

Knowre builds math confidence, provides consistent support for at-risk students

The Challenge

Venture High School is an alternative school of choice in Arlington Independent School District that offers self-paced, individualized and computer-assisted academic instruction. It is a dropout prevention and recovery program designed to help students complete their high school diploma or GED. Most students at Venture Alternative are behind in credits and meet at least one of the school's "at-risk" criteria.

A veteran teacher of 27 years, Julie Horner currently works as a geometry teacher. She faces several challenges in this position:

- One classroom can have students with a wide range of abilities.
- Students can come and go at anytime during the school year.
- Students have faced significant challenges in their lives, resulting in low-self esteem that affects their work.

Discovering Knowre

How did you evaluate Knowre?

The first time I saw Knowre, I was impressed by the instructional videos and interface of the program. We decided to trial Knowre with some students and they were very receptive. In fact, they refused to go back to doing packets after the trial! For my students, who have grown up in front of computers and smartphones, Knowre's graphics and interactivity was a huge plus.

My students also appreciated how to-the-point the instructional videos are. It's funny because I spent one summer making my own geometry videos and some of them turned out to be 20 minutes long! Knowre's videos do a great job of delivering instruction in potent doses.

Since my students come and go throughout the school year, I needed a program that could provide content flexibility. Knowre allows me to start students anywhere along the curriculum, making it easy to integrate into my classroom. The feedback structures in Knowre were also a great fit. Many of my students have low-self esteem and Knowre's approach to feedback seemed to not only encourage persistence on math topics, but increase overall confidence as well.



School Facts

- 9-12 Public School
- Located in Arlington, Texas
- Serves 286 students
- Alternative School of Choice

Goals

- Provide supported, self-paced math remediation
- Build math confidence and independent learning skills

Result

- "Knowre's support features give my students a sense of 'safeness.' Some of them have faced many challenges in their lives and having any kind of consistency or something to always fall back on is rare. It helps them build confidence as well as their independent learning skills."

Knowre Implementation

Take us through Knowre's implementation in your classroom.

When students come to my class, they grab a Chromebook and start working independently on the Knowre lessons that I have assigned. They are required to take notes and show their work on Knowre's practice problems in a notebook that they turn in.

As the students are working, I walk around the room and help them individually. If a student needs assistance and I'm busy working with another student, they know they can use Knowre's support features. They don't just sit there doing nothing. Students can watch the videos or receive step-by-step guidance through the problem-solving process with the Walk Me Through.

What are your favorite aspects of Knowre?

My favorite aspects of Knowre are the instant feedback that students receive and the coin and star rewards system. Back when my students were working in packets, they had to wait for me to grade the work before finding out how they were doing. With Knowre, students know immediately if they got the question right or wrong. Plus, I don't have to do any grading.

Knowre's achievement system is based off coins and stars. Students earn up to three coins for each question they answer correctly. They do have to "spend" coins to use the support features, but I've noticed that my students are not satisfied with earning just one or two coins per question. They always want to retry the question for all three!

Some of my students use another program where progress is reflected in percentages. It starts students off at zero and the percentage will move up or down depending on their performance. I find Knowre's approach to be more effective. I like to call them "happy coins!"

The Impact

How has Knowre helped your students?

My students are building math confidence everyday, sometimes without realizing it. Knowre has two types of questions: practice and application. The application questions are more difficult, so I don't require my students to do them. I was working with a student once and after she had solved the problem, I noticed that it was an application question. We were both happily surprised by the realization.

On Knowre, you can also view the last time a student was active on the program. After returning to school after winter break, I looked at my Teacher Dashboard and saw that one of my students was on the program on December 24th! It is very rare for my students to work on homework, let alone on Christmas Eve. It's little wins like these that keep me smiling.

Simply put, Knowre is a fun program. It's simple, consistent, and gives students a sense of safeness.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

I've been teaching for 27 years. I taught junior high, working with gifted kids in pre-AP classes, before coming to Venture. Witnessing the success my students are able to achieve in my classroom is much more rewarding knowing the challenges that they've faced in their lives.