



Description: Enhancing Learning Through
mimio® Interactive Technology

no.004

Location: Pine Valley Elementary School , NC



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New Technology for a New Teacher

Tara Jarman is only in her second year of teaching at Pine Valley Elementary School in North Carolina, but she says it feels like a lot longer. Teaching second graders takes a lot of energy, and Tara has learned that the right technology goes a long way toward making the classroom experience more fruitful for both students and teacher. She finds that is especially true when the technology includes a mimio® Interactive whiteboard system.

Goals and Challenges

Over half of the 21 students in Tara's class are struggling readers, who require a lot of repetition and reinforcement. The extra attention she must provide, along with meeting the day-to-day challenges of teaching science, math, and cursive writing to active seven- and eight-year-olds, are prime reasons why Tara needs all the help she can get.

Meeting the Challenge

Tara has found that a number of mimio Interactive whiteboard features are particularly helpful in engaging her students. Features that allow hands-on lessons have proven to be not only engaging, but also more effective. Students can come up to the board to complete activities, such as finishing a sentence or putting a sequence of steps in their proper order. Video and audio can be imported directly into the mimio Notebook. And students can enjoy games and fun activities from a variety of websites.

Tara takes advantage of educational websites such as www.starfall.com, www.keyskills4u.com, www.eduplace.com, and www.readinga-z.com, which offer projectable books, phonics activities, and videos. Incorporating content from these sites gets students excited about learning and holds their attention. This is particularly important for struggling readers, who often have trouble focusing when they are asked to read a passage or story independently. When Tara puts a lesson on the mimio Interactive board and uses Studio features such as Reveal and Spotlight, students are eager to read aloud, and do so more easily.



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Encouraged early on by these successes and eager to make greater use of the mimio Interactive system in the classroom, Tara pursued the mimio Masters online training course. The course offered weekly assignments, instruction and practice with the mimio toolbox and gallery functions, participation in online discussions, and - perhaps most importantly - collaboration with teachers around the country. She found that preparing interactive lessons in advance gave her more time with her students, and improved both her presentation and their comprehension. Drawing on the various mimio libraries, she was able to cut her preparation time as well as provide more engaging lessons. She says that she appreciates the convenience of storing her lessons in mimio Gallery and pulling up what she needs with just a couple of clicks. She notes that recording her lessons at the whiteboard makes it possible to effectively "clone" herself: She can play back a lesson so students can review it while she observes them practicing, for example, their cursive writing.

Outcome

The most obvious and measurable benefit of Tara's use of the mimio Interactive system is the progress her students have made in their reading level. At the beginning of the year, the average reading level of her class was 1.5 (fifth month of first grade). After just 18 weeks of school, the average level had risen to 2.1 (first month of second grade) – six months of growth in only four months!