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– Manuel Chavez, Teacher

Interactive Whiteboard Helps Students Improve Reading Skills

At the beginning of the school year, Manuel Chavez’s sixth-grade reading class consisted of 16 struggling students who had little enthusiasm for reading. These Avenue B Elementary School students were reading at low speeds and lacking in fluency. But in just three months, the class grew from struggling to successful. Chavez attributes their success to one piece of technology – the SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard.

When an October benchmark test showed the students had low reading scores, Chavez decided he needed to get his students excited about reading. He started using one of the eight SMART Board interactive whiteboards the Mammoth-San Manuel School District had recently purchased with a SMARTer Kids™ Foundation Grant and Title I dollars.

Since Chavez’s class follows a reading program called Voyager™ Passport reading program, he decided to use the interactive whiteboard to present the program’s curriculum.

“By computerizing my lessons and making them interactive, I was able to capture the students’ attention. Now, the kids are engaged in the lessons, and their reading scores have come up tremendously,” explains Chavez.

Reading rates and test scores rise

“When the readers first started at the beginning of the year, our class average was 89 words per minute. As sixth graders, they need to be reading 120 words per minute. When we took the second benchmark test in January, the average was 125 words per minute. I even had three students who were reading 160 words and above.”

When Chavez administered the third and final benchmark test of the school year, the students’ average had risen to 165 words per minute.

Chavez says before he started using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard most of his students were also failing their seat work, which usually consists of reading short stories and answering comprehension questions pertaining to the story.

“Once I started using the interactive whiteboard and making lessons more interactive, they started focusing on what was being taught. Now, anytime I give them seat work, very rarely do I get somebody who scores less than a seventy. Everybody’s scoring in the eighties and nineties.”

Challenge

Improve students’ reading skills and generate enthusiasm for reading

SMART Solution

SMART Board interactive whiteboard

Result

Reading rates and test scores rise significantly

“Everybody’s scoring in the eighties and nineties.”

Mammoth-San Manuel Unified School District

Case Study, San Manuel, Arizona



Since Chavez started using the interactive whiteboard, his lessons have become more interactive, and his students are focusing on what is being taught.

Mary Kyle, the district administrator of student achievement, introduced SMART Board interactive whiteboards to the district. She says when students in Chavez's class took the second benchmark test for reading in January, the results were so strong that they were no longer considered a low-reading class by the district. They are now rated as a medium-to high-reading class.

"The students in Chavez's class have also increased their retell fluency tremendously. This lets us know that their reading comprehension has also increased," explains Kyle. "For students in sixth grade to make this kind of progress is really incredible."

Bell-to-bell teaching

Chavez says the interactive whiteboard has also increased the amount of time he spends actually teaching. When his class first began following the Voyager Passport reading program, Chavez had to write a lot of instructions and vocabulary on the chalkboard during class. He spent a lot of time with his back to the students, and the students had to sit and wait for him to finish.

But Chavez discovered that using the interactive whiteboard to present the curriculum from the reading program was the perfect combination.

"By using the interactive whiteboard and the software that comes with it, I have all my lessons computerized. They don't have to wait for me to finish writing. I prepare everything after school or before school," explains Chavez. "It's strictly "bell-to-bell teaching when the kids come in.

Chavez says one of the best outcomes of adding the interactive whiteboard to his classroom has been how excited his students get about their reading lessons.

"It's strictly bell-to-bell teaching when the kids come in."

"I have to beat them off with a stick when we're doing our lessons because everybody wants to participate," laughs Chavez.

Chavez now uses the SMART Board interactive whiteboard in all of his classes, including math, science, social studies, language arts and spelling. He's confident all of his students will benefit from using this exciting learning and teaching tool.

About SMART

SMART is both the industry pioneer and global market leader in easy-to-use interactive whiteboards and other group collaboration tools. SMART products include the family of award-winning SMART Board interactive whiteboards, interactive pen displays, interactive digital signage and software. Using SMART products, groups can access and share the information they need to meet, teach, train and present. SMART customers include NASA, British Telecom, BMW, the Los Angeles Lakers, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Disney Imagineering and Harvard University. SMART products are sold through dealers across North America and distributors worldwide.



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