

Flashes

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The official newsletter of Inspiration Software®, Inc.

Inspiration
SOFTWARE, INC.
The Leader in
Visual Thinking and Learning™

2005 INSPIRED TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS open for entry!

Read more about
our scholarship
program—including
the **NEW Rookie
Awards.**
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for details.

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Inspiration Software celebrates 2004 scholarship winners!

Inspired Teacher Scholarship winners create innovative and motivating ways to make a difference in education

Thirty inspired educators were awarded scholarships by Inspiration Software in 2004 for championing visual learning in education and making a difference in students' lives. Discover how these innovative scholarship winners integrated Kidspiration®, Inspiration® and visual learning into classrooms across North America.

Maine Librarian inspires improved student writing skills

For a librarian, the days of sifting through stacks of books and checking them out one by one are now a thing of the past. K-8 Resource Librarian for the Scarborough School Department in Scarborough, Maine, Barbara Merritt exemplifies the new role of librarian as resource guide, program development manager and technology integrator.



For example, one pod of teachers has students study the history of Scarborough back to the 1600s. Kids study the roles of different people, learn about the town's early settlers and research what the town was like. "I showed them how to make an Inspiration diagram to visually organize the information. Once that was complete, we used Inspiration to compare people and places—what they were like then and what they are like now. It was a clear way for the children to see the differences and make comparisons."

Dedicated to bringing technology into the classroom, Merritt has creatively integrated Inspiration into the language arts and social studies curriculum. After discovering Inspiration and Kidspiration at a Classroom Connect conference in Boston in 2003, she immediately saw the learning benefits the software programs could offer her students back home.

"I chose Inspiration as the program to get teachers started using technology, because I firmly believe it has a positive impact on student learning."

-Barbara Merritt

Using Inspiration and the methodology of *Structured Writing* from ISTE, Barbara worked with a fifth grade teacher to teach students the essentials of paragraph writing. The students' positive response and improvement in their writing and organizational skills prompted other teachers to request the same writing instruction using Inspiration as well.

Merritt continues to attend seminars and conferences to stay current with new ways of using Inspiration in the classroom. She's also used "tech minute" sessions after school to show interested teachers a new program or technique that they can quickly learn and immediately apply in the classroom. ★

As the teachers became familiar with Inspiration, Merritt helped them create other curricular applications for their own classrooms.

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2004 scholarship winners celebrated,

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Maryland Staff Development Facilitator models in-class visual learning for teachers and students

Students have no fear of technology," says Kelly Hammond, Staff Development Facilitator for Carroll County Public Schools in Westminster, Maryland. "They love the intuitive nature of Kidspiration." Hammond is the primary reason Kidspiration is available in all 21 elementary schools in her school district. Hammond works with curriculum writers, teachers and students to create and adapt Kidspiration activities for the specific academic needs of schools and classes.

Last year, Hammond worked with the kindergarten writing team and successfully integrated over 50 Kidspiration activities into the new curriculum. Following the writing of a new mathematics and integrated language arts kindergarten curriculum, she supported her staff's development by supplying each teacher with a cd-rom compilation of newly created Kidspiration activities that aligned with their new instructional units. Hammond then worked with individual teachers and classrooms to help them learn to use and personalize the Kidspiration activities for their students.

Kidspiration in Maryland

Through classroom modeling, teachers learn to teach students how to create and use graphic organizers to brainstorm ideas, organize thoughts and write clearly and effectively. Once the students understand graphic organizers, they learn Kidspiration basics in a lab setting. The classroom teachers can then begin to integrate Kidspiration and visual learning into students' daily schoolwork.

As a result of classroom modeling and collaborative planning, teachers have become excited about how technology can support their instruction and provide developmentally appropriate activities for their students. "Teachers love Kidspiration," says Hammond. "It's the only piece of software I know of that anyone can see the instructional value of and learn to use within an hour." ★

Download Kidspiration activities created by Kelly Hammond at www.inspiration.com/flashes04examples.

Illinois teacher uses Inspiration to help students build learning skills

St. Charles North High School, St. Charles, Illinois, prides itself on the careful assessment of student learning methods, with an emphasis on both traditional and technological approaches. Known as a leader in the development of technological strategies for the school as well as his own classroom, Bill Stepien has elevated the school's reputation for excellence by creatively implementing technology, including Inspiration, in a variety of school programs.

Inspiration in Illinois

constructed the ideas they studied in class, what knowledge or experiences outside of class they connected them to and what questions or ideas they developed as a result."

Students were given time throughout the semester to add to and reflect on the new concepts they learned, helping them to see how knowledge is built. Using Inspiration, Stepien was able to check student work for completeness, accuracy and organization, as well as innovation and creative thinking. "I was extremely impressed with the results and intend to take this even further in future semesters," says Stepien. ★

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"I have been a strong advocate of visual learning since I was first introduced to Inspiration," says Stepien. "I initially had the software on my computer at home and used it to develop graphic organizers and flow charts for my students. As a member of the building technology committee, I presented the software to the technology director and within the year we had one computer lab outfitted with Inspiration. From there the demand continues to grow exponentially."

In his classroom, Stepien has discovered that for students of all abilities, Inspiration enhances clarity and builds knowledge. One of Stepien's innovative uses of Inspiration involves his U.S. history class. In the course, students are asked to create an Inspiration diagram showing their learning during that semester. "I introduced the students to constructivist learning principles. I told them I was interested in how they

Improve thinking skills across the curriculum!

Unlock the power of Kidspiration, Inspiration and visual learning with inspiring, curriculum-aligned lesson plan books. Every standards-based lesson plan book offers practical, step-by-step lessons that encourage students to learn, think and create. You can find out more about these easy-to-use lesson plan books and download free sample lesson plans at www.inspiration.com/lessonplanbooks. ★

2004 scholarship winners celebrated,

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"I wanted kids to know that writers don't just pull all of their ideas out of their heads."

-Duncan Anderson

Alberta Library Coordinator helps students connect research and fiction writing

Duncan Anderson is extremely enthusiastic about Kidspiration and Inspiration—so enthusiastic that he has shared his knowledge of the software with well over 1,000 teachers across Canada. Anderson, who currently serves as Library Coordinator for Chinook's Edge School Division in Alberta, has been a believer in visual learning for more than 15 years. As a teacher, teacher-librarian, K-12 consultant and administrator, he has used Kidspiration and Inspiration with students and teachers at all levels for research planning, library organization, technology integration development, web page work and much more.



research that supports that writing. Anderson created a series of Inspiration templates to guide students through the research and writing process for any work of fiction. Once the background information has been established by the students, the classroom teacher reviews writing strategies and helps students incorporate the research into their fiction writing.

Anderson has also used Kidspiration to develop an enhanced KWL chart that helps elementary students apply new learning. In addition to asking the traditional questions "what do you know?," "what do you want to know?" and "what have you learned?," Anderson includes the questions "how do you know that?" and "how can you apply that?" This helps students map out and apply what new learning means to them. ★

Recently, in response to the school division's desire to improve student writing, Anderson built an Inspiration teaching unit around fiction writing, which includes the development of student research strategies. "I wanted kids to know that writers don't just pull all their ideas out of their heads," Anderson says. He sought to help students make the connection between writing fiction and the need for background

Download Duncan Anderson's Inspiration templates for fiction writing at www.inspiration.com/flashes04examples.

2005 Inspired Teacher Scholarships

Calling all inspired teachers! *Inspiration Software's seventh annual Inspired Teacher Scholarships for Visual Learning are now open for entry! Twenty-five scholarships in the amount of \$750 each will be awarded to educators who champion the integration of visual learning and technology into the curriculum. New for 2005, five scholarships in the amount of \$750 each will be awarded to educators just starting out in the field of visual learning. All thirty scholarships are available to fund professional development opportunities in the area of visual learning and technology. Applications are due Thursday, January 27, 2005, and scholarships will be awarded on Thursday, March 17, 2005. For more information about the scholarships and to enter online, visit www.inspiration.com/scholarship.*

Inspired sites!

Take a look at these sites containing Kidspiration and Inspiration integration ideas, downloadable templates and resources for further exploration.

Kidspiration and Inspiration resources for busy teachers

Thousands of schools of education across the United States include Kidspiration and Inspiration in their technology instruction for pre- and in-service teachers. Check out the Kidspiration and Inspiration resources assembled for an educational technology class at the University of Sioux Falls in South Dakota.

Visit www.thecoo.edu/~apeter/Tech%20in%20ed.htm#INSPIRAT

Kidspiration for the math curriculum

Carroll County Public Schools offers a wide variety of Kidspiration math templates on their elementary mathematics resource site for teachers.

Visit <http://ccpl.carr.org/ccps/instruction/elemcurric/math/tkkidspiration.htm>

Creating web investigation projects with Inspiration

Mary Seamon, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction at Spartanburg School District in South Carolina, created a web site on Inspiration and the Web Based Learning Model. The site contains ideas on using Inspiration to create Guided Tours, Scavenger Hunts, CyberInquiries, WebQuests and more.

Visit www.spa3.k12.sc.us/wblearningmodel.htm

Does your inspired web site belong here? If you have Kidspiration or Inspiration projects to share, please email marketing@inspiration.com.

Tips & Tricks

Enhance your diagrams through hyperlinking

Hyperlinking adds a multimedia dimension to your Kidspiration and Inspiration diagrams. Automatic links to specific web sites guide students in conducting research and completing lesson requirements. Additionally in Inspiration, you can add hyperlinks to files, sound or video clips, email addresses and other Inspiration documents to enhance and illustrate your ideas.

Add a URL hyperlink in Kidspiration:

1. Simply type in the URL. Kidspiration automatically creates a hyperlink.

Note: Hyperlinks are only active when URL Hyperlink Auto-detection is turned on in Application Options, located in the Teacher menu.

You can assign hyperlinks to selected text in ideas, notes, symbols and links:

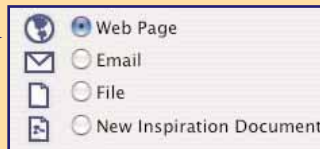
1. Select the symbol or text that will contain the link.
2. Enable the Teacher menu.
3. On the Teacher menu, click URL Hyperlink. (Or hit F6.)

The text you selected appears in the Hyperlink Text box. You can edit the text if you wish.

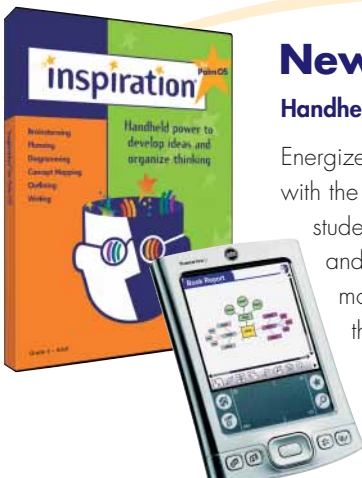
4. In the Hyperlink Address box, type the Internet address you want to assign to the text.

Add a hyperlink in Inspiration:

1. Click on the symbol or topic that will contain the link.
2. Select Hyperlink under the Tools menu.
3. Click Insert. (Or simply select the symbol and click F6.)
4. To add a URL hyperlink, select Web Page and type the URL in the Link To dialog box.
5. To add a hyperlink to a file, select File and click on Select File to navigate to the file location.
6. You can also create a new Inspiration document by clicking on New Inspiration Document. A new file will automatically be created and linked to your original Inspiration file.



Choose from the Link To dialog box



New! Inspiration® for Palm OS®

Handheld power to develop ideas and organize thinking

Energize students by combining the learning benefits of Inspiration with the natural ease of handhelds. Inspiration® for Palm OS® gives students and educators a familiar tool for gathering information and developing ideas. Across the curriculum, students have more access to the premier visual learning tool that helps them achieve clearer thinking, better writing and improved performance. Discover Inspiration for Palm OS and download a free, 30-day fully-functioning trial at

www.inspiration.com/palmos. ★

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FALL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

NYSC&TE 2004

New York State Association
for Computers and
Technologies in Education

November 21-23
Rochester, NY

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