

write them down.”

“This year we have a student with severe learning problems who had difficulty with the sixth grade and seventh grade. His mother expressed concern about his being in Mr. Beeler’s class because it would be too hard. I asked her to give him a chance — he’s smart

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but he just has some expression problems. Well, his mom came to me last six weeks in tears — he got a 98 in social studies, the highest grade of anyone in the eighth grade. He’s been in special education resources his whole life! But he was successful because he is bright, but he needed some help with the writing part,” Dr. McKenzie said.

Lickteig believes MacCSILE lets the students emulate things that adults do. “You watch the class, and they are working like mature

adults; they work a while, then they’ll stop and chat for a few seconds, then they’ll get back to work. If they need help, they will go find the person who can give them help. Maybe they need to bring several people together to accomplish a task, the same way you and I would work. So the computer and a network of computers allows that to occur, and we add to our telecommunications. In fact, we have a modem that some of our students already use,” Lickteig said.

“We’ve really been fortunate that we get along really well,” Beeler said laughing, “because we spend a lot of hours on this project. English and history really go well together. English supports all my skills I need to teach history; writing, reading and research.”

“And it really works well at this school because we are on the block system,” said Lickteig. “So out of an eight-period day, there are two 45-minute periods devoted to language arts and one to history, so for the novel project, students can devote three periods,” he added.

Lickteig also agrees with Dr. McKenzie’s assessment of what the project does for those with learning disabilities. “Their self-esteem skyrockets because they realize they are able to participate in the same projects that the ‘brains’

participate in, and they can make a contribution. They see their writing posted in the system, and they can use their technology correctly. Many of them are different types of learners, so they can use graphics and present their knowledge in different ways. A lot of these same kids just would not sit still for a teacher standing in front of them all

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the time,” Lickteig said.

“At the first of the year we spend some time on how your mind works, and it helps the students understand where they are in terms of doing research and its use in the classroom,” Beeler said. “We use Bloom’s Taxonomy, talk about moral development, and talk about thinking about thinking. This leads us into MacCSILE because their first assignment is: ‘You have just crashed landed on a planet in the year 2525 and it will take nine months for your ship to be