Technology Lesson 3 Carl Stern 4/1/2015

I explored a math and science-specific learning website called **Explorelearning.com**

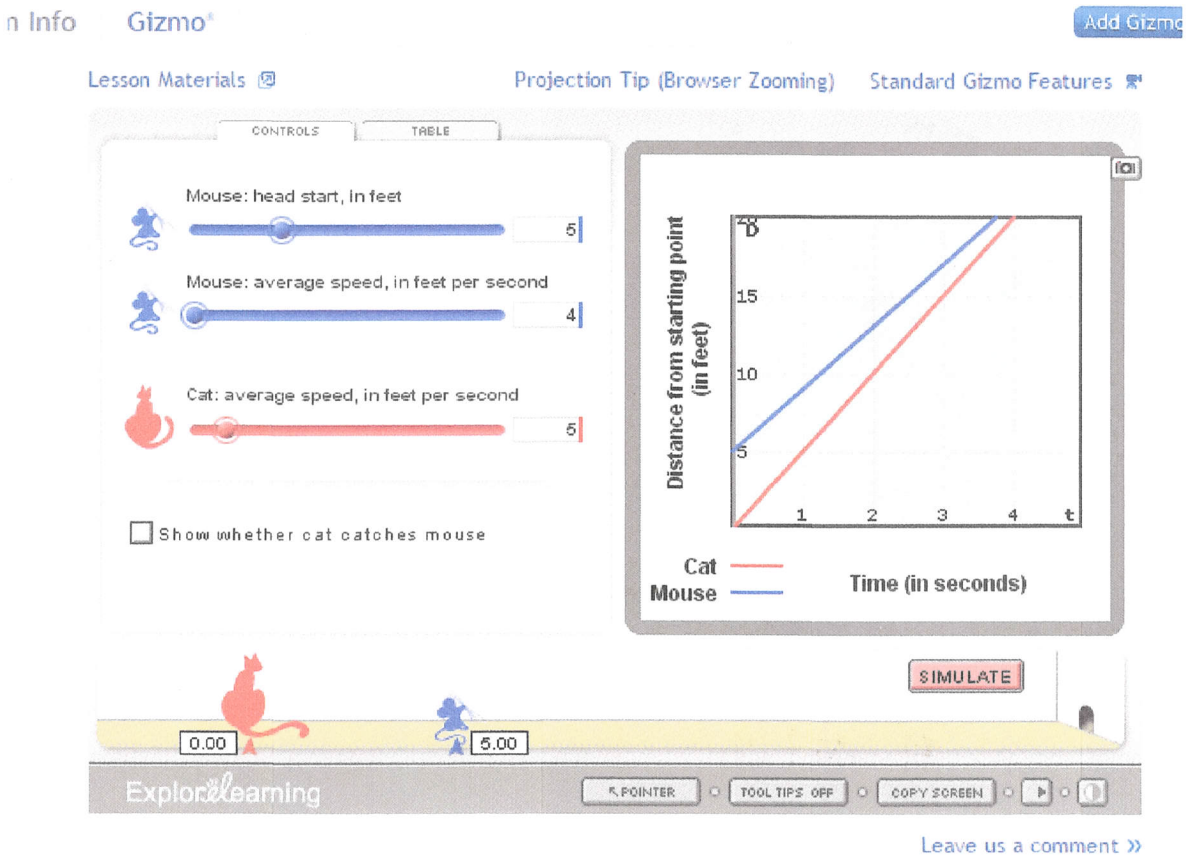
This website uses what they call "**Gizmos**" to explore and teach math ideas and skills. These are what we would usually call apps. Each app is an interactive presentation of an idea and/or skill.

You can sign up for a 30-day free trial in just a couple of minutes. If you want to browse the site, you can do it, but you will only be able to play with any Gizmo for 5 minutes. After that, you will be locked out of that Gizmo. If you want to explore this site, I recommend the 30 day free trial. It is not intrusive, has not sent me any spam, and can be done in less than 3 minutes.

I only had time to try out one Gizmo with my classes. I found it was pretty good in deepening the understanding of the idea and clarifying the skill. Students found it fun and interesting. I think the interactive nature helps motivate students.

Tech Tip: *You will need an up-to-date Shockwave Plug-in to use the site. If not, you can try clicking on "Update Shockwave Player." This might or might not get you set.*

If you want to follow along with this description: go to exploremath.com, then find and click "Browse Gizmos" (near the top), then choose "By Grade and Topic," "Math Grade 9-12," "Algebra," "Systems of Linear Equations and Inequalities," "Cat and Mouse Activity B," and then "Gizmo." You will see:



ment Questions (5):

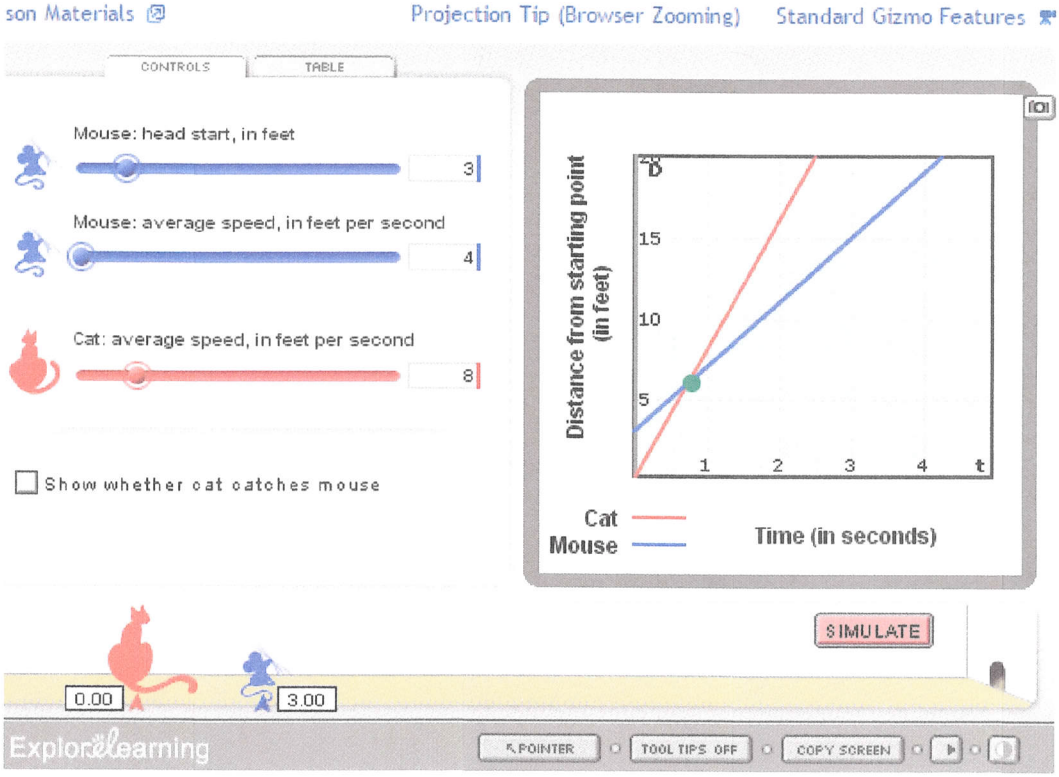
table below shows the distance of the cat and the mouse from the cat's starting point at given times. After 1 second, hc

The question is: Will the cat catch the mouse before the mouse can duck into its hole?

Students can easily change, by simply moving three sliders,

1. the speed of the cat
2. the speed of the mouse
3. the head start distance of the mouse.

For example, I have now increased the speed of the cat and decreased the head start of the mouse. Is it more or less likely that the cat will catch the mouse? Now it starts like this:



One part that makes this work for students is the "**SIMULATE**" button. This runs a little simulation of the cat chasing the mouse.

There are extensive activity worksheets and lesson plan materials for each Gizmo. I don't know that I would use those materials.

The Takeaway: I only had time for limited exploration of this site. Based on what I tried, I am very intrigued. I would be interested in trying out this site as an integrated part of my instruction next year. The website does not show the cost. Instead, it asks you to email for a quote. If authorized, I would take the next step and ask for a quote to pilot this program.

If you want to try this out yourself, I would be happy to give you my username and password (which will work for about 3 more weeks).