

Play & Learn Kids Wise Up with SMART™ Boards

Rachel Rosenthal stood in front of her preschool class, moving her small index finger across the large SMART™ Board, an interactive whiteboard and dragging five animated frogs to their corresponding lily pads. Her classmates watched in anticipation.

“One...two...three...four...five frogs!” proclaimed the beaming four-year-old proudly, pointing to the frogs on the screen at Play & Learn preschool in Fort Washington.

Rachel is one of the many Play & Learn preschool and kindergarten children to benefit from the addition of a cutting-edge teaching tool. Nine Play & Learn preschool centers have added a SMART™ Board interactive whiteboard to their educational repertoires. While the children still learn preschool level math and reading through traditional classroom methods, the Smart Board fosters computer-savvy while teaching the educational objectives in a fun and unique way.

“The SMART™ Board’s interactive nature makes such a difference in the way the children approach a problem,” said Joan Ostrum, Director of the Fort Washington preschool center. “They like to go up to the board, even if they are struggling for an answer. And they can figure out the answer because they can see it.”

All the Play & Learn SMART™ Boards are equipped with the TeachSmart® Learning System, the first comprehensive interactive whiteboard software package developed specifically for early childhood, and the only pre-kindergarten educational software accredited by SMART Technologies. The TeachSmart® Learning System offers over 1,100 exclusive, customized and scaffolded activities that reflect the latest scientific research for pre-literacy and mathematics concept acquisition in young children, as well as powerful features for teachers, such as digital portfolios.

Preschool staff members have participated in extensive training through Hatch, Inc., the software creator, in using both the programs and the equipment. All the preschool classes use the SMART™ Board multiple times a week to enhance their curriculum.

“The kids love it,” gushed Kristi Bryson, Director of the Lansdale location. “They love the matching games and writing their names and letters.”

Rachel and a few friends practice writing their names on the lower part of the screen with special SMART™ Board markers before gearing up for another SMART™ Board activity.

“Can we read a story now?” Rachel said, pointing to the interactive storybook icon with anticipation. “Stories are my favorite!”

Photo Caption: The Fort Washington Preschool children enjoy playing a matching game on the SMART™ Board.

