

Fun Activities for Teaching Keyboarding

- **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!
- **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 what ever team 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.
- **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!