

**Smart Boards and Interwrite Pads: How and Why I Use Them**  
**Mark Henderson, English 9-11 & ESL teacher**  
**Maur Hill-Mount Academy, Atchison, KS: mah1801@gmail.com**

## **Ways to use your Smart Board & Interwrite Pad**

- \* Posting daily work such as journal prompts, sentence correction, vocabulary words, etc.
- \* To give interactive presentations that can be added to or changed with little effort.
- \* Use images, audio clips, and web sites to supplement lessons.
- \* Use interactive games to review material. Students may write on the board or a multiple choice quiz may be set up with animation and sound.
- \* Create graphic organizers and complete them with students.
- \* Play, pause, and write over video. Great for emphasizing symbolism in films.

## **Positive Aspects of Using the Technology**

- \* Students are generally more interested in the lesson when technology is used. They are more likely to volunteer to stand in front of the class if they get to use the smart board.
- \* The Inter Write pad allows the teacher to move around the room and still give the lesson, not tied to standing at the front of the classroom. The teacher may also bring the pad to the students instead of having them walk to the front of the room, which may cut down on distractions.
- \* Making notes on the smart board instead of a chalkboard allows a teacher to save the work to use again in another class.
- \* Using these devices helps present lessons in multiple formats which addresses the needs of all learners in the classroom, even those with disabilities.

## **Negative Aspects of Using the Technology**

- \* Technology tends to act up at the worst possible time. A teacher must always have a back up plan in case things don't work. Students are often frustrated and distracted when the teacher has to tinker with the technology. It also takes away from learning time.
- \* Some students get too enthusiastic about the technology and have trouble concentrating.
- \* Some teachers may rely too heavily on the technology to teach their students. We must remember that technology is only there to help us, not to do our job. Do we really want a machine to do our jobs? What will they pay us to do?

## **What are these SMART Boards?**

*Gail Winship*

*New Richmond News - 10/03/2008*

High school math teacher Trish Moberg flicks off the lights and begins her calculus lesson.

What looks like a large white screen, but is actually a whiteboard, glows in the front of the classroom. It covers up part of the traditional chalkboard, which is used less and less since the new SMART Board has taken its place.

SMART Board is the brand name for an interactive whiteboard, first introduced in 1991, which is a product of SMART Technologies.

Moberg touches the SMART Board and her lesson plan appears in large, bold symbols for every student to see. The large, touch-controlled screen works with a projector and a computer.

As the teacher goes over the problems, she can draw and write directly on the board and erase what she's just done with the wave of her hand. She can use a variety of colors and any number of writing styles as she points, clicks and drags items onto and off her lesson just like a mouse would.

By touching another button, Moberg calls up the Internet and shows students a graphic example of a three-dimensional object to drive her point home in a visual fashion.

"The SMART Board literally changed the way I taught within the first 20 minutes of using it," Moberg said. "It makes things so much easier and it's great for the kids. It's brighter to see and easier to explain things to them with the SMART Board." The overhead projector mounted on the ceiling projects what is on Moberg's desktop computer to the SMART Board. She can change the visual on the board with the sweep of the mouse on her desk or the touch of her hand on the actual SMART Board.

A sound system also amplifies Moberg's voice and allows the SMART Board to "talk" to the students. As a demonstration, she touches a picture of a guitar from the menu on the screen, drags it into the center of the Board and the room is filled with chords of an acoustic guitar.

If Moberg chose to narrate her lessons when she put them on the computer, she could have the SMART Board do all the teaching -- her voice would explain the math problems to students and she technically wouldn't even have to be in the room. Moberg is not planning to teach from afar, even though she could.

Moberg's students agreed they love their SMART Board. Since it is only one of two at the High School, they are occasionally asked to share it with other classes. One student remarked that it was like going back in time without the SMART Board to help them learn math and said she didn't like to be without it.

Another great thing about the SMART Board, Moberg says, is that once you enter an Internet address, or URL, it will stay there so students can link to that site later if they have questions or want to review that part of a lesson.

The lessons on the Board may also be printed, similar to a PowerPoint presentation, so students can take them home for studying.

Moberg demonstrated that by touching the screen in various

places she could highlight and circle items, import film clips from the Internet (at one point we saw and heard John F. Kennedy giving a speech). This was not part of the calculus class, but more for the benefit of showing what the SMART Board's capabilities are.

The SMART Board can be used for all areas of curriculum and all age levels. Moberg pulled up a lined paper graphic for kindergarten and first graders to practice writing letters. She also pulled up simple words that were spelled out and had a matching picture to illustrate the word. By touching a spot the SMART Board made a sound to demonstrate how the word sounded. A voice from the ceiling said "bee" when Moberg chose that word.

Another thing Moberg likes about the SMART Board is that she can reveal as much or as little on a page as she chooses. That helps keep students focused on the area of the lesson she is discussing. Also, the page can go on and on just like a computer screen can continue scrolling.

According to New Richmond High School Principal Jeff Moberg, each SMART Board costs about \$1,500, with the projector costing another \$800.

New Richmond High School has two SMART Boards and plans to purchase two more. They are relatively easy to take down and relocate so they will become part of the new high school once it is finished.

According to Trish Moberg, the Middle School currently has four or five SMART Boards and the elementary schools have one in each classroom and a few in the music and art rooms.

It cost the elementary schools less to purchase their SMART Boards because they bought them in bulk, said Jeff Moberg, and the wiring was done all at once for them which was cheaper than having to go in and install them in the High School.

To equip the three elementary schools with 85 SMART Boards, the District paid \$1,500 each for the large Boards and \$1,100 each for the smaller ones. The projectors were \$650 each, according to Michele Wood, assistant principal at New Richmond Middle School and interim technology coordinator for the School District.

"For kids the technology really grabs their attention," Wood said. "For teachers, the SMART Boards are a tool they can use to have access to an abundance of resources such as lesson plans created by other teachers and tweaked to meet the needs of their own students. Also kids can interact on SMART Boards and become active participants in the classroom."