

# EDCompass newsletter

News and resources for educators using SMART products

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

### Welcome

"If a doctor, lawyer or dentist had 40 people in his office at one time, all of whom had different needs, and some of whom didn't want to be there and were causing trouble, and the doctor, lawyer or dentist, without assistance, had to treat them all with professional excellence for nine months, then he might have some conception of the classroom teacher's job." – Donald D. Quinn

Regardless of their needs, all students should enjoy equal opportunity to achieve their goals, access learning and reach their highest potential in all aspects of education. In this issue, we highlight special education and provide research and resources, along with stories from teachers who work in special needs classrooms who share their best practices and winning results. This issue also highlights the latest version of SMART Sync™ classroom management software, which helps keep students focused on learning in computer-enabled classrooms.

As always, if you have any comments about *EDCompass*™ newsletter or any of the information featured in this issue, we'd love to hear from you. Please e-mail us your feedback at [newsletters@smarttech.com](mailto:newsletters@smarttech.com).

## THIS MONTH'S POLL

What technology products do you use to teach students with special needs?

[Vote now](#)

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

### Bringing Out the Exceptional



**By Rachel Shepherd**

Ashe County High School  
West Jefferson, North Carolina

When I began teaching seven years ago, *instructional technology* was an alien concept for me. My only experience with classroom technology had been occasionally visiting the computer lab in high school or using my laptop in college to create a PowerPoint® presentation.

As a teacher, I struggled with ways to make history relevant to my *exceptional children*, as

I call them. These students cannot sit and listen to me lecture about the importance of World War I in their lives (an event that, for them, happened in the ancient world) or the impact that the Vietnam War had on U.S. foreign policy. Lecturing doesn't make these events come to life for my students the way it did for me. I needed a hook – something to make them excited about coming to my class every day. Then, my district's technology director came to me with a new product – a **SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard**. This opened an entirely new realm of possibilities for me and for my students with disabilities.

Using only my SMART Board interactive whiteboard at first, I began creating interactive lessons that made my students interested in, and excited about, history. As I became more comfortable with creating lessons in **SMART Notebook™ collaborative learning software**, I branched out, incorporating assessments with the **SMART Response™ interactive response system**. I had my students create activities in Google Earth and use iPod Touch devices to make their learning relevant and fun. Suddenly, students who hated school were coming to my class early to see what we were doing that day. Students who had discipline problems with other teachers were model students in my classroom. Students who had never experienced success on a standardized assessment were receiving high scores.

I believe their positive results can be directly attributed to the successful integration of technology products in my classroom. I am a firm believer that we must educate all 21st-century students using technology skills and products. Many of my peers were skeptical of my methods because many people see students with disabilities as being disabled. I believe this perception to be faulty. I simply needed to change my methods of instruction to accommodate my students' needs. Instructional technology gave me the means to do so, and its effects can be as dramatic for any student as they were for my exceptional children.

## SMART Notebook Lesson Activities



Find a comprehensive database of [K–12 lesson activities](#) on the SMART Exchange™ website. The activities, many of which are standards correlated, are created by classroom teachers and SMART's team of curriculum resource developers.

Try one of the following SMART Notebook lesson activities with your special needs students.

### Letters of the Alphabet

Deaf or hard-of-hearing students can learn how to sign letters of the alphabet.

### Vowels and Spelling

Students with special language needs in grades 1–3 can learn how to identify and sort vowels and consonants to help develop their spelling skills.

### Turning Over a Good Leaf: Working With Stem-and-Leaf Plots

Students with special needs in grades 4–8 can learn how to work with stem-and-leaf plots as they prepare for state assessments. This lesson activity also includes a SMART Response question set.

### October Hidden Pictures

Students in K–3 can answer fun questions that relate to the month of October.

## Special Education Resources

### Attend a webinar

The [SMART webinar series](#) has been hugely popular among educators across North America. And our complimentary on-demand viewing feature allows you to watch them at your convenience.

The following are just two of the webinars on special education that we previously hosted. Teachers and administrators explore the ways technology products support student engagement and achievement in special needs classrooms.

### Creating Classrooms for Everyone: How Interactive Technology Supports Universal Design for Learning

### How Interactive Technology can Improve Learning Outcomes for Students with Special Needs

### Research resources

Our website includes links to a wide range of resources on how students with special needs use technology products to learn and interact in the classroom. Here are just a few:

### Teaching Emerging Literacy Skills: Using Touch Screen Technology and Reading Recovery Inspired Methods

This project explores the impact that the Symposium™ interactive pen display (now called SMART Podium™) and SMART Notebook software have on the literacy skills and achievements of at-risk students. Download the [report](#).

### The Aural Enabler: Creating a Way for Special Needs Kids to Participate in the Classroom Lesson

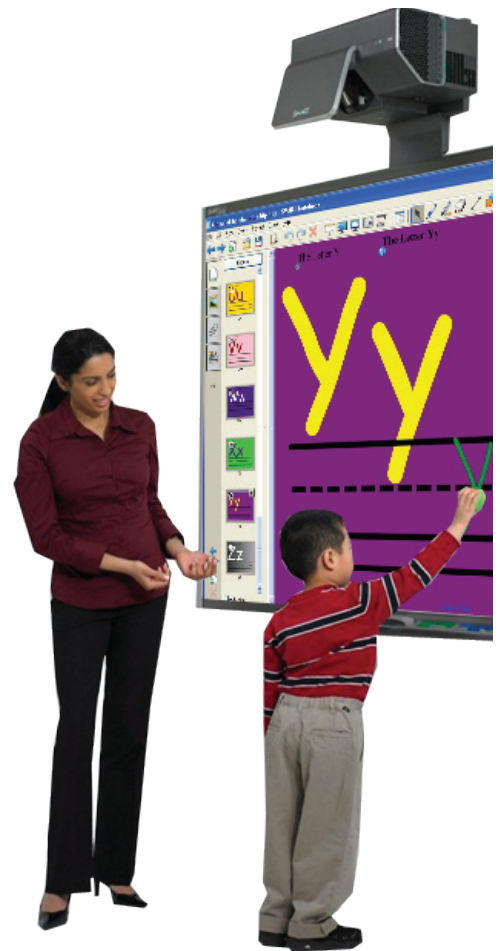
With a SMART Board interactive whiteboard being used for instructions, this study assesses the language skills of third- and fifth-grade special needs students. Download the [study](#).

### SMART Board Interactive Whiteboards Transform Learning for Autistic Students

This article appeared in the Fall 2009 issue of [Interactive Administrator](#). It reveals some of the outcomes Spaulding Youth Center teachers saw after implementing SMART Board interactive whiteboards in classrooms of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Increased engagement, better communication skills and improved small-group collaboration are just a few of the results. Read the [article](#).

### The Power of Multitouch

Find out how the [SMART Table™ interactive learning center](#) is helping a rural Texas school district improve articulation, social skills and fine motor skills for all students, including those with special needs. Watch the [video case study](#).



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### SMART PD Plus

New SMART PD Plus courses on the **SMART Response interactive response systems** and the **SMART Slate™ wireless slate** are now available in various cities. These full-day professional development events will provide you with tips on how to integrate a particular SMART product in your curriculum, add interactivity to your lessons and create engaging content. You'll also receive a free SMART product upon completion. Take a look at the upcoming events to find out if one is coming near you.

- October 22, 2010 – New York, New York – SMART Response interactive response system
- November 8, 2010 – Winnipeg, Manitoba – SMART Response interactive response system
- January 14, 2011 – Dallas, Texas – SMART Response interactive response system
- March 2011 – Houston, Texas – SMART Response interactive response system
- March 2011 – Los Angeles, California – SMART Slate wireless slate

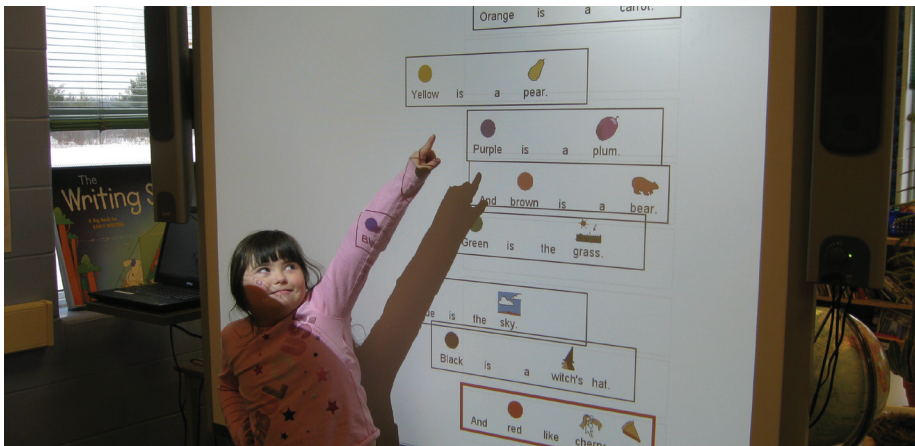
Visit our [website](#) for more information or to register for a course.

### Learn How to Create Engaging Lessons... From a Distance

We continue to design new professional development courses to fit your needs, budget and schedule. Our latest is a distance education course that will teach you how to create engaging and interactive SMART Notebook lesson activities. Each six-to-eight-week course is facilitated by a SMART professional development trainer, and you'll have access to a discussion board to ask questions and share your experiences. You will also receive college credits upon completion. Space is limited to 25 participants. Visit the training and professional development [pages](#) on our website to learn more and get involved.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Lending a Voice to Learning



If there was a formula for creating effective and inclusive learning environments, the SMART Inclusion team at Upper Canada District School Board could very well be credited with its invention. [Read the full article.](#)

## CLASSROOM CONTENT

### SMART Table Activities



If you're using the SMART Table interactive learning center in your special needs or K-3 classroom, check out the growing number of **SMART Table activities** and applications on the SMART Exchange. Many activities correspond to a SMART Notebook lesson activity and SMART Response question set.

The following are a few activities and an application to get you started.

#### Colors

Early learners and children with special needs can explore the colors red, blue, green and orange.

#### Contractions 1

Students with special needs can practice language arts by matching the contraction to the word.

#### Animals

In this activity, students can learn about the different kinds of animals and differentiate between mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and amphibians.

#### The Letter S

In this activity, students can become familiar with words that start with the letter "S."

#### Narrow It Down

In this application, students can work together to narrow down a set of items by asking yes or no questions about a secret item.



## Jeff's SMART Notebook Tips

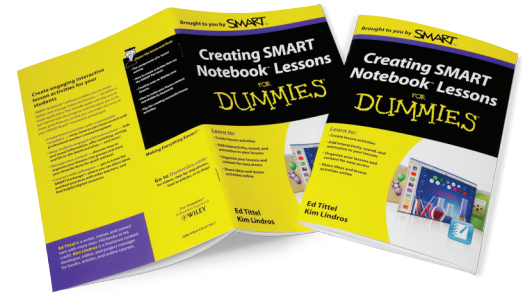


Each month in this column, you'll find a new tip from Jeff Taylor, Product Manager for **SMART Notebook software**. This month, Jeff explains how to create a theme for your SMART Notebook pages. They're quick and easy to create, just follow these steps:

- From the menu bar at the top of your SMART Notebook page, select Format > Themes > Create Theme
- The Fill Effects sidebar will appear on your page. Select the type of fill and color for your page and then click on the SMART Notebook page for the Fill Effects sidebar to disappear. Just click the Properties tab for it to reappear.
- Double click Theme Text Style at the top of the page to change the font style, size and color. This will become the default for all pages you create with this theme.
- Once you have the theme you want, name it at the top where you see Theme Name and click Save. Your new theme will appear in the Gallery under My Content > Backgrounds and Themes.
- You now you have a consistent theme for your lesson that can be used as often as you wish. The objects and colors that are part of the theme are now permanent and cannot be moved or edited.
- When you want to use your theme, drag it onto a SMART Notebook page. You will be given the option of applying the theme to the current page, all pages of the current group, or on the current page only.

## Creating SMART Notebook Lessons for Dummies® Book Now Available

*Creating SMART Notebook Lessons for Dummies* is a quick reference on everything you need to know to create engaging, effective SMART Notebook lesson activities. The popular *SMART Board™ Interactive Whiteboards for Dummies®* is no longer available to order but, while quantities last, any purchase of a SMART Board interactive whiteboard will come with two complimentary copies.



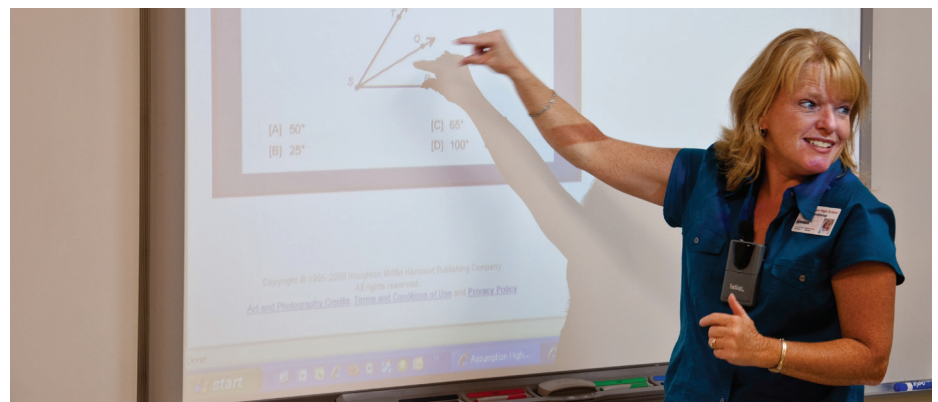
These titles introduce users to the SMART Board interactive whiteboard and SMART Notebook software, provide tips and help them troubleshoot.

## SMART Table Wins Worlddidac Award

One of the most prestigious international awards in education, the Worlddidac Award, recognizes innovative and pedagogically valuable products with a strong potential to improve learning or teaching. Following a rigorous evaluation by an independent international panel of education experts, the **SMART Table interactive learning center** was honored with this award. This is the third time SMART has received the Worlddidac Award. The **SMART Board interactive whiteboard** was recognized in 2004, and **SMART Notebook collaborative learning software** was recognized in 2008.

### SMART SHOWCASE SCHOOL PROFILE

## Kentucky School Offers Students Multiple Ways to Learn



This fall, 99 percent of the 2010 graduating class at Assumption High School in Louisville, Kentucky, went off to college – that's significantly higher than the state average. And that figure is even more impressive when you consider that 41 of those students had diagnosed learning difficulties. [Read the full article.](#)

# Keep the Focus on Learning with SMART Sync

If the average class has about 24 students, then in a computer-enabled environment you have 48 eyes and 240 fingers to guide, engage and keep focused on your lessons – instead of on the Internet.

It's natural if you feel a bit outnumbered when teaching in a computer-enabled environment. And since 40 percent of U.S. teachers report frequently using computers during classroom instructional time,\* you are probably not alone.

**SMART Sync classroom management software** helps you put learning first. The new version of this popular software provides you with all the tools and insight to manage learning in computer-enabled classrooms.

SMART Sync enables you to see what students are working on and ensure they use their computers in a collaborative and productive way. You can view students' screens and interact with them to encourage collaboration and support learning.

## Any classroom, any configuration

SMART Sync 2010 is ideal for most computer-enabled environments. The software is compatible with Windows® operating systems, including Windows 7, and as of this month a Mac version is also available.

If your school has a wireless network, there is good news. The 2010 version features improved performance on wireless networks, so you can quickly connect and stay connected. SMART Sync continues to work well on wired networks.

## Different approaches to lessons

Creating collaborative learning experiences is easy with SMART Sync. The software features tools that enable smooth transitions between whole-class, small-group and individual learning. You can provide students with an individual learning assignment, then use SMART Sync to randomly organize them into small groups to share ideas about the assignment. After you can broadcast each group's work to every computer screen to spark a class discussion.

\*For more information, download [Teachers' Use of Educational Technology in U.S. Public Schools: 2009](#), National Center for Education Statistics.



## Fast Facts



- **Centralized tools** – With SMART Sync software, you have all the classroom management tools you need in one place, making it easy to monitor, focus, support and collaborate with students
- **Flexible** – SMART Sync software works on both wired and wireless networks and can be used with both Macs and PCs
- **Collaborative** – The software makes it easy for you to support individual, small-group and whole-class learning.
- **Easy management** – SMART Sync software has many features that help you streamline classroom management, including the ability to broadcast screens, send files, shut down all computers and block applications
- **Saves time** – A recent customer survey shows that, on average, SMART Sync software saves teachers 14 minutes of administration time per 50-minute class. Read the full report at [smarttech.com/syncreport](http://smarttech.com/syncreport).
- **Efficient** – You can use the software to monitor your students' activities, answer questions, control computers remotely, send assignments and links to websites, and poll your class – right from your desktop
- **Secure** – SMART Sync software has security features like teacher authentication and 256-bit encryption that provide a safe learning environment for your students

## Wired into Wireless



Close to 29,000 schools in the United States have wireless Internet access, and that number continues to increase as wireless local area networks (WLANs) become more affordable and reliable.

So, what are the reasons that schools go wireless?

- **Flexibility** – As laptops and mobile devices are used more frequently in the classroom, WLANs provide teachers and students with access to information anytime and anywhere
- **Scalability** – Laptop usage continues to grow. A high-bandwidth WLAN will allow schools to accommodate increased Internet usage and information sharing without additional installation costs.
- **Installation** – Schools in historic buildings often choose WLANs to avoid running cables through walls or ceilings

But wireless isn't the only option or even the best one. It depends on the school's objectives and how it shares information. Some schools choose a wired network for speed and security reasons, and other schools choose a combination of wired and wireless networks.

## Up Next

Watch for the next issue on SMART's services and support. Find out how to best take advantage of this complementary offering. You can also learn about our newest floor stands for SMART Board interactive whiteboards.

## What Educators Say



Michael Goodman, Instructional Technology Coordinator at [Kenmore Middle School](#) in Arlington, Virginia, has been using SMART Sync software for five years. We asked him about using the software not only to guide student learning, but to facilitate teacher training.

**EDCompass** Why did you choose SMART Sync software for your classroom management needs?

**Michael** I chose SMART Sync because I was looking for a product that was designed with an educational environment as the target market. I looked at several other products but SMART Sync worked with our client management software and on our imaged computers with no software conflicts. Teachers liked the fact that they could monitor student progress and share screens with the students.

**EDCompass** What benefits does SMART Sync software offer your computer-enabled environments?

**Michael** SMART Sync allows me to manage computers throughout my entire school campus. I can provide just-in-time training for teachers at anytime. Many times our classroom teachers or substitutes have issues that are easier demonstrated than explained, and having the ability to share screens with staff has improved my productivity and lessened the amount of time it takes to provide service.

**EDCompass** What is your favorite feature of SMART Sync software and why?

**Michael** The favorite feature for the teachers in my building is the ability to lock the students' screens while they are delivering instruction and they need the students' undivided attention. I have changed the screen colors to a bright red with white text, and it says, *Please stop working, move back from the computer, and pay attention to the instructor.*

**EDCompass** How does SMART Sync software help you support whole-class, small-group and individual learning?

**Michael** SMART Sync has allowed many teachers in our school to differentiate instruction. They can monitor the progress of the class from one location without physically hovering over a student's shoulder. We have some teachers who prefer to send text or chat messages with students, commenting on their progress and providing guidance or encouragement. I have also seen students working on research and the teachers have shared resources with groups of students based on their topic. The ability to select individual computers, multiple computers or all computers is key to allowing educators to be flexible in how they target the delivery of their instruction.