

A magic whiteboard that changes the routine and increases knowledge at school

Primary school Biesles, Biesles/France



Nursery class. Younger students use the SMART Table® for interactive learning.

A sea of hands wave in the primary school class of Benoît Deparpe. The lesson on decimal numbers has clearly met with great success. All the children want to get up and go to the white board. Remember back to your years in primary school, and you can see that this enthusiasm is truly remarkable. With so many volunteers, Benoît even has a hard time choosing the next pupil. Today the class is putting their hundredths in order... they are faced with a dozen numbers that have one, two, and three figures after the decimal point. „So who can place 3.65 on our line?“ Benoît asks the group. It's Julie's turn to place the number on the scale that the pupils created together. The teacher has traced a line on the class's SMART Board® Interactive Whiteboard and randomly placed the numbers that need to be organized. Julie points at the number in question with her finger and slides it to the spot that she thinks is correct. The label with the number „3.65“ magically follows the movement of her finger along the surface lit up by the video projector. But the pupil takes it one step too far.

„Is that what you think?“ asks Benoît. Julie's classmates don't hesitate to chime in. Raising their hands with their eyes bright, they seem as if they want to reach to the ceiling in their impatience. Some pupils even have a hard time waiting for the teacher to call on them. A discussion about graduations ensues. Laura seems to have found a solution. „Can you explain how you found that?“ asks Benoît. The issue raises some good points. Some children had a hard time seeing the difference between tenths and hundredths. Laura's explanation seems to clear up her classmates' understanding.

A tactile and interactive class

„Our students are all motivated to go to the board,“ confirms Maryse Chrétien, director of the Biesles school. „Even those who are having a hard time in class don't hesitate. There's no longer any stress at the board.“ Benoît Deparpe adds: „Our teachers no longer have to worry about running out of space. We used to have to prepare the board in the morning for the day, half-an hour before class, just so a child could come up to the board one time. It was hard to have three or four come up for the same exercise. There wasn't enough room or enough time to have a discussion about solving the problem. We no longer have

Challenge

Leveraging the technologies covered by the ENR program, utilizing the interactive whiteboard to its fullest in the classroom, developing new teaching techniques

Solution

At Primary school Biesles are 4 SMART Board® Interactive Whiteboards 680, 1 SMART Table®, and SMART Notebook™ software installed

Result

Increased pupil involvement, higher level of general culture starting at an early age, more in-class activities, multi-disciplinary use of the solution

these limits with the SMART Board® Interactive Whiteboard. No need to erase what we're currently doing, since it's easy to add as many pages as necessary. For example, to underline the subject and verb for a given text in French class, all you have to do is „clone“ it as many times as necessary so that each pupil can offer an answer. SMART Notebook™ software facilitates this type of interaction with the class. Above all, it encourages discussion and enables us to use several different teaching techniques. On a regular blackboard, it's not easy to start an exercise over again with several pupils. We end up wasting time. We also need more space for larger drawings. We would have to erase everything to go back over notions that were not fully understood. In comparison, using the SMART Board enables us to handle all of these aspects easily.”

The pupils from first to fourth grade who have been using SMART Board interactive whiteboards since last year confirm what their teachers say. „The SMART Board is easier to use than the blackboard,“ answer the students together. „We can add pictures, and draw straight lines in geometry, which is hard to do on the old board. We made zigzags and couldn't use pictures to understand better. And it's much faster to use the interactive whiteboard. We do more things. It's more precise, faster, and we can follow what the teacher is doing... maybe because there is more technology in the whiteboard than in the blackboard,“ adds a young girl with a sly smile. Pupils who do more and understand better? „So do you work more?“ Benoît Deparpe asks his class. „Yes, because we work better,“ says Lou, 8 years old. No comment...

Nursery school kids with advanced fingers

It's the same story in the nursery school building next door. One of the teachers, Ingrid Lemonnier, has also started using SMART tools. „My kids arrive in the morning and we take roll right away using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. This lets us know who is there and who is not. We expand this activity using different writing forms, different fonts and sizes, which helps the children recognize their names in various types of writing styles. We also ask them to identify other children's first names. The labels on the interactive whiteboard can be moved and changed however we want, which makes this type of activity even easier.”

It took the teachers at the Biesles school about six months to become fully familiar with their new work tool. „We now spend time looking for new ideas for our activities. This includes presentations, exchanges, and cooperative work with the children. We just finished a project on Africa, and we don't mind even far-fetched ideas. The SMART Board interactive whiteboard enables us to display images as we talk about plants and animals, as well as other topics the children don't know yet. Pupils have developed a far richer vocabulary than we had been able to achieve in the past. Without this tool, we would have to use traditional resources, which are slower and harder to handle. We used to have to think about everything ahead of time. With the SMART Board, we can answer a pupil's question immediately, without having to put it off for next week. There's no delay in learning, which can include looking up terms, images, and video. The advantages for our students are significant, as they can see, hear, and touch the subject directly. We are using this to try and stimulate all their senses,“ adds Ingrid Lemonnier.

The children can really feel the difference, even those who are not having any specific problems. Since the school acquired its SMART Board interactive whiteboards and a SMART Table, the first interactive learning center and tactile table on which all the nursery and primary school children work together, young Camille has dared to participate, despite her language difficulties. The other pupils help the little girl and support her progress. Teachers at Biesles are full of praise. They can measure the increase in actual activities and have observed a transformation in pupil involvement. „Some effects are surprising: they write more and faster, know a broader range of descriptive vocabulary, and know how to read and analyze images,“ says Benoît Deparpe with amazement. Parents and local authorities are also convinced. Ingrid, Maryse, and Benoît keep the school blog updated. Despite some initial hesitation, everyone has noticed the positive benefits. Biesles has become a reference in the field, and even advises local authorities on projects to equip schools in neighboring cities and villages with digital tools.



Primary school. The SMART Board® interactive whiteboard is an integral part of the classroom.

“These tools remove the board and class apprehension that inhibits children and keep some of them from moving forward. Tactile technologies change the impact of mistakes. You can make a mistake and then erase everything and start over again. There are no old chalk marks or areas on paper ripped by erasers. SMART Boards and SMART Table let kids “forget” previous mistakes and concentrate on their successes.”

Maryse Chrétien, director of the Biesles school.

About SMART

SMART Technologies Inc. is a leading provider of collaboration solutions that change the way the world works and learns. As the global leader in interactive whiteboards, our focus is on developing a variety of easy-to-use, integrated solutions that free people from their desks and computer screens, making collaboration and learning with digital resources more natural. Our products have transformed teaching and learning in more than two million classrooms worldwide, reaching over 40 million students and their teachers. In business, our Freestorm™ visual collaboration solutions improve the way that people work and collaborate, enabling them to be more productive and reduce costs.

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