

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

## 2005 SCHOLARSHIPS REMINDER

Jan. 27, 2005  
Deadline  
Fast Approaching

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for details.

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## Visual learning inspires Texas students of all abilities

**D**o you want to engage reluctant learners and facilitate understanding of difficult concepts? Do you need teaching strategies that enable gifted students to take learning to a higher level? Educator Julie Sanders and her colleagues from the Alief Independent School District in Texas have found the answers to both of these instructional challenges in Inspiration® and Kidspiration®.

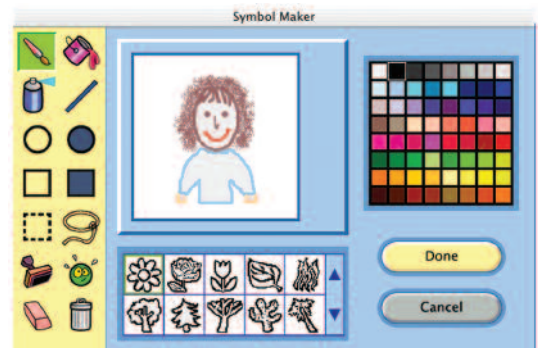
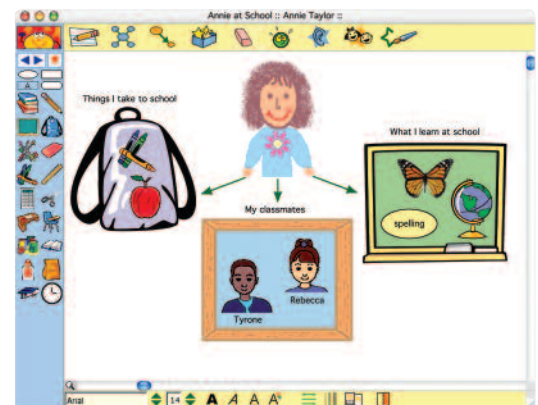
"Part of what is so compelling about using Inspiration and Kidspiration in the classroom," says Sanders, "is that these visual learning software products motivate learners across the learning continuum." Sanders, a teacher with more than 25 years of experience, has trained hundreds of her colleagues at the local, district, regional and state levels on using visual learning strategies in the classroom. As the technology specialist and campus gifted coordinator at Flem Rees Elementary School, she championed the use of Kidspiration and deployed the software to all of the district's computers.

Sanders says that students who were previously reluctant to do any writing or participate in other classroom activities began to express their thoughts openly in Kidspiration. At the same time, gifted students were using Kidspiration to create better developed and more detailed reports and presentations.

### Kidspiration 2 offers new enhancements

When Kidspiration 2 debuted earlier this year, Sanders was impressed. She was excited to see that the new version of Kidspiration offered many capabilities she had suggested to Inspiration Software. New tools, such as Symbol Maker and unlimited SuperGrouper® allow young students to build early literacy skills by expressing themselves visually and making connections between words and meanings.

Sanders says teachers and students love the new Symbol Maker drawing tool that allows them to draw and paint their own symbols using a simple interface.



**Sanders says her teachers and students love the new Symbol Maker drawing tool that allows them to create their own symbols.**

For emerging readers and writers, these symbols can be used to represent words in their graphic organizers.

The new SuperGrouper capabilities in Kidspiration 2 are also popular with other elementary school teachers. With one click, students and teachers can transform any symbol into a SuperGrouper shape, making sorting and categorizing activities more meaningful and engaging. Sanders says her teachers were all very happy to see a new Venn diagram SuperGrouper shape, which enables students to use

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# Visual Learning Inspires Texas Students

continued from page 1



a classic learning technique to show understanding of similarities and differences.

Other favorites include the font pop-up menu for faster font changing as well as the ability to save Kidspiration activities anywhere, including on a network. This flexible access makes it a snap for classrooms to use customized lessons.

## Using Kidspiration across the curriculum

At Flem Rees Elementary School, students use Kidspiration from kindergarten through the fourth grade.

- One kindergarten teacher takes digital photos of her students and imports the pictures into Kidspiration, creating unique symbols to represent each student. Students then use the SuperGrouper tool to rearrange the symbols, grouping them into different categories, such as favorite color or favorite flavor of ice cream.
- After going on a field trip to the zoo, a class of first grade students collaborated to find symbols in Kidspiration's library of more than 1,200 images that represented the various animals they saw.

They then switched to Writing View to compose descriptive sentences about each animal.

- Sanders' district has also had great success using Kidspiration with bilingual students. With one of the highest populations of ESL and bilingual students in the state, Alief Independent School District teachers use Kidspiration's text-to-speech capabilities to help students build their vocabularies.
- Flem Rees Elementary School parents even have the chance to use Kidspiration themselves! During Family Technology Night, students teach their parents how to use Kidspiration, and together they create a family tree, leaving the event with a meaningful keepsake.

This school year, Julie Sanders has moved to Hastings Ninth Grade Center where she is co-teaching the remedial reading program. She says that she and her teaching partner will be using Inspiration to help her high school students build literacy and critical thinking skills. "Visual learning," she concludes, "is important for all grade levels and learning abilities." ★

## Tips & Tricks

## Creating your own activities in Kidspiration

Get students started on a new learning project by using Kidspiration activity templates. Use a ready-made activity found on the Kidspiration opening menu or create a new activity.

### To create an activity in Kidspiration:

1. Create the assignment or project in Picture View or Writing View.
2. Enable the **Teacher** menu.
3. On the **Teacher** menu, choose **Save With Activity Wizard**.
4. Select the defaults you want for the activity.
5. In the **Activity Name** box, enter a name for the activity.
6. In the **Description of Activity** box, type a few words to describe the activity.
7. Choose the category that you want the activity to appear in, such as "Science."
8. When you are finished setting up the activity, click **Save Activity**.

### Sharing an activity over a network

With Kidspiration 2, you can share activities that you create over a network so your students or other teachers can easily access it.

#### To share an activity over a network:

1. Create and save your activity (see the above section for reference).
2. On your computer, open the Kidspiration Activities folder located in the Kidspiration folder.
3. Copy the activity file you created to a network server.
4. Now any students or teachers running Kidspiration 2 can open and use the activity.

### Tips



### Adding numbered steps:

Many of the ready-made Kidspiration activities include step-by-step instructions. To create numbered steps in your own activities, use the symbols in the "Numbers 2" library on the Kidspiration Symbol palette.

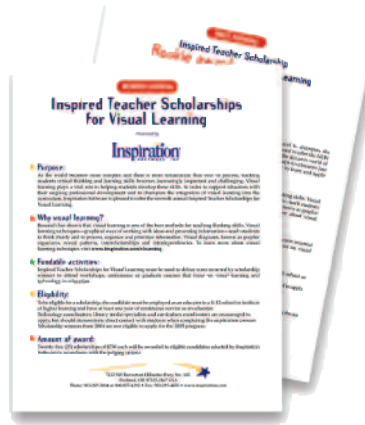
### Creating custom symbol libraries:

If you want specific symbols to be available for an activity, you can create a custom symbol library by selecting New Symbol Library on the Teacher menu. After you add the symbols you want to the new library, choose Save With Activity Wizard on the Teacher menu and select the new custom library as the default library for the activity.

Scholarship reminder

# Apply today for 2005 Inspired Teacher Scholarships for Visual Learning

January 27 deadline



Apply today for Inspiration Software's 2005 Inspired Teacher Scholarships for Visual Learning. For the seventh year, the Inspired Teacher Scholarship program will fund the professional development of educators who champion the integration of visual learning and technology into the curriculum. Thirty scholarships, each with a value of \$750, will be awarded in the spring of 2005. Applications are due Jan. 27, 2005.

This school year also marks the debut of the Inspired Teacher Scholarship Rookie Awards. Five of the 30 scholarships are designated for educators who are new to visual learning and demonstrate a desire and capacity to learn and apply visual learning techniques in their classrooms.

To apply online or obtain more information, visit Inspiration Software's web site at [www.inspiration.com/scholarship](http://www.inspiration.com/scholarship) or email [tscholarship@inspiration.com](mailto:tscholarship@inspiration.com). ★

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## Inspired sites!

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

### Teaching vocabulary with Kidspiration

Visit [www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/littlekids/downloads/kidspiration/](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/littlekids/downloads/kidspiration/)

Ryan McNavage and Dana Loube from the Montgomery County (Md.) Public Schools Division of Technology Training in Montgomery County Public Schools created these vocabulary building Kidspiration templates for the district's Early Childhood Technology Literacy Project. Check out and download templates, which are each tied directly to a specific Maryland Learner Outcome.

### Virginia educators share activities

Visit [www.fcps.edu/DSSSE/its/howtos/inspir/inspiration.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/DSSSE/its/howtos/inspir/inspiration.htm)

Teachers at Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools created these great Inspiration and Kidspiration templates on topics ranging from the branches of government to the elements of a story.

### Boost student achievement with Inspiration Directory of Sites

Visit [www.techteachers.com/inspirationtemplate.htm](http://www.techteachers.com/inspirationtemplate.htm)

Consultant Meg Ormiston of Tech Teachers compiled this library of sites sharing Inspiration templates.

### Google it!

Visit [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

Looking for a Inspiration or Kidspiration template or example to teach a specific lesson? Google it! There are thousands of Inspiration and Kidspiration templates and examples on web sites around the world. To search for a specific subject area or type of template, select "Advanced Search." In the Field Results box, type your topic or subject area in the "with all of the words" box, then type what you are looking for (e.g., "Inspiration templates" or "Kidspiration examples") in the "With the exact phrase box" and discover all of the great resources that colleagues have created.

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