

Interactive White Board

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Interactive white boards are increasingly being integrated in classrooms across the country. There are many types of boards, each with their advantages and disadvantages, and many ways to use them effectively in the classroom setting. Interactive white boards are used in the classroom to include all the students, use time efficiently, and teach in a creative way that promotes interaction with the topic.

The leading manufacturers of interactive whiteboards are: SMART Board, Promethean, Polyvision, and Mimio. SMART Boards are touch based boards that are in 55% of classrooms in the education industry (Dulany, 2012). A disadvantage of these white boards is the cost. It costs \$5,000 to have one smart board in one class (Dulany, 2012)

. Advantage of a smart board is that it has SMART software and can recognize pens and touch. The software allows the user to do many things, like special interactive templates, on the board that another board's software cannot. Promethean boards are a close competitor to SMART boards. Promethean boards are pen based. An advantage of this board is that the boards can recognize more than one pen at a time. A disadvantage is that that the pens can break and time is wasted when multiple people have to use the pens. Another interactive white board is the Polyvision board. The Polyvision board is touch based, magnetic, and extremely durable. Some advantages of a Polyvision board are that it's affordable because it only costs 1,500 and it is extreme durable (Dulany, 2012)

. Therefore by paying the reasonable fee the school will get a board that can last many years. The disadvantage is that it uses pens that can be lost. The Mimio isn't an actual board but a system that is attached to an ordinary board to make it interactive. An advantage is that it most affordable board on the market and its portable meaning many classrooms can use it (Dulany,

2012). A disadvantage is that it doesn't actually have a board and its software isn't as fancy as other leading software.

Interactive white boards allow educators to teach in a way that engages the student more than a lecture would while saving time if they use the software properly. Taking attendance is simpler on a white board because students can tap their names instead of a teacher spending a lot of time calling out names. Also once the attendance list is created it is very simple to change the list or see patterns in attendance. Another example is a focus circle. As you know, a focus circle is a circle that is surrounded by words that can be used to possibly describe a picture or an idea. With the board teachers can have students drag words into the circle that they think describes the situation. After multiple students have gone up the teacher may see some words that weren't picked at all. The teacher then can ask the class if they recognize the words and if they don't the teacher can help them figure out. Without an interactive white board the teacher could have done something similar in the class with paper or discussions but it would not be as efficient or group oriented. Another thing that would hard to do without an interactive board is the "magic tunnel". The magic tunnel allows educators to demonstrate simple math problems or simple questions by having studnets drag the problem from one square of color to a square with a different color in order to reveal the correct answer. The magic tunnel can also be used by having students do the problem and then checking their answers by dragging the question. Without a white board this can be done by writing out the answer or giving a test but the white boards make it more colorful, fun, and time efficient. These boards also allow for teacher to play different types of trivia games with different animation as opposed to a simple jeopardy games for a review. Making certain images that can when clicked reveal an answer or questions leads to a new way of reviewing. A classroom without a white board does not have the opportunity to make their

pictures talk or at least not as well. Interactive boards also offer the ability to bring up different types of conversation starters by having a problem displayed on the board and different solutions that can be dragged into the appropriate place. A teacher can have a student drag what they think is an appropriate answer to the appropriate place and that answer will start conversation in a classroom. Without the white board the conversation would be started most likely by the teacher which takes away from the students' interactions. Overall the white board allows teachers to find different, creative, efficient way of teaching that couldn't be done this way without them.

At any level the best practices that can be used at any level, from above, are the magic tunnel, a focus circle, and the clickable review game. The magic tunnel can be used in a kindergarten classroom to show opposites. This can also be used in a college level history class to match a name of a person with the idea the person is responsible for as a review. The focus circle can be used in a high school class to discuss ways to deal with bullying. It can also be used in a first grade class to encourage the students to discuss the main points of a short story. The animation review style can be used in a high school class to review for a test or for a third grade class to go over vocabulary words. These boards are useful for every level.

Although these boards are helpful they also have disadvantages. A disadvantage to having an interactive white board is that technology always fails. If a teacher has the day planned around the board and it fails she loses the day's lesson. This problem can come at any time which is why it is important to always have a backup plan that keep the student entertained and learning until the board is fixed. Another disadvantage to having a board is that only a couple students can use the board at a time leaving the rest of the students only observing. This can be treated by giving the students activities that will force them to follow along while others are at the board. Another disadvantage is that the cost of a board isn't affordable for every school. This

can be avoided by making sure that the school purchases the affordable board and trains everyone to share and learn to use the board to make sure money isn't wasted.

I can personally use an interactive white board to save my time and my classroom time, to have the students interact more in the class, and to creatively review simple concepts. I will save my time by creating templates that I can use later on in the school year and easily change. An example would be taking attendance because by having the students tap their own name so that can become familiar with reading their own name which is important at a kindergarten level. The magic tunnel will help them grasp simple concepts like opposites and simple math in a creative and interactive way. The white board will be used in my classroom to stimulate my kindergartner's senses, teach them, and have them interact with each other while efficiently managing time.

When used correctly interactive white boards help a teachers teach in a creative and effective manner that can't be done otherwise. There are many types of boards and ways to use them for an advantage. Interactive white boards are meant to be used to manage the student and teacher time, review and teach concepts in a different more student-centered approach, and add to a teacher's lesson.

Works Cited

Dulany, P. (2012). Interactive Whiteboard. *Concordia University Chicago*. River Forest.