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Hyper...what?

“What is *HyperStudio*, and why use it in the classroom?”

Okay, you have bought this wonderful book because you are a teacher who has begun to use *HyperStudio* in your classroom. Or maybe you bought it because you are a teacher who would *like* to begin using *HyperStudio* in your classroom. Maybe you even bought it because your administration has decided to make *HyperStudio* a part of the curriculum, or you are just curious about this “*HyperStudio*” program colleagues, parents, or students keep telling you about. Whatever description best describes your particular situation, one thing is clear—the thought of teaching and using *HyperStudio* in your classroom terrifies you!

It is natural to experience some fear or hesitation when trying something new, especially when it involves the use of computers. For many of us who are teachers, experience with computers was not a part of our tertiary education degree program. Yet we are trying to educate young people who are growing up unaware that there was ever a time *without* computers. Ten years ago, few students had a computer at home. Now when you ask students how many of them have computers at home, practically every hand is up, and many children report having *two or more* computers. They are far more computer-savvy than students used to be, and their expectations for using computers in the classroom are far greater.

Computers impact our lives daily. They are in many of the appliances we use and the automobiles we drive. They provide the special effects we have become used to seeing in commercials, television shows, and movies. They run our ATM machines, and price the products we buy at stores. They are used in everything from medicine to weather forecasting, stock market analysis to standardised test scoring. Why? Well, one reason is that computers can help us do things more quickly and efficiently, barring the periodic bug or glitch that is inherent in any type of technology. Let’s face it, even a pencil lead breaks once in a while, and ballpoint pens run out of ink at the most inopportune moments. But the value of computers goes far beyond just their speed and efficiency. Computers are also interactive. We can communicate with them, and they can communicate back. They can display colorful images that engage our attentions, and provide us with on-screen areas which react when we click on them. They can enable us to access vast amounts of up-to-date information—information which can speak to us, play an animation, or a video.

Not only is it possible to communicate with a computer, but, like the pencil and the pen, the computer is a tool that can enhance the ways in which we communicate with *one another*. That is where *HyperStudio* can play a key role.

So, what is *HyperStudio*? *HyperStudio* is computer software that enables us to create our own interactive projects and presentations. These projects and presentations can communicate thoughts, ideas, and information through multiple types of media—sound, graphics, text, animation, video, and Internet access—just to name a few. As educators, you know that our students learn most effectively when more of their senses are stimulated, and when they are actively involved in the creation of their own learning. With its multimedia capabilities at our fingertips, we and our students can teach and learn from one another in ways that we never before thought possible.

HyperStudio is not a fancy multimedia encyclopedia or some flashy video game. It is not an interactive testing program or an animated history simulation. Not that there's anything wrong with these types of programs; they are effective learning tools in their own right. However, these kinds of programs are designed primarily to be *used* or *referenced*. Not so with *HyperStudio*. It is a resource of simple, yet powerful, tools that await our creative inspiration. If we can imagine it, *HyperStudio* can help us create it. We become the *creators* of our own interactive, multimedia programs. *HyperStudio* empowers us to be effective communicators through technology. If we want to, we can design our own multimedia encyclopedias or video games. We can author our own interactive tests or animate our own historical simulations. They may not be as polished or professional-looking as commercial products, but they are *ours*. And that is rewarding.

Students actually don't mind doing work when it involves *HyperStudio*. In fact, they feel a great deal of pride and satisfaction in the process. They love showing off their projects to their parents, or to friends they drag in from other classrooms. They can hardly control their enthusiasm. They feel a true sense of ownership in their work, and as a result, are more likely to put forth their best efforts.

You will enjoy serving as a facilitator to your students as they work on their multimedia projects. Try to coach and encourage them through each stage of a project's development. *HyperStudio* is a vehicle through which you can collaborate with your students.

Lesson 1: Get With the Program!

“Taking a look at student and teacher-created sample projects”

HyperOverview:

HyperStudio practically teaches itself. It’s one of the most user-friendly pieces of software available, and requires no previous computer programming knowledge on the part of its user. However, while learning to use its basic features is easy to do, learning *how* and *when* to use each feature to its fullest requires time and practice. Even after using this program for many years, you will continually learn and discover new techniques and ways of creating with *HyperStudio*.

HyperStudio was originally designed for use on the Apple IIGS computer. Within a few years, it became available for Macintosh computers. And a few years after that, a Windows version was introduced. You will not find too many companies that are supporting these three computer environments the way that Roger Wagner Publishing (the producer of *HyperStudio*) is.

HyperStudio ships with a very nice resource CD, along with a well-written reference/tutorial manual. It is strongly recommend that you utilise these as you use and learn the program. This tutorial is not intended to take the place of the information addressed on the CD and in the manual. What it is intended to do is complement this material by providing insights, tips, and information based on classroom experience—which should help you and your students avoid common mistakes and hours of frustration. So, let’s *get with the program*.

HyperHardware:

- *HyperStudio* Program Resource CD (essential for Macintosh 3.0 and Windows versions—no CD needed for Mac 2.0 or Apple IIGS versions)

HyperPrerequisites:

- A basic understanding of and experience with using your particular model of computer and its system software (essential)

HyperClinic:

Start up *HyperStudio*. After a few moments, you will notice a screen looking like the one in Figure 1 (page 9). This is, in fact, not *HyperStudio*. (It is the Home Stack, which will be discussed in a moment.) There should be a menu bar with words across it at the top of your screen. The items contained in this menu bar and in its branching sub-menus make up *HyperStudio*. The program is basically behind-the-scenes. It will occasionally display messages and dialog boxes on the screen as you are creating, but most of the time it is off-stage—like a stagehand working the necessary props and effects to spotlight your performance.