

# 17% Test Score Gains from Using Boards and Voting Technology!

Robert Marzano was the keynote speaker at the Computer Using Educator's Conference in March 2009. He was honest to say he had been slow to get on the technology bandwagon but finally did. He has done research after research and I think there will be a lot of people surprised at his findings. The information below comes from the blog of a person who attended the conference <http://iwbrevolution.ning.com/forum/topics/robert-marzano-and-interactive> and is a summary of Marzano's findings about the impact of Interactive Whiteboards and Voting Technology.

On this, Robert Marzano was very clear. This technology is the future of education. His data was undeniable.

**1. Of those classrooms employing these boards and using the voting technology, there was an immediate 17-percentile gain in scores.**

2. He also found that if a teacher were using the board for 20-30 months, there was, on average, a 20 percentile gain. Thus, proving that with time and practice, a teacher can hone his/her skills to encourage even more student success.

**3. The "Sweet Spot" he says, the perfect storm of student achievement according to his findings, was when the technology was used by an experienced teacher, having had it for 2 years, using it 75% of the time in class, who has had training. That teacher shows a whopping 29% gain in scores.**

But there is such a thing as too much. Marzano went on to remind us that beyond this sweet spot there be dragons, doing less for student scores, thus proving that you clearly "can't take the human mean out of teaching." To get the most out of the ... technology, a district can't just give it to a teacher, and not to just any teacher. The district has to train that teacher. And, Marzano was quick to point out, that "weaker teachers require professional development in [both] effective teaching and the use of Interactive Whiteboard Technology."

**Success comes in finding that sweet spot and using it properly. He stresses that, statistically, this successful strategy only works if:**

**\* There is clear focus on content, not just using bells and whistles. The technology proves merely distracting otherwise.**

**\* The voting component is in place, keeping track of students who are getting it and those who aren't, and using this feedback formatively.**

**Marzano believes that voting technology is a breakthrough technology, but it must be combined with teachers who know how to "milk" that data.**

It was exciting to have Robert Marzano up there, standing behind the ed tech standard, evolving in his own theories. But it was also comforting to have such a Godfather of educational practice reminding those before him in the trenches that, despite the negative press about education, statistics continue to prove that, "If you give magic bbs to teachers who want to hone their craft, great things can happen."