

Flashes

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The official newsletter of Inspiration Software®, Inc.

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The Leader in
Visual Thinking and Learning™

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Inspiration Software celebrates 2005 scholarship winners!

Inspired Teacher Scholarship winners develop innovative ways to make a difference in education

Thirty inspired educators were awarded scholarships by Inspiration Software in 2005 for championing visual learning in education and making a difference in students' lives. Discover how these innovative scholarship winners integrate Kidspiration, Inspiration and visual learning into classrooms across the world.

Texas technology coordinator builds understanding of French grammar with graphic organizers

How can teachers help their students understand a difficult subject? For Gail Corder, the answer is having students

create their own graphic organizers in Inspiration. Corder believes graphic organizers help students understand complex concepts when they construct their own graphical representations of relationships among information.

Corder first discovered the importance of having students create their own graphic organizers during a complicated grammar lesson in her French class at Trinity Valley School in Fort Worth, Texas. Previously, students had difficulty understanding how to choose the correct auxiliary verb and past participle. Instead of simply assigning a list of grammar rules for memorization, Corder required the students to develop flowcharts in Inspiration to guide their word choice, using yes and no questions to diagram the complex French grammar rules and exceptions.

To test the accuracy of their work, students used their flowcharts on sample sentences provided by Corder. According to Corder, encouraging students to think

through the relationships and then evaluate their work was highly effective. "Watching those students work was one of the most exciting moments I've experienced as a teacher. You could practically see the connections being made in their heads," says Corder. "Since that day, I've understood the power of visual learning."

As technology coordinator for the K-12 school, Corder constantly shares her knowledge of graphic organizers in workshops she offers at her school and at state-level conferences. She encourages teachers to integrate graphic organizers into their curriculum and helps them create technology lessons, no matter what subject they teach. "I have

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-Gail Corder

not found a discipline for which I cannot develop a more effective lesson using a graphic organizer," emphasizes Corder. ★

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2005 scholarship winners celebrated,

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Oregon autism specialist uses visual learning to help students make connections

"Islands without bridges" is one way Tamra Hass describes a learning challenge of students with Asperger's Syndrome. Students with this highly functioning form of autism often find it easy to memorize data, but may have difficulty understanding abstract relationships and concepts. To help students with Asperger's Syndrome, Hass developed a unique program using Inspiration. She created visual representations of abstract concepts and social situations that often prove challenging for these students.

Hass's program, the Manual for Adolescents with Asperger's Piloting Social Success (MAAPSS), is a set of informal assessment and teaching tools that helps teachers and parents develop students' social success in a mainstream classroom environment. MAAPSS focuses on four domains of learning and living: social connectedness, communication, organized thinking and emotion. Parents and teachers use the tools to analyze a student's skill level within each of the four domains and then



develop individual educational goals based on the analysis. Visual exercises in each of the four areas help students with various tasks, such as analyzing their feelings, maneuvering through conversations, planning projects and setting goals.

"For many students with autism, visual thinking strategies are the key to opening untapped potential," says Hass.

Hass presents workshops designed to teach school personnel more about visual learning and autism. More than 100 educators in Oregon have adopted Hass's program. Success in using graphic

organizers with autistic students has often led educators to use the software with their general education students as well. "Teachers will tell me that Inspiration is fantastic for all their students!" says Hass. "They find that visual learning techniques help many students catch on more quickly." ★

For more information about the MAAPSS program, contact Tamra Hass at 503-916-3400, ext. 8468 or Columbia Regional Program at 503-916-5570.

Virginia computer resource specialist enhances graphic organizers with links to web resources

"I am completely hooked on Kidspiration and Inspiration!" says Katie Knapp, computer resource specialist for Windsor Oaks Elementary School in Virginia Beach, Va. Knapp offers professional development and creates Kidspiration and Inspiration activities that support and extend what students are learning in the classroom. Recently, she began adding web site hyperlinks into Inspiration templates to add rich and varied content to the lessons.



This year Knapp helped teachers in her school use technology to support social studies learning goals as defined in Virginia's Standards of Learning. When the second graders studied Native Americans, for instance, Knapp created an Inspiration template to review and extend the unit. In the First Americans activity, students organized various images and words into groups according to the tribes they represented. After completing the sorting activity, students went to the Internet to watch relevant digital video clips available through the school's subscription to a video-on-demand service, read a story, look at paintings and play an educational game—all via hyperlinks from the

Inspiration file. "Visual learning helps students of all ability levels better understand content and complete activities successfully," says Knapp.

Knapp conducts trainings on Kidspiration and Inspiration at the school, district and state levels. She feels her most important objective is empowering teachers to use the software in their own classrooms. "Whether presenting an in-service in my school system or a session at a conference, I want the participating teachers to leave with numerous activities and ideas they can use in their classrooms," says Knapp. "It's a bonus for me when I get an email from a teacher who, after attending one of my training sessions or conference presentations, shares with me a Kidspiration or Inspiration activity which he or she has created. That is very fulfilling!" ★

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Kidspiration and Inspiration for **BLOGGING**

Have you considered the possibilities of using diagrams in your weblogs? The saying goes that a picture is worth a thousand words. Just imagine the power of a diagram!

2005 scholarship winners celebrated,

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New South Wales high school teacher achieves 20% increase in software design exam scores

According to Greg Alchin, computer science teacher at James Sheahan Catholic High School in Orange, New South Wales, Australia, there is a clear reason why his students' software design annual exam scores improved by 20%. Alchin attributes his seniors' success to a new perception of themselves and their work resulting from the use of Inspiration to organize and enhance their thinking processes.

Before using Inspiration, students often viewed the tasks involved in software design, such as constructing and deconstructing programs, as too difficult, and they would give up. Inspiration provided a structured yet flexible approach to problem solving. Students created their own graphic organizers to represent processes and problems, or they used templates, such as the Assignment Plan Template, to learn how to manage their projects. "Being able to represent a complex problem,

break it down into its components and see the relationships between the parts significantly enhances students' understanding," says Alchin.



Alchin applies the principles of visual learning outside his own classroom as well. As the cofounder and organizer of a digital short film festival for students and staff of regional schools, Alchin discovered that Kidspiration and Inspiration help participants succeed in the most difficult step of creating a film: concept development. Each participant in the film festival is given a trial copy of Kidspiration and Inspiration and taught how to use the software for brainstorming and storyboarding.

"The fluid and flexible nature of Kidspiration and Inspiration supports the lateral process of growth and the refinement of ideas," says Alchin. "Students who developed their ideas in Kidspiration and Inspiration usually developed more engaging and resonant movies." ★

Find additional information about scholarship winners at www.inspiration.com/scholarship.

Inspired sites!

Inspired Sites from 2005 Inspired Teachers! These sites, created by our scholarship winners, contain information about Kidspiration and Inspiration, graphic organizer how-tos, downloadable templates and links to other resources.

<http://faculty.trinityvalleyschool.org/corderg/go/index.html> Find resources and information about creating and using graphic organizers at this site created by Gail Corder of Trinity Valley School, Fort Worth, Texas. The site also contains sample activities and downloadable PDFs that provide ideas for integrating graphic organizers into the curriculum.

www.windsorwoods.es.vbschools.com/Insp_US.htm Download Kidspiration and Inspiration activities from this site created by Katie Knapp and Mary-Ellen Davis of Windsor Oaks Elementary School, Virginia Beach, Va. Designed for educators who attended their conference presentation about incorporating digital videos into Inspiration activities, the site also offers suggestions for specific educational videos that enhance each activity.

www.whrsd.k12.ma.us/intranet/roar/show.htm This site, created by Donna J. LeBretton for Whitman Hanson Regional School District, Mass., showcases Kidspiration projects completed by elementary students.

www.whrsd.k12.ma.us/intranet/roar/kid.htm

www.whrsd.k12.ma.us/intranet/roar/inspir.htm

Also created by LeBretton, these sites contain additional links to Kidspiration and Inspiration resources.

www.technospud.com This site, created by Jennifer Wagner of Crossroads Christian School, Corona, Calif., offers a monthly newsletter that contains various technology tips, including ideas for using Kidspiration and Inspiration in the classroom. The site also hosts a number of fun, collaborative, online projects for elementary students.

www.ideate.org.au Download Kidspiration and Inspiration templates that help students with assignments about deconstructing advertisements and planning movies at this site created by Greg Alchin of James Sheahan Catholic High School of Orange, New South Wales, Australia. Just click on "Resources" to find templates and a guide to creating digital videos in the classroom, which includes suggestions for using Inspiration for brainstorming and storyboarding.

Exporting moves planning work to final product

THE FIRST STEP: PLANNING

You already know that Inspiration makes planning a project or presentation easy and beneficial. Using graphic organizers to develop ideas and organize information at the beginning of a project results in better-organized, more creative projects. When students are ready to move to the next step, they can easily export their projects and continue working in another program, including Microsoft® Word, Microsoft® PowerPoint® and AppleWorks®.

One-click transfer to word processors

With one click of the Transfer button you can easily move an Inspiration project to a word processor to format and edit the project for publication. The new word processor document retains the look and structure of your Inspiration outline.

To transfer work to a word processor:

1. **Open** the diagram or outline you want to transfer.
2. On the Toolbar, click the **Transfer** button.
Inspiration creates a new .doc or .rtf file in the same location as the Inspiration document and starts your preferred word processor.



TIP: When transferring from Diagram View, a picture of the diagram also appears.

Other options for exporting Inspiration outlines

Exporting an Inspiration outline as a text file offers additional formatting options for Microsoft Word or AppleWorks files. Students can also export work to other file formats including Microsoft PowerPoint or plain text.

To export an outline:

1. From **Outline View** select the **File** menu and choose **Export**.
The Export dialog box appears.
2. **Select the text file format** in which you want to save the outline.
 - Microsoft Word
 - AppleWorks
 - Microsoft PowerPoint*
 - Plain Text

**Note: The main idea becomes the presentation title, and each first level topic becomes a separate slide. Second level and lower topics become slide content.*
3. **Select** from a variety of **outline options**:
 - Show Prefixes
 - Show Hidden Notes
 - Show Hidden Subtopics
 - Show Outline Structure**

***Note: Unchecking the Show Outline Structure box makes all transferred work appear at the same level, with no indents.*
4. Click **Save**.

TIP: Easier formatting in Microsoft Word
Make whole-document formatting changes easier by using Microsoft Word's AutoFormat option to convert each level of the outline into a different heading style.

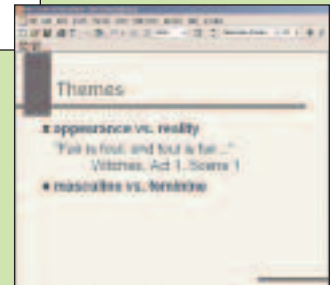
1. When the document opens in Word, press **Ctrl-A** to select all text in the document.
 2. From the Format menu, click **AutoFormat**.
 3. Choose from the appropriate options and **click OK**.
- Tip submitted by David Gobbett, Flinders University, Australia*



Students use graphic organizers to develop and organize ideas as they start the writing process.



Students move work to a word processor to finalize a project.



Students export work to Microsoft PowerPoint to create a presentation.

For more exporting options, go to the Inspiration Help menu and type "exporting" into the Index dialog box.



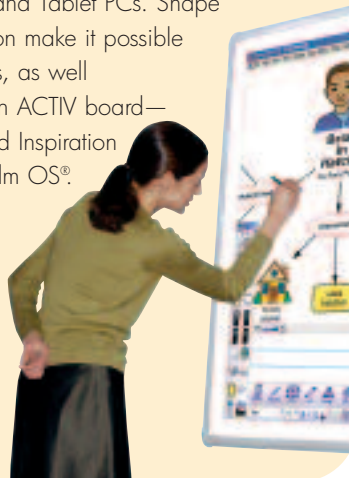
Get more visual learning power with Kidspiration® 2.1 and Inspiration® 7.6!

2005 updates support emerging classroom technologies

Kidspiration and Inspiration now offer enhanced compatibility with new technologies, including interactive whiteboards, Palm Powered™ handhelds and Tablet PCs. Shape and handwriting recognition make it possible to sketch symbols and links, as well

as write text directly on whiteboards—such as the Promethean ACTIV board—and on Tablet PCs and Wacom tablets. Plus, Kidspiration and Inspiration now include the ability to sync to and from Inspiration® for Palm OS®. Also included in the Kidspiration 2.1 update is the one-click transfer to Scholastic Keys where students can finalize their writing projects.

Get complimentary updates if you are currently using Kidspiration 2 or Inspiration 7 and higher at www.inspiration.com/productinfo/2005updates/index.cfm



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Spring special offer: upgrade now and save!



Are you waiting for the right time to upgrade your district licenses? Act now and save!

By upgrading all Kidspiration 1 and Inspiration 6 (and earlier) licenses in your district by June 30, 2005, you'll save 30% or more.

Find more information at:
www.inspiration.com/upgradeoffer, call **1-800-877-4292** or contact your favorite educational software dealer.

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Kidspiration 2.1 upgrade:

www.inspiration.com/productinfo/kidspiration/new_in_kids2/index.cfm

Inspiration 7.6 upgrade:

www.inspiration.com/productinfo/inspiration/new_in_seven/index.cfm