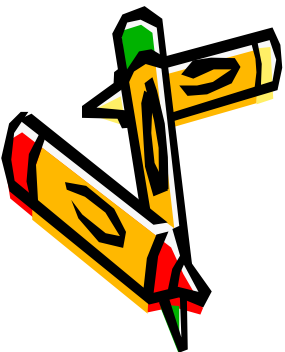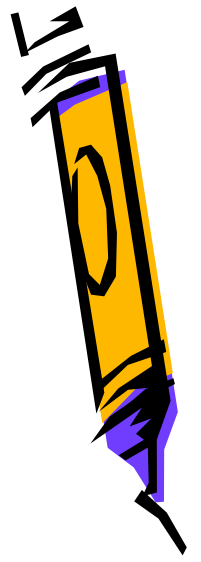# Writing Apps

By: Jessica Norman, OTDS
Belmont University
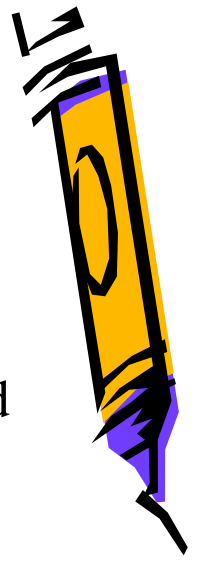
Contact Information:
Phone: (931)397-6878
Email: jdnorman12@gmail.com

# Writing

- Apps that emphasize composition, creation and "kinesthetic" (physical) skills are key components for writing success throughout student's careers.

- Once your students have the basics of early reading and spelling down, "look for apps that go a little deeper, teaching kids about story structure...or responding to writing prompts," suggests Shira Lee Katz, director of digital learning at Common Sense Media.

- According to Katz, quality educational writing apps share some fundamental characteristics, such as fostering a love for letters, sounds, and storytelling and providing repeated opportunities to practice and reinforce skills.

- Look for apps that promote the skills outlined above, as well as age-specific abilities. Letter-tracing apps are perfect for preschoolers looking to hone the fine motor development needed for physical writing.

- As the students grow, interactive "story-building apps" encourage creative thinking, while keeping a "digital diary" can keep older kids engaged in jotting down their thoughts daily.

(Norman 2013)

# iWriteWords

- Can your students help Mr. Crab collect the numbered balls by tracing her letters?

- This adorable app—featuring a cheery palette and child-like graphics—teaches writing by touch as your toddler traces letters and spells out simple words. Sound effects and a voice prompt will help your students stay engaged and follow instructions.

- After 3 or 4 letters, simple words like CAT and MOON are spelled and sounded out. This app is highly interactive with a lot of sense appeal for the tiniest tots. The big bonus? On top of ABC familiarity, this app promotes physical and kinesthetic learning.

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 4.3 or later. This app is optimized for iPhone 5.
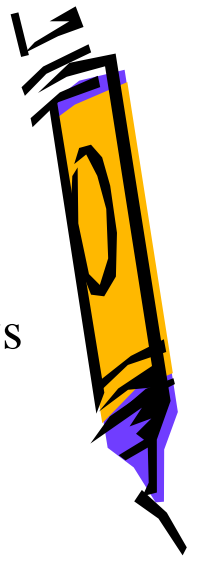
- Price: $2.99

- Age: 2-5

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/iwritewords-handwriting-game/id307025309?mt=8
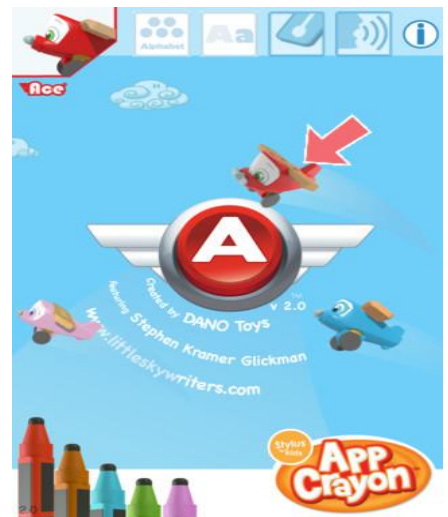
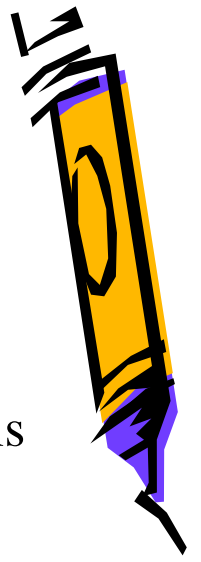(Norman 2013)

# Little Sky Writers

- Grab your pilot goggles; it's time to fly! Watch your student's letter knowledge soar as she follows a plane that traces the letter's shape.

- A narrator talks about the letter, makes words associations, and even tells jokes.

- Featuring bright colors and cute animation, this teacher-created app is a great introduction to physical writing—with tons of bells and whistles and even positive reinforcement that make it perfect for physical and kinesthetic teaching.

- Students are so engrossed in the game, they do not even realize they are learning.


- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad.  Requires iOS 4.0 or later

- Price: $1.99

- Age 2-5

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/little-sky-writers/id384466666?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

# ABC first words – learn to spell musical instruments: Letters, Sounds & Writing

- This spelling, writing and word recognition tool is visually stunning with healthy a dose of early music education.

- Help your students drag and arrange colorful letter blocks to spell the musical instrument that's pictured.

- With each correct spelling, they will be treated to a tune; spell "piano" and you get a snippet of a piano medley—spell "cello" and cello music plays.

- This app hones fine motor skills and is especially appealing to auditory learners.

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.
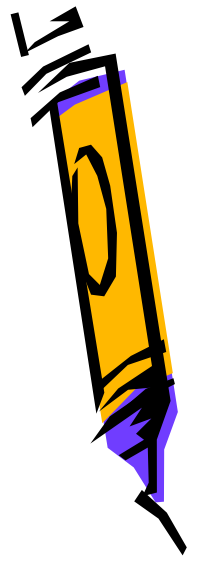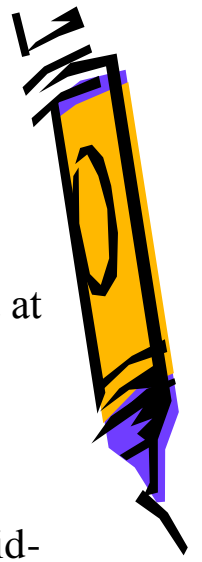
- Price: Free

- Age 2-5

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/abc-first-words-learn-to-spell/id436080012?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

# Write My Name

- Name tags that talk, radiant word cards and an animal-filled alphabet notebook … it's all here in this charming writing practice app. Students can follow the sparkling star trail to trace letters and simple words using their fingers—no pencil and paper required.

- As students tackle each user-friendly exercise successfully, the narrator speaks the word or letter and a picture appears with cute sound effects, reinforcing recognition skills with audio and visual components.

- Once the alphabet book with upper and lower case letters has been mastered, children are ready to tackle virtual cards with simple sight words. The real standout feature is the "name tag," where budding writers can practice writing their names with a voiceover recording and complementary photo.

# Write My Name

- Teacher Features:
  - Tracks student's progress with charts, which can be reset at any time. This app can be used by very young students without much supervision once they get the hang of it.

  - Beginner writing lessons could really benefit from this kid-friendly, engaging app.

- Skills: Handwriting, The Alphabet, Spelling, Sight Words

- Requirements: Compatible with iPad. Requires iOS 4.3 or later.

- Price: $3.99
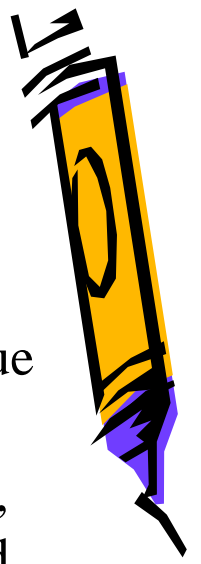
- Grades: Preschool - Kindergarten

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/write-my-name-by-injini/id500623496?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4

# Sentence Builder

- Designed to help elementary aged children learn how to build grammatically correct sentences

- Building sentences can be tricky; give your students a leg up with this easy slot machine-esque tool, featuring basic nouns, verbs and articles.

- Line up the words correctly to match the pictures, and they will be rewarded by a cheering animated pal.

- This app is especially great for practice with grammar and connector words, and is appealing for visual learners because of the graphic illustration of how grammar works.

- Three levels of play are possible and there are many additional settings, allowing the app to grow with your child.

- Requirements: Compatible with iPad. Requires iOS 5.1 or later.

- Price: $5.99

- Age 5-10

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sentencebuilder-for-ipad/id364197515?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

# iDiary for Kids

- An interactive diary, journal and scrapbook all in one, this app is flexible enough for younger students but engaging enough to keep the interest of older students.

- Formatted like a standard diary, students can write everyday and add photos, drawings and other personal touches to their journal entries.

- Users also have the option of sharing some content online or emailing specific entries.

- This app encourages self-reflection, imagination and daily writing practice.

- Requirements: Compatible with iPad. Requires iOS 5.0 or later.
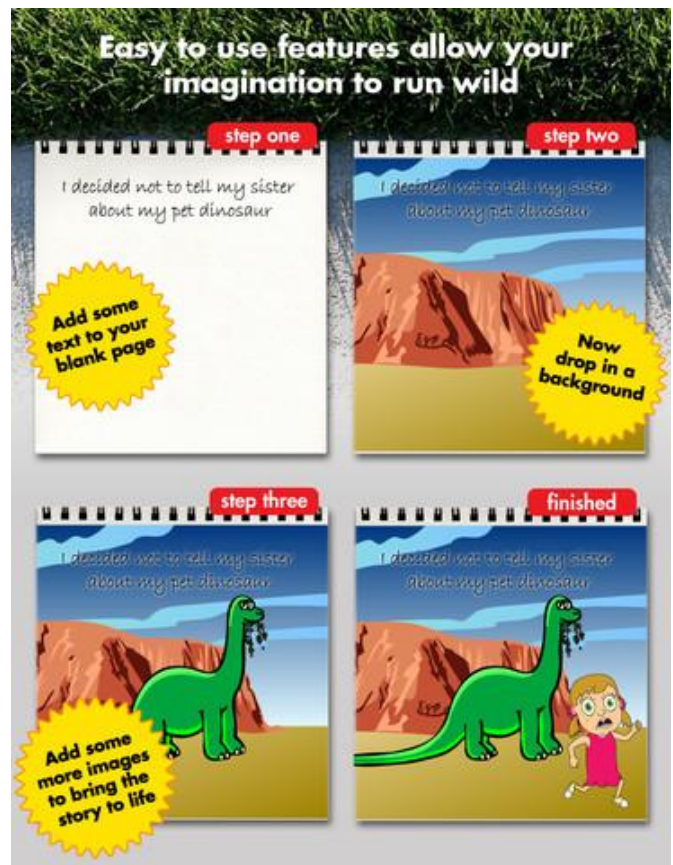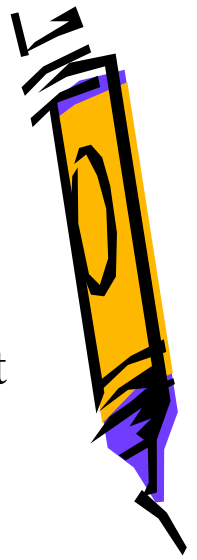
- Price: $1.99 (iDiary for Kids Lite is Free)

- Age: 5-13

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/app/idia
ry-for-kids-
journaling/id424283623?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

# Story Patch

- Nurture your student's creativity with this garden-themed app.

- Either choose a theme or start from scratch, and get to writing! After they have penned the tale, help them choose from over 800 customizable illustrations to pair with the text.

- Your students will be awed when her story leaps off the page; this tool makes composition and storytelling a truly multimedia experience.


- Requirements: Compatible with iPad. Requires iOS 3.2 or later.

- Price: $2.99

- Age: 5+

URL:
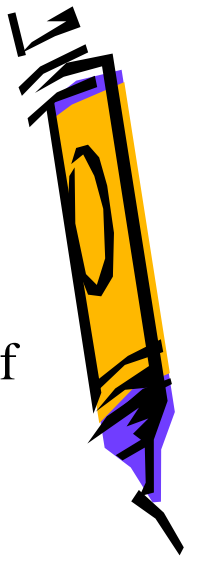https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/story-patch/id388613157?mt=8

# Toontastic

- Lights, camera, writing! Encourage your students to create his or her own cartoon story with this app.

- Instead of just throwing random elements together, *Toontastic's* "story arc" feature guides her in the basics of narration—your budding storyteller must choose a conflict, a climax and a resolution for her tale.

- This is a great tool to teach the essentials of good composition while sharpening writing skills and stimulating creativity.

- Requirements: Compatible with iPad. Requires iOS 5.1 or later.

- Price: Free

- Age: 6+

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/toontastic-free/id404693282?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

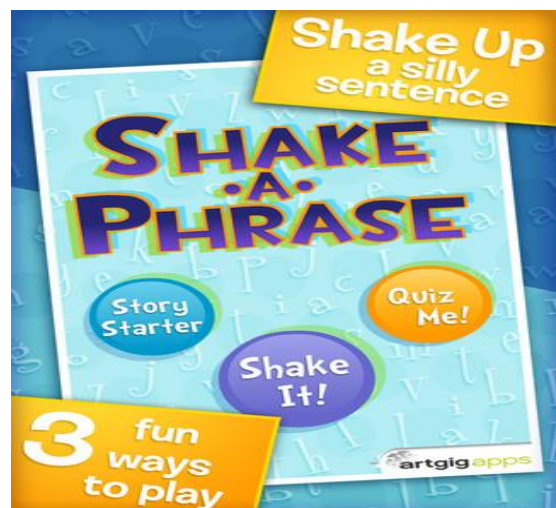# Shake-a-Phrase: Fun with Words and Sentences

- Creative writing prompts, vocabulary, and parts of speech practice.

- Shake things up with this hilarious writing app, which creates silly sentences with a flick of your wrist.

- Boasting four kid-friendly themes, 2,000+ vocabulary words, touch-definitions, testing mode and story introductions, this app is a great way to get your student's creative juices flowing.

- A super way to stimulate imagination and make creative writing fun.


- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.2 or later.
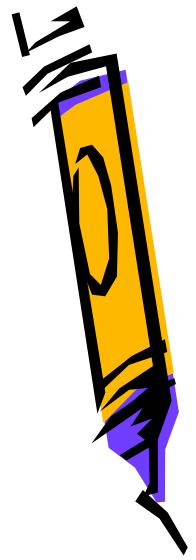
- Price: $1.99

- Age: 7+

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/
shake-phrase-fun-words-
sentences/id436414534?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

# GrammarPrep – Subjects and Verbs

- Grammar Prep - Subjects and Verbs explains and drills subject-verb agreement issues in a no-frills, academic style.

- Students fill in the blanks of sentences with the correct form of a verb—singular or plural. The app contains a variance in types of sentences, which provides lots of practice with the trickiest subject-verb agreement issues our already tricky language offers.

- While the educational value is sound, the app wears out its welcome quickly.

- Skills: Grammar, Subject-Verb Agreement

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.
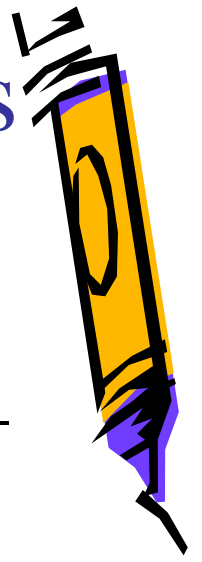- Price: $3.99
- Grades: 6th – 8th

URL: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grammarprep-subjects-verbs/id372370020?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4
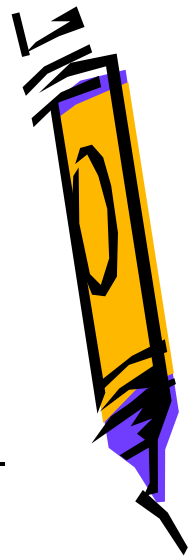
(Norman 2013)

# GrammarPrep: Apostrophes

- GrammarPrep is the first grammar app with multimedia tutorials, quizzes and mastery tests, answer feedback, and progress tracking, it is the only grammar app that offers proven, educational-quality content.

- With GrammarPrep you can quickly and easily improve your writing. Students learn how to recognize and correct common grammar errors through instructional videos and podcasts, assess skills and see what they know with "Practice Tests", test their skills with "Mini Tests", track improvement through the "High Scores" progress tracker.

- Skills: Apostrophes

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.
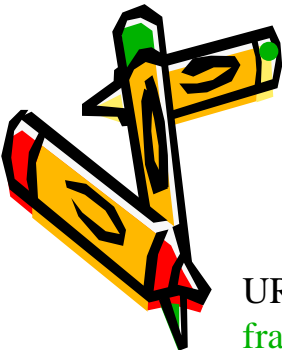
- Price: $3.99

- Grades: 6th – 8th

URL: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grammarprep-apostrophes/id382244969?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4

(Norman 2013)

# GrammarPrep: Fragments, Run-Ons, and Comma Splices

- GrammarPrep is the first grammar app with multimedia tutorials, quizzes and mastery tests, answer feedback, and progress tracking, it is the only grammar app that offers proven, educational-quality content.

- With GrammarPrep you can quickly and easily improve your writing. Students learn how to recognize and correct common grammar errors through instructional videos and podcasts, assess skills and see what they know with "Practice Tests", test their skills with "Mini Tests", track improvement through the "High Scores" progress tracker.

- Skills: Fragments, Run-Ons, and Comma Splices

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.
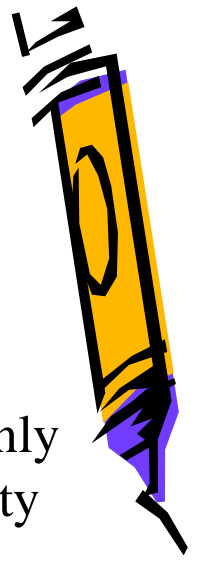
- Price: $3.99

  Grades: 6th – 8th

URL: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grammarprep-fragments-run/id387666766?mt=8

(Norman 2013)

# GrammarPrep: Using Commas

- GrammarPrep is the first grammar app with multimedia tutorials, quizzes and mastery tests, answer feedback, and progress tracking, it is the only grammar app that offers proven, educational-quality content.

- With GrammarPrep you can quickly and easily improve your writing. Students learn how to recognize and correct common grammar errors through instructional videos and podcasts, assess skills and see what they know with "Practice Tests", test their skills with "Mini Tests", track improvement through the "High Scores" progress tracker.

- Skills: Commas

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.

- Price: $3.99

  - Grades: 6th – 8th

URL: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grammarprep-using-commas/id372367489?mt=8
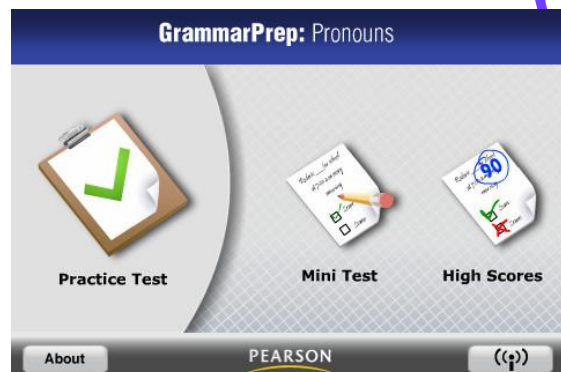
(Norman 2013)

# GrammarPrep: Pronouns

- GrammarPrep is the first grammar app with multimedia tutorials, quizzes and mastery tests, answer feedback, and progress tracking, it is the only grammar app that offers proven, educational-quality content.

- With GrammarPrep you can quickly and easily improve your writing. Students learn how to recognize and correct common grammar errors through instructional videos and podcasts, assess skills and see what they know with "Practice Tests", test their skills with "Mini Tests", track improvement through the "High Scores" progress tracker.

- Skills: Pronouns

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.
- Price: $3.99
- Grades: 6th – 8th

URL:
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grammar prep-pronouns/id372369164?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4
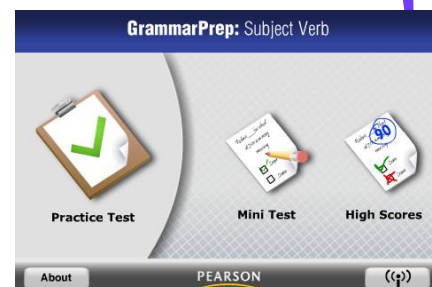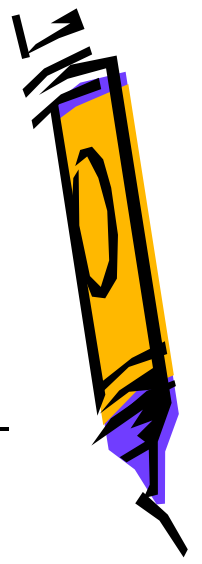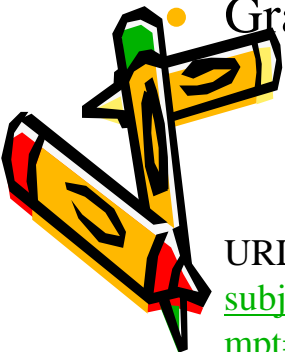
(Norman 2013)

# GrammarPrep: Subject and Verbs

- GrammarPrep is the first grammar app with multimedia tutorials, quizzes and mastery tests, answer feedback, and progress tracking, it is the only grammar app that offers proven, educational-quality content.

- With GrammarPrep you can quickly and easily improve your writing. Students learn how to recognize and correct common grammar errors through instructional videos and podcasts, assess skills and see what they know with "Practice Tests", test their skills with "Mini Tests", track improvement through the "High Scores" progress tracker.

- Skills: Subjects and Verbs

- Requirements: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.0 or later.

- Price: $3.99
  - Grades: 6$^{th}$ – 8$^{th}$

URL: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grammarprep-subjects-verbs/id372370020?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4

(Norman 2013)

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Munoz, R. (2012). 8 essential writing apps for kids. Retrieved from http://www.education.com/magazine/article/writing-apps-kids/.

(Norman 2013)