

September 2013



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Welcome Back!

A Letter from StarrMatica's CEO

Welcome to the beginning of another fantastic school year! As a former fourth grade teacher, I know you are in the midst of learning about your new students, setting classroom routines, and just trying to keep up with the beginning of the year rush. So, thank you for taking a moment to allow us to welcome you back.

We made many updates over the summer based on feedback from the generous teachers who took the time to respond to our spring survey. One of the requests we are honoring is getting this newsletter out to you at the beginning of each month so you can plan in advance to use the time-sensitive holiday resources that are often enclosed. We added hundreds of new content resources including an entirely new category, Social Studies, and we have many more updates to launch this fall including several Common Core math updates.

Every decision we make at StarrMatica is focused on empowering you to use technology more easily and effectively to meet the needs of all of your students. Thank you for inviting us into your classroom, and please let me know if there is anything I can personally do to help you make this school year the best one yet!

*Thank you,
Emily Starr*

President/CEO StarrMatica.com

P.S. I am often asked why I started StarrMatica. If you are curious, you can read about it on the last page of our [May 2013 Newsletter](#).



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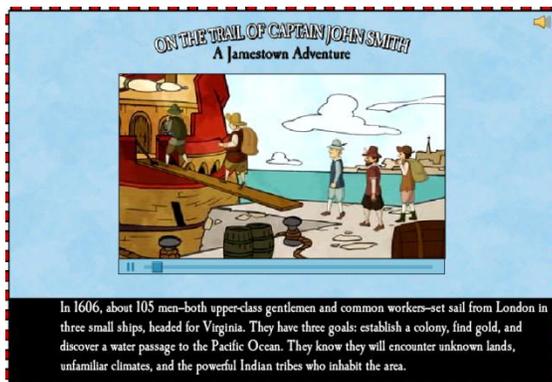


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Summer Updates

Social Studies

This summer, a new category of content was added: *Social Studies*. This new category is loaded with hundreds of digital resources to help you make your social studies lessons interactive and interesting. Resources are grouped into 11 topics. In the Geography topic group, topics include: *Continents and Oceans, Landforms, Maps, Regions, and States and Capitals*. In the History topic group, topics include: *Colonial Times, Explorers, Native Americans, Railroads, and The Underground Railroad*. The Government topic group includes content on the branches of government. And we're not done yet! Throughout the fall, you will see our Science and Social Studies resources expand with new topics, so if you are looking for something specific and can't find it in our library, let us know!



[On the Trail of Captain John Smith](#)

Watch animations and play mini-games to learn about Captain John Smith and the Jamestown settlement.

[Build A Globe](#)

Build your own globe by adding continents, oceans, mountains, and rivers!



Telling Time

A new K-2 StarrMatica Lesson launched over the summer: *Telling Time*. To access the new lesson, login to your teacher account and choose the K-2 button. Then choose the Math castle and *Telling Time* as your topic. Be sure to check out one of our favorites listed below.



[Create A Clock](#)

Collect all the gears to fix the broken clock by finding matching digital and analog clocks.

Picture Book Content Guides

30 new picture book guides were added to StarrMatica over the summer. Picture book content guides help you to use picture books in your classroom to focus on *extended response comprehension questions*. Each guide includes a digital connection for introducing the book, example questions, enrichment ideas, an answer key, and standards correlations. Directions for viewing all of the picture book guides in the links search of classroom management are on the second page of our [May 2013 Newsletter](#). Check out one of our favorites focused on Comparing and Contrasting.



[The Three Little Javalinas](#)

Everyone knows the story of the three little pigs, but now you're going to meet the three little javelinas--lovable, wild, southwestern cousins of pigs--as they try to outsmart the coyote who had hoped to eat them with red chile sauce.

Math Manipulative Content Guides

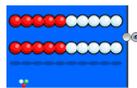
New content guides for math manipulatives were added to StarrMatica over the summer. Math manipulative guides help you to use manipulatives for problem based-learning and concept development. Each guide includes manipulative directions, ideas for using the manipulative in different settings, example questions that are modeled after SOL, Smarter Balanced, and PARCC example test questions, an answer key, and standards correlations. Directions for viewing all of the math manipulative guides in the links search of classroom management are on the second page of our [May 2013 Newsletter](#). Check out one of our kindergarten favorites:

Brilliant Bead String Rekenrek
Instructions and Example Activities



Instructions

- Click to choose one or two groups of 10 beads.
- Click and drag a bead to move it left or right.
- Click and drag a colored dot over a bead to change its color.
- Click and drag to cover the screen with a shade.
- Click the to make the shade transparent or opaque.



Uses

The following activities can be used in multiple settings.

- They can be used as guided practice with the whole class viewing on an interactive whiteboard and collaborating to answer questions as a class.
- They can be used as guided practice with the whole class viewing on an interactive whiteboard and with students responding independently on traditional rekenreks and then sharing their combinations on the board.
- They can also be used whole class in a setting with students responding on laptops or tablets while the interactive is simultaneously projected at the front of the class. The teacher can walk around the room to view individual student answers and can also share answers for whole class discussion via the projected interactive.

[Brilliant Beadstring Rekenrek](#)

This guide shares four activities for working on composing and decomposing numbers, adding, and comparing groups.

Blog Gems

Writing Inspiration

Are you looking for new ways to inspire budding authors in your classroom? Do you have a student with writer's block? Or do you have a student who thinks writing is a chore? Check out these digital resources that are sure to inspire even the most reluctant authors:

blog.starrmatica.com/writing-inspiration



Building Place Value Concepts

Many classrooms begin the new school year with place value. As you assess your student's current knowledge in order to build on what they already know or to identify gaps in their understanding that need to be addressed before moving on to more advanced concepts, be sure you are not just assessing rote knowledge but also conceptual understanding.

Your students may be able to state the value of a digit in a larger number, but do they understand what that value represents? Check out this blog post to discover several ways you can use digital content to find out!

blog.starrmatica.com/building-place-value-concepts

Getting to Know You Activities

If you are looking for ways to infuse digital content into your beginning of the year getting to know you activities, check out this blog post that shares eight web tools and ideas for using them with your students:

blog.starrmatica.com/digital-getting-to-know-you-activities



Primary Wall

Students can make a post on a shared classroom wall in response to a question such as: *What would you like to learn this year?*

Need help finding that perfect digital resource? Email or call StarrMatica's digital content experts. We would be happy to help!

info@starrmatica.com ★ 563-219-2111