

## Fun Activities for Teaching Keyboarding

- **Row Races:** Divide students into teams of 4-5 people. Using sentences in a book or the lesson pages that go with each KeyWords lesson, assign a row or paragraph to each person. When the teacher says "go" the person from each team that picked Line 1 begins typing. The people who picked Line 2 are not allowed to start until they receive a "high five" from the Line 1 typist that he or she is finished. This goes on until they all have typed a line. Then the team that gets through the allotted lines the fastest, wins.
- **Type that Tune:** Bring a Christmas CD or just turn on the radio. They are to type as much of the song they can as it is being sung. This, obviously, is pretty hard to do, but they mostly all get the chorus. If you use a CD with a song on it, you can restart it several times so they can get more of the song.
- **Switch hands:** Have students cross their left and right hands over each other and try to type sentences in the book. They realize this is very awkward, and then it seems the regular way isn't so bad after all.
- **Story Marathon:** Using the AlphaSmart Hub, download a story starter into a file on each unit. Students are to continue the story for about two minutes. When time is up, they have to switch AlphaSmarts and read the story started by their classmate (give them about a minute to read the preceding paragraph or two) and then I time again for two minutes. We continue this several times. Then, have the students return the AlphaSmart to the original owner, complete the story, and proofread for errors. They love to read a few of these out loud. It is also fun to do this with thematic music. When the music is turned off, they switch chairs. I have a Halloween CD that has "Monster Mash", "The Munsters theme song", etc. on it so it is really a great activity on Halloween party day!
- **Duets:** Have each student choose a partner and sit next to him or her (or even share a chair if they prefer). One person is the right hand the other is the left and they have to type sentences in a book together. This is a great drill to get them to type with a sense of rhythm. At first they will want to call the letters out loud to help tell each other where they are in the word. After a few times, tell them they have to do it silently and watch them start tapping their feet or bobbing their heads!
- **ABC's** – In AlphaWord, you can go directly to the Typing Timer (cmd FIND). Have the students type the ABC's as fast as they can. Continue practicing this to see how much they can improve on their time. For variations, have them start at different places in the alphabet and 'come back' to the original point – for example, tell them to start at M and then they would type MNOPQRSTUVWXYZABCDEFGHIJKL. Another variation is to start at Z and type it backwards!
- **Baseball** - This activity is for speed development. The class is divided into two teams and each team selects a name. Students are timed for one minute on a selected line or sentence. They are to key the line as many times as they can during the timing. Each line is equal to one base; four bases (lines) equal a run. Scoring: Each team counts the number of lines each team member completes during the timing, and records the "run" on the board. For example: if a team gets ten total bases (lines), it scores two runs and has a runner on second for the start of the next inning. The number of innings is based on the amount of time available.

- **Flash Cards** -Letters that have been introduced are written on large index cards - one letter per card. One card at a time is flashed with students keying letter-space-letter-space until the next card is flashed. As a variation, each day a different student can be the flash card holder.
- **Football** -Create a simple illustration of a football field on the board or a piece of poster paper. The class is divided into two groups. Each group keys in a certain line for a 30 second time period. At the end of that time, one person from each team counts the total number of words typed in for their entire group. The difference in number of words typed between the two groups is the amount of “yardage” the leading team advances. There are penalties though - five yard penalty for any improper technique including wrong fingering, looking at the keyboard, or hunting and pecking. Ten yards for illegal use of the voice (talking during the game).
- **Simon Says** - The teacher acts as Simon, calling out things for the students to do. Students should not complete the action, unless the teacher first says, “Simon says.” If students do not follow directions, they must stop. Try the following examples, but remember to add a few non-Simon directions also. Simon says stand while you type, sing while you type, shake your head while you type, type on one foot, type line 7, type the top line, type the bottom line, type with your tongue out, etc.....
- **Technique Tag** -The purpose of technique tag is to work on proper technique at the keyboard. One person is selected to walk around the room looking for someone with excellent technique. When the person finds someone with great technique, they tag or tap that person and the tagged person becomes the new person to search for another person with great technique.
- **Tortoise and the Hare** - The class is divided into two equal teams, the “Hares” and the “Tortoises.” The Hares’ goal is to type for speed and Tortoises’ goal is to type for accuracy. Scoring goes as follows and can be adjusted to reflect skill levels of individual classes:

### Hares

1. 5 yards for 15 wpm gain
2. 3 yards for 12 wpm gain
3. 1 yard for 10 wpm gain

### Tortoises

1. 5 yards for no errors
2. 3 yards for 1 error
3. 1 yard for 2 or more errors.

The ten “animals” who earn the greatest distance are the winners. Switch student roles so they work at both, building speed and accuracy.

**Rapping the Keyboard** – Here is a rap you can teach your students and then they can sing it while they type the alphabet –

*Left Hand*

Little finger A, reach for B,  
Same finger C, D, E,  
Side by side F and G

*Right Hand*

First finger H, reach up for I,

*Both Hands*

J, K, L -three in a row,  
M and N side by side,  
Use ring finger, reach up for O.

Both little fingers P and Q,  
R, S, T not hard for you.  
Up for U, down for V.  
Left ring finger up and down  
Press W and X without a frown.  
Reach up for Y and down for Z.  
Now you have them all you see.

Web Sources: <http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/tnl/langarts/activities.htm>,  
<http://www.tcet.unt.edu/START/instruct/general/kb-rap.htm>,  
<http://www.angelfire.com/ks/tonyaskinner/kbideas.html>