



MCCE NEWS

MONTANA COUNCIL FOR COMPUTERS
AND
TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

Vol. 17, No. 2

December 2004

PowerPoint used for basic drawing instruction

Software review by Vince Long

One of the nice things about Microsoft's PowerPoint, other than its pure ease of use, is its great versatility. Slides can be designed to accompany an oral presentation, used as a stand alone

tutorial, exported as web pages, and a variety of other ways limited only to the imagination of the designer. In Adrian's Art Tutorials, Adrian Wegner has bridged a couple of these methods to create a comprehensive set of lessons on basic drawing techniques.

The CD is suitable for use by a teacher who might project the slides as they deliver a lecture to their students and it is rich enough in content that it can serve as a self-paced course in basic drawing.

The CD contains 12 pre-built PowerPoint presentations, each containing about 30 to 40 individual slides. The topics covered include:

Basic Shapes	Pen & Ink
Color Theory Tutorial	Perspectives
Elements & Principles	Simple Object Abstract
Drawing Unit	Object in Repetition
Personal Design	Portrait Drawing

In addition to the presentations, the CD also contains handouts for several of the units with additional content and exercises. The cover sheets sport attractive artwork by the author or one of his students. Each folder also holds the artwork as separate files in the .TIF

format, making them easier to open on virtually any computer platform.

Opening one of the units, in this case, Basic Shapes, the user is greeted with a title slide, illustrated with some of the four basic shapes that the presentation will guide the user in drawing. This slide,

drawing by Adrian Wegner

like all the slides feature a arrow button making it obvious that clicking there will advance the presentation. There is no need for an extensive operators

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During the general meeting at MEA we discussed several things and one of the more interesting topics dealt with the broad scope of MCCE. More specifically we discussed what MCCE currently provides for members, what we thought MCCE should do and finally came up with a few goals. An outline of that discussion follows:

What do we do?

- Provide sectionals at MEA
- Networking through listserv
- Social aspect
- Hospitality room/food
- Environment to share expertise
- Incentive to be active (stipends)
- Professional recognition
- Newsletter
- Affiliation with NCCE and ISTE

What should we do?

- More advocating for educators
- Coordinate a conference for technology in education
- Put some focus on techs staff in education
- Connect with other organizations
- More emphasis on the integration piece
- Bring higher education in more
- Involve students
- Provide a resource base to other organizations
- Collaborate with library organizations/conferences

Goals

- Short term
 - Every board member submit one post to listserv & one article to newsletter
 - Increase membership
- Long term
 - State tech conference
 - Speaker / resource list

This conversation helped establish who we are and provide us with some direction for the future. Terry Lankutis has been corresponding with Michael Hall at OPI and is working on details to coordinate some video conferences across the state to help draw some more attention to these issues. Be looking for more information on the listserv. (Also see the map on Page 3.)

As always, thanks for your time and commitment to technology and education and please let us know if you have any comments or questions.

Kevin Croff
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Members meeting, MEA/MFT 2004



Join ISTE, the national voice for the
Montana Council for Computers and
Technology in Education.

<http://www.iste.org>

WANTED

Newsletter Articles for MCCE News

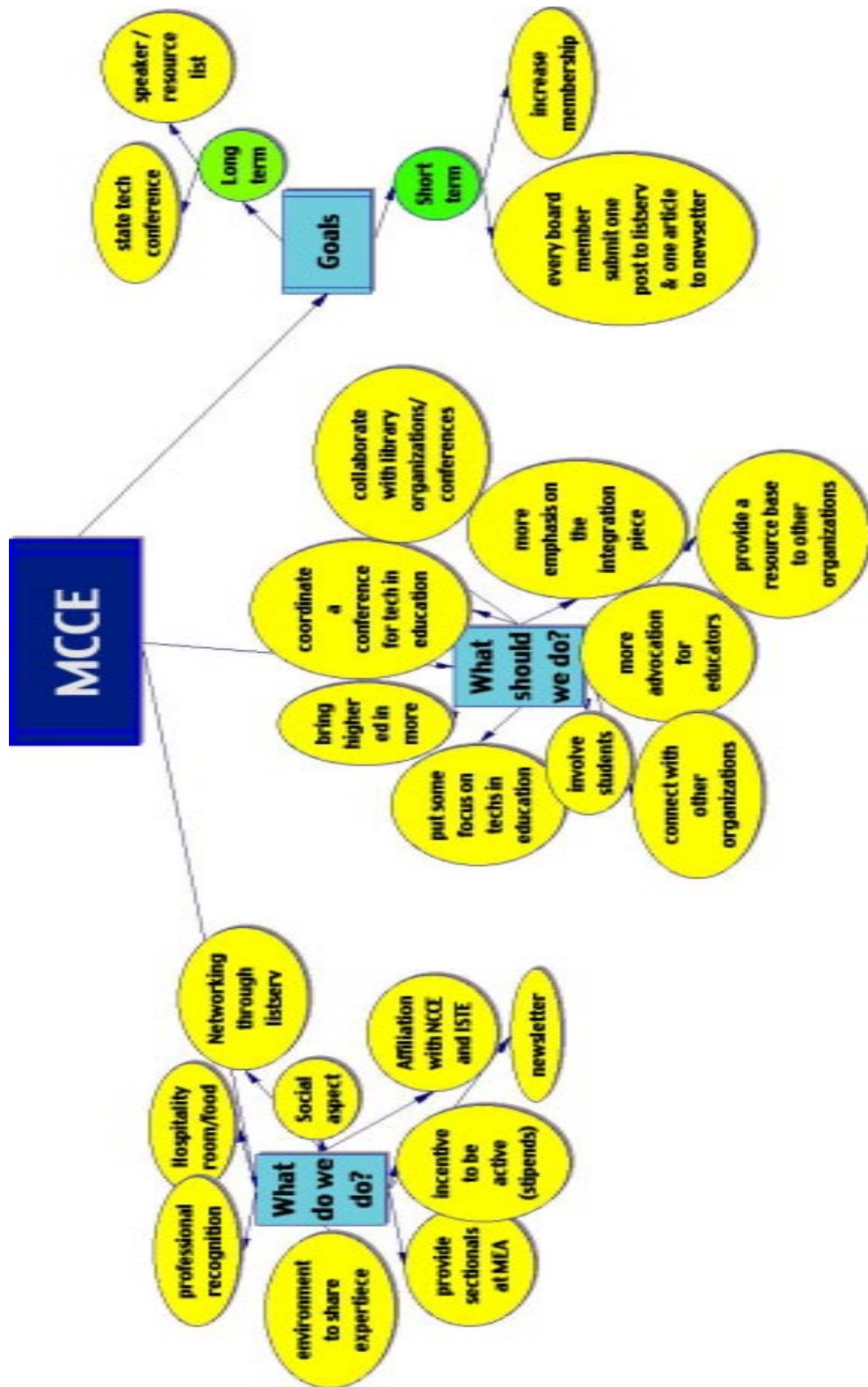
Software Reviews,
Classroom Technology Tips, Student-
Written Stories, Web Site Reviews

MCCE NEWS

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**Next Submission Deadline:
February 12, 2005**

**This and past issues of MCCE News are avail-
able on the World Wide Web at:
<http://senior.billings.k12.mt.us/mcce/>**



A FEW GOOD WEB SITES

By Kevin Croff

A recent post on the MCCE listserv by Cathy Ziebarth made me sit back for a second and think about some of the resources that we have available on-line that we do not realize or have simply forgotten about. Those sites suggested by Terry, Vince and Don were all excellent and I added them to my every-growing bookmarks.

I encourage you to send some of your favorite sites and a brief review to our outstanding newsletter editor Vince Long longv@billings.k12.mt.us and he can compile them and create a new column for us each newsletter sharing your offerings. It is simple and takes a minimal amount of time. Some of my new favorites are:

<http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/> - a new browser by Mozilla that is truly cross-platform and is getting rave reviews. It's pop-up blocking, security and loads of possible extensions are drawing quite a stir.

<http://www.enc.org/> - every math and science teacher should add this one to their list. I visit the Digital Dozen and Calendar every month and their searchable lessons are top notch.

<http://www.meddybemps.com/> - my 4 year old daughter's favorite site. No advertising, games are education based and the Beantime - Spotted and Purple Pigmoose Stories always get some giggles.

Tech Tips at Skyview High

by Desiree' Caskey

Here are some articles compiled to assist our teachers:

<http://skyview.billings.k12.mt.us/departments/techint/newsletter/vol1issue2.html>

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Free VOIP brings Internet telephony to the masses

by Vince Long

Even before widespread use of the Internet occurred in the mid-90s, various applications attempted to implement some kind of voice communication over networked computers. Using dial-up modems running at 2400 baud, techies tried to replace the conventional POTS (plain old telephone service) with one that relied on the personal computer. Results were varied but some brave souls persevered and used these burgeoning technologies to voice chat online and, in many cases, avoid long distance calling fees.

Along comes the Internet's introduction to world and VOIP (voice over Internet protocol) naturally became another application looking to establish its place in this new venue of business and personal communications. Many companies promoting this have come and gone and some have become successful. It wasn't until I encountered Skype (www.skype.com) that I found a tool that I could truly recommend and to do so for two big reasons. First of all, Skype works. Second, it's free.

To use Skype you need a computer and an Internet connection. The computer can be a Macintosh, a Linux machine, or be running Windows. Their web site indicates

that you will need Windows 2000 or XP but I have used it successfully on Windows 98SE. You also need speakers and a microphone or one of those headsets that have a microphone. Once the software is downloaded (10 megabytes) and installed, you go through a very short sign up process which involves creating a screen name and a password.

Ideally you will want to know someone else who has Skype so you'll have someone to talk to other than strangers. Use email to exchange Skype user names and you're ready to chat. Enter that user's name in your contacts list and click on the green phone icon to place a call. They will get a ringing in their headphones and once they answer you talk just like a normal, two-way (full duplex) phone conversation.

The most useful feature of Skype is that it supports conference calls with up to 5 users. In a recent test I chatted with friends in Kentucky and England and it sounded as if they were right in the room. Again, the cost of this is nothing. Skype is free.

Uses for Skype in the classroom are numerous. Class projects between schools no longer have to rely on email or instant text messaging applications. Foreign language students can practice with native speakers. It's use is only limited by the imagination of the teachers and students.

Basic drawing instruction

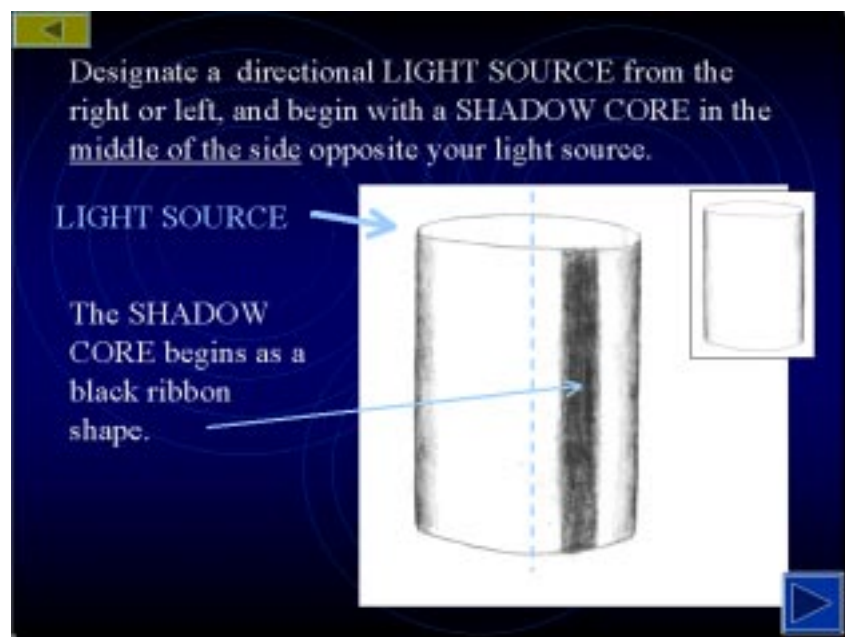
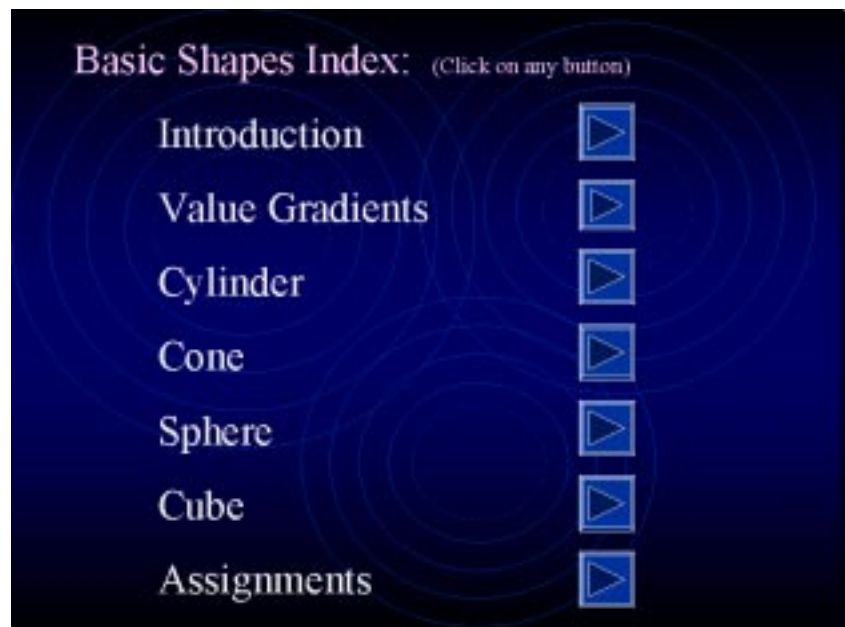
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The next slide features a menu listing the shape tutorials in this unit. PowerPoint has the ability to branch to various slides within the presentation and Mr. Wegner has put this non-linear function to good use.

The introduction for this section provides a background realistic drawing, shows the four basic shapes, and defines and illustrates gradients. Proceeding on to the drawing of the cylinder, the user is presented with an bare rectangle that evolves, step-by-step with supporting instructions, into a realistic 3-D cylinder. The use of shadows and an awareness of the light source are shown in clear detail with the minimal amount of supporting text. The unit concludes with a series of exercises/assignments allowing the student to practice what they have just experienced. Each assignment slide also contains a finished example drawing.

The remaining units are covered in similar detail, providing the teacher and/or the student with enough text-based content to explain what is being shown in the numerous illustrations. The presentation uses various transitions between slides for a professional look and button clicks are accompanied by a pleasing sound effect to provide a degree of audio feedback.

One feature of this product rarely found in any educational software is that these PowerPoint presentations are not copy



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Basic drawing instruction

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protected. While they are covered by copyright, the user can modify the slides. This is a real advantage because it allows classroom teachers to modify the content to suit their own lessons. For example, a teacher may wish to augment a unit with some local content or modify and expand the assignments.

Overall, this package provides a practical, interactive approach to basic drawing lessons at less than the cost of most textbooks on the subject and it was developed by a teacher with over 30 years of classroom experience. The presentations were tested with his own students who provided some of the wonderful illustrations on the CD. In fact, one of the best parts of using the CD is viewing the wonderful artwork that accompanies it.

The presentations played flawlessly during testing. System requirements, as listed on the CD's docu-

mentation, indicate that a basic Pentium system running Windows 98 is all that should be required for a computer to use the CD. It also indicates that you will need Microsoft Word and PowerPoint to access the documents.

While those programs were used to author the contents of the CD, if you do not have Word or PowerPoint you can still use the CD to its fullest. I tested the presentations with OpenOffice and other than needing an extra mouse click here and there to move things along it worked just fine. OpenOffice is a free replacement for Microsoft Office and features a presentaion tool, word processor, spreadsheet, web page builder, and other tools. It is available at www.openoffice.org. (You can read an article about it in the MCCE News, Fall 2003, <http://senior.billings.k12.mt.us/mcce/mccenews/oct2003-screen.pdf>).

The CD costs \$22.00 and is available from adewegner@hotmail.com. Put "tutorial" in the subject line.



FOLLOW-UP EXERCISE 'E': Create a COMPOSITION using slices and pieces cut from the BASIC SHAPES.

From Cathy Warner, Assistant Executive Director, MEA-MFT

I have some great news about our 2005 Application to Present. Since you are the experts from the 2004 Educators' Conference, I welcome you to test our on-line Application to Present before it is available for everyone. We've designed a test site where you can go to "try to break it"! Go to: <http://www.mea-mft.org/edcon>

Please take a few moments to check it out. I would appreciate any and all feedback by December 8 so that we can get it ready to post on our website in January.

Happy Holidays!



Coming Soon!!! NECC 2005 26th Annual National Educational Computing Conference

June 27-30, 2005
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Montana Council for Computers and Technology in Education Membership Form

Last Name _____ First Name _____

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Area of Interest: College _____ High School _____ K-8 _____

Please be an active member by indicating your area(s) of interest:

_____ willing to be an officer _____ willing to submit articles for the newsletter

_____ willing to be on the Board of Directors _____ willing to work on MCCE committees

_____ willing to be on a committee for a convention

Dues: _____ \$15.00 per year _____ \$35.00 for 3 years

Mail the completed membership form and dues to:

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