

INTERACTIVE Math Program Gets Rave Reviews



By Kelly Freckmann

Fritz Hager is living every parent's dream: His kids are clamoring to do schoolwork. The Senior Vice President of Sales at Voyager Expanded Learning was recently awoken at 6:30 a.m. to his nine- and eleven-year-old sons arguing over whose turn it was next to play VmathLive™. >>

“I just let them use my laptop because I was tired of them fighting over who could use the family PC for VmathLive,” says Hager, chuckling.

In November, Voyager Expanded Learning® partnered with Australia-based 3P Learning to create VmathLive, the American version of the most popular educational website in Australia. Developed with the ultimate goal of increasing student achievement in mathematics, the interactive, web-based program reinforces the essential concepts and skills taught in core math programs while placing strong emphasis on motivation.

In fact, research shows that motivation is the greatest factor for

increasing student achievement. According to *Teaching with Technology: Creating Student-Centered Classrooms*, a study by Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT), students learn the fundamental skills of reading, writing and arithmetic faster and better when they have a chance to practice them routinely using technology. One of the reasons for this improvement is that students are engaged by the interactive medium, and as a result, they spend more time learning and practicing the basic tasks than students who approach the same tasks using traditional paper and pencil.

VmathLive is designed to capture students’ interest with its dynamic, interactive features that let students practice and improve their math skills, as well as safely compete against other children around the world in a live, online environment. The interactive format provides immediate feedback to build students’ confidence and also lets teachers and parents track student progress, providing a bridge between home and school.

THREE STEPS TO STRONGER MATH SKILLS >>>

Used as a stand-alone program, VmathLive motivates students to im-

prove their math skills in three easy steps: Practice, Prepare, and Play. In VmathLive, students practice their math skills, prepare for high-stakes tests, and play in real-time competitions of speed and skill. Not only do they receive recognition and rewards for participation and achievement, but they compete against other students also online across the world.

For example, three students at the same instructional level may be online at the same time in three different countries—say, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. If a student chooses to compete, the program sets up a game of speed and skill against the other students online. If no students are online at the time a game is requested, the student can play against the computer. Students find that learning with technology is fun, and the real-time competitive element drives them to become better and quicker at math.

“Our very firm belief is that e-learning can be pivotal in the learning process,” notes Shane Hill, general manager of 3P Learning. “And the results of the program illustrate this. For example, computational fluency is more than doubling in less than two hours spent on VmathLive.”




A MULTI-MEDIA MATH CURRICULUM

VmathLive also meshes seamlessly with traditional Vmath®, Voyager’s math intervention program for grades 3-8, to create an engaging learning experience and give students who struggle with math a competitive edge. VmathLive reinforces the explicit instruction of Vmath through interactive practice, using the same lessons and modules to teach students the math skills they are lacking. The VmathLive component also supports different learning modalities by adding alternative learning models for students who need to see or hear the problem. To help students who struggle in math, as well as English Language Learners, VmathLive’s

Animated Math Dictionary provides definitions and animated visual representations of common mathematical terms. Optional audio support is available when reading the definitions.

Presented in an interactive medium, these features not only strengthen students’ understanding of fundamental math skills and strategies, but also empower them in their learning. According to a study published by The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), “[T]echnology encourages students to take charge of

their education. In classrooms where technology is part of the curriculum, students are more likely to initiate learning-based activities, sometimes even directing them.”

Shane Hill agrees. “Really the best aspect of VmathLive is that there are lots of ways to motivate and engage students,” he says. “The more you motivate students, the more they use the program and benefit from it. And competing against other students across the world is the most motivating factor of all.” 

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[New Assessment Tools Help Boost Student Achievement]

At the start of the school year, Voyager released important updates and enhancements to the Vmath® Intervention System, including a new Assessment Guide. This helpful guide provides all the information teachers need to successfully evaluate students’ understanding of the skills taught in Vmath. Inside are answer keys that correspond to the enhanced assessments in Vmath, including the Initial and Final Assessments, Computational Fluency Benchmark and Progress Monitoring Assessments, and Pre- and Post-Tests for each module.

The guide also includes instructions for:

- Administering each of these assessments
- Scoring procedures for each of the assessments
- Using data for instructional planning
- Entering assessment scores in VPORT™

With the Assessment Guide, teachers no longer have to reference the Teacher Edition module booklets to find the answer keys for each of the assessments. Now, all the information is in one easy reference guide!