

May 2013



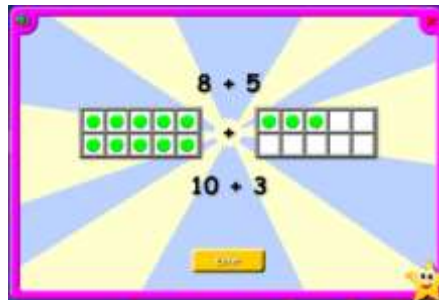
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This Month's New Resources

K-2 Addition

A new K-2 StarrMatica Lesson will launch on Monday – *Addition*. To access the new lesson on Monday, login to your teacher account and choose the K-2 button. Then choose the Math castle and *Addition* as your topic. Be sure to check out one of our favorites listed below.



Make A Ten

Become a ten frame master by using the counters to make a ten!

And the Survey Says...

A huge **thank you** to all of the educators who took the time at such a busy time of year to share their thoughts with us on our end of the year survey. We are busy tabulating the results and will share them with you in our back-to-school September newsletter. We welcome your feedback, so please don't hesitate to email or call anytime!

Winners of the 5 Barnes and Noble \$20 gift cards were selected via a random name picker online. (It is a cool free tool you can check out: <http://primaryschoolict.com/random-name-selector>) And the winners are: Susan Langton, Cheryl Fuller, Brandy Moore, Carol Wallace, and Abby Jackson!



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Summer Backpacks

Do you have individual student accounts? If so, why not use our student backpack feature to share content that will keep your students' minds sharp over the summer. From your teacher account, create collections for June, July, and August and share them with your current students. Or coordinate with the teacher of your incoming class to use her account to share collections with your new students.

Directions for creating and sharing collections are found on [pages 16-19 of our classroom management membership guide](#).



Summer Continuing Education



You may be starting summer vacation, but at StarrMatica we never take a break from helping you use interactive content in your classroom. This summer join us for one of our popular weekly webinars to learn how to use StarrMatica's content in even more ways in your classroom.

- *Manipulative Mania: Using Virtual Manipulatives in Math*
- *Interactive Integration Ideas: Ways to Integrate StarrMatica in Your Classroom*
- *Bloom's Taxonomy for a Digital Age*

Do you have individual student accounts but haven't had time to dive in and learn everything Classroom Management System has to offer? Become a pro this summer by taking one of our *Classroom Management* classes:

- *Digital Backpacks: How to Share Content with Your Students and Colleagues*
- *Links Search: How to Narrow Your Search, Mark Favorites, and Find Content Guides*

Each webinar is 20-30 minutes and is the perfect opportunity for you to ask questions and receive personal attention. Enjoy your short break, and please know that we are here to help when you need us!

[View class descriptions, check scheduled times, and register HERE.](#)

Classes are scheduled two weeks in advance, so check back throughout the summer for new class times!

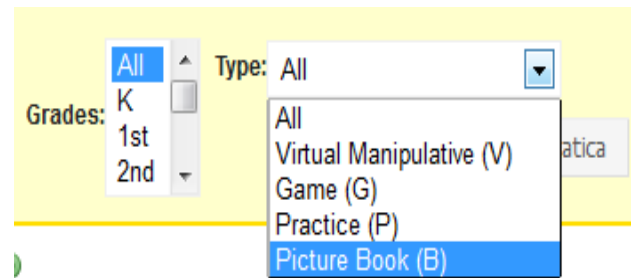
New and Improved Picture Books!

If you have been taking advantage of our reference lists of picture books in the 3rd-6th grade area, you will notice that as of this morning, they are no longer listed under the *Resources Gear*. We have moved these helpful teacher resources under the *Classroom Management* section of StarrMatica.

You can find lists of relevant picture books now included in each search under the *Links* tab. Picture books are indicated by a book icon next to the title and a B in the type column.

You can also choose Picture Book in the type drop down to view titles of books only. If the title of a book is hyperlinked, clicking the title will take you to that book on our partner's website, AKJ, where you have the opportunity to purchase the book if it is not already available in your library.

Link	Topic	Type
Nonfiction: A Chance For Everyone ★	Author's Purpose	P
Lessons ★	Author's Purpose	V
Should Always Be Worse 📖	Author's Purpose	B
Inform 📖	Author's Purpose	V
Identifying the Author's Purpose Tutorial	Author's Purpose	P
Hey, AI 📖	Author's Purpose	B
Henry Hikes to Fitchburg 📖	Author's Purpose	B
Haunted Library ★ 📖	Author's Purpose	G



A few of the books are available for purchase in ebook form, and we will update the links as more ebook formats become available.

As part of this upgrade, 175 new books were added to expand many of our reading and math topics, so be sure to explore our new lists this summer!

New Content Guides Search

This spring we began adding content guides to help you to easily use our virtual manipulatives and picture book resources. A content guide is a ready-to-go lesson plan developed by a fellow teacher. Content guides for virtual manipulatives include manipulative directions, ideas for using the manipulative in different settings, example questions, answer keys, and standards correlations. Content guides for picture books include digital connections, launching activities, example questions, enrichment ideas, answer keys, and standards correlations. In the *Links* search, content with a guide available is indicated by a light bulb icon next to the title. Click the plus to expand and view a description of the content. Click the link to access the guide.



You can also use the new Guides toggle button to refine your search to view only content with guides available.



Focusing on the Why

As another school year draws to a close and we all begin to reflect and regroup, I wanted to share with you the “Why” behind StarrMatica-- why StarrMatica’s isn’t just another software program or teaching tool. As a former teacher, I understand the myriad of demands that are placed on you every day, so my mission is to empower you with the resources you need to teach more easily and effectively. Here’s why I am so passionate about helping you:

I always knew I wanted to be an elementary teacher. I idolized my creative fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Burnett, who inspired my love of writing with outdoor journeys to sit under trees and journal. I was intrigued by my sixth grade teacher, Mr. Campbell, who designed fantastic labs for us to experiment using the scientific process. I loved school buildings with colorful bulletin boards, clanging bells, squeaking shoes in the gym, and loud conversations in the cafeteria. So it was no surprise when so many of my peers were struggling to decide their future careers, I declared elementary education as my major and never looked back.

I taught fourth grade for five years, first at Briggs Elementary in Maquoketa, Iowa, and then at Ekstrand Elementary in DeWitt, Iowa. I had fun using technology in my lessons, which also came as no surprise. My mom was a business education teacher, so I grew up learning to type with Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing on the first IBM computers.

My first year I won Iowa’s Spotlight on Education Technology Award for my use of technology in the classroom. So you can imagine how excited I was when at Ekstrand, I was one of the first teachers to receive a projector. I saw it as a window to the world and an exciting new possibility for engaging my students. But my excitement quickly turned to disappointment and frustration.

I searched the internet hours at a time for quality interactive content to visually explore math concepts and apply reading comprehension skills. I should have been developing engaging lessons using interactive content during all those hours, not simply searching to find it. Much of my school’s software collection was out of date and what did work only covered a small portion of my curriculum. I investigated new software, but it was sold in pieces and parts, and the comprehensive programs were ridiculously expensive. I was tired of searching and angered by the lack of a solution.

What I really wanted was a library of digital content that covered my entire curriculum and allowed me to select the resources that were best for my lessons and my students. That library simply didn’t exist. So in 2005, I decided to create it myself so other teachers wouldn’t experience the same frustrations I had.

From its classroom roots, StarrMatica has grown to be an award-winning library of online digital content for interactive whiteboards, tablets, response systems, projectors and computers. Teachers and students benefit from 5,000 K-6 reading and math simulations, animations, activities, games and assessments searchable by grade, topic, state standard, National Core Curriculum, and textbook curriculums. Classroom educators design and review our research-based content, making StarrMatica like a friendly colleague with digital content expertise. Just as I had envisioned, educators who partner with StarrMatica quickly locate targeted content for specific lessons and for specific students, so they can spend their valuable time planning effective lessons that leverage technology so every student can shine.

Now you know why I say StarrMatica is *Your Digital Content Teaching Partner.*



This is me testing StarrMatica’s first content with one of my students in September 2005.