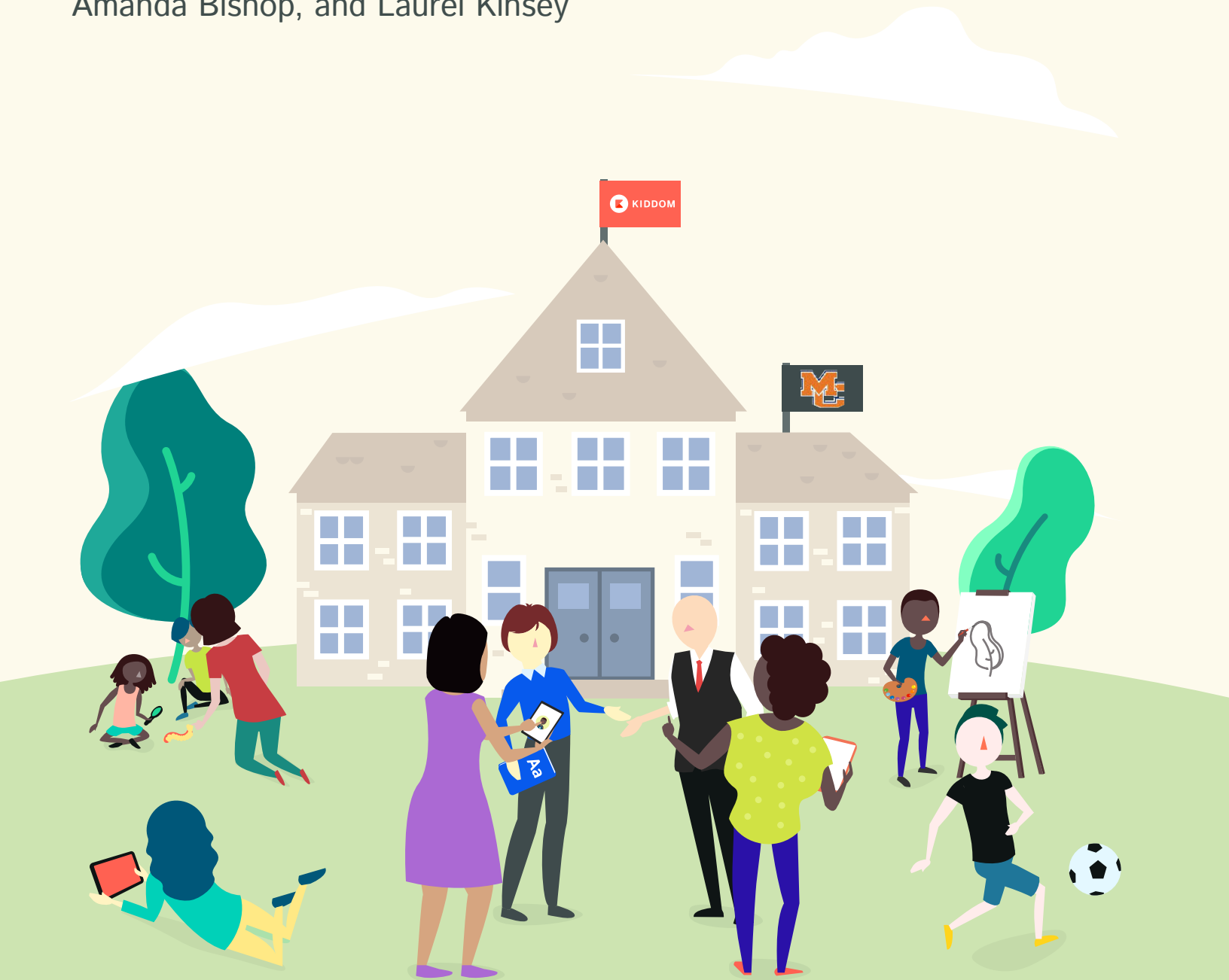


# Discovery at South Marshall Elementary School

Teachers: Anna Maziarka, Jackie Curts, Amanda Bishop, and Laurel Kinsey





**Problems of Practice:**

- How can technology enhance lesson plans that involve true personalization for all students in a blended learning classroom?
- How does technology support pedagogy that builds student self-advocacy?

**Overview**

In Marshall County, Kentucky, teachers have embarked on a journey to shift the focus of planning and instruction from standardized testing to personalized curriculum that supports student choice and voice. To make this change, four teachers at South Marshall Elementary (SME) school have focused on using technology, including Kiddom, to ensure that students can become curious and resourceful adult learners, not just good test-takers. There are three major

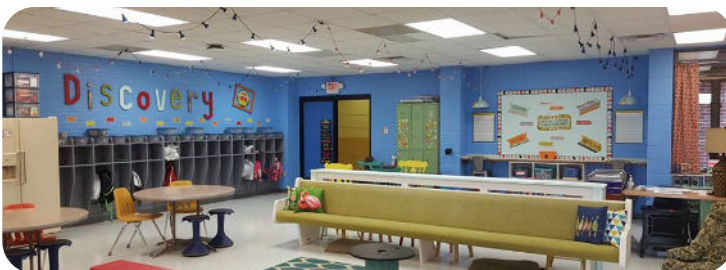
elements of their classroom that bring this student-centered vision to life: flexible use of classroom space, standards-based grading, and intentional use of technology to support personalized, blended learning. In these dynamic classrooms, personalization doesn't mean only using technology; rather, it means individualization of assignment content, format or media, length of time allowed, and other differentiated supports.

**Launching Discovery**

**Classroom Environment**

SME teachers started this journey by creating warm, inviting spaces for students, and encouraging them to pick work spaces that fit their needs. Sometimes, students sit in groups at tables to discuss a project, other times they sit in comfortable arm chairs to read. By allowing students to make these decisions, the teachers empower them to think reflectively

about their learning styles. This layout sends the message that the kids really are at the center of the learning, rather than a teacher at the front of the room with rows of uncomfortable, slanted desks. "We want students to recognize that they're in the driver's seat," says Mrs. Jackie, noting that giving students choice has changed the whole dynamic of her classroom and driven student engagement.





## Standards-Based Grading

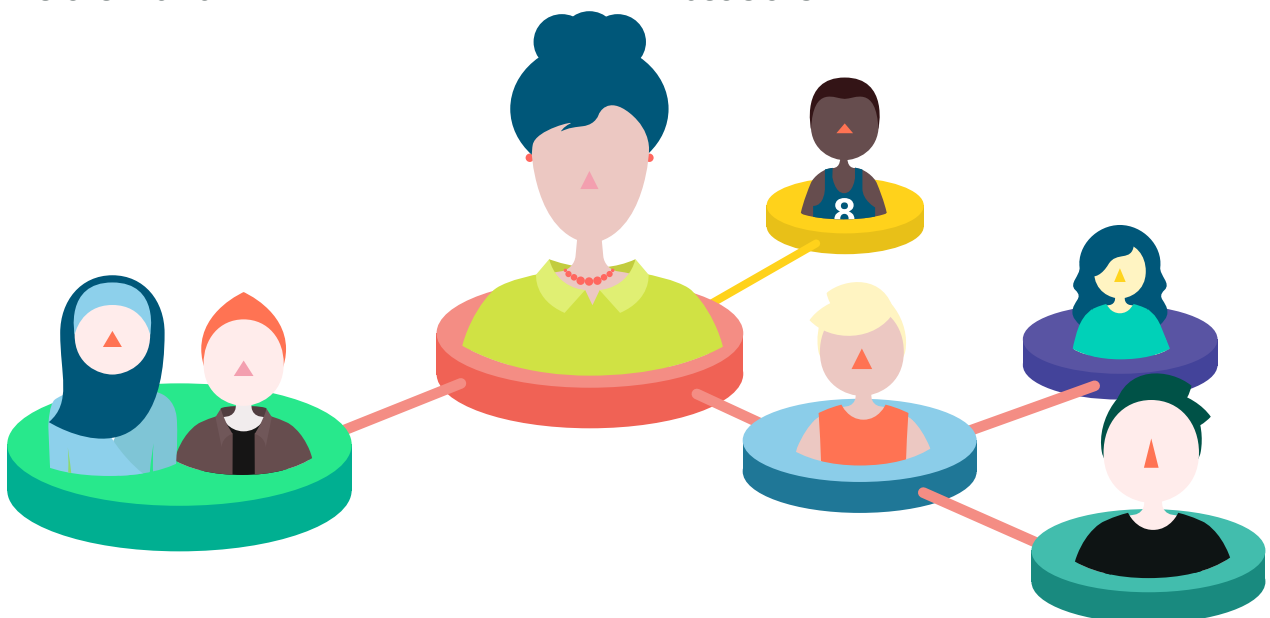
It was important for the teachers at SME to adopt standards or competency-based grading practices before jumping into personalized learning. First, the teachers had to develop a deep understanding of the skills and content they wanted students to master, and then consider how to choose the appropriate content to support student development. Then, they worked to ensure that students understood the standards so that they could make the right

choices. This meant investing time in the beginning of the year to discuss the skills they would be learning, and continuing to return to them throughout daily lessons. Ms. Jackie explains, “when we talk to the kids, we say ‘at all times you need to know what you’re working on to reach mastery.’ If I say ‘what are you working on?’ I don’t want to hear them say lesson five, they should know the actual skill.”

## Choosing Instructional Technology

Choosing the right tools for a new classroom model was crucial for the Discovery teachers at South Marshall Elementary. They understand that technology cannot completely replace direct instruction, but must intentionally supplement collaborative classroom interactions. They don't want technology to replace instruction, but they do want to use it to enhance the parts of instruction where it could be more organized and efficient to use machine over human.

SME uses a mix of adaptive platforms, like Lexia for literacy instruction, and standards-aligned content from Zearn, to support a flexible blended learning model. These teachers use Kiddom to tie together the mix of independent, in-class paper assignments, differentiated digital assignments, and student-teacher conference notes to ensure that students can be self-directed and all four teachers have access to up-to-date student data to make instructional decisions.





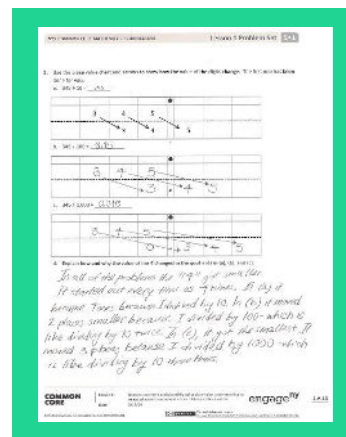
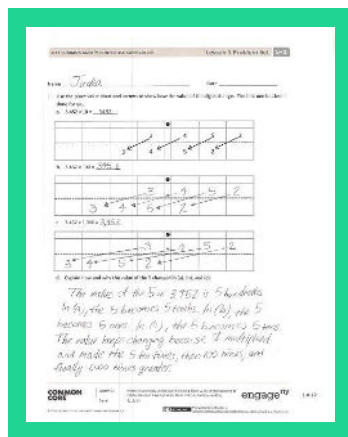
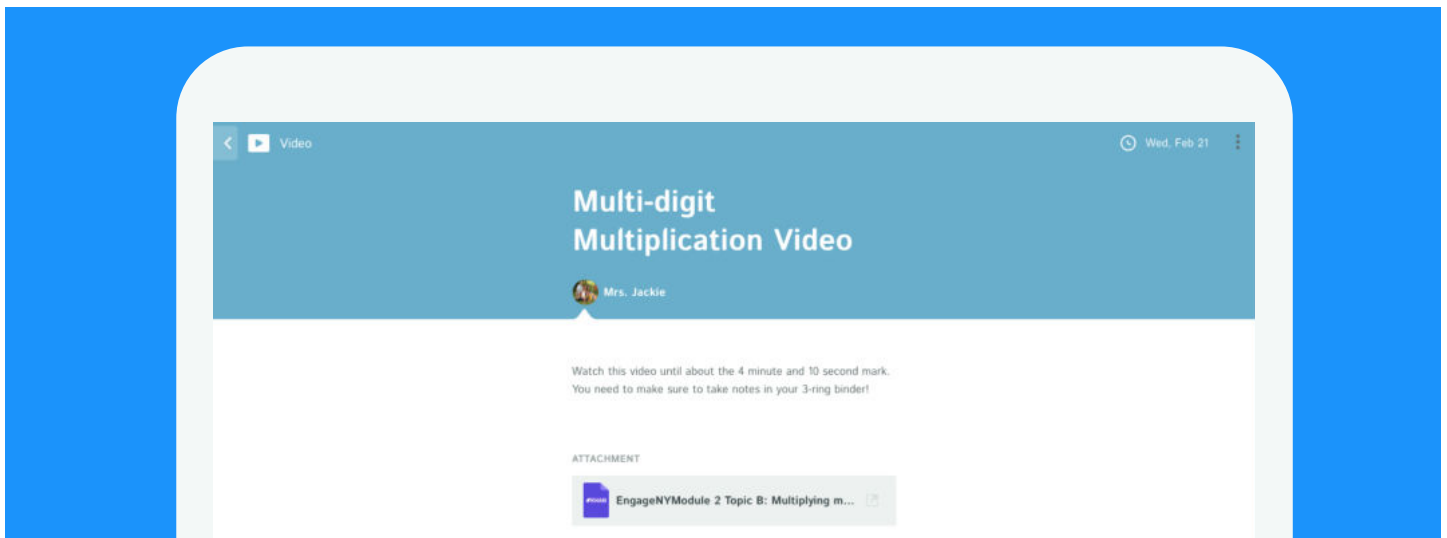
## Using Kiddom at SME

### Multiple Methods of Differentiation

#### *Differentiate Student Mastery Levels*

With Kiddom, the Discovery team assign content, both teacher-created and from our Library, to students at a range of levels to ensure that they can work independently and make progress towards their own learning targets.

During Discovery math blocks, students are assigned videos and practice activities from Khan Academy, which are aligned to EngageNY's modules. Sometimes the task simply involves taking notes to review a new topic, other times there is group work involving practice on paper. Once students have completed any work done off-line, they scan a copy of it into Kiddom and submit it for teacher review.



#### *Differentiate Method of Instruction*

Within Kiddom, the students also receive and submit materials that are differentiated in the format that learning takes place. Some students are ready to handle completely independent

work, and they can take their laptops to a quiet area of the room to work at their own pace. Other students need additional teacher support and work 1:1 with teachers or in small groups on work, then submit their final evidence via Kiddom to receive a score.



## Student Self-Advocacy: Technology as a Resource

Kiddom supports the development of self-advocacy and independent learning skills in the Discovery classrooms at SME. The teachers use Kiddom's Planner to outline the materials that will be used in each module, and then assign them to individual students when they are ready. Amanda Bishop explained, "students are able to move throughout lessons at their individual pace. With that, students can use Kiddom to help guide them on what they need to work on, when it is due, review tasks they have completed, and know what they will be working on next." Because students have access to the same real-time data as their teachers, they can

make informed decisions on which skills to prioritize and practice.

"We want students to see technology as a resource, and also use the other resources they have including their peers," explains Jackie Curts. Students access their data reports in Kiddom, and then instead of relying only on teacher help, they can go back to previous assignments or submissions for a refresher, or ask a peer for help. Her co-teacher, Laurel Kinsey adds, "Students frequently log into past assignments and can look back at their grade and a picture of their scanned work."

## Personalization Made Easy

Personalizing learning to this extent could be exhausting for teachers without the appropriate resources. Managing the range of materials and assignments given to different students, tracking progress, and conferencing individually require clear systems for organization and communication, which is another reason the

team at SME has chosen Kiddom to plan curriculum, assign materials, and grade. Mrs. Jackie says, "Kiddom is helping us to resolve the issues of having a different program for all our needs. We use it to push our assignments to our students with content attached."





No longer do the teachers have to worry about making individual copies of paper assignments personalized for individual students - with Kiddom’s Google Drive integration, copies are automatically created for each student, and the teachers send personalized directions or modifications digitally. For elementary students learning the skills required for independent learning, staying organized is not always easy, and sometimes it’s the little things that make teachers’ lives easier. “There is no student saying ‘no I handed that assignment in,’ it is scanned in on their account. No worries on a paper with no name or no piles of papers!” With Kiddom housing students’ “portfolio” of work from the entire school year, there is never confusion or miscommunication over what has been done, even with all students working at

different speeds.

Kiddom’s detailed, standards-aligned reports help teachers make instructional decisions and make student conferences more powerful. “At any point in time I can go to generate reports and have students grades already added in,” says Amanda Bishop. The team uses these reports to guide students’ in setting their own SMART goals, and choosing which materials to assign next. “Kiddom is also great for assessing data and then assigning appropriate content based on student performance. We also love that it is very easy to attach standards and rubric to every assignment.” The teachers have students complete a self-assessment every few weeks with Kiddom reports in hand to reflect on what factors led to their progress, or what obstacles they need support in overcoming.

### Student Self-Reflection

Staying on Task	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Effort on work	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Class participation	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Organization	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Asking for help	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Effort on content assessments	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Behavior	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Talking quality notes	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Making and keeping goals	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve
Attendance	Excellent	Good	Okay	Needs to improve

“We have students that have been able to grow excessively this year because of their tailored assignments and customized pacing,” says Mrs. Jackie, noting that there are two layers of learning happening - academic progress and work habits.

Kiddom reports paired with student self-reflections are also shared with parents to help them understand how this new teaching model works for their students, and give them targeted information to support their students at home, too.

# Discovery at Jonathan Elementary School

Teacher: Chasity West







**Classroom Structure:**

1:1, math, SBG, self-paced, elementary

**Problems of Practice:**

How can students document their justification for solutions in math coursework?

How can teachers give feedback student process as well as product?

## Overview

Ms. West uses Kiddom to help students develop important justification skills in her math classroom. First, students complete practice problems independently, with pencil and paper, or on the computer using resources from Khan Academy or other providers in our content library. But simply completing a problem doesn't necessarily demonstrate all aspects of learning. To push her students towards a higher level of critical thinking, students use the webcams on their computers to film themselves walking through the process they took to solve the problems, and justifying their responses. They attach the videos, along with a photo or scanned copy of their handwritten work, to Ms. West, who can evaluate not just if they got the answer correct or not, but also dig into how deeply they understand how to reproduce the

steps, and know exactly where to intervene if there are misunderstandings. Ms. West also uses the platform to spark mathematical curiosity in students, presenting them with equations or other mathematical information and asking them to submit videos of their 'wonderings.' Once students have submitted these videos, Ms. West uses custom rubrics built within Kiddom to give students feedback, in addition to in-person 1:1 conferencing. This practice helps drive this Jonathan Elementary classroom in meeting key characteristics identified by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (see Table 1). In Ms. West's room, the students defend their ideas and develop self-advocacy skills by using the technological tools in the room to ask for help, submit revised work, or build on the ideas taught during direct instruction.

**Table 1**

**Levels of Discourse in a Mathematics Classroom**

Levels	Characteristics of Discourse
0	The teacher asks questions and affirms the accuracy of answers or introduces and explains mathematical ideas. Students listen and give short answers to the teacher's questions.
1	The teacher asks students direct questions about their thinking while other students listen. The teacher explains student strategies, filling in any gaps before continuing to present mathematical ideas. The teacher may ask one student to help another by showing how to do a problem.
2	The teacher asks open-ended questions to elicit student thinking and asks students to comment on one another's work. Students answer the questions posed to them and voluntarily provide additional information about their thinking.
3	The teacher facilitates the discussion by encouraging students to ask questions of one another to clarify ideas. Ideas from the community build on one another as students thoroughly explain their thinking and listen to the explanations of others.





**Flipgrid** [Toggle]

- 4 The student explained the activity and the math the activity required them to do. The student included evidence.
- 3 The student explained the activity and gave evidence.
- 2 The student explained the activity.
- 1 The student showed evidence.

**West**

1 RUBRIC

**Flipgrid What do you wonder?** [Toggle]

- 4 Gives a wonder that relates to math or notices something mathematical.
- 3 Gives a wonder.
- 2 Talks about the image.
- 1 Off topic.

In addition to supporting students' understanding of mathematical concepts, using Kiddom's rubrics and grading systems build transparency and self-advocacy, making her classroom even more student-centered. Before students submit

their videos, they have access to the custom rubrics Ms. West has created, as well as the standard they are working on, so there is no mystery about what the expectation is.