

encouraged a ‘beat the clock’ environment. Plus, the children enjoyed the sound clip at the end of the countdown timer! (You can use a variety of sounds; either choose one of the ones provided or simply download whatever you like and use that.)

Our use of the IWB for this lesson didn’t go without hitches! By playing around with the tools available on the board, we solved most minor problems we had. However, we did have problems with the use of the ‘ticker tape’ tool, and found that it was easiest to switch it off before changing window or using another page of the flipchart, or else it caused problems with the graphics. We also would have found it helpful if you could have skipped pages in the flipchart, although, when investigating if we could do this, we found another useful tool that allowed you to use page turn effects, just to make your presentations even more exciting.

One thing that we did conclude after the lesson was that we think we tried too hard to get the children up and using the board. During the ‘spotlight’ activity, bringing pupils up to the board to move the spotlight seemed somewhat unnecessary. In fact, at the times when the teacher was moving the spotlight around, the children were just as interested in what was going on. Just because the children are able to use the board doesn’t mean they have to. We also realised that while we consider the tools we have implemented in this lesson simple and easy to use, we tend to forget that we have had many hours of training using computers in this way over the last few years. Tasks such as setting a background on a slide and creating a short video clip in *MovieMaker* are not simple if the user has no experience of them. Thus, we concluded that it would be very worthwhile for any teacher with an IWB in their classroom to set aside some time for merely playing around with the tools available. Guidance from somebody more experienced would be invaluable, too, as we found out with this lesson. Children quickly become familiar and confident with the use of the board, sometimes more confident than us!

In conclusion, using an IWB enhances lessons, not only in maths but across the curriculum. All IWB arrangements have a vast array of tools available, and the more time that is spent experimenting with and using the board the more valuable its use becomes. ‘Practice makes perfect’, and in our experience this certainly seems to be the case.

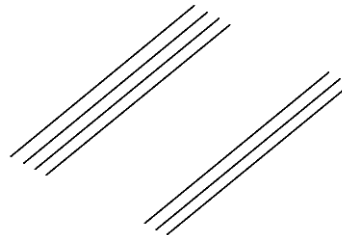
Lee Bell, David Jones, Julia King, Claire Nicholson and Andrew Pinks are final-year students on the BA (QTS) Primary Teaching course at Warwick University.

Line multiplication

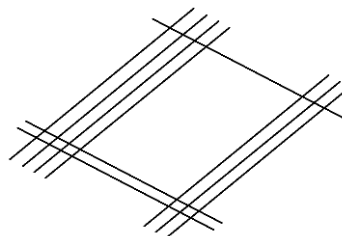
Colin Foster

Here’s a way of doing multiplication that I hadn’t seen until today.

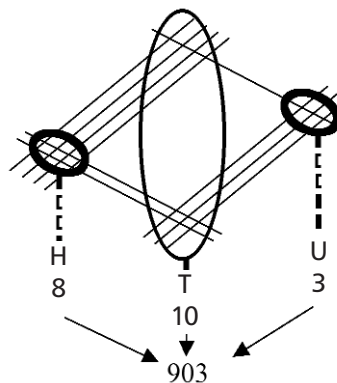
Say you want to work out 43×21 . For 43, draw 4 parallel lines, a gap and 3 parallel lines:



For 21, on the same drawing, but going the other way, make 2 parallel lines, a gap and 1 line:



Then count up the number of crossing points, adding where there are multiple crossings vertically in line:



This works just as well with numbers with three or more digits. And if you have a zero somewhere, just use a dashed line there and count ‘zero’ crossings.

It’s a bit fiddly as an efficient everyday method, but does it have some use as an aid to thinking about multiplication?

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Acknowledgement

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