Monthly Newsletter

Interactive content for your interactive classroom

StarrMatica Learning Systems®

March 2014

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Nonfiction, Nonfiction, Nonfiction!
(and science videos!)

As former teachers, we know that with the Common Core's focus on Nonfiction for 3-5, you will be looking for more nonfiction resources than ever before. That's why we have spent the last month focused on adding 120 nonfiction articles and content guides for K-6!

To locate these new articles in the Links Search, choose *Reading* as your Subject, and *Nonfiction* as your Topic. You can identify online articles by the title *Online Article.*

And best of all, all of the articles include online versions that can be accessed by clicking the title link!

Articles with a content guide available are indicated by a light bulb icon next to the title. Click the plus to expand and view more information. Click the content guide link to access the guide.

You can also use the Guides toggle button to refine your search to view only content with guides available. To view *all* article guides, select *Reading* as your subject, *Nonfiction* as your topic, click the *Guides* button, and click load.

But wait, there's more! This month we also added 19 science learning animations about the body that discuss everything from your eyes to your respiratory system to diabetes. You can check them them out by choosing *Science* as your subject and *The Body* as your topic. Look for the word *Movie* in the titles.
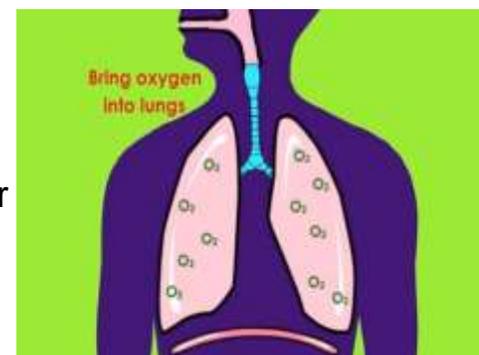
StarrMatica's Featured Content
K-2 Place Value

If you have had the opportunity to explore StarrMatica's K-2 place value content, you already know that the animations and activities are structured to help students explore place value concepts. However, you probably don't know that this lesson was developed after extensive Common Core training and that it incorporates very specific teaching techniques.

Creating Groups of Ten

This introductory animation invites students to explore grouping animals in different ways to help you lead them to discover that they are easier to count when there are ten in a group with some left over.

Aerial Gardening

This game challenges students to count the number of seeds in the field before they disappear. They have to count by tens and ones because the seeds disappear too quickly to count one at a time. 3 disappearing speeds are offered.

Apple Pickin'

Students add and subtract boxes of ten apples and individual apples and see their actions reflected in a number that changes. Six levels of difficulty help to scaffold learning as students move from using manipulatives to mental math.

Leading Students to Draw Conclusions

How many times have you taught a concept, only to have to re-teach it the next day because your students don't remember what you taught the day before? As teachers we know that engaged students learn more than passive students, so we need to construct learning experiences in ways that lead students to discover a concept by drawing their own conclusions rather than directly teaching them the concept. Here are a few ways a directly taught concept can be modified with digital content to encourage students to draw their own conclusions.

Directly Taught Concept: The more times an experiment is conducted, the closer the results will be to the theoretical probabilities.

Student Discovery of that Concept: In this StarrMatica activity, students conduct a probability experiment 10 times and 100 times and then compare the results to draw a conclusion. *(You must be a StarrMatica member to access this content.)*

http://www.starrmatica.com/lessons/direct.php?l=probability&id=4586
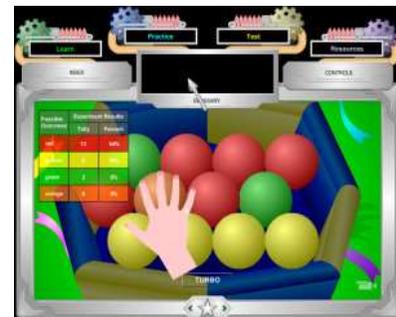
Visit our blog to discover three more examples of digital content you can use to help students discover concepts for themselves:

http://blog.starrmatica.com/leading-students-to-draw-conclusions

Teacher Feature: Marica Myrie and Kadijah Jeanty

Meet Ms. Marica Myrie, Math Intervention Specialist, and Ms. Khadijah Jeanty, Reading Intervention Specialist, at Samuel Huntington P.S. 40 in Jamaica, New York. Here is how they use StarrMatica in their own words:

*Samuel Huntington P.S. 40 is in the process of a technological reform. **In order to meet the needs of the Common Core our principal has begun transforming our 100 year old building into a state of the art "tech hub".**   Currently we house Promethean Boards in all of our 2nd through 5th grade classes. In addition, students have access to our new Apple Lab equipped with twenty-four brand new 20 inch Mac computers. Laptops and iPad minis are also available for student use. Our principal encourages all of her pedagogues to infuse technology every day, throughout the day. **Her philosophy is that we prepare our scholars for being able to work independently using technology for the future.***

*This transformation has opened up countless possibilities for teachers and students, and the introduction of StarrMatica in our building has excited all. We were introduced to the program in Fall 2013. Since that time StarrMatica has been such a dynamic tool that we are enthusiastic about using. **This program has become the perfect co-teacher in all of our classrooms.** Currently, we use StarrMatica through a variety of ways. Many teachers use the StarrMatica videos for guided lessons when teaching a specific skill. When peeking through classroom doors you can find students engaged and tuned in. The teachers also use skill specific games for whole group practice. This component adds enjoyment and brings learning to life for our students.*

StarrMatica has also added a couple more minutes in our day.   *In the past, we've dedicate countless hours skimming through the internet in search of appropriate materials. Now, that we have StarrMatica, we can type in a topic, and like magic, a plethora of material from games, to activities, to videos appear; thousands of resources at our fingertips.*

*We all love and have taken advantage of the digital backpack component that StarrMatica provides. **This has helped our school GO GREEN!** It allows us to assign students work that is geared specifically to improving areas of deficiencies he or she has. The great part is that they can access their backpacks at home, and/or at the public library. This aspect saves us from having to have work copied, and having students lose their assignments. In addition, the digital backpack allows us to add outside content, so the options are endless.*

P.S. 40 has fallen in love with StarrMatica. *We like to think that there is something for everyone. All of our teachers and students from PK-5 have been able to use it and have been able to navigate through it easily. **StarrMatica has engaged our struggling learners, allows for academic intervention, provides enrichment for our advanced students, and has proven to be a great resource tool for our entire teaching staff.***
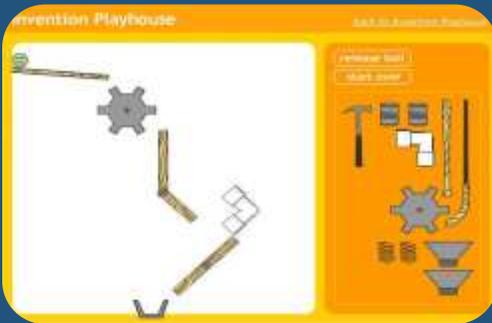
We are reaching for the stars with StarrMatica!!!

Digital Content to Encourage STEM Thinking

Encourage your students to develop their engineering skills with these construction problem solving challenges.

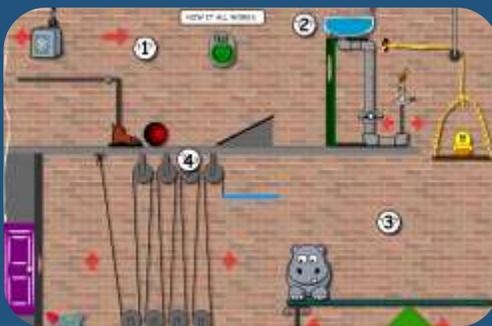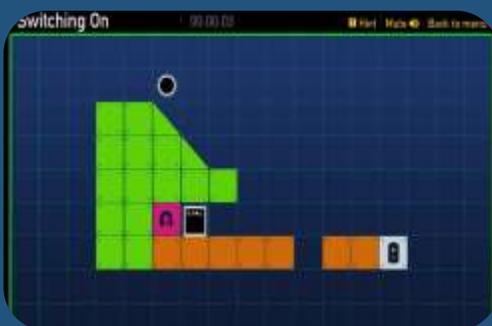*(Click an image to visit that activity.)*

Tinker Ball

Dish It Out

Rube Goldberg Burglar Catcher

Goldburger To Go

Launch Ball

Mechanical Madness