Springboro High School is a public school near Dayton, Ohio that serves approximately 1800 students in grades 9–12. Springboro students have historically been high achievers with an AP® participation rate of 33% and an average graduation rate of 98%.

Recently, Springboro leaders introduced Chromebook® laptops into most of the school’s classrooms, and they have been moving towards adding more online components to the school’s curricula. This was a key reason why Social Studies teacher, Kelsie Andrews asked her department head to set up a presentation of McGraw-Hill Education’s United States Government: Our Democracy with the online study tool, LearnSmart®.

“We were going through the process of picking new textbooks,” recalls Andrews. “I thought adding LearnSmart as a study tool would give my students and their parents extra confidence, because its questions are triggered by what a student already knows.”

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LearnSmart uses adaptive technology to identify areas that need more study and helps students become more familiar with the content.

Implementation

Andrews first implemented LearnSmart in her American Government class during the 2015–16 school year.

“I thought it would be much harder than it was,” says Andrews. “As it turned out, I was more focused on getting used to the eBook. When I introduced my students to LearnSmart for the first time, I simply took screen shots of the first chapter as it progressed and spent a class period walking them through it step by step. Then I assigned LearnSmart as homework for the next chapters.”

Once students were on board, Andrews was able to “take the supports away,” as she puts it, and allow her students to sink or swim with LearnSmart on their own.

“From a user-standpoint, LearnSmart is very easy to understand,” says Andrews. “For instance, the program asks students, ‘How well do you know the answer?’ If they aren’t sure, it zooms into the paragraph in the textbook that provides that information, so students can easily review the material until they are more confident that they know it.”

Student Engagement

Andrews was immediately impressed by how well her students responded to LearnSmart. She quickly saw an increase in their understanding of the content and noted the benefits of students being able to see their own progress.

“My students like the visual element in the program that shows a sprout growing into the tree of knowledge as they learn,” says Andrews. “The more questions students complete, the more they can visually see their progress. They can get very competitive about their results.”

She adds that sometimes students think they don’t know the answers when they actually do. Other times, they may believe they are farther along than they are. Having raw data to capture their knowledge means she can tell when they are proficient and when they are guessing.

And while her students don’t see the raw data in the same way that Andrews can, they know when they have mastered a concept, and it gives them the confidence to move forward.

“The more questions students complete, the more they can visually see their progress. They can get very competitive about their results.”

–Kelsie Andrews,
Social Studies teacher
Springboro High School

Results

Andrews reports an immediate increase in her students’ test results. As an example, she points to one second-semester senior who had been failing tests. After studying with LearnSmart, that student went from scoring in the 40’s to scoring in the 70’s. Andrews believes the way LearnSmart presents the material makes a difference.
“LearnSmart helps prepare students for the structure of tests as much as the content,” she says. “When students are familiar with the ways tests can be worded or set up, they aren’t thrown off by the testing itself.”

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–Kelsie Andrews

Andrews also believes that LearnSmart can help every level of student increase test scores and build confidence.

“Students who are already getting 100’s in their classes use LearnSmart to stay fresh for testing,” says Andrews. “But LearnSmart is also a great tool for students who need a boost in their grade, not just for the gifted.” In fact, she has seen some of the greatest success with struggling learners.

To measure the results of using LearnSmart, Andrews administered eight tests to her students before the implementation to create a baseline of their abilities. She then administered a test after the mid-year implementation of LearnSmart, so that she could more clearly see any impact it might make. The results were impressive.

“Before LearnSmart, my general students were averaging around 71% on all tests,” she says. “After LearnSmart, they earned an average of 84%. None of those students had ever received anything above 80% before.”

The Future

Today, Andrews is in her second year of using LearnSmart, and she has been extremely happy with the results.

“I continue to see an increase in my students’ grades, and I am more confident in their test-taking abilities,” she says. “I will definitely keep using LearnSmart.”

About LearnSmart

LearnSmart is an online interactive, adaptive study tool that assesses a student’s proficiency and knowledge within a specific course, tracks which topics have been mastered, and identifies areas that need more study. SmartBook® is an intelligent eBook that applies the adaptive technology of LearnSmart to the content of a course. The result is the first and only learning experience that is based on—and continually adapts to—each student’s knowledge. This ensures a focus on content the student hasn’t learned while also promoting long-term retention of learned material.

LearnSmart is available for:
• Social Studies, Grades 6–12
• World Languages: Spanish, Levels 1–4
• Science, Grades 6–12

To learn more about LearnSmart, visit: mheonline.com/LearnSmart