

PEARSON

Grade Banding

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Author FINO

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The goal of grade banding is to provide students in different age groups with interfaces and content they can easily understand and use.

Following are some areas to illustrate this idea:

- Older students can independently solve technical problems (wi-fi issues, out of storage...), while younger students may need the help of a teacher or parent
- Younger students may require visual imagery to support text-based instructions
- Younger students' access to content may be limited



Children as young as 2 years old can understand and interact with an iPad, from unlocking it, to launching apps and navigating interactive books. We should never think in terms of "dumbing down" things for children.

Instead, let's think in terms of providing extra information about situations that may go beyond a child's level of understanding at their current age.

For example, we should never add elements for the sake of making something more playful, cute, colorful or childlike. Instead, we need to identify complex ideas such as "wi-fi settings" and find ways to help students deal with situations where they may encounter them.

The Nielsen Norman Group has identified various differences in younger children, teenagers and adults.

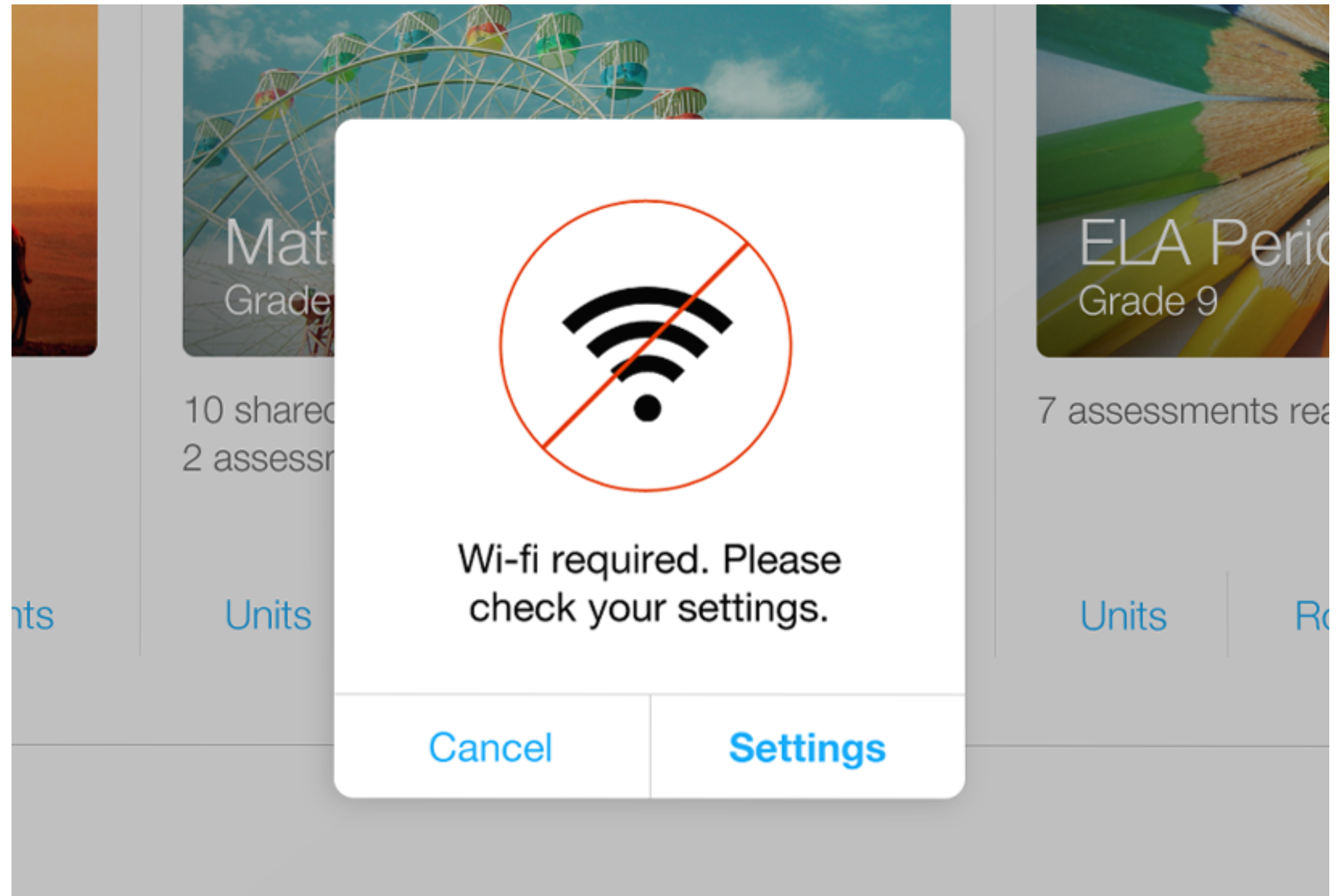
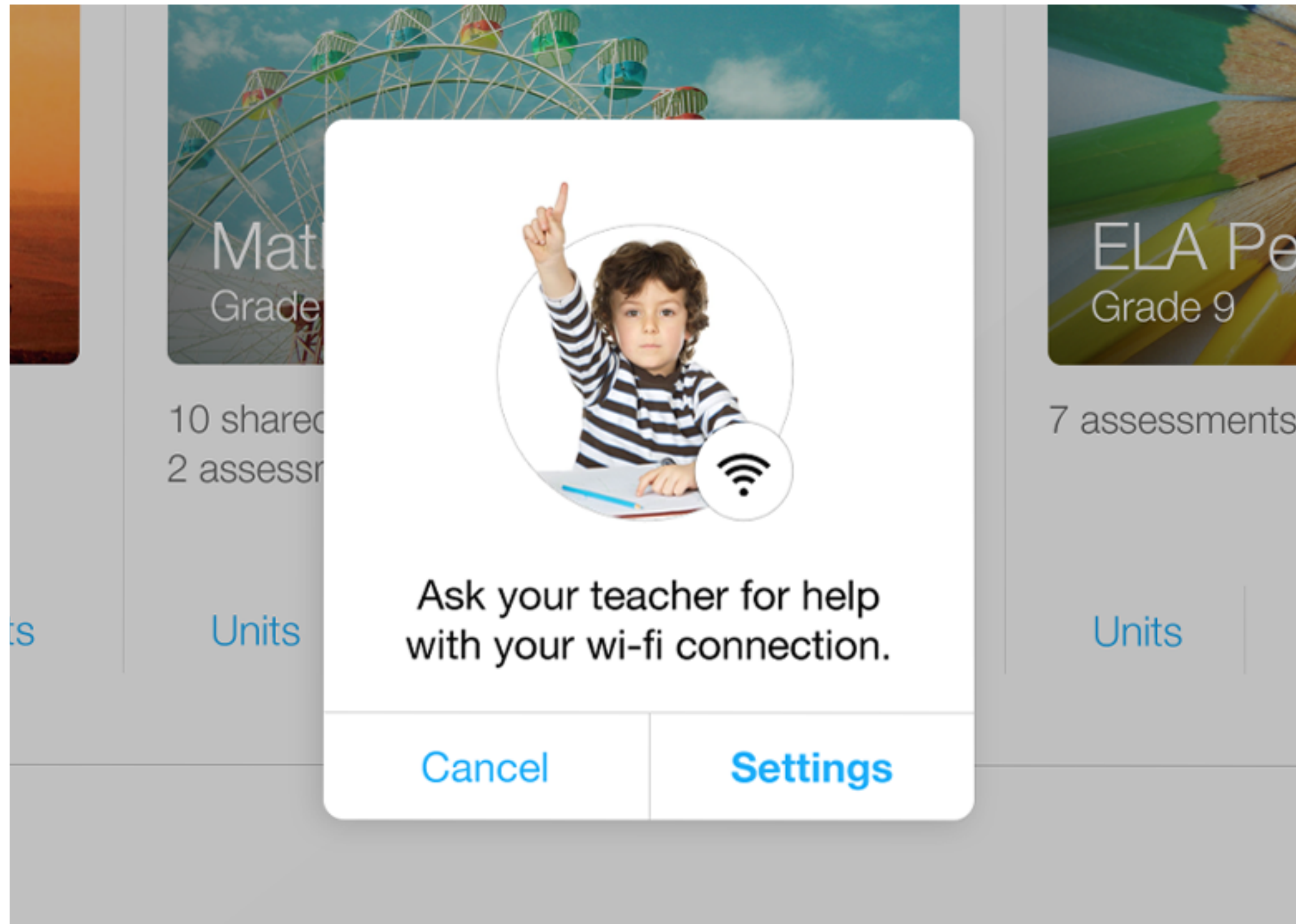
Images are from the following sites. They have more useful information.

<http://www.nngroup.com/articles/childrens-websites-usability-issues/>

<http://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-of-websites-for-teenagers/>

	Hunting for things to click	Tabbed browsing	Scrolling	Search	Patience	Animation and sound effects
Kids (3-12)						
Teens (13-17)						
College students (18-24)						
Adults (25-64)						

	Children	Adults
Goal in visiting websites	Entertainment	Getting things done Communication/community
First reactions	Quick to judge site (and to leave if no good)	Quick to judge site (and to leave if no good)
Willingness to wait	Want instant gratification	Limited patience
Following UI conventions	Preferred	Preferred
User control	Preferred	Preferred
Exploratory behavior	Like to try many options Mine-sweeping the screen	Stick to main path
Multiple/redundant navigation	Very confusing	Slightly confusing
Back button	Not used (young kids) Relied on (older kids)	Relied on
Reading	Not at all (youngest kids) Tentative (young kids) Scanning (older kids)	Scanning
Readability level	Each user's grade level	8th to 10th grade text for broad consumer audiences
Real-life metaphors e.g., spatial navigation	Very helpful for pre-readers	Often distracting or too clunky for online UI
Font size	14 point (young kids) 12 point (older kids)	10 point (up to 14 point for seniors)
Physical limitations	Slow typists Poor mouse control	None (unless disabled)
Scrolling	Avoid (young kids) Some (older kids)	Some
Animation and sound	Liked	Usually disliked
Advertising and promotions	Can't distinguish from real content	Ads avoided (banner blindness); promos viewed skeptically
Disclosing private info	Usually aware of issues: hesitant to enter info	Often recklessly willing to give out personal info
Age-targeted design	Crucial, with very fine-grained distinctions between age groups	Unimportant for most sites (except to accommodate seniors)
Search	Bigger reliance on bookmarks than search, but older kids do search	Main entry point to the Web



Young students are instructed to ask a teacher or parent for help with complex issues.

Older students and teachers are asked to independently address issues.

Approaches for young students:

- Use supporting images with real-life references
- Avoid abstract icons
- Use color to direct attention
- Use animation to explain interactions
- Simplify language

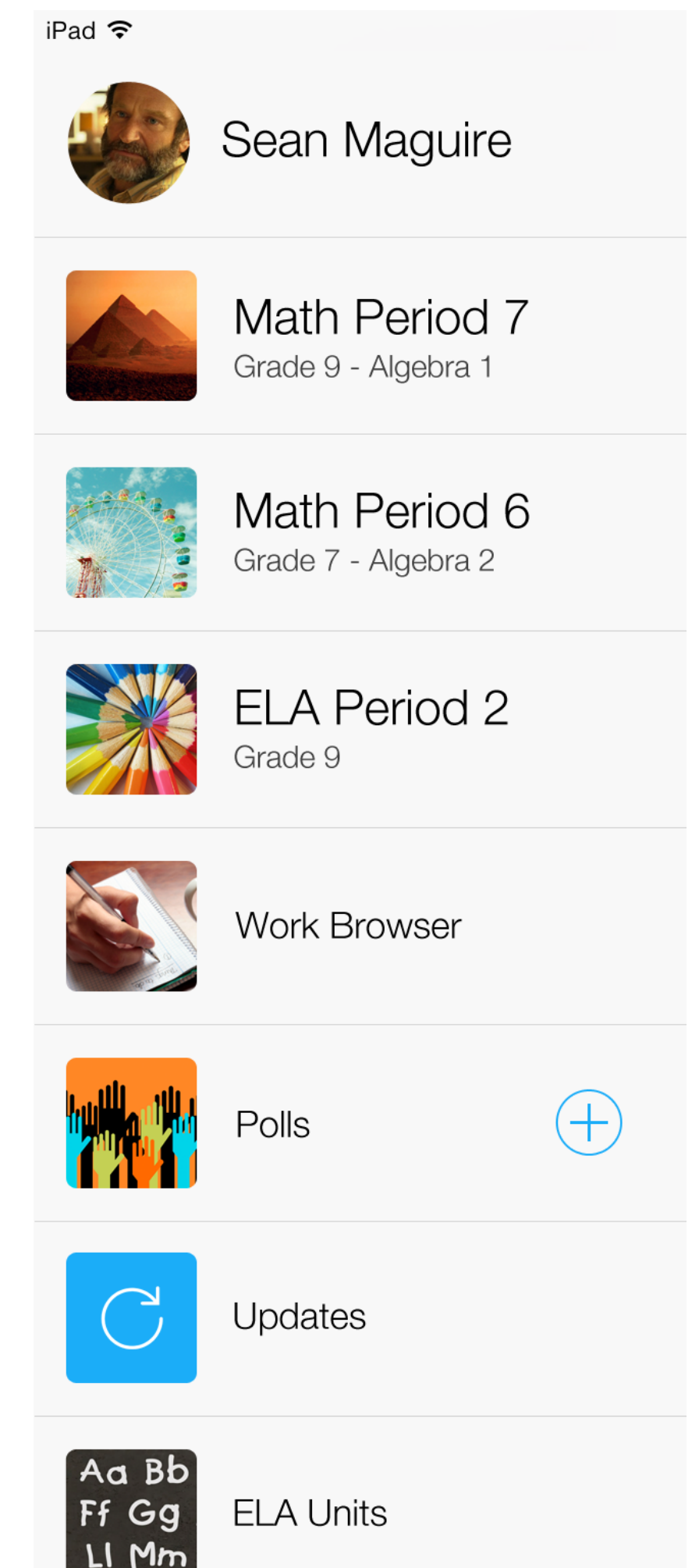
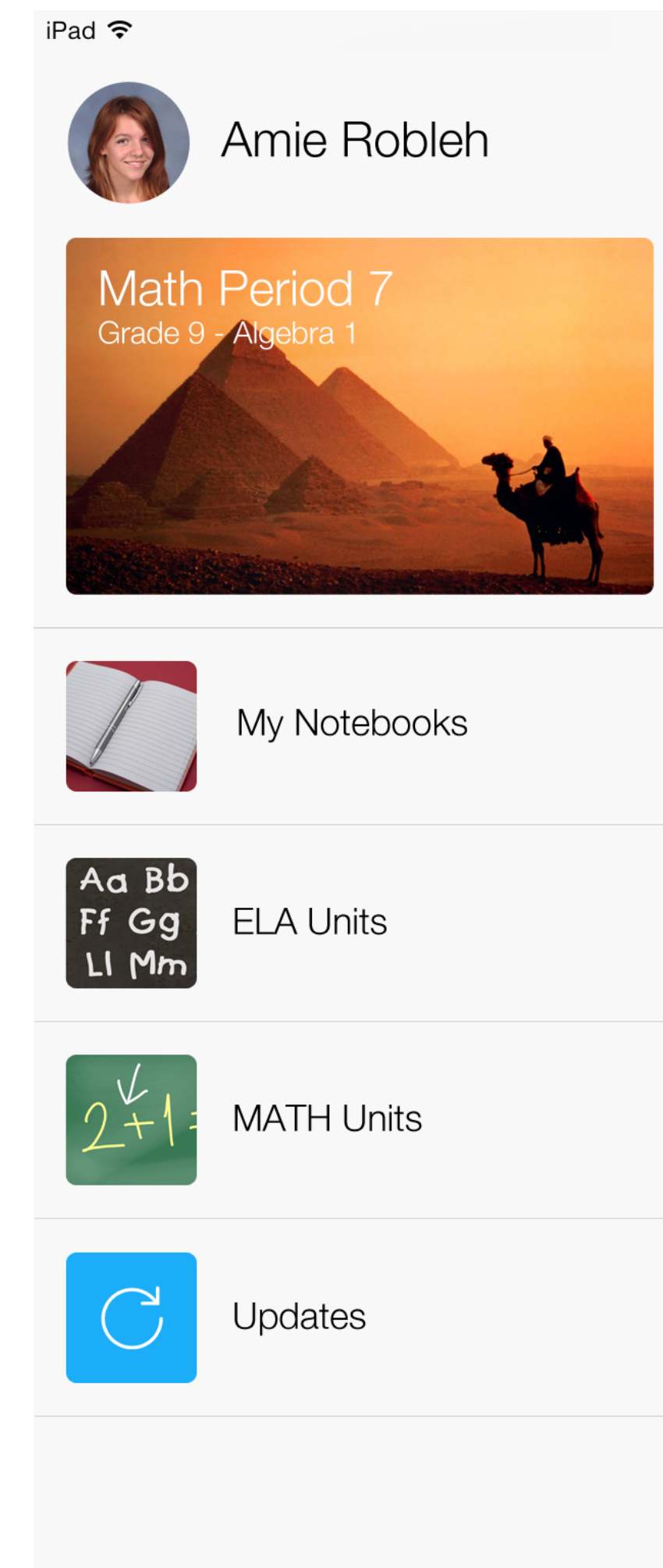
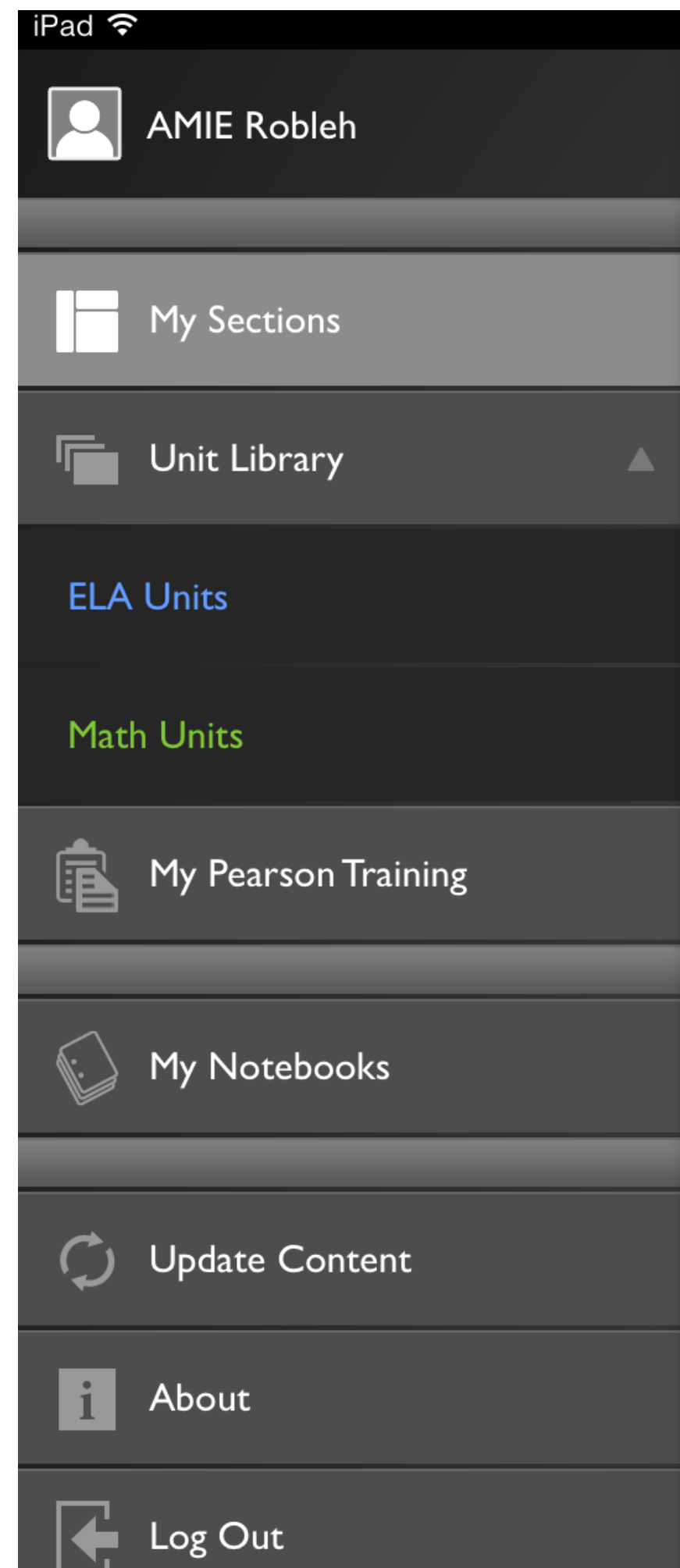
Default messaging



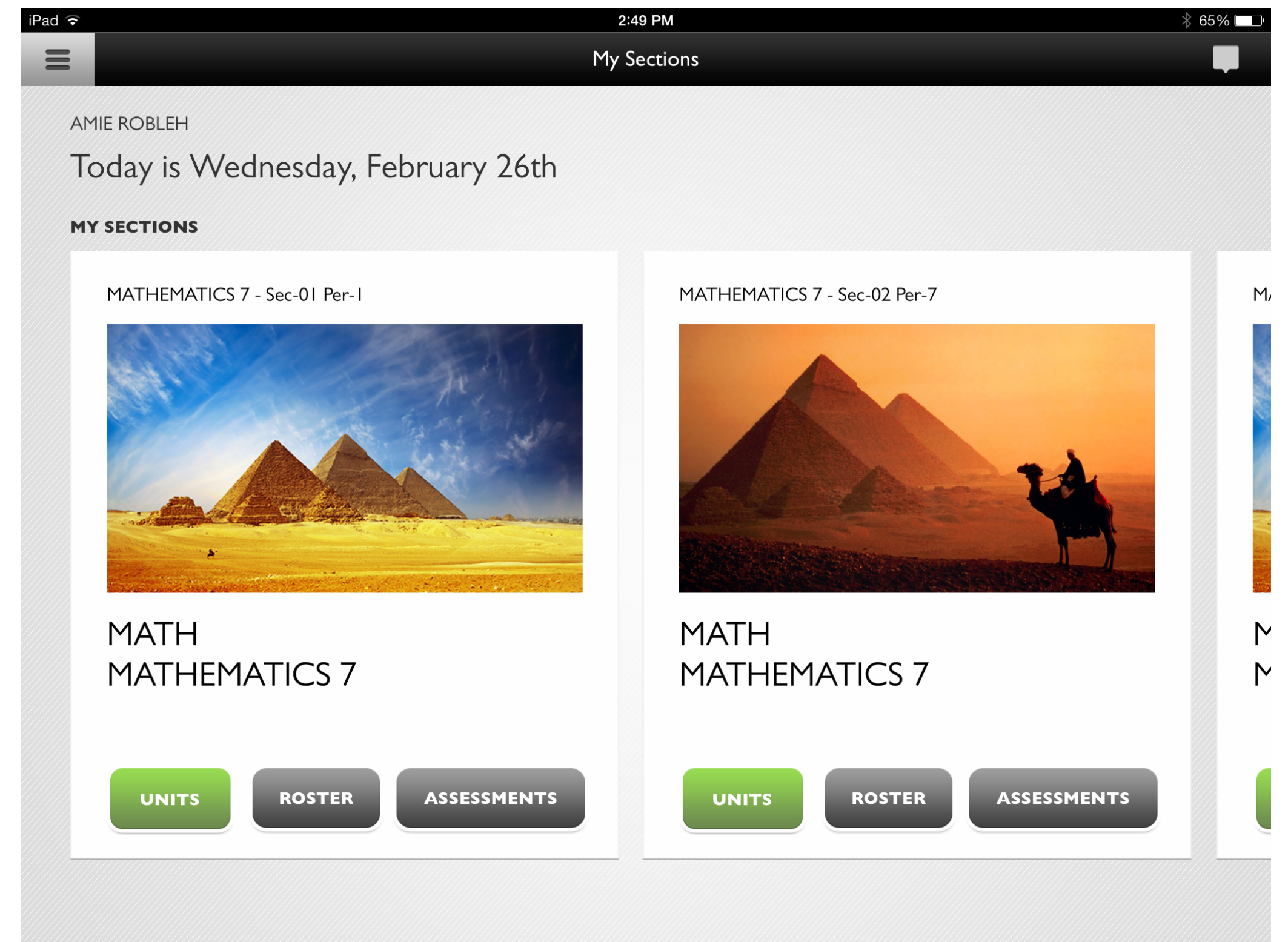
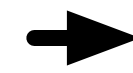
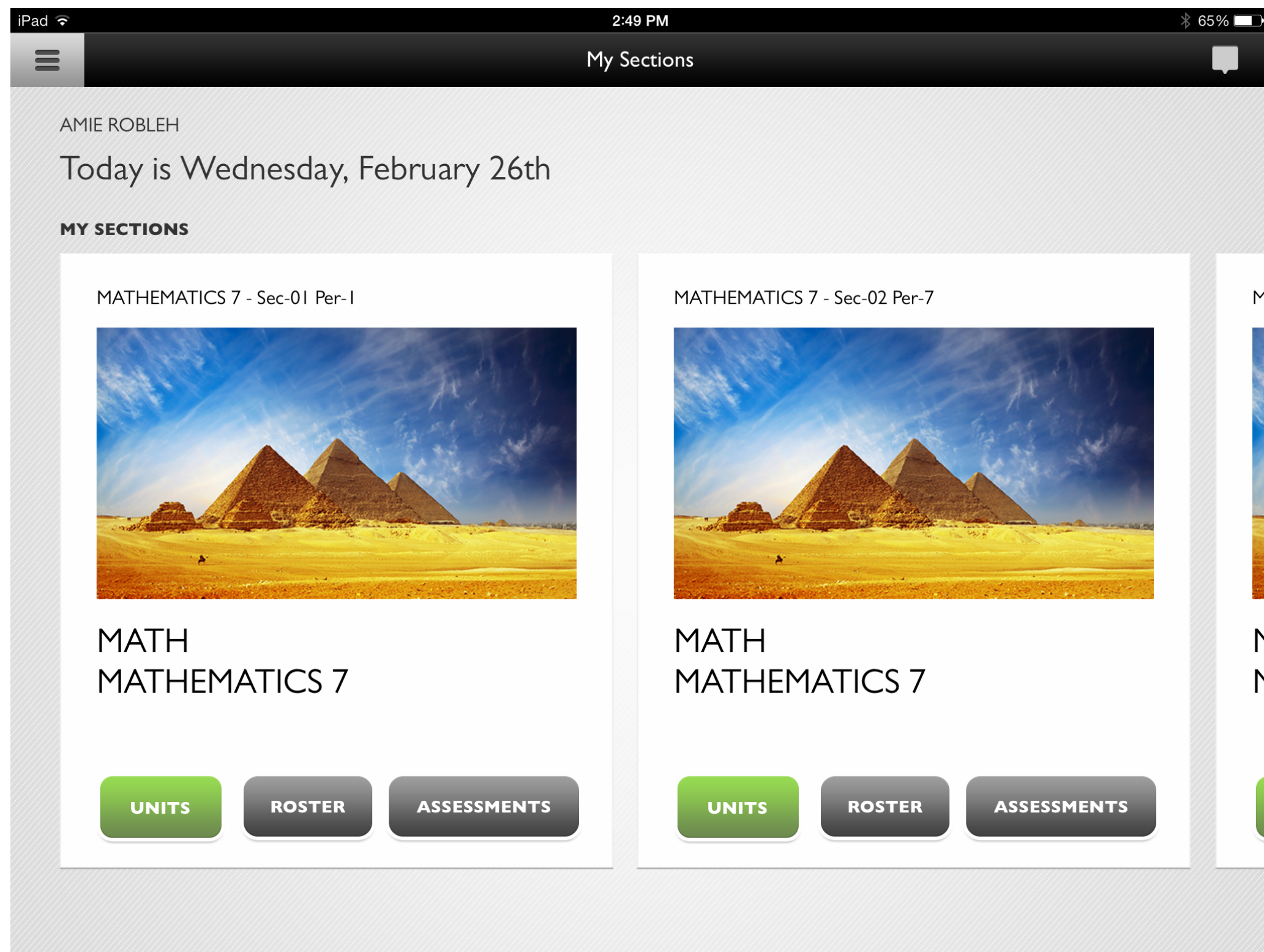
For young students

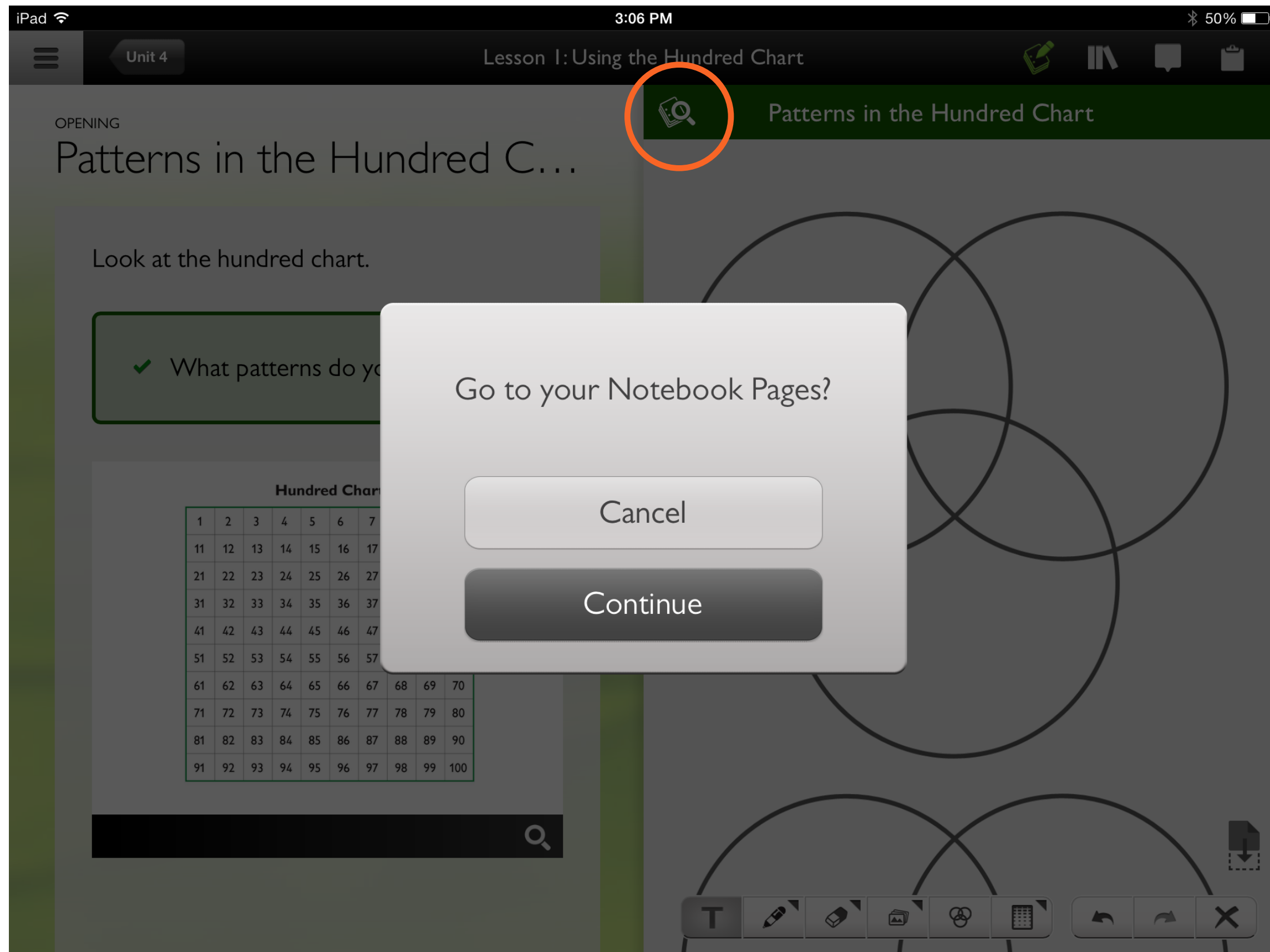


- Use images instead of abstract icons to simplify recognition
- Use visual elements and layouts familiar from the native operating system

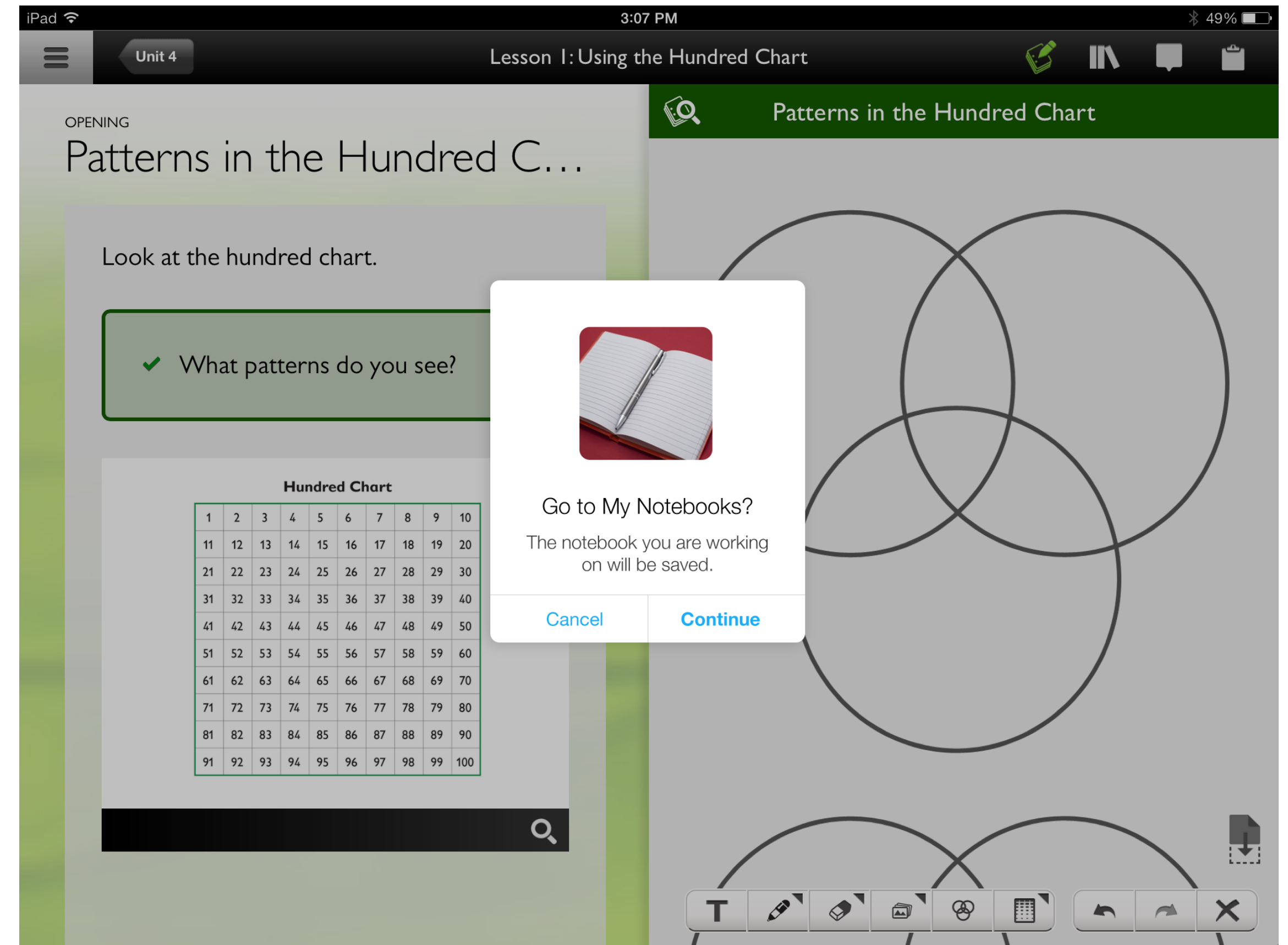


Use unique images for each piece of content for easier referencing and navigation.

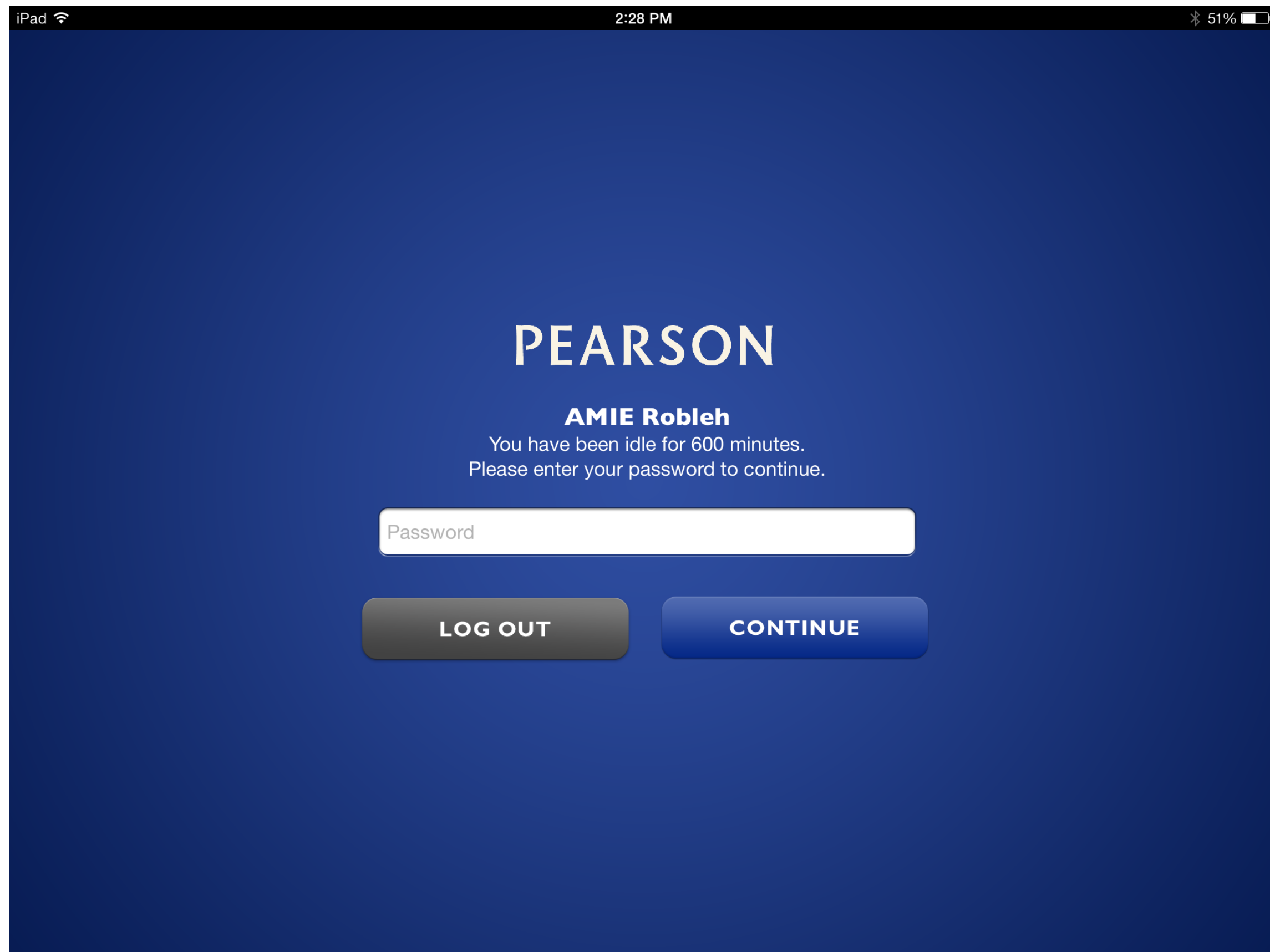




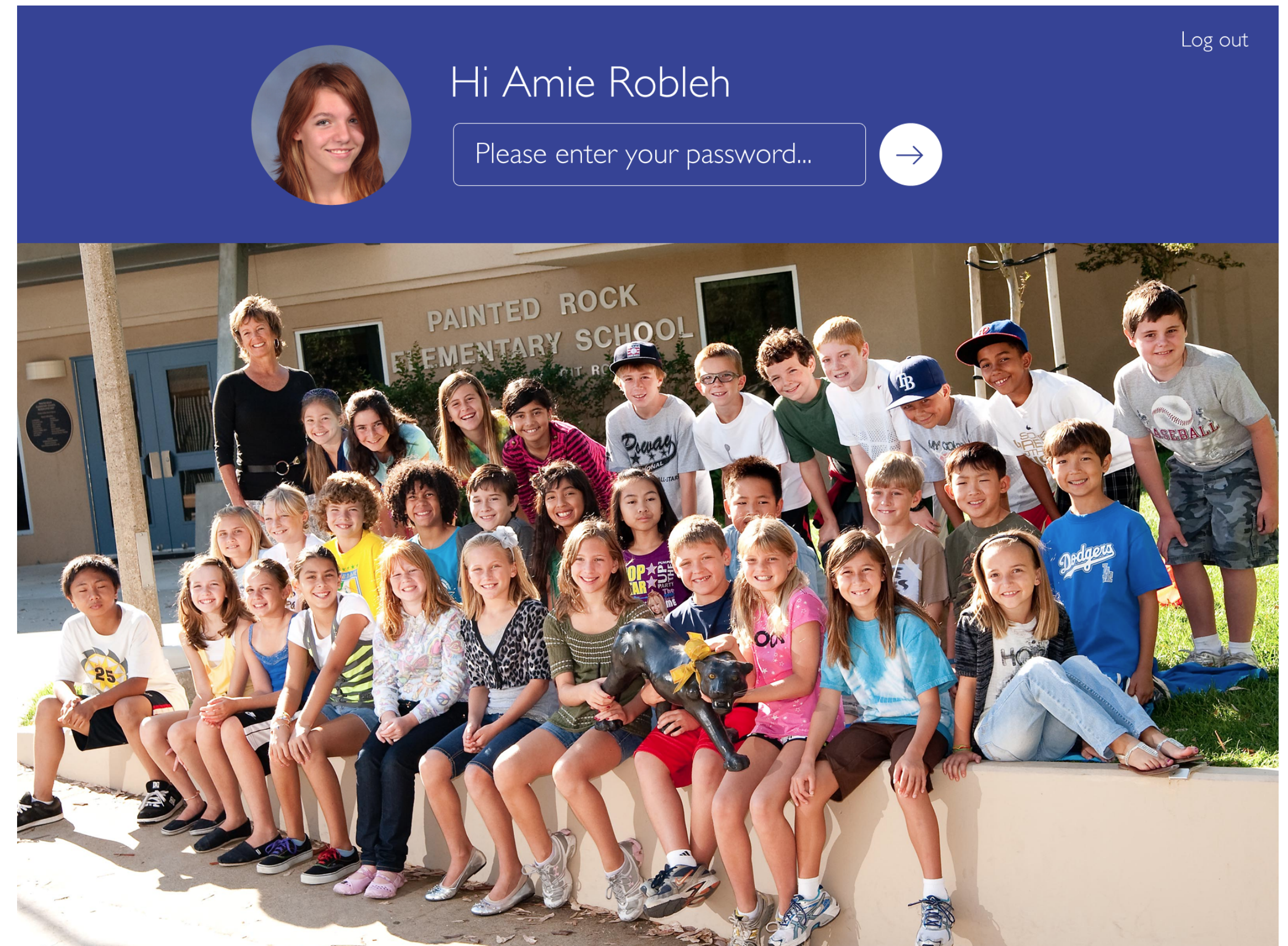
Tapping the icon circled in orange shows this popup. It does not use the native iOS styling and button layout and therefore requires learning. The Cancel options also seems like the preferred option due to the visual treatment.



Recommended is an iOS 7 styled overlay. The extra images is used anywhere notebooks are referenced so it becomes easy to identify. Additional text explains the effects of confirming this popup.



The current login screen is very impersonal.



An updated login screen can show the student's face as well as a photo of the whole class for easier recognition and a friendly first impression. The logout button is moved into the corner to reduce the chance of accidental tapping.



Alternatively, the login screen could show information from the current curriculum.



The login screen in context.

iPad 2:48 PM 86%

Done Participation Chart


Participation Chart

	5 points Best job	4 points Outstanding job	3 points Very good job	2 points Good job	1 points Not so great this time	0 points I didn't participate
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This is the standard layout for tables. Each cell can be a checkbox or an input field.

iPad 9:17 AM Not Charging

Done What type of reader are you?




What kind of books do you like?




Horror

They're great
 They are very good
 They're okay
 Not for me
 I never read one



Fantasy

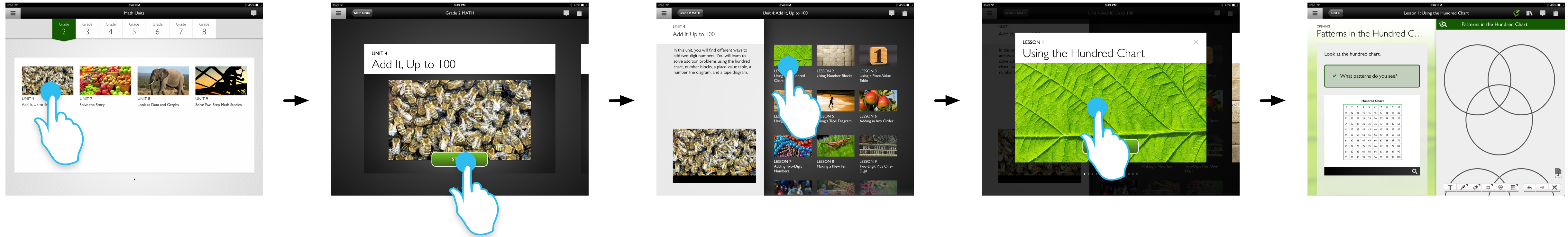
They're great
 They are very good
 They're okay
 Not for me
 I never read one



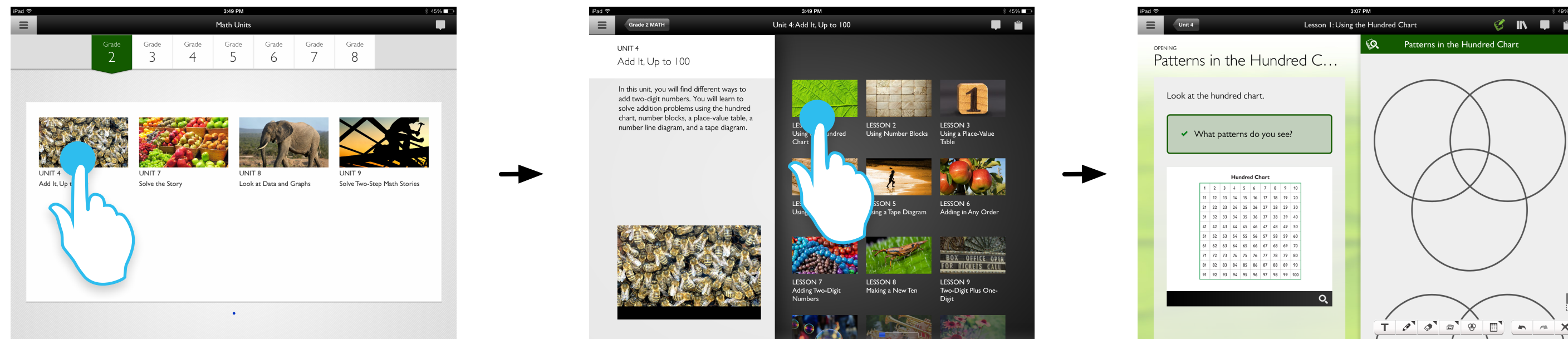
Mystery

They're great
 They are very good
 They're okay
 Not for me
 I never read one

Suggested changes to improve usability. Young children are much more reliable on visuals to identify content and interaction models.



Current navigation uses interstitial overlays that provide no additional information or context. This results in tedious navigation.



Removing these steps simplifies navigation without removing any information. Importantly, this removes scrolling, which is harder for young children.