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Introduction

Welcome to *Kidspiration for Terrified Teachers*. You hold in your hands a book that is designed to help you use *Kidspiration* in the classroom with your students.

What is *Kidspiration*?

Kidspiration is a visual thinking and learning software application that was specifically designed for the primary grades. You can use it with your students to brainstorm ideas using pictures and words. It allows you to create a picture of your ideas in the form of concept maps, idea maps, webs, storyboards, and more. *Kidspiration* is also a great organizational tool. Using the **SuperGrouper™** feature, students can categorize information and concepts visually.

What is in This Book?

This book includes a thorough review of the *Kidspiration* program in the *Getting Started* section. You will learn the terminology and the functionality associated with every tool bar button and menu option. If you read this section carefully, you will soon master all the “ins and outs” of this visual thinking and learning software application.

The *Kidspiration* learning activities that come with the program are introduced in the *Using the Pre-existing Kidspiration Learning Activities* section. Skim this section to see if there are any *Kidspiration* learning activities that you can use with your students right away.

Step-by-step instructions for modifying the pre-existing learning activities to meet your students’ educational needs can be found in the *Modifying the Pre-existing Kidspiration Learning Activities* section. You will learn how to take an activity and change symbols, text, and more to make it truly your own.

Feeling adventurous? Then try creating your own student learning activities. In the *Creating Your Own Kidspiration Learning Activities* section, you will learn how to create a student learning activity from scratch—from entering the first idea to saving your project as a template file for students to use again and again.

The remainder of the book provides you with language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health and physical education, and the arts activities that incorporate the use of *Kidspiration*. The activities were developed for kindergarten through third-grade students and their teachers. Since all the files related to these projects are on the CD-ROM, you can use them right away with your students.

Each activity is presented as follows:

Learning Activity Description

In this section, you are provided with a brief description of the activity, allowing you a quick overview of what your students will be doing.

Hardware and Software Needed

In this section, you are provided with information about the hardware and software you will need to complete the activity. Sometimes you will find that software other than *Kidspiration*, such as *Microsoft Word* or *Microsoft Excel*, is necessary to open and print optional resource files, student activity sheets, etc.

Materials Needed

In this section, you are provided with a list of all the materials and supplies you need to complete the activity.

CD-ROM Files

In this section, you are provided with the name, description, and filename of each resource file, student learning activity file, graphic organizer, answer key, symbol library, and student activity sheet provided on the CD-ROM.

About *Kidspiration* Learning Activities

Kidspiration provides you with several learning activity options. The three learning activity options covered in this book are as follows:

- Using the Pre-existing *Kidspiration* Learning Activities
- Modifying the Pre-existing *Kidspiration* Learning Activities
- Creating Your Own *Kidspiration* Learning Activities



First, you can use any one of the 48 pre-existing learning activities provided within the *Kidspiration* program. This is probably the best place to begin if you are new to the *Kidspiration* program. You will find information about each of the pre-existing *Kidspiration* learning activities in the section *Using the Pre-existing Kidspiration Learning Activities* that begins on page 80.

Second, you can modify any pre-existing *Kidspiration* learning activity to meet the specific curricular needs of your students. This is a good way to begin understanding the ins and outs of using the *Kidspiration* program. You can learn how to modify an activity in the section *Modifying the Pre-existing Kidspiration Learning Activities* that begins on page 130.

Third, you can create your own project or assignment in *Kidspiration* and save it as a learning activity for your students to use again and again. This is probably the best place to begin if you are a seasoned *Inspiration* user and want to jump right into using *Kidspiration* in your own way with your students. You can learn how to create your own *Kidspiration* learning activity in the section *Creating Your Own Kidspiration Learning Activities* that begins on page 147.

So, glance through all three sections to discover the one with which you are most inspired to begin. Have fun!

Creating Cinquain Poems



Learning Activity Description

In this learning activity, students review the following grammatical terms: *noun*, *adjective*, *verb*, *phrase*, and *synonym*. Then students learn how to write a five-line cinquain poem. Students compose their own cinquain poems using *Kidspiration*.

Hardware and Software Needed

For this activity, you will need your computer system and *Kidspiration*. If you plan to share the sample cinquain poems

Midnight and *Boo Boo* with your students, you will also need the word processing software application *Microsoft Word* to open the cinquain poem files for display on your computer system or for printing. If you plan to use the cinquain poem starters provided in the **Additional Resources** section, you will need *Microsoft Word* to open and print the activity sheets for your students. If you do not have *Word*, you can use the copies of the activity pages provided in this book. Consider using the copier to enlarge the pages so that students have sufficient writing space.

Materials Needed

For this activity, open the sample cinquain poems *Midnight* and *Boo Boo* that are shown on pages 176–177 [filenames: *midnight.doc* and *booboo.doc*]. Print these files or have them ready for students to view on your computer system. If you feel your students could more easily write their cinquain poems using familiar pictures as writing prompts, you may want to have several available.