



Literacy Web-based resource for beginning readers

ABRACADABRA

Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance (CSLP)



Goal

- To increase young children's abilities in reading and language development.

Clientele and targeted communities

- **Students:**
 - Kindergarten (4- and 5- year- olds)
 - Grade 1
 - Grade 2 (with difficulty reading and writing)
- **Users:**
 - Teachers
 - Special education teachers
 - Speech therapists
 - Parents
 - Tutors
- **Establishments:**
 - English elementary schools
 - Quebec community organizations or other educational institutions (free version on the Web)

ABRACADABRA is a free, interactive, Web-based resource designed to support the development of reading and writing skills of emerging readers. This evidence-based software uses a balanced approach to teaching early literacy. **ABRACADABRA** promotes the use of new technologies in the classrooms and, through its modular design, which scaffolds and supports both teachers and students, creates an engaging flexible learning environment.

Characteristics

- Interactive activities to help the child develop skills in:
 - alphabetic: learning graphemes and phonemes
 - fluency: reading with rhythm and expression
 - comprehension: understanding the sequence of events in a story
 - writing: learning to spell words and write sentences
- Several skill levels within each activity to accommodate each child's pace of learning
- Animated demonstrations to show the child how to complete each activity
- Friendly multi-cultural characters may be consulted for help
- The recording of reading samples and the writing of stories within an electronic portfolio, ePEARL

Partners



ABRACADABRA was designed and developed by a multidisciplinary team at the CSLP with input from a variety of Canadian researchers and partners. Housed at Concordia University, the CSLP has spearheaded a large number of innovative projects in research and development that have made a difference for hundreds of elementary, secondary and postsecondary students.



One of LEARN's mandates is to foster cooperation and educational innovation through technology and the promotion of best practices. Within the framework of the **ABRACADABRA** project, and in addition to its part in reviewing the development of the tool, LEARN now offers support by providing training to Quebec educators. LEARN will also distribute ABRA materials: paper copies of the books, stickers, posters, etc.

Transfer of research

ABRACADABRA is an initiative led by researchers Philip C. Abrami, professor at Concordia University's Department of Education and Director of the CSLP, and Robert Savage, professor at McGill University's Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology.

The tool's theoretical underpinnings stems from an exhaustive analysis of the most probing research results on English language and literacy development by young children and on the needs of the academic environment. **ABRACADABRA** has been the subject of numerous research projects, which have documented its significant and sustained impact on kindergarten and primary grade students, as well as with students who otherwise would struggle to learn.

How to obtain ABRACADABRA

- The complete version is accessible within the CSLP's Learning Toolkit which is installed on a school board server. The installer may be obtained by contacting the CSLP.
- A lite version (Instructional, Teacher and Parent modules) is also available on the Web at <http://abralite.concordia.ca>.

Information

CTREQ

Phone: 418 658-2332

info@ctreq.qc.ca

www.ctreq.qc.ca/abracadabra

ABRACADABRA

Components

- **Instructional module (student)**
Helps students develop their skills in four areas: alphabetic (sounds, letters, words), fluency, comprehension and writing. You can mix and match up to 32 activities with stories designed and stored in a digital format, creating an authentic and challenging learning environment.
- **Professional development module (teacher)**
Offers information on best reading and writing teaching practices, tips, lesson plans, printable resources, and videos demonstrating how to use **ABRACADABRA** in the classroom.
- **Assessment module (teacher)**
Enables teachers to track the development of each student's reading skills by recording the results of each activity in a database and to customize learning to meet individual needs.
- **Communication module (teacher)**
A secure environment that facilitates communication between educators to share ideas and expertise, lesson plans and assessment tools.
- **Parent module**
Offers tips for support, along with resources so that parents may better help their child.
- **Link with ePEARL (Electronic Portfolio Encouraging Active Reflective Learning)**
Allows children to follow their reading (audio recording module) and writing (text editor) progress, to set goals and to reflect on their work, and to comment on their peers' work and ideas.



Training and Support

- Technical support to ensure optimal tool performance in schools provided by the CSLP, Concordia University
– Information: abracadabra@education.concordia.ca
- Training provided by CSLP and LEARN, a non-profit organization whose mandate is to train teachers within Québec's English school network,
– Information: Gia Deleveaux, CSLP Literacy Coordinator (Phone: 514 848-2424, extension 5922; gia.deleveaux@education.concordia.ca)

CTREQ

CTREQ's mission is to help improve academic success rates by stimulating educational innovation and helping communities of practice put those innovations to work through knowledge transfer, support for practical experience, and monitoring, liaison and networking.

In cooperation with its organizational partners, CTREQ provides awareness, information, screening and intervention tools and services to communities of practice that are active in improving academic success in Québec.

Québec 

Avec la participation financière de:
• Secrétariat à la jeunesse
• Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
• Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation



March 2009

1175, avenue Lavigerie, Suite 440
Québec (Québec) G1V 4P1

Phone: 418 658-2332

Fax: 418 658-2008

info@ctreq.qc.ca

www.ctreq.qc.ca

 **CTREQ**

Le centre de transfert
pour la réussite
éducative du Québec