

schoolzone *newsletter*

educational intelligence

message from the editor..

This comes to you hot on the heels of BETT, the biggest education technology show in the world. Schoolzone spent three days at the exhibition, finding out about new technology, chatting to publishers and software developers, and updating ourselves on the latest government policies and initiatives. We also paid 40 Schoolzone teachers to provide feedback on their impressions of this year's show, and how it compared with previous years.

From those whose feedback we've now received, this year's show is still rated as the most important and influential ICT event of the year. All said that the products they had seen would influence their purchasing decisions over the next 12 months, and that if they found a supplier was not exhibiting at BETT, they would probably look for alternative solutions. As one reviewer said, 'To be at BETT means the company is a good one!', and another, 'BETT is unmissable as a means of staying ahead and understanding developments'.

Our view is that the rate of technological change has definitely slowed down, with the focus shifting to sharing good practice, and refining existing products and applications to enable users to get more out of them. The show this year seemed to attract fewer visitors: better for those who were there, as it made browsing easier and more enjoyable. From the exhibitors' point of view, though, this confirmed their fears that this could be a tough year. However, the publishers to whom we spoke remain committed to involving teachers in developing new products and software, and testing and trialling new resources in schools before launching them, which was good news. If you are attending any education exhibitions over the next 12 months, and would like to be paid to complete a feedback form/questionnaire, please contact lynne@schoolzone.co.uk.

If one of your New Year's resolutions is to promote creativity in the classroom wherever possible, you may be interested to hear that Schoolzone is working with the NSPCC's ChildLine service to support 'Idea', their new campaign which invites pupils from Key Stage 2 to 5 to take part in a series of competitions involving writing, drawing, designing and even film-making. Each month, ChildLine will be releasing around 20 new

competitions, set out as invitations to respond to creative briefs which are themed around the message, 'Whatever your worry, it's better out than in'. A panel of Schoolzone teachers will translate the briefs into engaging, lesson-related teaching suggestions, making it easy to see how the briefs can be creatively incorporated into your lessons, so do log onto the Schoolzone website to download information about this.

For those of you who are familiar with Schoolzone's product evaluations, you'll be interested to hear that we're adding a peer review tab. Word of mouth recommendations are the most persuasive method for selling educational resources, so if you've bought a new resource or piece of software, and would like to let other teachers know about it, please share your experience of using it - both good and bad.

Our aim this year is to continue involving as many teachers as possible in hands-on, teacher-focused research, and providing as many free services as we can to support teachers in doing what they do best - teaching. Please keep visiting our site, to make the most of the opportunities on offer. Your comments and views are always valued, so please email me at melissa@schoolzone.co.uk if you would like to comment on any of the issues raised in this Newsletter.

Schoolzone just got bigger and better!

This month saw the launch of Schoolzone's new look website:

- More free resources for teaching and learning (now over 60,000)
- Better access to information
- Revised educational updates service - policies, news and guidance
- List all your school's jobs for £40 for the whole year
- Educational events, courses and organisations

And it's still completely free to use.
Visit us at www.schoolzone.co.uk



free resources & opportunities

Make the best even better.

Our webguide of 50,000 education websites is now open to registered users to add your own comments about each entry. Just follow the resource link in the results then click on the 'Add a Review' link at the top of the page.

Evaluations News

You may notice that we are making some changes to our evaluations. We currently have 493 evaluations live on the Schoolzone site. These will soon include access to a peer review tab where you will be able to add your comments to those of our evaluators. We are making the changes to the service to give you more access to information about products and be further linked with Interact our 'try before you buy' service.

ICT InterACT for Key Stage 3: Network DVD-ROM 2

ICT InterACT 2 is a core Key Stage 3 series that is delivered via Dynamic Learning, Hodder's interactive presentation engine. It offers users personalised information in an attractive and very accessible format which children enjoy using. The style and functionality make it very usable for both whole class teaching and individual learning, supported by useful assessment activities. Dynamic Learning facilitates the running of a series of lesson resources - additional examples of which can be downloaded from the publisher's website and used within the software. These additional resources include a wide variety of subject studies across a range of KS levels.

To read the full evaluation visit: <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/evaluations/evaluation.asp?evalID=5035>



interact Schoolzone interact

Schoolzone Interact currently has 3264 schools as registered users. The service allows full access to publishers' educational content on a 'try before you buy' basis. There is a 'new to Interact' section for those who would like an introduction to what is on offer and there is no commitment to buy at the end of the trial period.

To access this free digital content please go to: www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/interact/login.asp

Schoolzone has recently changed the criteria for inclusion into Interact which means a wealth of new resources will be available through the system in this coming spring. Keep your eyes peeled and take advantage of this great 'try before you buy' feature.

Interact feedback:

In a pre-launch Interact focus group teachers stated:

"This is a way to interface with bits of software that I am interested in and cut out the dross, I can find directly what I want."

Schoolzone's Teaching Recruitment Site!

This is an exciting opportunity for schools to advertise teaching jobs by registering with AllTeachingJobs.co.uk.

For just £40 per year plus VAT, schools can instantly add, edit and manage all school vacancies for an entire year.

Alternatively, if you are seeking employment, see our listing of current jobs, which are delineated by region, subject or sector.

In addition, Schoolzone is offering a job alert service. All you need to do is register an email address and your job search preferences, to receive this updated information every day.

Take a look at Schoolzone jobs today:
<http://www.schoolzone.allteachingjobs.co.uk/>

Contact Carmen Frowd,
carmen@schoolzone.co.uk or call 01242 262906
for more information.

Don't forget ... to have your say

Last month we asked our website users the following question...

Is sustainable development high on your school's agenda?



Of the respondents, 53% voted YES and 47% said NO.

This month we ask:

Is the recession adversely affecting your school's purchasing decisions?

Please go to our News pages at <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/news.asp?Action=search> to cast your vote or email your comments to the editor: melissa@schoolzone.co.uk.

Each month the Schoolzone website brings you details of events of interest to the education community:
<http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/events/index.asp>

For example:

Inspection Skills Training for Headteachers

Dates Available: 13 Feb 2009 to 27 Feb 2009

Time: 09:30 to 15:30

Based on current Inspection Framework, the three-day course helps senior managers develop inspection and evaluation skills. It covers most aspects of school self-evaluation and gives examples of good practice.

More details are available here:
<http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/eventsandtraining/events/moredetails.asp?id=10451>

Email: admin@pbm-group.co.uk
Telephone: 01889 567014

Further details on the website.

www.schoolzone.co.uk