



DIRECTIONS

Technology in Special Education

Vol. 11 , No. 6

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

IRS Classification Received

All donations are fully tax deductible!
See page 2 for details.

New Director of Public Relations

Gerry Kawamura joins DREAMMS volunteer staff!
Read about it on page 2.

The MMany MMs of Multimedia -- Part II

Multimedia is "soaring high" in K-12 education as more and more schools and districts discover the benefits of interactive, multisensory learning. A recent report from IBM has stated that "CD-ROM and laserdisc technology use is increasing at the respective rates of 93 percent and 80 percent, just in the past school year! As parents, we are going to have to scurry to keep up with our kids!

Educational Resources presented a very informative session on multimedia technology at the Pinellas County Educational Technology Conference in August. They defined multimedia as, "A combination of different communication tools such as text, visual graphics, sound, still images, and motion video. When used together, these media create a highly versatile teaching tool that helps a broad spectrum of students to learn."

In a recent article in Technology & Learning magazine, Margaret Church, director of program services in Burke County Schools in North Carolina states that she believes that when a child uses multimedia to combine reading and writing and listening, drawing and painting, they will remember that experience for ever. She believes that today's multimedia is the answer to the ancient educational philosophy of Lao Tse in 430 B.C. He stated: "If you tell me, I will listen, If you show me, I will see. If you let me experience it, I will learn." It's a good thing it only took us 2,500 years to apply his philosophy!!

(Please see MM on Page 6)

Technology Tip of the Month

Did you know that with the following little trick you can turn your everyday word processor (MAC or Windows) into colorful flash cards for your youngster? You can spend as much time as necessary on each word, and can easily come back to it at any time! And, it is all available to you without spending a single penny on expensive software! Try this and see how it works for you!!

The example we'll use is for simple words, but this same procedure can be used for ABCs, math, or just about anything that requires repetition.

1. Start by launching the Word Processor and opening a new document.
2. Select "Center" alignment for the text
3. Turn CAPS lock on if you desire all capital letters
4. Select a color for your text
5. Set the font size to 40 or higher
6. Type in the desired word
7. Insert a page break
8. Repeat from step 6 until you have typed in all desired words
9. Now set your word processor to "Print Preview" mode
10. Page up and down and your "flash screen" will display only one word at a time!

(Please see TIP on Page 7)

Educational Toys

An increasing number of toy manufacturers and distributors are considering the whole child in the design of their products. Discovery Toys, for example, is helping parents choose the right toy by using symbols to identify the primary developmental benefits of each product. They offer educational and developmental toys, books, games, and tapes of high quality and excellent value. Their goal is to offer children many hours of creative learning with emphasis on success and the positive self esteem it brings.

Trained Educational Consultants provide professional guidance to parents of children with special needs. They show appropriate product selections based on a child's individual needs.

For your free catalog and more information contact Discovery Toys Educational Consultant, Patty Kawamura at (813) 784-3724.

DREAMMS News

IRS Classification

After many months of paper shuffling back and forth between our office in Clearwater, and the IRS office in Atlanta, we have been granted federal tax exemption under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3)! What does that mean? It means that we have been recognized by the IRS as an organization providing a public service, and as such have been classified as a public charity. This also means that any donations, (financial, equipment, or services) to our company can be used as a tax deduction for the donor. Please be sure to keep your donation receipt for tax purposes!

New Director of Public Relations

We at DREAMMS are very lucky to have a new volunteer working with us. Gerry Kawamura has taken the position of Director of Public Relations, and will be responsible for the management and direction of corporate fundraising. Gerry graduated from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, and currently holds the position of Business Development Manager with E-Systems in St. Petersburg. He has over 15 years of experience in the business development field. We welcome Gerry to our DREAMMS family!

DIRECTIONS

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Vendors - We welcome product news. Please include pricing and contact name with press releases.

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This Month's Software Pick



Just Grandma & Me from Broderbund Software

Broderbund's **Living Books** are computerized versions of books with proven literary value. Each page is reproduced on the screen, and the words can be spoken to the reader. The story becomes animated through the child's interaction.

This is a wonderfully interactive story told on the computer screen. In the story, created by Mercer Mayer, Little Critter[®] experiences a number of adventures. Clicking on any part of the screen will cause something to happen! Each screen is well laid out, with more than enough room between pictures. The program has the ability to speak in English, Spanish and Japanese.

We recommend it highly for students who enjoy being told a story. The colors and happy voices are very enticing, and hold a student's attention for long periods of time! The stories are proven winners... Mercer Mayer has been authoring books for a very long time!! Truly enjoyable!

As a special note, please be sure to give us a call [813-781-7711] if you would like to purchase one of our *Software Pick* titles. We can help to direct you to either a retailer (i.e., EggHead, Sears) or a distributor (i.e., Educational Resources, Quality Computers) for your software purchase. Each mode of purchase has good and bad points, you decide for yourself which is most practical for you. Distributors are also very happy to send you their FREE catalog.

**Be sure that the
software you buy is
compatible with
your computer!!!!**

Editor's Note

I have spend many hours deciding what my note to you would be about this month how silly of me it can only be about this

Our belief of DREAMMS that our children will be required to perform in a society that will be very different from the one we now experience, and that we must do al that we can to help them prepare for a life in that society.

The changes that have occurred in the last 10 years in the field of technology are truly remarkable! Scientists see society in the new millennium as a technical whirl of information and data. Our children must be literate in that society in order to be a contributing member of it! And, we, their parents, have a responsibility to prepare them as best we can.

Our goal at DREAMMS is to provide explanations and technical assistance to all parents who find themselves a bit befuddled by computers and the technology that is being used at school. If a parent wants to augment their child's educational experience, we want to make their job easier, and less frustrating! Although our focus is special education, any parent can access our services, just by or reading the tips in our free newsletter, or calling our free HOTLINE!

DREAMMS is a public charity, and a non-profit organization based in Clearwater, FL. Next month, DIRECTIONS will reach over 2,000 parents and educators in the Tampa Bay area. Our goal is to increase that number monthly, in order to provide quality assistance to many more parents and educators. This goal can only be accomplished with the help of our sponsors. Your belief in the need for this information, and your tax deductible donation are what will allow us to cover the costs of printing and distribution.

Please join us in our journey !!

Kindest Personal Regards,

Janet

Did You Know?

Here's some interesting information from a publication entitled, *The 21st Century Challenge: Transforming Education through Technology*. You'll find it very interesting!

"Based on the extraordinary growth in information and revolutionary developments in technology, the following predictions have been made:

- * That the body of knowledge will have doubled four times between 1988 and 2000, and will continue to grow even more rapidly in the 21st century.
- * That 85 percent of the technologies we will work with by the year 2000 **haven't been invented yet!**
- * That all of the technological knowledge we work with today will represent only 1 percent of the knowledge that will be available in the year 2050!"

WHEW! !

WORDS TO GROW BY

ASCII [pronounced "ask-y"] (American Standard Code for Information Interchange): A standard method for computer coding characters (letters, numbers, punctuation). ASCII is used to transfer text from one computer program to another

Bulletin Board: A computerized forum that allows computer users to express concerns, ask questions, offer information or ideas and receive feedback from other users. Bulletin boards are often organized around a particular topic.

Bundle: The grouping of hardware and software into a complete package or solution.

CD-ROMs: Compact Disk Read Only Memory disk that allows the storage of text, graphics, video images, and sound files.

Conferencing: Online "meeting" of a pre-determined group of people to discuss (via computer) a topic of common interest.

Data Base: A collection of information organized to allow users to search and retrieve contents that interest them. For example, a database might include weather information, descriptions of programs in certain subject area or documents on topics in education.

Electronic mail (e-mail): Messages sent through a communications network from one computer user or group to another.

File server: A computer used primarily to store files and provide network users with access to those files.

Hardware: The physical components of a computer system (i.e., the computer, the monitor, the keyboard, the modem, etc.)

ILS (integrated learning systems) or IIS (integrated instructional systems): Networked personal computers that have software which covers most of the school curriculum: Students use these while working at individual workstations.

Internet: The international network of networks. A global cooperative network of university, corporate, and private computers, all communicating by means of TCP/IP. May become a major part of the "Information Highway".

LAN (local area network): A group of computers linked together within a limited physical space, usually to share printers, software, and information.

Modem: A device that allows computers to communicate over telephone lines. Stands for modulate / demodulate.

Network: A group of computers that can communicate electronically.

Online services: Information resources such as news or databases available through a network to computers equipped with a modem and telecommunication software. Some popular online services are CompuServe, Prodigy, and America OnLine.

Program (noun): A sequence of coded instructions (an application) that can be inserted into a computer.

Program (verb): To insert instructions into a computer.

Protocol: The rules governing the workings of networks or systems which determine where, when, how and in what format information is transmitted.

Satellite dish: A device allowing schools to receive special programming that is broadcast via satellite linkage and received through the use of the "dish".

Software: Computer programs that may include the entire set of programs and procedures associated with a computer system. A computer application is usually software.

TCP/IP: Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol

WAN (wide area network): A long distance computer network that enables computers not physically linked to communicate with each other through public switched telephone networks (PSTN).

Word processing: The production of written documents using computerized typing and text editing equipment. Some popular packages are WordPerfect and Microsoft™ Word.

DREAMMware_a is HERE !!

You've obviously heard of software, shareware and freeware... Now there's DREAMMware®! DREAMMware products are Microsoft™ Windows and PC based educational software programs that are distributed FREE by DREAMMS for Kids, Inc. through bulletin board systems and on-line information systems (CompuServe, Prodigy, America-Online).

All DREAMMware products are designed and developed with the special needs child in mind. Operation of the multimedia application is very intuitive, buttons are large, and the screens are simple and non-cluttered. All applications will come with a special sound driver that will allow those PCs without sound cards to hear the voices and sound!! Each product will have a single focus, and will come complete with extensive on-line help systems.

**This Month:
Kira's Word Explorer!**

Edward W. Dolch, Ph.D., Professor of Education at the University of Illinois, derived a set of words that he scientifically determined were the first words necessary in learning to read. He believed that children needed to recognize these early 220 words called the *Dolch 220 Basic Sight Words* in order to encourage independent reading. Although there is much debate surrounding the use of phonetic methodologies versus sight word recognition, studies have shown that children with learning disabilities tend to have more successes reading when first using sight words.

Kira's Word Explorer! is an easy to use multimedia product that assists in teaching the 220 word Dolch Sight Word List. Students use large buttons to display the words on the blackboard in Kira's Classroom. They also can select a button to hear the word in recorded in Kira's own voice (not computer synthesized!)

All DREAMMware is distributed free of charge, and can be found on numerous local bulletin boards and national information networks. Call our HOTLINE to find out where to call to download your copy! (If you cannot access one of these bulletin boards, send us your name and address, and \$2.00 to cover mailing costs! We'll get a copy out to you right away!!)

Washington News

Here's news on recently passed legislation that affects children with special needs:

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act signed into law Public Law (P.L.) 103-239 on May 4, 1994. These bills would help students who do not attend college to move more smoothly from high-school to the work force.

Approximately \$100 million in FY (fiscal year) 1994 has been designated for grants to states to coordinate job training, vocational education and other work programs. These dollars can be used by school systems to help prepare students for various positions within the work force.

Along these same lines, this month's issue of Technology & Learning magazine included a very informative article on national standards and technology in education. The article stated that "the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has just submitted a proposal to develop educational technology standards along with an array of powerhouse partners including the Chief State School

(Please see Washington on Page 8)

HOTLINE Update



Q.

M.L. Musser of Oldsmar wants to know if her old portable "dinosaur" computer can be used to run any of today's software and programs?

A.

Well, that depends. The largest single problem with running today's graphic based software on older computers is the incompatibility of the video display. Most older computers have Hercules graphics cards (if they have any at all...) and those just aren't compatible with current software. Our advice was to bring her computer (since it was a portable) to one of the larger computer stores (Computer City, etc.) and let a hardware expert determine if she could upgrade her video display.

MM

(continued from Page 1)

The most exciting aspect of multimedia, however, is that it provides multiple forms of input and expression. This is extremely important for children who are disabled, since they can experience the information through many of their senses rather than a single one. As stated in The Multimedia Source Guide, "Multimedia addresses all of the learning modalities, ensuring more comprehension of content. It captures attention, and when utilized interactively, provides hands-on student-centered learning. It can help explain concepts not easily taught, show things not easily visualized, and make concrete that which is abstract." It will help us to address the needs of the next century by preparing the students of this one!

As an aid to all of you who will be entering the multimedia world, here are definitions of some terms that you may come across in your travels!

Access Time: The amount of time required to access information from a hard disk or CD-ROM.

Authoring Software: A software package that allows the user to create presentations.

CAV: Constant Angular Velocity. With respect to LaserDisc players, this type is interactive.

CLV: Constant Linear Velocity. Again with respect to LaserDisc players, this type is more like a movie, you can't interact.

LaserDisc/VideoDisc: A platter like device (almost like old 33 rpm records) that stores a very large amount of information.

MIDI: Musical Instrument Digital Interface. A specification for musical instrument communication to computers and electronic devices.

OCR: Optical Character Recognition. A term used with scanners. This software converts the graphic image it scans in to characters that can be utilized by a word processor.

Photo CD: Specialized CDs and players that allow 35mm film images to be played and stored.

Virtual Reality: A relatively new techniques that allows

the user to interact with the computer by wearing specialized equipment and virtually becoming part of the program!

That's it for multimedia this month! Be sure to stay tuned for next month's issue! **As a Special Note:** Call the IBM Multimedia Information Center at 1-800-426-9402 for your **free** subscription to *IBM Multimedia Solutions* magazine, or for more information on IBM multimedia products and services!

Next Issue: What kind of software is out there?



Media Corner

This list of books and magazines available on computer related topics was taken from *Computing for Kids, A Parent's Guide* distributed by FUTUREKIDS:

Books:

Kids & Computers: A Parent's Handbook, by Judy Salpeter (SAMS \$16.95)

The Parent's Guide to Educational Software, by Marion Blank and Laura Berlin (Microsoft Press, \$14.95)

Parents, Kids and Computers: An Activity Guide for Family Fun and Learning, by Carol Ellison and R. Raskin. (Random House, \$20.00)

Magazines:

Family Fun

PC Home Journal

Kids & Computers

Compute!

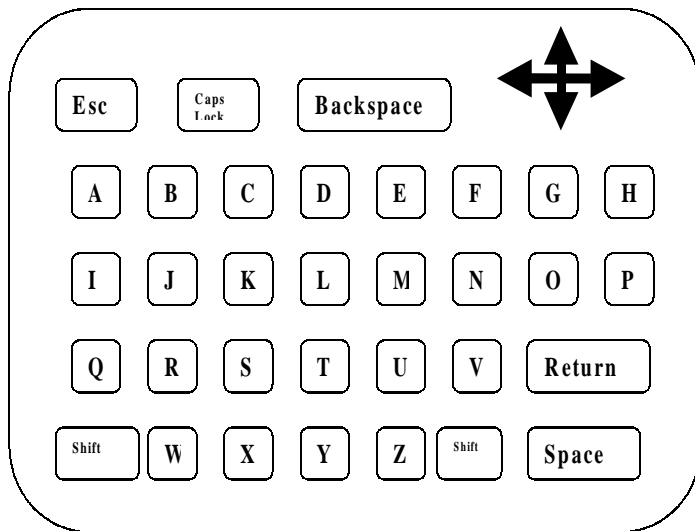
MAC Home Journal

Stop by **FUTUREKIDS** at 3293 Tampa Road, Palm Harbor to pick up your free copy of this very informational publication!

Also, Toys R Us has a booklet available for parents entitled, "Toy Guide for Differently Abled Kids!". This booklet lists a number of toys that have been tested and evaluated for use by disabled kids. Each toy is also clearly identified with a skill building symbol next to it for easy identification. The booklet is sponsored and endorsed by the National Parent Network on Disabilities. Pick it up in the store!

Alternative I/O

Alternate keyboards (input) have been developed for students of all ages (adults too!) who are not able to manipulate a standard computer keyboard. They are especially appropriate for early childhood, primary and special needs populations where attempts to use complex, traditional computer keyboards can be very difficult, if not impossible. These keyboards are ideal for individuals with physical, visual or developmental disabilities, are colorful, and easy to see and understand. Younger students love to use them, since its very easy to see letters and numbers.



These special keyboards generally have flat membrane surfaces, are touch sensitive, and are available with the standard QWERTY interface. Most also provide overlays with an ABCDEF interface, numbers, shapes, pictures, arrow keys only, and a host of other interfaces. All three listed below are also programmable so that one keystroke can perform a series of functions. Custom overlays can also be created for special software, writing, math, and science projects, in order to suit the user, activity, or software.

Contact the following companies for more information, or call DREAMMS at 813-781-7711.

IntelliKeys[®]
IntelliTools, Inc.
5221 Central Avenue, Suite 205
Richmond, CA 94804
800-899-6687
Platform: PC or MAC

Concept Keyboard
Hach Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 11754
Winston-Salem, NC 27116
800-624-7968
Platform: PC or MAC

Ke:nx On:Board[®]
Don Johnston Developmental Equipment, Inc.
P.O. Box 639
Wauconda, IL 60084
708-526-2682
Platform: MAC Only

Tip

(Continued from Page 1)

11. Be sure to save your file for next time!!

Reading or speech teachers often use the Dolch Basic Sight Word List to teach students sight vocabulary skills. These words have been identified as those most appropriate to master pre-reading or vocabulary skills. This list of 200 common words can be found in a number of books in college libraries, or can be obtained FREE from DREAMMS by sending us a large self addressed stamped envelope. Also, please see *DREAMMware is Here* in this issue to learn how you can obtain your free copy of our Microsoft® Windows based **Kira's Word Explorer!**



**DON'T FORGET!!
YOU CAN CALL OUR
HOTLINE FOR HELP
ANYTIME!**

Washington

(Continued from Page 5)

Officers, the national School Boards Association, the national Association for Secondary School Principals, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the Software Publishers Association. This proposed five-year project would look at the development of Technology Foundation Standards; Standards for Using Technology in Learning and Teaching; educational Technology Support Standards; and Standars for Student Assessment and Evaluation of Technology Use.”

Also, Goals 2000 Educate America Act, signed in March of this year, formall added Goal 8. This goal states that by the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.



This month’s HOT PRODUCTS come from the Top Sellers List in this month’s Quality Computersä / Enhance Buying Guide

Software for IBM, Windows & Mac

Math Rabbit
from The Learning Company

Hardware & Accessories

Sound Blaster
from Creative Labs



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