

A guide to using
Interactive Whiteboards

Project

Third edition

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Project - A Guide to Using Interactive Whiteboards
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AN INTRODUCTION

Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) are the latest technological development to enter the English Language classroom. They are exciting and fun and can bring a variety of resources to the classroom, such as the internet, DVDs and multiROMs. But like any teaching aid they should help us in our lessons rather than dominate them.

This booklet aims to address the concerns that teachers may have about using the new technology. We will look at some simple techniques that can be used to get the most out of the IWB without the need for specialist training, and demonstrate why this learning aid can be such a valuable tool in your classroom. To begin with, let's look at some of the arguments for and against using IWBs in the English language classroom.

✓ Encouraging heads-up learning

In language lessons we usually want our students to speak to each other in order to practise the language. If the students have their noses in the books, it is difficult for them to communicate. Because we can do such things as exercises, readings, picture descriptions and guessing games on the IWB, it can help students to get their heads out of their books and get their bodies into the correct position to speak to one another.

✓ Encouraging a hands-on kinaesthetic approach

In any classroom there are a range of learning styles; some students prefer to see things, some prefer to hear things and some prefer to touch things and move about. These kinaesthetic learners can benefit from the interactivity an IWB can offer. Getting students up to the board, touching it, moving things and developing patterns will really suit their style of learning.

✓ Helping to bring the outside world into the classroom

The IWB allows us to bring other media into the classroom with ease. We can access the internet, use multiROMs from course books, have an electronic dictionary open and use DVDs and television programmes without having to switch between different machines. All we need is our computer, an internet connection and an IWB.

✓ Helping to cut down on photocopies

Photocopiable resources can be brought into the classroom on the whiteboard rather than on paper. The students will be looking at the board instead of their copies, encouraging the heads-up environment we mentioned earlier.

✗ A teacher-centred classroom

One of the biggest fears about IWBs is that the teacher will stand at the board and click through screens while talking to the students, resulting in the lesson becoming less interactive. We have to be careful how and how much we use the IWB. It needs to be a tool for everyone to use, not just for the teachers.

✗ Overwhelmed by technology

Any new technology can be scary for the teacher, especially as most of our students know more about computers than we do. This might put us in a vulnerable position. We are no longer in control of the class. However, we can use their knowledge and learn from the students, who may feel empowered by being experts in something.

✗ Increased planning time

Teachers believe they need to spend a lot of time preparing and planning lessons with the IWB. But there are a number of techniques that we can learn which will help us get the most out of the IWB in the classroom. We look at three in the next section.

THE FUNCTIONS

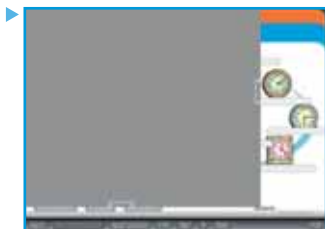
Screen shades, Spotlights and Shapes

It is inevitable that the IWB will become the focal point when it is used in a lesson. However, you may want to focus students' attention on a small part of the board or hide something on the board, or focus their attention somewhere else entirely. The screen shades, spotlight and shapes can help you do this.

► Focusing the students' attention

How many times have you asked your students to look at a picture in the course book only for them to start reading the text or doing the exercise?

The screen shade can be used to reveal the specific item you want students to focus on or to cover the entire board.



◀ If the focal point is in the middle of the board, the spotlight can be used.

► Creating guessing games (e.g. memory games)

To help review vocabulary, show the students a screen with several pictures or words on it. Give them 20 seconds to try to remember the words and then use the screen shade to cover the board. The students then have to write down all the words they can remember.

Alternatively, try revealing a picture bit by bit. Cover the screen with the spotlight and move the cursor so that the spotlight moves around the screen. The students have to guess what the picture is. You could also use the screen shade to slowly reveal the picture from the top or side.

Finally, you can use the screen shade over a video to hide what is happening. Students listen to the voices and try to guess what is happening or describe the scene. Then play the scene again with the picture showing, so the students can see if they were correct.

A variety of grammar structures can also be practised this way, including:

- present/past continuous for describing actions and scenes,
- past simple/present perfect simple for describing what you saw/have seen,
- *may/might/could (have)* for speculating on what you can see (or have seen),
- *will/going to* for making predictions.

Pens

The pens can be used to write over whatever is on the screen. This means you can annotate rhymes, highlight important information in grammar presentations and add dialogues to pictures. The highlighter option can allow you to focus your students' attention on important information.

► Focusing on pronunciation

After doing a dialogue with audio you can highlight pronunciation features such as intonation, connected speech and sentence stress. With the audio script on the board, get the students to mark the words they think will be stressed, connected, etc. Then play the listening exercise to see if they are correct. To do this you will have to use the class audio CD, as clicking on the iTools audio will remove the pen marks. You can then get students to practise their pronunciation in choral drills using the markings on the whiteboard to guide them. This will raise students' awareness of some of the features of English pronunciation.



► Making gap fill exercises

Using the shapes or the pens you can make impromptu gap fill exercises. In the dialogues opposite ask the students to role play the dialogue in pairs a few times. Each time, use the pen to black out some more of the key vocabulary. This will help the students to remember the language and speak more confidently.

► Giving feedback

The IWB can be used to give feedback after certain practice activities. Students can come to the board and write their answers using the pens. Anyone with a different answer can come and write their versions. The students can then discuss the alternatives and decide which one is right.

IMPROVING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Students with different learning styles can benefit from the introduction of an IWB to the classroom.

► Kinaesthetic

The IWB gives those students who like to touch and move things and move about in the classroom a chance to get involved in the learning process. The board needs to be interactive for everyone and not just the teacher, so getting the students to come up to the board is important. This can be done by:

- getting students to move words to label pictures. *Project iTools* contains plenty of opportunities for students to do this.
- organising board races where students have to race each other to be the first to touch the board to answer a question.
- asking students to come to the board to write their answers.

► Audio / Visual

The built-in speakers allow the spoken word to be linked to the written word. This means we can display words or pictures that support the meaning of the audio. For example:

- Put some of the more difficult words or phrases on the board, and while the students are listening they can tick the words they have heard.
- Put some pictures on the board that help illustrate the meaning of the listening.
- *Project iTools* includes activities where students read and listen to a dialogue which is shown as it is spoken.



► Encouraging a non-correct aspect

Traditional educational software has the answers inbuilt, meaning there is no discussion; things are either right or wrong. This can demoralise students who think they have the right answer and can justify why. The advantage of the IWB is that even if you are using traditional learning programmes the teacher and students can discuss answers and explore erroneous answers before 'correct' answers are revealed.

TOP TEN TIPS

- 1 Practice makes perfect. Find time to get to know what you can do with the IWB and what it can do for you.
- 2 Avoid using white backgrounds. These can produce more glare and reduce students' concentration span.
- 3 Think about your classroom position. You don't want to be throwing a shadow on the board or getting the beam in your eyes. Advise your students of this too.
- 4 Remember the activities should be interactive. The English classroom is not a lecture theatre so it shouldn't just be you at the board. Make sure it is interactive for everyone.
- 5 Make sure your classroom set-up allows access to the board. If possible move desks so the students are in a horseshoe formation near the board. Try not to have a barrier between the students and the board.
- 6 Don't allow the IWB to dominate lessons. Like anything in the classroom you can have too much of a good thing. The focus in a class should change, so try to use it when it will help you and benefit the class.
- 7 Don't make IWB material too complicated. If there is too much on the screen, or too many things that can move around, it will be more difficult to maintain the interest of the class.
- 8 Think about different learning styles when designing material. IWBs can benefit a variety of different learning styles so make sure there is something for everyone.
- 9 Don't make materials too complete. The teacher shouldn't just be a clicker of the mouse; there needs to be room for the teacher to add things, and for the material to be flexible.
- 10 Don't let the IWB do all the work. Students need to be able to follow their own thought processes, make additions and mistakes. This will encourage discussion and help the cognitive process.

Unit 1

page	SB ex	iTools exercise
4	1	Introductions
5	5	Greeting people
6	2	Classroom objects: <i>a / an</i>
6	2	In the classroom
7	5	Classroom instructions
8	1	Numbers 1–10 (1)
8	1	Numbers 1–10 (2)
8	5	Numbers 11–20 (1)
8	5	Numbers 11–20 (2)
9	6	Numbers x 10 (game)
9	11	Rhyme: <i>Once I caught a fish alive</i>
10	1	The alphabet (1)
10	2	Song: <i>Let's sing the ABC</i>
10	6	Plurals (-s ending)
11	8	Plurals (-es ending)
11	8	Plurals (irregular forms)
13	2	Maths: sums
14	1	Asking for information
14	2	<i>a or an</i>
15	1	Song: <i>There were ten in the bed</i>
DVD		Clip
		Exercise

Unit 2

page	SB ex	iTools exercise
16	1	Countries
16	2	Capital cities (game)
17	5	<i>be</i> : affirmative long and short forms
17	6	<i>be</i> : affirmative and countries
17	7	<i>be</i> : negative long and short forms
18	1	Family tree
18	3	Possessive adjectives
19	5	Possessive adjectives
19	7	Whose is it?
19	9	Rhyme: <i>Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor</i>
20	1	Mickey, Millie and Mut
21	4	<i>be</i> : questions and short answers
22	1	Days of the week
22	3	Birthday request
23	4	Questions words (game)
23	4	Put the words in order
25	4	Geography: the world
27	1	Song: <i>My Bonnie</i>
DVD		Clip
		Exercise

Unit 3

page	SB ex	iTools exercise
28	1	Possessions (game)
29	3	<i>have got</i> : affirmative
29	5	<i>have got</i> : negative
30	1	Animals (game)
30	3	<i>have got</i> : questions and short answers
31	5	What have they got?
32	1	Mut's present
33	2	Colours (game)
33	2	Opposite adjectives (game)
33	3	The order of adjectives
34	1	Schools subjects
34	1	Timetable
37	1	Science: the human body
37	2	Science: animals' bodies (1)
37	2	Science: animals' bodies (2)
38	3	<i>have got</i> : affirmative and questions
39	1	Song: <i>My favourite day</i>
DVD		Clip
		Exercise

Unit 4

page	SB ex	iTools exercise
40	1	Telling the time (1)
40	2	Telling the time (2)
41	4	Activity, day, time
41	8	Rhyme: <i>Hickory Dickory Dock</i>
42	1	Daily routine
43	3	Present simple: affirmative (1)
43	3	Present simple: affirmative (2)
43	4	Present simple: negative
44	1	<i>play or go?</i>
44	1	Activities (game)
45	10	phonetics (game)
46	1	Mickey, Millie and Mut
49	2	Music: musical instruments (1)
49	2	Music: Musical instruments (game)
49	3	Music: Musical instruments (2)
51	1	Song: <i>If you're happy and you know it</i>
DVD		Clip
		Exercise

Unit 5

page	SB ex	iTools exercise
52	1	Amy's room
52	3	Prepositions
53	5	Where is it?
54	2	Rooms in Amy's house (1)
54	2	Rooms in Amy's house (2)
55	6	Furniture
56	1	Places in a town
56	1	Places in a town (game)
57	4	<i>There is / are</i> : questions and short answers
57	8	<i>sh</i> and <i>s</i>
59	2	<i>can / can't</i>
59	4	<i>can / can't</i> : questions (1)
59	4	<i>can / can't</i> : questions (2)
61	2	History: place names
62	2	Places in town
63	2	Song: <i>Our town</i>
DVD		Clip
		Exercise

Unit 6

page	SB ex	iTools exercise
64	1	Appearance
64	1	Appearance (game)
65	3	Describing people (1)
65	3	Describing people (2)
65	4	Describing people (3)
66	1	Saturday morning
67	3	Present continuous: affirmative
67	5	Present continuous: negative
67	7	In a shop
68	1	Are we going to the shops?
69	3	Present continuous: questions and short answers
70	1	Clothes
70	4	Rhyme: <i>Diddle diddle dumpling</i>
71	5	The king's new clothes
73	2	Art: describing a picture
75	1	Song: <i>Head, shoulders, knees and toes</i>
DVD		Clip
		Exercise

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