

Improving Student Performance on the Georgia CRCT in Hinesville, Georgia

Frank Long Elementary



**Patrick Heath,
Teacher**



**610 students
Grades K to 5**



Study Island



**58% African American
2% Asian/Pacific
Islander
24% Caucasian
6% Hispanic
65% Free/Reduced
Lunch
10% Special Education**

The Challenge:

Frank Long Elementary is part of the Liberty County School System in Hinesville, Georgia. The city of Hinesville is the county seat, the largest city in Liberty County, and one of the fastest-growing cities in Georgia.

Technology is an important part of the learning process at Frank Long Elementary. The school uses computers and other technology tools to supplement the learning process and aid in student achievement.

"Kids totally need interactivity," said fourth grade teacher Patrick Heath. "They're 30-second kids; things always need to be moving and changing. It's very different than the old style of teaching, where it's nearly all lecturing. We started using Study Island in our after-school program to provide supplemental instruction for at-risk students. The teachers and students who used Study Island loved it, so we launched it schoolwide."

Frank Long Elementary uses Study Island to help students master grade-level academic standards and prepare for the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT). Through whole-class, small-group, and individualized instruction, students have increased their excitement about learning and are achieving steady gains.

How They Did It:

Frank Long Elementary rolled out Study Island during the 2005–06 school year. Today, all students in grades one through five work on the online educational program in the computer lab. The upper grades use Study Island in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies, while the lower grades focus on math and reading. Teachers also use Study Island for whole-class and small-group instruction inside the classroom.

“Study Island gives us a great way to supplement and personalize instruction to prepare students for the CRCT [Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests],” said Heath. “It matches our state standards and fits in really well with our classroom instruction. Students take what they learn and immediately apply it in the classroom.”

Heath also conducts whole-class instruction using Study Island. For example, in math, he projects problems onto a SMART Board and reads the problems aloud to students. Students individually answer each problem using student response pads, or “clickers.” Together, Heath and his students review the answers and talk about which choice is correct. Heath then selects the answer the class decides upon, and students receive immediate feedback and an explanation in Study Island.

“This approach allows me to instantly see how students are answering questions and if they’re on target or off base,” Heath said. “Kids really enjoy using the clickers with Study Island, and they like seeing the data about how many students select each choice.”

Technology also plays an integral role in the writing process in Heath’s classroom. One Study Island feature Heath and his students particularly enjoy is the writing assignment module, which provides a paperless way to develop writing skills across the curriculum.

Using this module, Heath can choose from grade-specific writing prompts or create his own writing assignments for single students or groups of students. Students can use online graphic organizers to plan their written responses and create and submit their compositions online. Heath can then electronically send grades and comments back to students or ask for revisions.

“On certain mornings during the week, I’ll send kids to the Study Island learning center to work on writing prompts. Over a three-day period, I can cycle all my students through the center,” said Heath. “Students send their compositions to me, and I shoot comments back to them online. Not only do I enjoy reading students’ writing assignments on the computer, but I can get their assignments back to them in a more timely manner.”

Another feature Heath finds helpful is the real-time reporting in Study Island. With this data, he can easily differentiate instruction to address learning gaps and help students prepare for state assessments.

“The reporting is particularly useful for my Response to Intervention (RTI) and special education students,” he said. “I can closely monitor what students are working on and make sure they’re keeping up. It allows me to track their skill development and see how their progress correlates to what we’re doing in the classroom.”

To prepare for the CRCT, Heath launched a “Blue Ribbon challenge.” Each grade level tracks the number of Blue Ribbons students earn in Study Island in math and reading. For every 25 Blue Ribbons a class earns, it places a Blue Ribbon on a bulletin board in the hallway.

“Students jumped right into the challenge,” said Heath. “We now have a huge number of students working on Study Island at night and during the weekends. They get so excited about seeing the Blue Ribbons go up on the bulletin board. They like to compare and see whose class is in the lead.”

Study Island is also available to at-risk students after school and to students in summer school. “After school, many teachers use Study Island as their main curriculum because it’s a fun way to help students master the standards,” said Heath. “As part of the after-school program, I use Study Island with the interactive whiteboard for small-group instruction and for individual work on the computers in my classroom.”

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Success:

“With Study Island, students don’t feel like they’re working on schoolwork because it’s fun,” said Heath. “It’s more like a video game approach to learning. They love the games and rewards, so they flourish with Study Island. And I like Study Island because I can put students on the computer and know they’re working on standards-based items and building the skills they need to succeed. I know that it strongly supports my classroom curriculum. It’s helped us get to where we are today, and we continue to grow.”

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The Future:

For more information:

Contact [800.447.5286](tel:800.447.5286) or visit www.edmentum.com to learn more about Edmentum's online learning solutions.