

# WHAT'S new

Evan-Moor has released **Hot Topics High Interest Reading**, a supplemental reading product designed for struggling readers in grades 4–8. Hot Topics helps readers through direct instruction of strategies and the use of motivational texts.

According to the company, the four-page cardstock design encourages students to read about subjects such as firefighting, wakeboarding, and dog sledding in a format that is less intimidating than textbooks. Each of the two levels presents 20 reading selections in a variety of genres such as articles, interviews, biographies, folk tales, and interviews. The Teacher's Guide includes an eight-page unit for each selection, providing lesson plans, reading strategies, instructional prompts, and student reproducibles. The kit includes six copies of 20 reading selections, a Teacher's Guide, a two-disc audio CD, and a storage box with 20 tabbed dividers.

**MORE INFO:** Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 1.800.777.4489  
<http://www.evan-moor.com>



Numedeon, Inc. has developed a site for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) that offers kids a virtual field trip around the famed lab. The micro-world is accessible through the JPL Web site, <http://virtualfieldtrip.jpl.nasa.gov/>.

The purpose of the **JPL Virtual Field Trip** is to familiarize students with some of JPL's goals, missions, and activities, and enhance their actual "in-house"

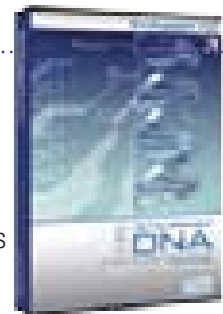


experience. On the site, a virtual tour guide takes visitors through the JPL Space Museum, the Mars Exploration Rover Lab, and the Mission Control Center, where they plan an interactive game simulating the process of managing and communicating with JPL's spacecraft exploring the solar system and beyond.

**MORE INFO:** Jet Propulsion Laboratory, 1.818.354.4321  
<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov>

NetSupport has released **Dynamic Network Administrations (DNA) 2.7**, a software tool for inventorying and managing educational IT assets. NetSupport DNA allows IT departments at educational institutions to inventory hardware and software, monitor application usage, budget for upgrades, improve in-house IT support, and track student Internet usage. The software supports Windows and Linux, and includes an automated scheduler and the option to assign custom data views to specific operators. A 30-day free trial of DNA 2.7 is available for download from the NetSupport Web site.

**MORE INFO:** NetSupport, Inc. 1.888.665.0808,  
<http://www.netsupportdna.com>



Tool Factory has launched the **Worksheet Station**, a library of curriculum-based worksheets created by teachers to meet their daily classroom needs. The worksheets are available in multiple formats, and educators can also upload their own worksheets and share their curriculum across the district. The Worksheet Station is organized by a tree structure and labeled by thumbnails. It is searchable by keyword, author, grade, or product. The Worksheet Station provides worksheets for grades PK–12, and is available as a single unit for \$30, or \$400 for a school site license.

**MORE INFO:** Tool Factory, 1.802.375.6549, <http://www.toolfactory.com>



eLearning Systems International released **WebLessons**, a hosted e-learning management system for both educators and students. Each WebLesson follows a proven instructional model. Students are introduced to the topic to activate prior knowledge and generate interest. They are guided through a series of Web resources related to the topic. Students practice by taking a quiz and are then asked to apply what they learned by completing a final written project related to the initial scenario. WebLessons provides lessons in the content areas of social studies and science for grades 3–12. WebLessons are available for \$750 per teacher per annual subscription. Free trial versions of the software are available for download.

**MORE INFO:** eLearning Systems International, 1.800.672.6988  
<http://www.elearningsystems.org>



PBS has launched **PBS Teachers**, an online resource for PK–12 educators that provides information on effective ways to use media and technology in the school or home-based environment. The site provides a resource for educators searching for wide-ranging curriculum resources, video products (Shop for Teachers), and online professional development opportunities (PBS TeacherLine). Among the features is “Media Infusion,” a blog designed to encourage conversations about using media and technology in the classroom. The site also provides standards-based lesson plans, classroom activities, and interactive resources organized by subject, grade level, and curriculum topic.

**MORE INFO:** PBS, <http://www.pbs.org>

Curriculum Associates has introduced **Math FACTMASTER Online**, a math learning tool. The program uses animated characters, sound effects, games, and activities to engage students in grades 1–6. Educators can use the online management tool to adjust classroom and student use. Schools can also provide students access to the software to download for home use. At the end of each session, a printable homework sheet is presented for daily paper and pencil practice. Test-prep activities are also available. A one-year subscription for 1–9 classrooms of 25 students is available for \$70/classroom. The software works with either Windows or Macintosh systems. It remains available for purchase on CD-ROM for \$59.95 (volume pricing available).

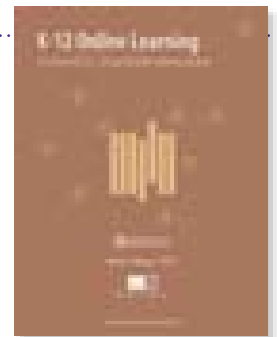
**MORE INFO:** Curriculum Associates, Inc., 1.800.225.0248  
<http://www.cainc.com>

The Sloan Consortium has released the results of the first survey of online learning in elementary and secondary education.

**K–12 Online Learning: A Survey of U.S. School District Administrators,**

a nationwide survey, conducted during the 2005–2006 academic year, finds that almost two out of three (63%) school districts had one or more students enrolled in either a fully online or a blended course. The survey consists of responses from 366 public school district chief administrators representing two million U.S. students. The online report is freely available for download.

**MORE INFO:** The Sloan Consortium, 1.781.292.2523  
<http://www.sloan-c.org>



ProProfs.com announced the launch of **ProProfs Quiz School**, a free learning tool that enables educators to use the power of the Internet to create online quizzes and practice tests for their students. The Quiz School provides access for students and educators to create custom quizzes, as well as a collection of online quizzes ranging from K–12 education to topics such as technology certification, SAT, GRE, and general trivia. Students can take the quizzes without logging in to the site and can receive instant feedback and scores. Students can also access tips on how to improve their future performance. The quizzes can be retrieved from the ProProfs library through keywords or tags, and students are able to vote, rank, and comment on all of the quizzes.

**MORE INFO:** ProProfs.com, <http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/>



Samsung announced its Ultra-Mobile PC (UMPC) model, the **Q1P for Windows Vista**. The UMPC features an Intel Pentium processor that runs at 1.0 GHz, a 60 GB hard drive, and 1 GB of memory. The Q1P is also equipped with a seven-inch wide LCD touch screen and an “inking” feature, which allows data to be directly

inputted through the touch screen, with results similar to a handwritten note. The device weighs 1.7 pounds, and offers wireless communication capabilities that include WiFi and Bluetooth. Various options for the UMPC include an external USB keyboard with a track point and 2-button built-in mouse, organizer/portfolio carrying case, extended battery life, and multiple external optical disc drive options. The Q1P is available for \$1,300.

**MORE INFO:** Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. 1.800.726.7864  
<http://www.samsung.com>

**Safari Books Online** has announced the addition of instructional video content to its searchable reference library of more than 4,000 technology and business books. The release of 75 titles and 600 hours of video content focuses on training for creative professionals and knowledge workers. The titles include training videos for software such as Acrobat, Illustrator, Photoshop, Mac OS X, Dreamweaver, Flash, Windows XP, and Microsoft Office. Safari Library subscribers can access any of the online video tutorials at no additional cost.

**MORE INFO:** Safari Books Online, 1.800.775.7330  
<http://www.safaribooksonline.com>

Centurion Technologies announced the



release of **MacShield UniversalT**. The hard drive protection software is designed for Apple's Intel-based and legacy PowerPC processors. The software is intended to protect Apple computers from harmful and erroneous changes to the system image and hard drive. MacShield UniversalT returns the hard drive to the pre-defined configuration upon restart and removes all temporary changes. The software clears unwanted changes such as downloads or deletions, system setting changes, and installed programs. A "Persistent Storage" space can be set during installation, where users can save documents, e-mails, and other information that remains unharmed when the computer is restarted. The software operates as a buffer zone, allowing the computer user to experiment without penalty or permanency. Changes are written to the temporary zone instead of the hard drive, therefore the system files will never be modified. The software is available for \$70.

**MORE INFO:** Centurion Technologies, 1.800.224.7977  
<http://www.centuriontech.com>

SATexamPrep.com announced the launch of a free **SAT test prep study guide** that covers key information including math, critical reading, and writing.



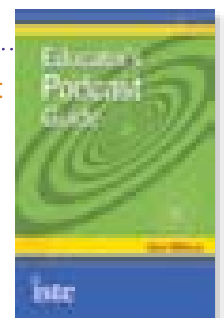
The free course includes all of the core information in the official SAT study guide, including test vocabulary words and other key areas of exam practice. According to the company, the Web site is designed for students of every level seeking to boost their exam scores.

**MORE INFO:** Pixel Blue, Inc. <http://www.satexamprep.com>

Tool Factory has released podcasting software that combines a scripting tool, sound recorder, easy uploading, and built-in broadcasting. The software enables anyone with a microphone, an Internet connection, a voice, and a Windows computer to create podcasts. **Tool Factory Podcasting** includes the Tool Factory Podcasting software, Clip Art Station subscription, Web page station hosting, and a how-to guide for podcasting. The Tool Factory Podcasting is available for \$100 for a single unit and \$1,000 for a building license. The software is available by calling 1.800.220.8386.

**MORE INFO:** Tool Factory, Inc., 1.802.375.6549  
<http://www.toolfactory.com>

ISTE has released **Educator's Podcast Guide** by Bard Williams. The 280-page paperback book explores the use of Web-based content delivery systems to engage the digital native students of today. The book includes an introduction to podcasting complete with hardware and software requirements and has chapters on integrating podcast technology in your curriculum and classroom. The tome also introduces a wide-ranging collection of educational podcasts available online, sorted by curriculum area. Cost is \$31.95, ISTE member price is \$28.75.



**MORE INFO:** ISTE, 1.800.336.5191, <http://www.iste.org>

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