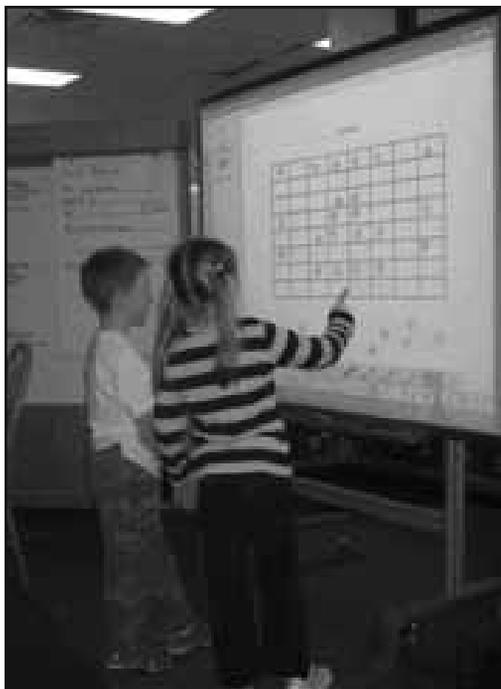# Using Interactive

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Julie Millan

You've been hearing about the incredible potential interactive whiteboards (IWB) have for engaging students in learning, teaching traditional lessons in exciting ways, and increasing student participation in all areas of the curriculum and you finally have one in your library or classroom! But now what? Where do you begin? How do you use your interactive whiteboard? Where can you find resources to support the curriculum using your board? Here are a few suggestions and ideas.

Where to Begin

Interactive whiteboards are large boards that display information available through a computer using a projector. They allow participants to interact with the computer using an electronic pen (stylus) or even your finger. SMART™ Boards are a particular brand of interactive whiteboard. One of the unique features of the SMART™ brand of boards is the Notebook software that is included for use with the boards. SMART™ also provides many resources to help support their product. The SMART™ Educator Resources offer users the opportunity to search for lessons based on the curriculum (across North America), provide lists of other websites that support the elementary and secondary curriculum, and offer teacher training. You can access all of this information at http://www.education.smarttech.com/ste/en-US/Ed+Resource/. Make sure you also go to the SMART™ Exchange section of this site which provides users with hundreds of lesson plans, opportunities to connect with other teachers, and the opportunity to design and share lessons.

Where to Find Resources

The Ontario Educational Resource Bank http://edu.gov.on.ca/elearning/bank.html is a free online resource available to teachers and students in Ontario. There are thousands of resources, including units, lesson plans, activities, maps, and interactive learning materials available through this site. You can search by grade, curriculum strand, or type of resource. Passwords are available through your school board.

Interactive Websites

There are hundreds of interactive websites that are suitable for use with IWB and there are many sites that provide lists of these sites organized by grade or curriculum. A couple of excellent sites for this purpose are www.topmarks.co.uk/Interactive.aspx and http://eduscapes.com/sessions/smartboard/ .

Give a Dog a Bone is a math game using the 100's chart. Students are given a random number and they

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have to find it by clicking on the blank hundreds chart. The game is timed and students try to find as many numbers (bones) as they can in one minute. This is a great diagnostic tool for teachers and useful practice for students learning the 100's chart. www.oswego.org/ocsd-web/games/DogBone/gamebone.html

ABCya! is a site with hundreds of educational games created by teachers. The site is organized by grade and serves students kindergarten to grade five. The navigation buttons are easy to use and voice instructions are also available on this site. www.abcya.com

SMART Board Goodies http://smartboardgoodies.com/ is a teacher created blog dedicated to sharing SMART Board resources. It's a great site to explore and has loads of fantastic interactive activities!

IWB's are also an excellent platform for media literacy lessons. Using a Venn diagram to compare a picture book and an ebook (www.tumblebooks.com) is just one example.

Once you get used to your new interactive whiteboard, you'll be ready to tackle creating your own interactive lessons to enhance your classroom program, support student learning, and model effective teaching. The IWB possibilities are truly endless – it's just a matter of embracing the new technology and investing some time learning a truly engaging teaching tool! ▌

(Above right) Students love interactive whiteboards as much as teachers!

(Opposite page, right) Students learn using interactive whiteboards