

Mildred Johnson uses CS First as project-based learning for science and social studies



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Mrs. Mildred Johnson teaches fifth-grade science and social studies at North Salisbury Elementary School in Salisbury, Maryland. She uses Google's free computer science (CS) curriculum, CS First, to empower her students to create and share engaging class projects.

Why did you decide to use CS First in your classroom?

I found CS First to be a better way to get my students to learn Scratch, a block-based programming language targeted at children. The step-by-step videos allow all students to experience success. Also, teachers don't need to be proficient in coding to start using the platform.

"With the ability to code, CS First offers my students an additional resource for communicating their ideas and findings."

Mildred Johnson

How does CS First help you accomplish your instructional goals?

My science and social studies instruction encourages project-based learning. Once students learn coding skills with CS First, students create a Scratch project related to what they are studying in both subjects. For example, students recently coded Scratch projects on weather and U.S. Presidents. With the ability to code, CS First offers my students an additional resource for communicating their ideas and findings.



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Hey guys! Today you will be learning about the 19th President of the United States. He served from March 4, 1877 to March 4, 1881.





Projects created by Mildred's students

What strategies do you use when teaching CS First?

I allow my students to work at their own pace on CS First after they've completed their class assignments. Whenever they're given a project to complete, I let them choose a theme to demonstrate their knowledge of a particular subject matter. The Animation theme is often used in building their projects.

What advice would you give to a teacher who's using CS First for the first time?

Make sure to celebrate students' accomplishments and projects. One of my students was withdrawn and not inspired in school. It seems CS First inspired him to learn CS. Afterwards, as the successes continued, I started seeing more of his pleasing personality. With my encouragement he just smiled. That was the first time I saw him do that!

