



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!