

Remote Control Classroom

By ReadWorks.org

An Iowa class heads into high-tech tests.

Every student in class has a remote control, and the kids are clicking away at the screen. But they aren't changing channels. They're taking a test! Terry Rex's fourth graders at Wings Park Elementary School in Oelwein, Iowa, are using a new kind of classroom technology. Instead of writing with pencils on exam papers, the students use remote controls to take tests.

"It's more fun," Courtney Ricchio, 9, told WR News. "I don't have to write, and my hand doesn't get tired." The remote controls are part of the Classroom Performance System (CPS). When students use CPS to take a test, the questions appear on an electronic screen. Students key in their answers on the remote-control response pad.

Rex is one of the first teachers in Iowa to use CPS. His students use the technology for more than taking tests. They also play learning games with the system. Sam Myott, 9, says his favorite CPS activity is a football game. "It's a math game with multiplication and subtraction," he told WR News. "Since it's on the computer, it's more fun than a worksheet on your desk."

Making the Grade

Some teachers think using CPS to grade a test is more efficient, or a better use of time, than grading a written test. The computer keeps track of the students' answers and prints out their grades at the end of the day. The computer also reports which questions the class found most difficult to answer, so Rex can review them with the group.

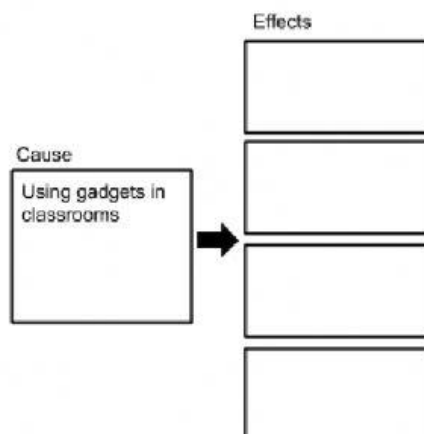
The Right Touch

Sixth Graders Marina Gagliano (Front) and Kerry O'Conner Of Wellwood Middle School in Fayetteville, New York, label parts of a microscope on an interactive whiteboard. The whiteboard allows students to use their fingers to click and tap answers on the projected image.

Get Up And Go

Fourth and fifth graders at Elton Hills Elementary School in Rochester, Minnesota, are on the move. Their classrooms have no chairs! Tiny desks hold high-tech gadgets, such as laptops and iPods, with different lessons.

1. Complete the chart.



students do not need pencils	using technology is more fun.
more efficient grading.	daily feedback
the work is more difficult	students work alone

Researchers say this setup may be healthier for students than sitting at desks all day.

Cause and Effect Card #5 Highlight the correct answers.

Pizza Problems
By ReadWorks.org

Should kids be reading for pizza? A nationwide reading program is drawing criticism for putting pizza front and center. Since 1985, the restaurant chain Pizza Hut has been running the Book It program, which rewards students for reading with personal pan pizzas. Now some people are taking a slice at Book It. They say the program promotes poor eating habits and gives Pizza Hut free advertising in public schools.

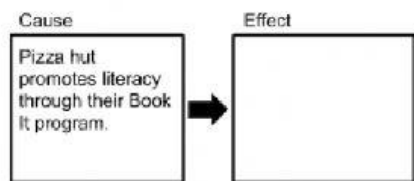
"It's clear that Pizza Hut's Book It has no place in public schools....It promotes junk food," says Susan Linn, a cofounder of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. The group has called for schools to stop participating in the Book It program.

Nearly 22 million children in 50,000 U.S. schools take part in Book It. Since the program began, more than 200 million pizzas have been given away. Each year, from October 1 through March 31, students read books to meet monthly reading goals set by teachers. When students meet their goal for the month, they get a certificate for a personal pan pizza.

"We're really proud of the program," says Leslie Tubbs, the director of Book It. "We get hundreds of e-mails from [past participants] who praise it and say it helped them get started with reading." In 1988, President Ronald Reagan honored the program for promoting literacy, or reading skills.

But critics say schools can teach students to enjoy reading without the help of a fast-food company. "Schools need to realize that they are undermining their students' well-being," says nutrition expert Jane Levine. She explains that the Book It program is a problem not just because it rewards kids with fast food but also because it makes a large company a regular part of the school day.

1. Complete the chart.



- A. Pizza hut encourages poor eating habits.
- B. The Book It program began in 1985.
- C. The Book It program is used to advertise pizza.
- D. Pizza hut received feedback praising their efforts to get kids to read.

2. Complete the chart.

Cause



Effect

Susan Linn is demanding that schools no longer participate in the Book It program.



- A. Pizza Hut gives children unhealthy foods as part of the Book It program.
- B. Children are taught to enjoy reading with Pizza Hut's help.
- C. Students read to earn free pizzas from Pizza Hut.
- D. More than 200 million pizzas have been given away.