

The phenomenal success of our students is attributed to the immense opportunities the language lab has provided.

MONTVERDE ACADEMY

Established in 1912, Montverde is a private, college preparatory, boarding school with a population of 700 students. The boarding program hosts 300 students from nearly 40 different countries. The goals of these students are to learn English, graduate with an American high school diploma and to gain admittance to top universities across the country and around the world.

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Montverde provides an intensive English Language Learning program to non-native English speaking students, while all English native speakers are required to take a foreign language. Therefore, nearly every student in the high school will use the Sanako Lab 300 at some point during the week. Currently the school offers Spanish and French and provides support for students of other languages upon request.

Mr. Derek Gaudet, Director of International Student Academic Development notes the school has grown tremendously in the last few years and has developed a large population of international students in the boarding program. Many of the students are coming from homes where English is not the first language, yet they want an accredited high school diploma in order to attend American universities. We currently have roughly 100 ESL students at various levels. There are 4 full-time ESL teachers who teach 3 distinct levels of class. Each class has students of varying needs and it was felt that a new language solution was needed to help them address the different levels they had in their classes.

With the recent growth in international students, the school has found that each ESL level has students of varying needs. It was felt that a new language solution was needed to help them address the different levels they had in their classes. A concerned family in the high school made a significant donation and the Chen Family Foreign Language Laboratory was developed during the summer of 2009 to provide the school with a modern, up-dated approach to language acquisition and development.

The Chen Family Foreign Language Lab is equipped with 45 networked multimedia computers and a dual screened administration station. The lab utilizes the SANAKO Lab 300 system, which helps control student and teacher access to a number of other programs for language development.

The paired discussion feature is the most popular function with the students. They really enjoy speaking to each other and practicing their new language skills with a one-on-one live audience. Teachers create exercises and assignments that require students to create their own dialogues and conversations. Teachers appreciate being able to listen to the pairs and provide feedback and guidance to individuals as they need it. Teachers are seeing faster language development with this peer to peer approach and are finding it easier to individualize each assignment for their students' needs.

The ESL department brings their students on a daily basis to give the students opportunities to listen to examples of correct English language use and to complete activities from online resources. The administrative computer used with the Sanako system has a dual monitor where the teacher is able to see a thumbnail of each student computer. This view of the whole class allows teachers to see when a student is having trouble and permits them to give help to the students who need it the most at any time.





Students are able to access these activities from home and can continue to work at their own pace. Teachers are able to put their lessons and activities on the lab server for the students to access from their dorms and work on them on their own time.

AP Language teachers are also making great use of the lab to prepare their students for standardized tests. The teachers are able to allow stronger students to advance at their own pace while giving other students more individual attention who need it. It is much easier to provide students with time to complete practice tests and the teachers no longer need to record each student individually with a tape recorder. Students and teachers alike appreciate being able to record their voices and retrieve the recordings at any time from the network server for reference and further practice. Teachers truly appreciate being able to access the student recordings from their own computers rather than having to carry around files that may get lost or corrupted. Instant access allows for faster turnaround of assessment and grades, which in turn has motivated the students.

Without exception the language teachers in the Foreign Language Department and the Progressive English Department alike have found this new technology to be extremely useful in helping them deliver the strongest language learning opportunities possible. They are excited to try new tools and programs using the Sanako Language Lab.

The school purchased the Sanako Lab 300 in the summer of 2009. The brand new Chen Family Foreign Language Lab was constructed over the summer with the special financial backing of the Chen family, whose son is a current junior and had great success in the ESL program. The family was so pleased with his progress they wanted to help the school develop an even stronger program so that more students could have the same success their son did. The lab has 45 student stations and one teacher/admin station, with individual study carousels for each station, and a digital overhead projector.

Students and teachers alike have been very excited about the new lab and the Sanako system. We have a 7 period schedule and nearly every period has one class or more using the system. An online schedule had to be developed in order to allow teachers to see when the lab was free. While the majority of classes using the lab are the ESL classes, the French and Spanish teachers have taken good advantage of this resource. The AP language teachers have been using the lab for AP Exam prep, taking advantage of the listening and recording features in particular.

We have purchased a few programs which compliment the tools available with the Sanako system, such as an online reading program and electronic books. Teachers love the capacity the system offers them to be able to watch each students screen from the admin computer to make sure they stay on task. The students are excited about being able to use computer-based learning instead of traditional methods of teaching. The system helps us meet the students in the world they are most comfortable with.

The most impressive display of the power and potential of the system came one day when we had 2 different language classes scheduled for the same period, and then a third teacher showed up who had not booked the lab but asked if we could let her come in with her students anyway. We were able to accommodate and deliver for 3 different languages to 40 students at the same time. Teachers and students alike were truly impressed.

At the end of the first semester students were re-evaluated for level placement. The results were very impressive as 68% of Level 1 students moved up one or more levels, 72% of Level 2 students moved up, and 75% of Level 3 students out of ESL completely. This phenomenal success is attributed a great deal to the greater opportunities the language lab has provide for the teachers and students.



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