



Teacher Feature

Julie Ahern



Meet Julie Ahern. She teaches at Andrew Cooke Magnet Elementary School in Waukegan, Illinois. Here is her StarrMatica story:

Our fine arts magnet school is located in a vibrant and diverse community where I have taught 3rd and now 2nd grade for 22 years. Although we are in a high poverty district, our school has been able to retain our fine arts magnet status. However, it has been a challenge to find the funding for technology and effective computer programs. Although we have a computer lab in our building, which the students visit once a week, I have worked very diligently to obtain laptops for all of my students so that we are a 1:1 classroom. Therefore, with my remaining available funds I wanted to make sure that I obtained the most effective research based programs out there.

Last year I submitted a DonorsChoose project for StarrMatica and found it to be everything and more that I needed for my students. *StarrMatica allows me to introduce a new skill on our projector and then have my students go into the related interactive games and lessons on their classroom laptops. When needed, I can differentiate lessons by directing students to certain games/lessons in the K-2 section and even challenge others to work in the grades 3-6 section. I also value the included search option to find lessons and activities so that we can extend our learning.*

My parents appreciate that they can have their children continue our lessons at home. *At the end of our units, I have my students complete the assessments and then share that information with my parents. This is my second year of using StarrMatica. After having such a positive experience with this program, I made sure to include it in our line-up for the school year 2014-15. Our district is asking us to implement the Common Core standards yet has not provided us with a reading or math curriculum to do so.*

Therefore, I appreciate having access to StarrMatica as it has provided me with the reading and math Common Core content that I need. *It also has saved me time searching for relevant curriculum because the StarrMatica program does an excellent job of offering content on so many levels. I will definitely seek a membership to StarrMatica next year as well!*