

# Kerpoof Scholastics News

## December 2007



Happy holidays from Kerpoof!

*Welcome to the second Kerpoof Scholastics Newsletter!*

Our goal is to provide information about Kerpoof's free resources for educators. If you are not interested in receiving this newsletter, please feel free to opt out. If you have colleagues who you think would be interested in receiving this newsletter, [please feel free to forward it to them](#). If you have received a forwarded copy, you can sign up for your own free subscription.

We want Kerpoof Scholastics and Kerpoof Scholastics News to be a great resource for you. Please feel free to contact me with comments or suggestions. You can call me at 720-220-7824 or e-mail me at [caryn.jones@kerpoof.com](mailto:caryn.jones@kerpoof.com).

Sincerely,  
Caryn Jones  
Director of Education Services  
Kerpoof

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What's new at Kerpoof?

*Web site enhancements*

Kerpoof launched several fun new activities at the end of November. Take a look and see how you can incorporate them into your classroom!

*The Bag of Favorites* allows logged-in users to place their favorite objects from almost any Kerpoof scene into their bag. Then they can bring those objects into any scene whenever they want!

*Kerpoof's Avatar Builder* lets logged-in users create their own character to represent them at Kerpoof. They can choose from dozens of skin colors, hair colors and styles and more to create their own identities.



*Kerpoof Chat* is a safe, controlled chat environment. Users can only chat with people they know in the "real" world because they need to know the group name and group password. Teachers can set up groups for their classes.

*Super Doodle* is a new product that we are testing. It allows users to draw their own art. Caution: Because it is a test product that is still in development there is not a way to save your artwork yet, other than by printing it! You can find Kerpoof's Super Doodle activity in the spotlight on the Kerpoof home page.

### *Great news!*

Kerpoof is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a grant by the National Science Foundation to research and develop an environment that can be used to teach programming concepts in grades 3-8. The initial version of this environment can be seen in the current Kerpoof Movie Maker activity.

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Congratulations to our November contest winners! Congratulations to Leanne Chauvette from Henniker Community School in Henniker, NH and MaryAnn Sansonetti from Richland School District One in Columbia, SC. Leanne and MaryAnn each won a \$50 gift card to Target for telling us how they use Kerpoof in their classrooms.

Leanne teaches first grade and uses Kerpoof to help students practice their mouse skills and develop fine motor skills. Her students have also made pictures and recorded their own stories about them on their iPod recorders. She looks forward to continuing to use Kerpoof in her classroom.

MaryAnn is actually training teachers in her district to incorporate Kerpoof in all content areas. Some examples she provided included using Kerpoof to explain math concepts, to explain the concept of pros and cons and to illustrate stories students have written.

Check [Kerpoof Scholastics](#) on January 15 for information about our next contest!

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New lesson plans available at Kerpoof

There are two new lesson plans available at Kerpoof Scholastics. Take a look and be sure to check back each month for new lesson plans.

#### *Metaphors in Fairy Tales*

Let students in grades 7-8 try their hand at identifying metaphors in fairy tales; this lesson plan includes a PowerPoint presentation to activate prior knowledge and model the activity, plus a rubric

#### *M.C. Escher's Relativity*

Study perspective and the work of M.C. Escher in this lesson plan geared toward grades 4-8; includes a biographical PowerPoint presentation about M.C. Escher and an optional tessellation activity

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#### *Lesson plans coming in January*

Picasso's Cubism

Nocturnal vs. Diurnal Animals

New scenes coming soon

Our new winter movie maker scene will appear on Kerpoof around December 17. We're also working on an addition to the Great Artists Series: Salvador Dali.

Tips and Tricks

#### *Layering objects in Kerpoof*

We are working on a better way to put objects in front of or behind other objects. We know that it isn't an easy thing to do right now. In the meantime, you can experiment. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- When you bring in an object, it automatically appears on the ground in scene
- You can use the Shift key while clicking and dragging an object to move an object up or down in the scene (putting it in the air, for example)
- To stack some objects, try first dropping them on the ground, one just in front of the other, so that they are layered in the order you want. Then hold the shift key and drag the objects with the mouse, lifting them up to where you want them to be.
- When you are lifting an object into the air, make sure to click on the object you want to move, but NOT on its shadow

#### *Assigning computer partners*

It is often useful or necessary to assign partners to work on the computer

together. Some schools don't have enough computers for the entire class to work individually. Even those that do have enough computers may find that learning to use the computer or new software comes easier if students can think and work together. Keep Vygotsky's zone of proximal development in mind when you are assigning the partners. Whenever possible make sure that at least one group member already has enough computer experience to comfortably complete the assigned task.

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## Idea Center

### Foreign Language practice

An anonymous teacher (If it was you, please let us know, we'd love to give you credit!) recently created an assignment in the Kerpoof Publishing Studio to test students' knowledge of counting and mathematics in French. The assignment asked students to identify how many boats (bateaux) or underwater creatures (animaux sous-marins) were in a scene with the answer on the next page.

### Weather Center

Students in the early grades will love predicting the weather using Kerpoof. Have them create a scene showing what they think tomorrow's weather will be. Discuss ways to predict (looking at today's weather, thinking about the seasons, etc.). After they have printed out their scene, come back to it the next day and see if their prediction was correct. Discuss why their prediction may not have been correct.

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