classroom or office for students to access independently
- Have a related activity/article or database on the Projector/SMART board for students to complete/read and discuss collaboratively
- Highlight a section of the Early World of Learning database that is related to classroom learning on the Smart board and/or iPads
- Use a permalink to various pages as learning centres
- Use as a listening/reading centre
BOOKFLIX

- Recommended for K-3 students
- 120 fiction and nonfiction book pairs (250 books total) organized into themes
- Pairing fiction with related nonfiction increases student comprehension when reading both formats
- Search titles by guided reading level (Fountas and Pinnell), author, grade level, theme, etc.
- Lesson plans provided for each pair, 1-3 follow up “puzzlers” for each pair
- Real voice audio support embedded throughout resources to allow emergent readers to navigate the resource independently

**VLC** – provide access to quality print and digital learning resources in multiple formats that are reviewed to ensure they address a diverse range of student learning and developmental needs

‘HOW DO I USE THIS’ IDEAS: BOOKFLIX

Read Aloud Ideas:
- Highlight a book/author from your collection and have all of the related print resources on display following the reading
- Turn volume on mute and have a karaoke read - divide students into two groups and each group reads different pages
- Have no read along on and read it yourself using the beautiful large illustration to engage the students
- Instruct students to look for a word or phrase during the reading and make a motion/sound whenever it comes up
- Load the book on the Smart Board and students can complete the puzzlers on the SMART board following the book reading
- Pre-load on iPads/tablets or computers and use for a listening centre
- Use for home reading program

TRUEFLIX

- Sister resource to BookFLIX designed for grades 3-6
- Nonfiction content divided into 2 broad themes with 3-5 sub themes
- Each eBook includes an introductory video to help build background knowledge of topic and improve students comprehension
- Lesson plans provided for every eBook, all eBooks are guided reading level (Fountas and Pinnell) aligned
- Human voice read-along feature to support emergent/struggling readers
- Interactive table of contents for each eBook, in addition to a glossary and index
- Essential inquiry questions and project ideas from every eBook

**VLC** – support the development of competencies in many areas; including the gathering, analysis and evaluation of information
'HOW DO I USE THIS' IDEAS:
TRUEFLIX

- Assist resistant readers to select books with the introductory video for every eBook
- Find True Books in your print collection - pull them and highlight them for your readers
- Direct students to TrueFLIX to supplement nonfiction content for inquiry projects
- Run an introductory video related to their topic of study to promote nonfiction in general in your library

TEACHINGBOOKS.NET

- A wealth of support materials to teach and promote books in your school (book trailers, author interviews and read-alongs, author audio name pronunciation, QR flyers, embedded citations, book guides and lesson plans)
- Share/permalink any page using the Email/Text/QR Flyer/Bookmark or PermaLink features
- Access Alberta specific booklists:
  - Pacific Northwest Library Association Young Readers Choice Award (YNCA)
  - ELA Authorized Novel and Nonfiction Reading List for grades 4-12
  - Canadian Book Award Winners/Canadian Book and Author Resources
- Create and/or request a personalized booklist
- VLC - supports literacy, numeracy, competency development and student learning outcomes through access to and instruction in the effective use of print and digital resources

'HOW DO I USE THIS' IDEAS:
TEACHINGBOOKS.NET

- Using the Permalink option, feature a Canadian author each month on your Learning Commons/classroom/school webpage (link print and virtual - create a related bulletin board with a QR code to the webpage)
- Feature staff pick(s) each month and provide a permalink to the book’s TeachingBook.net page
- Create custom reading lists for different grades, top student selections page, or create a librarian/morning news page in TeachingBook.net and provide the page to your LLC webpage - mimic this in the physical space
- Support classroom novel studies and/or book clubs with the provided support materials
- Create school-wide Virtual Book Club
- Promote Rocky Mountain Book Award (and other award lists) selection using the support materials (virtually on your webpage and in library print collection also)
SPRUCING UP SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE WITH THE ORC

PebbleGo Animals (Grades K-3)
PebbleGo Science (Grades K-3)
PowerKnowledge Earth and Space Science (Grades 1-6)
PowerKnowledge Life Science (Grades 1-6)
PowerKnowledge Physical Science (Grades 1-6)
National Geographic Kids Virtual Library (Grades K-6)

PEBBLEGO ANIMALS & PEBBLEGO SCIENCE

- Recommended for students in K-3
- Easy navigation, levelled text, visual searching all designed for beginning researchers
- Human-voice read-aloud with text highlighting, photos, videos, audio clips to enhance learning and engage learners
- Articles segmented into brief sections with tab navigation at the top of the screen
- One or two videos that align with the article to help activate/develop background knowledge of the topic

VLC:
- provide student access to and guidance on the use of:
  - online licensed and open access resources
  - quality print and digital learning resources in multiple formats that are reviewed to ensure they address a diverse range of student learning and developmental needs.

‘HOW DO I USE THIS’ IDEAS: PEBBLEGO ANIMALS AND SCIENCE

- This is a database that can be easily navigated by kinders and grade 1 students with very little assistance on chromebooks, tablets or iPads
- Always a struggle to find nonfiction content appropriate for this age range - this can supplement the print collection
- Use for independent inquiry projects or for science lessons
- Topics covered in Science: plants, animals, humans (senses), matter, sound, forces and motion, seasons, weather, etc.
- Topics covered in Animals: amphibians, animals behaviour, animal classification, animal habitats, birds, dinosaurs, fish, insects and spiders, invertebrates, mammals, pets and form animals, and reptiles
- Use the updated curriculum map
POWERKNOWLEDGE SUITE

- Recommended for grades 1-6
- Content divided into 3 databases: Earth & Space, Life Science, and Physical Science
- Includes a customizable read aloud feature
- Short, segmented articles with introductory videos to build background knowledge
- Embedded science experiments, projects, and educational games related to the content of the database
- Aligns with 95% of the grade 3-6 science curriculum and 87% of the grade 1-6 science curriculum
- VLC - provide support, resources and opportunities for transferability of learning to support broad exploration and inquiry that leads to deeper learning

POWERKNOWLEDGE EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE

Science Units Supported:
- Grade 1 Seasonal Changes
- Grade 2 Exploring Liquids
- Grade 3 Rocks and Minerals
- Grade 4 Light and Shadows & Waste and Our World
- Grade 5 Weather Watch, Wetland Ecosystems & Social Studies Mapping
- Grade 6 Sky Science

POWERKNOWLEDGE LIFE SCIENCE

Science Units Supported:
- Grade 1 Needs of Animals and Plants
- Grade 2 Small Crawling and Flying Animals
- Grade 3 Animal Life Cycles & Hearing and Sound
- Grade 4 Plant Growth and Changes & Waste and Our World
- Grade 5 Wetland Ecosystems
- Grade 6 Trees and Forests
POWERKNOWLEDGE PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Science Units Supported:

• Grade 1 Needs of Animals and Plants
• Grade 2 Hot and Cold Temperature & Magnetism
• Grade 4 Wheels and Levers
• Grade 5 Electricity and Magnetism & Classroom Chemistry
• Grade 6 Trees and Forests

‘HOW DO I USE THIS’ IDEAS:

POWERKNOWLEDGE SUITE

Supplement your print collection for the classroom and library

• There are only so many books a classroom or library can have on penguins - PowerKnowledge databases can be accessed by a limitless number of students simultaneously
• While pulling print content fetching units, find related content in the PowerKnowledge databases, create permalinks to articles to send those along in an email as well
• Use permalinks to create QR codes to various animals/topic articles and have a centres around the classroom
• Earth - select applicable articles and create QR flyers for around the school
• These resources are included in the Science curriculum mapping documents

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS VIRTUAL LIBRARY

• Authoritative nonfiction content
• Award-winning maps and photos
• 200+ National Geographic Kids Books
• 500+ Kid-friendly downloadable images
• National Geographic Kids Magazines (2009-Present, 3 month embargo)
• Include listen feature
• VLC - provide and support technology for learning to enable creation, collaboration and communication
HOW DO I USE THIS' IDEAS:
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS VIRTUAL LIBRARY

- Have National Geographic Kids running on iPads instead of print - better yet have both
- Have a featured article on the Smart board to explicitly teach pulling key information out, begin exploring a topic, etc.
- Show a video to set up learning and/or activate previous knowledge
- Use a permalink and QR to articles about different Canadian animals and have that abound classroom as learning centres, around the school as a "Did you know?" series
- Use copy-right friendly images from this resource in student projects, around the school and/or classroom
- Easy to use and access content for classroom inquiry/project based learning

SOCIAL STUDIES

Pebble GO Social Studies (Grades K-3)
Culturegrams (Grades 3-12)

- Easy navigation, levelled text, visual searching all designed for beginning researchers
- Human voice read-aloud with text highlighting, photos, videos, audio clips to enhance learning and engage learners
- Articles segmented into brief sections with tab navigation at the top of the screen
- One or two videos that align with the article to help activate/develop background knowledge of the topic
- VLC: provide student access to and guidance on the use of:
  - online licensed and open access resources
  - quality print and digital learning resources in multiple formats that are reviewed to ensure they address a diverse range of student learning and developmental needs.
‘HOW DO I USE THIS’ IDEAS:
**PEBBLEGO SOCIAL STUDIES**

- This is a database that can be easily navigated by kinders and grade 1 students with very little assistance on chromebooks, tablets or iPads
- Always a struggle to find nonfiction content appropriate for this age range - this can supplement the print collection
- Use for independent inquiry projects or for science lessons
- Topics covered: my world, maps, long ago and today, community, culture and awareness, citizenship, holidays

**CULTUREGRAMS**

- **Kids Edition** - excellent support for gr. 3 & 5 S.S.
- **Provinces Edition** - supports gr. 2 & 4 S.S.
  - Updated every 6 months and written/reviewed by in-country consultants
  - Features included: customizable read-aloud, photo gallery, slideshows, videos, famous people, and cultural recipes
  - Tools included: build-your-own graphs and tables, pre-generated graphs and tables, distance calculator, and currency converter
- **VLC** - focus on quality learning resources in multiple formats and provide exposure to a wide variety of Canadian and international resources (fiction and nonfiction) which reflect multiple perspectives, promote literacy and numeracy and develop students’ interests and competencies beyond the school setting

‘HOW DO I USE THIS’ IDEAS:
**CULTUREGRAMS**

- There are only so many books on Tunisia/India/Ukraine/Peru and Canada
- This database can greatly assist grade three and five students who are looking for content related to various countries
- Finding content for the grade 2, 4 social studies curriculum is challenging
- While this database does not provide information on the exact cities and towns studied in the grade 2 curriculum, it does provide excellent content on each of the provinces
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESOURCES: A JUMPING OFF POINT TO RESEARCH

Britannica School: Elementary (Grades 1-3)
ScholasticGo! (Grades 2-12)

Britannica School: Elementary
• Recommended for students in grades K-6
• Britannica Learning Zone designed for grades PreK-2
• Offers play-based activities for learning colours, geography, numbers, shapes, how to tell time, and vocabulary
• Canada In Focus section devoted to articles about significant Canadian people, places, and history
• Two reading levels allow users to change level while maintaining age appropriate interface
• Embedded read aloud feature and font adjustment and text translation for 50 languages
• Seamless access on tablet, smartphone, laptop or desktop
• Educator tools including lesson plan builder
• VLC: provide student access to and guidance on the use of:
  - online licensed and open access resources
  - quality print and digital learning resources in multiple formats that are reviewed to ensure they address a diverse range of student learning and developmental needs

ScholasticGo!
• Formerly known as Amazing Animals of the World, it is now a database made up of seven Scholastic encyclopedia databases: Encyclopedia Americana, Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia, The New Book of Knowledge, America the Beautiful, Lands & Peoples, Amazing Animals of the World, and The New Book of popular Science
• Contains 115,000 articles written by experts in their subject and edited by professional editors
• Articles are all differentiated by Lexile Reading Level
• Read Aloud available for every article
• Access to world atlas with more than 1200 maps, hundreds of photos, and thousands of links to related articles within Scholastic Go!
• Alberta Standards available
• VLC: provide support, resources and opportunities for transferability of learning to support broad exploration and inquiry that leads to deeper learning
LANGUAGE LEARNING

BBC Muzzy Online (Grades K-6)

BBC MUZZY ONLINE

• Guided immersion language learning program; lessons build on the previous for lots of repetition

• Languages include: British English, American English, Spanish, Latin-American Spanish, French, Chinese Pinyin, Italian, German, Korean (RR)
  • Two levels of learning, twelve lessons per level
  • Topics include: time, health & feelings, past, present & futures tenses, asking questions, transportation, people and places, life at home, family and friends, food, etc.
  • New features include: music (with optional subtitles) and recording
  • Ideal for English Language Learners (ELL), French as a second language (FSL) or special needs students experience social challenges
  • VLC - provide high quality learning resources in English, French and other languages, as applicable, in order to support instruction and self-directed reading

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL STAFF USING THE ORC

ORC Support Site
ORC Listerv
Contact
ORC SUPPORT SITE

www.onlinereferencecentre.ca

• Resource training materials - podcasts, videos, archived, webinars, and guides
• Information about upcoming free ORC PD opportunities
• Information about province-wide resource trials and surveys
• Online booking system for ORC sessions
• Calendar of ORC Events
• Links to the ORC Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook accounts

ORC LISTSERV

ORC Listserv  http://eepurl.com/cgred5

• Weekly email updates powered by MailChimp and organized by grade levels:
  • New resources and features
  • Province-wide trials
  • Surveys
  • Free PD opportunities
• No emails during school breaks
• Email ORC@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca or visit the ORC Support Site to join today

CONTACT

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