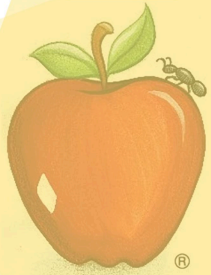


WINTER 2020



**KUDOS!**

**SHOUT**

**OUT!**

VoWac® Publishing Company would like to take this opportunity to thank and recognize all the schools, public, private, and home, that have supported us and continued to speak out on our behalf. Your dedication has gone above and beyond the call.

The CoVid pandemic has caused some unexpected partnerships. Through thick and thin, our commitment is to help you teach essential skills to your kids.

Welcome pilot schools! We're glad you're with us for the first time. We will do whatever we can to help you find success.

This year we welcome several pilot schools to the VoWac family. A quick shout out to a few.... Lewis and Clark Elementary, Williston, ND; Havasupai Elementary, Supai AZ; Holy Cross Lutheran, Saginaw MI; St. Thomas More, Brookings, SD; and St. Andrew Catholic School, Ft. Worth, TX. The latter just added six more classrooms!

# Not just a new look!



If you've visited [www.vowac.com](http://www.vowac.com), you have no doubt gotten a bit lost or overwhelmed trying to maneuver through the site. There are a lot of things to take in with over 100 different products from which to choose.

A new face and some site options were long overdue. The target date for the new VoWac website is set well before the end of 2020, barring any unforeseen glitches.

You still find all of the free downloads and resources. New content will be added along with an easier viewing option to get a better look at the products.

Past SMANTIX! editions will be available to download. Even though some of the editions date back a few years, there is still valuable information and resources that would be useful in all school settings

There is a clickable that will take you directly to our Facebook page. You'll find a variety of free printable materials, contests, give-aways, prizes and articles of special interest relating to curriculum.



You be able to have quick and direct access to our collection of YouTube video clips. If you need a refresher on teaching some of the VoWAC concepts or looking for a few new ideas for classroom activities, our YouTube clips may be just the trick!



Ordering your VoWac materials will also **continued on pg. 2 - New Look!**

**Did you know?** Our Facebook pages contain posts that explain how to get free teaching materials....FREE!  
Sometimes all it takes is a phone call. If you haven't checked it out, you may be missing out!

# New Face

## Jess Hansen joins VoWac team

One of the new voices you'll hear when you contact our office is Jess Hansen. Jess is originally from Faulkton, SD, our home site.

He will be in charge of accounts receivable order processing/fulfillment, and customer support.

If you have a question about an invoice or need help tracking an order, Jess will be your "Johnny-on-the-spot".

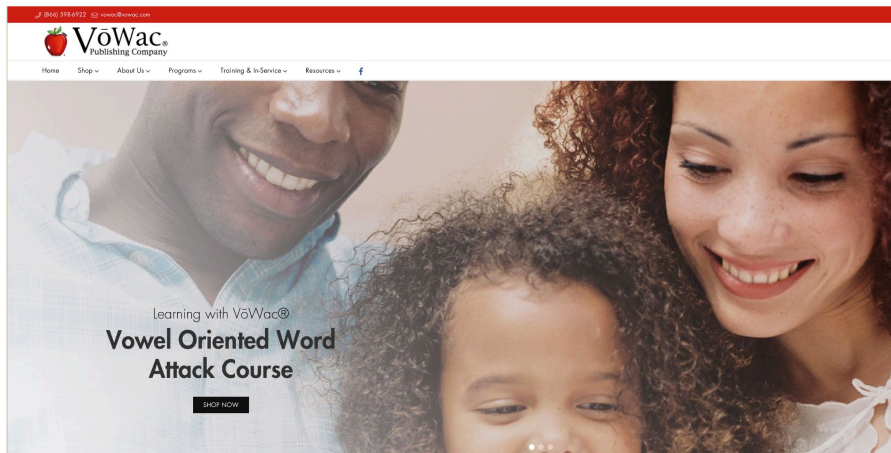
Jess has a wonderful sense of humor. We're confident you'll enjoy a quick visit with him when you call.



Welcome to the team, Jess!

# New look!

continued from pg. 1



Snapshot of VoWac's new Home page • [www.vowac.com](http://www.vowac.com)

be easier and faster. The ordering process was tweaked and streamlined to make it so your orders will go through without some of the glitches we've run across over the last few years. We still use Shopify, which accepts a variety of payment methods.

Using a purchase order is also an option. Someone from VoWac will call your school to verify any PO.

Of course, orders can call your order in, email it, or fax it. Emailed and faxed orders will have a brief response so you know your order was received. If you

do not get an email or returned fax response, give us a quick call for confirmation.

Sometimes emails and faxes get stuck in some black hole. It's easy to complete your order

in its entirety without error when we are both on the same page.

If by chance an order looks like a duplicate or if something looks amiss, we'll call and inquire. That's part of the personal service we try to provide.

And finally, we value your opinion and input. We can't do what we do without you. If you have a suggestion to make something better, easier or more efficient, please tell us. Quite often we get a pat on the back from you...gotta admit...that feels pretty darn good, too!

# SMANTIX!

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page 2

Getting kids academically dressed for success since 1983....it's what we do!

# Price guide available for 2021

Only workbooks see slight increase of 3.5%

If you have used our price guide in the past, you'll have no problem with the 2021 guide. There are no changes that will prevent you from easily maneuvering through the many items we offer.

If you're new to VoWac, here's a few tips that will make it a little easier to get from point A to point B.

VoWac can email you a new price guide or you can download a copy from the website. Go to the bottom of the homepage and click on 'price guide' Download the PDF and print it.

Specific grade level items are color-coded. There will be some overlap. A few items are relevant to two or more levels. Pre-K is a goldenrod hue. Kindergarten is blue; Level One - red; Level Two - yellow; Three is red, and Level Four is purple.

You'll see stars beside various items. The stars indicate which items are included in specific level kits. The two remedial packages are colored orange or gray - Remedial 1 or 2 respectively.

VoWac item codes are essentially the initials of the item itself. We tried to keep this simple and easy.

Here's a few examples: a Level One teacher guide is labelled TG1-a or -b; Teacher Guide • Level One • 'a' is the first volume, 'b' is the second volume. The spelling teacher guide is labelled STG-1. Workbooks are listed in a similar fashion; W-K-D or W-K-Z - workbook•level K•D'Nealian

(slant) (D) or Zaner-Bloser (upright) (Z) font. Workbooks and any other items without a 'D' or 'Z' indicator will be printed in the 'Z' or upright font.

If you aren't sure if you are ordering the right item, you can always contact us. You can also go to the website and enter the item code in the search icon. It will direct you to that specific item, give you a picture and a brief description.

One of the practices VoWac DOES NOT use is needlessly creating or updating new editions in order to drive sales. Updates are done as needed, usually without a price increase. If we find something minor that needs to be edited before a print cycle, we will provide information on the change and have you make that edit in your existing guide. VoWac understands budgets. Using this practice has saved schools hundreds of dollars over the years.

And finally, we need to inform our schools of the necessary price increase. We have held steady for five years without an increase in workbooks. It was decided that a minimum increase of 3.5% would have to be added to the skills and spelling workbooks, bring them to \$17.60 and \$16.50 respectively.

We hope we can hold that pricing structure for several years to come. The Covid pandemic has cause a bit of a dilemma in our operation. We hope things get back to normal soon.

## FREE WORKBOOKS!

No gimmicks. No bait and switch. Just an honest offer to any school new to VoWac. We'll loan your school the teaching materials AND provide up to 18 skills workbooks per room for two classrooms. Up front cost is shipping & handling. Use VoWac for the entire school year. Compare it to any other skills program you're using or considering. If you can find something more effective, you better buy it. If you're searching for a new skills and/or spelling program, call VoWac for details  
Toll Free 866.598.6922

# SMANTIX!

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page 3

Getting kids academically dressed for success since 1983....it's what we do!

Did you know? Since 1983, over 95% of the schools participating in our pilot program have adopted in part or whole. Our challenge has always been, "If you can find a more effective word attack program - buy it!"

**Did you know?** Only 35% of the fourth grade students in the United States are at or above proficient in reading. By the time students in grade twelve are tested, that percentage increases by 2%. VoWac can increase these scores.

# What message do you really want to send?



How many times have you heard an education guru say something like, "if schools are doing 'this', they should stop because it makes no sense." The 'this' is usually some small change that seems effective at the time; making a child stay in for recess as punishment, giving extra credit to students that finish tasks early, eliminating homework, etc.

We rarely, if ever, hear anyone suggest changes that would effect a much larger systemic issue - something we have let become an archaic sacred cow - the report card.

As educators and parents, we have created this 'report card monster' that is supposed to be able to tell us everything we want to know about any child in school. Let's set the record straight on three things.

First, report cards are intended to communicate student academic and non-cognitive progress. Second, the single letter grades do NOT tell the most accurate story of student progress over time. And third, student performance is far more than a single letter grade, percentage or performance level on any learning standard.

That being said, here are three suggestions that parents might support to rid your school of that 'report card monster'.

First, communicate to parents that frequent communication on academic progress is essential to student success. Provide parents access to an online gradebook that they may check was often as they'd like. Also provide them with an option of receiving a paper report card at the end of each grading period.

All that stuff you send home....newsletters from teachers, from school, from the PTA, from the boosters....whatever....STOP! Parents are becoming numb to all of the often, mindless communications and begin to miss the important communications - like how their child is performing.

Start an email schedule that parents know about. Perhaps every Sunday night, parents will receive an email about their child. Week 1 could be from the teacher telling about classroom events. Week 2

could be about building events. Week 3 might be important district level information. Week 4 might be PTA information, and so on. But EVERY email reminds parents to review their child's progress by logging into the online gradebook.

At the end of a grading period, send an email informing parents of such and kindly remind them, "Please log into your online gradebook."

There will be a rub to this. If parents don't receive a paper report card and do not have access to the internet how will they know how their child is doing in school?

One current study indicates that about 89% of Americans have access to the internet. If you have any parents that fall in that 11% without internet, provide access to a computer in the office of your school...kind of like a Report Card" kiosk. Let families know they are welcome to come to the school and review their child's progress at any time. This will also give you a great opportunity to visit with those parents. It is those parents that often feel disenfranchised from the school. It could change the entire level of home support for that student, not to mention you would be providing a great service to the parent.

All of these things can be done gradually. But they become moot if your school does not have an online gradebook. If you're one of those systems - keep the paper flowing, but do so without killing so many trees.

Don't forget...a good old-fashion phone conversation also goes a long way. Very few homes are without some sort of telephone, be it landline or cell. The call doesn't always have to be when something negative happens. On the contrary Report the good stuff too! The important thing - communicate.

