

Case Study



Kress Elementary School Kress, Texas

The 3Rs: reading, writing and the right technology

With a student population just over 100, Kress Elementary is a small school, but the efforts of a dedicated teacher have created enormous possibilities for learning. Technology specialist and third-grade teacher Lori Reed is a passionate educator who has taught at this Texas school for 18 years. She recognizes that students must be active participants in their learning experiences, and, in order to achieve that, she must accommodate the diverse learning styles of the students in her classroom. Reed is always looking for compelling and practical methods of instruction – tools and ideas that will create an engaging classroom environment where learning is fun and effective.

It used to be that the standard teaching implements in Reed's classroom were a chalkboard and an overhead projector. With these traditional education tools, she was restricted to lecture-style teaching, and her students often had difficulty focusing and participating. However, in 2003, Reed saw a SMART Board interactive whiteboard in use at a summer professional development course in another district. She was thrilled with all the interactive features and thought her students would be too, so Kress Independent School District bought its first SMART Board interactive whiteboard.

"Technology has changed my classroom, especially the SMART Board interactive whiteboard – it's the best tool I have. It has enabled me to move from the sage on the stage to the guide on the side. Kids are in charge of the lessons; they are at the interactive whiteboard actively constructing their knowledge," Reed says.

Challenge

Create a classroom environment where students with visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles can successfully learn reading and writing skills

SMART solution

SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard, AirLiner™ wireless slate, SMART Ideas™ concept-mapping software and Notebook™ collaborative learning software

Result

Test scores have improved significantly and students enjoy participating in the interactive games and lessons

Reed focuses on using teaching methods that target visual, kinesthetic and auditory learning styles. She says the SMART Board interactive whiteboard is the perfect addition to her classroom because all learners can be successfully taught using this collaborative tool.

For her 15 students, Reed has created a custom-designed, digital third-grade curriculum using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard and Notebook software in daily lessons. Reed has developed lessons for every aspect of reading and other core subjects. She uses the SMART video player to teach reading concepts, and the feature that converts handwriting to written text for penmanship and spelling practice. Students use Notebook software and SMART Ideas concept-mapping software to develop presentations, and online wiki writing to practice punctuation, spelling and capitalization.

Reed says that the SMART Board interactive whiteboard is successful in classroom environments because it's a "visual hook" for students. While students focus on the interactive whiteboard, Reed can guide the lesson with an AirLiner wireless slate from anywhere in the room.

One of the students' favorite activities is a spelling race using both the SMART Board interactive whiteboard and AirLiner slate. Reed divides the class into two groups – one has the wireless slate and the other is at the interactive whiteboard. Reed calls out a spelling word and the first group to write it down correctly obtains a point for their team.

Reed has also discovered that SMART Ideas software is a great tool for brainstorming. Before students start writing a short story, book report or journal entry, Reed creates a pre-writing web – students can collaborate on ideas, and Reed will write them in the concept map. The completed map is useful for the students to reference as they work on their assignment.

"I've written lessons for the SMART Board interactive whiteboard on everything that's required of me to teach, Reed remarks. "And if I don't have a lesson for it, I will make one. If it can't be taught with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard, I don't think I am doing the best job I can for my students."

With the SMART Board interactive whiteboard, Reed knows she is giving her students the finest education experiences, and their performance proves it. "I have found that my test results over the past several years have overwhelmingly confirmed what's in SMART's white papers and other case studies: that engaged and motivated learners exhibit greater learning retention when it's time to show what they know," Reed says. "Students who are taught with the SMART Board perform better."

The success of the integration of a SMART Board interactive whiteboard into Reed's classroom prompted the purchase of another one, and more purchases are on the horizon. Reed is currently training other Kress Elementary teachers how to use this technology. Reed says her colleagues are impressed with the collaborative tool and can see the possibilities and benefits for their own teaching methods. And Kress parents are thankful that their children have the opportunity to use first-rate technology and develop the skills required to be successful in today's world.

For a small school in the small city of Kress, the SMART Board interactive whiteboard has created an environment where opportunities and potential for learning are immense.



Students in Lori Reed's classroom learn sentence structure concepts.

"If it can't be taught with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard, I don't think I am doing the best job I can for my students."

**Lori Reed, third-grade teacher,
Kress Elementary School**

About SMART

SMART Technologies Inc. is both the industry pioneer and global education market segment leader in easy-to-use interactive whiteboards and other group collaboration tools. The award-winning SMART Board interactive whiteboard is the most widely installed interactive whiteboard in the world. Many school jurisdictions have standardized on the product, which is used to provide interactive learning opportunities and enhance student achievement in more than 450,000 classrooms spanning every U.S. state, every Canadian province, every Local Authority in the UK and in more than 100 countries worldwide. SMART products also include interactive pen displays, interactive digital signage, wireless slates and software. Using SMART products, groups can access and share the information they need to meet, teach, train and present. SMART's education customers include New York City Board of Education (U.S.), Oxford University (UK), Kobe City Board of Education (Japan), Barrier Public School (Australia), University of Ottawa (Canada), United World College (Singapore), Stephen-Hawking-Schule Neckargemuend (Germany), Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (U.S.) and Harvard University (U.S.).

SMART is a private company founded in 1987. Employing more than 800 people, SMART is headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, with assembly facilities in Ottawa, and offices in Bonn, Tokyo, China, New York City and Washington DC. SMART has been issued and maintains a broad portfolio of patents with numerous U.S., Canadian and other patents pending. In 1992 SMART formed a strategic alliance with Intel® Corporation that resulted in joint product development and marketing efforts, and Intel's equity ownership in the company. SMART products are sold through dealers across North America and distributors worldwide. For more information, visit www.smarttech.com.

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