

Inspiration is a visual learning tool that supports multiple learning styles by allowing students to easily brainstorm concepts and ideas using graphic organizers such as concept maps and mind maps. Inspiration also has an integrated outlining environment that can be used to develop the ideas generated using these concept maps and mind maps into well-organized written documents. Inspiration provides more than 1 million images that can be used as symbols to represent concepts and ideas. These symbols can then be linked to show relationships. The latest version (8) also makes it easy to include multimedia such as video and MP3 sound files in your diagrams. Inspiration helps develop both visual and linear thinking to deepen understanding of concepts, increase memory retention, and develop organizational and creativity skills.

Getting Started

When you launch Inspiration, it will open up to the **Inspiration Starter**, where you can choose which view you want to work in.

Inspiration supports three different views. The **Diagram** and **Map** views are very similar in that they allow you to quickly build hierarchical diagrams that show the relationships between concepts by using symbols and links. While you work in Diagram or Map view, your changes are reflected automatically in the integrated outlining environment, but you can also choose to start out in **Outline** view by choosing that option from the Starter.



Switching between the two diagram views and the outline is easy. You just click on the button on the upper left corner of the Inspiration screen.



The Inspiration Starter also gives you the option of starting off with a template. Inspiration includes more than 60 templates arranged into curriculum areas such as English, science and the humanities.

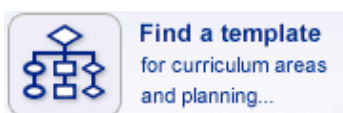
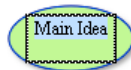


Diagram View

When you select **Diagram** in the Starter to create a new diagram, a **Main Idea** symbol will already be created in the center of your canvas. This will be the starting point for your diagram. You can edit the text in this symbol by double-clicking on it until a blinking cursor appears, then selecting the text you want to change and entering new text in its place.



While you have your text selected, you can use the **Formatting toolbar** at the bottom of the window to change options such as the font you want to use, or change the size or color of the text. You can also make your text bold or italic, or add an underline to it.



Once you are finished editing a symbol, simply click anywhere outside of it to commit your changes. You can then move your symbol anywhere on the canvas by clicking on it once to select it and then dragging it to a new location.

If you have symbols you need to delete, all you have to do is click on them once to select them and then press the **Delete** key on your keyboard (you can select more than one symbol by holding down the **Shift** key as you select symbols, or by drawing a box around the symbols you want to select).



If you are not able to see all of the symbols on the screen, you may have to adjust the zoom level of your diagram. To do this click on the zoom buttons (the ones with the mountain peaks) that appear on the Formatting toolbar.

You can also increase the amount of information you can display on the screen by collapsing topics so that the subtopics under them are hidden. Whenever you click on a symbol that has subtopics, you will see a small triangle to the right of it. You can click on this triangle to toggle the visibility of subtopics off and on.



Creating New Symbols

There are three ways to create new symbols in Inspiration:

1. You can create a new unconnected symbol by clicking on a blank area of the canvas and typing the text you want to use in your symbol. You can use the **Link** tool later to connect this symbol to other symbols in your diagram.

2. You can use the **Create** tool. First select the symbol you want your new symbol to be connected to, then place your pointer over the **Create** button in the toolbar. The **Create** button has several points on it. As you hover over the points they change from dark blue to green to let you know that direction



in which the new symbol will be created. Click on one of the points to create a new empty symbol in the direction you selected. You can then click inside the new symbol to enter your text.

3. Use the Rapid Fire tool.

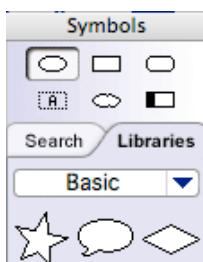
The Rapid Fire tool allows you to quickly brainstorm ideas. To use this tool, click on the **RapidFire** button in the toolbar (it has a lightning bolt on it), then begin typing the text for your first symbol. A lightning bolt icon will appear at the end of your entry to let you know you are still in Rapid Fire mode. To create additional symbols, press **Enter** after each word or phrase you want to use as the text for a symbol. When you're done creating your symbols, click on the RapidFire button to exit Rapid Fire mode. You can use the pulldown menu next to the RapidFire button to select whether you want to have the new symbols connected to each other as they are created or not.



Modifying Symbols

You can easily change the size of a symbol by selecting it once to show a number of handles (squares and diamonds) around it. You can drag on these handles to resize your symbol. Holding down the **Shift** key allows you to constrain proportions while you resize your symbol.

The Symbol palette located to the left of the Inspiration canvas allows you to change the shape of your symbols or to select an image to use as a symbol.



Inspiration provides access to more than 1 million images that can be used as symbols in Inspira-

tion diagrams. To change your symbol so that it uses an image, you will use the **Symbol palette** that appears to the left of the canvas.

To use a different shape or image as a symbol:

1. Select the symbol you want to modify by clicking on it once.
2. From the Symbol palette, select a different shape from the ones that appear at the top of the palette, or select Libraries if you want to use an image.
3. You can search for an image to use with your symbol by clicking on the Search tab, or you can browse the many categories (Libraries) installed with Inspiration. To browse the Libraries, you can use the arrows at the bottom of the palette, or you can navigate to a specific Library by using the pulldown menu.
4. Once you find an image you want to use, click on it once and your symbol will change to use the image instead. The text for that symbol will then be displayed underneath the image. To edit the text, you can double-click on it just as you would with a shape symbol.

In order to access all of the images available for use with Inspiration you may have to connect to an online symbol collection. To do so, select **Utility, Preferences** and make sure there is a check mark next to **Online Access**.

In addition to the images included with Inspiration, you can create your own libraries by selecting **New Symbol Library** from the pulldown menu in the symbol palette. A dialog box will open where you can give your new library a name.

Once you have created the library, you can edit its contents by selecting **Edit Symbol Li-**

braries from the pulldown menu. You can select the new library you created and click on **Import Graphic** to use images stored in your computer as symbols. A dialog box will ask you if you want to resize the image so that it is in the standard size used by Inspiration or if you want to use it in its original size.

To modify the fill or line color of a shape symbol, make sure it is selected and press the appropriate button on the **Formatting toolbar** (the fill and line color buttons are the last two buttons on the right of the Formatting toolbar). When you click on the fill or line color button, a series of color squares will open so that you can choose the color you want to use. You can also use a line thickness button that has two arrows to allow you to either increase or decrease the line thickness.



Once you have your symbol the way you want it, you can have all future symbols use these settings by selecting the **Defaults** button in the toolbar and selecting **Set Default**. You can apply these default settings to symbols you have already created by selecting them, clicking on the **Defaults** button, and selecting **Apply Default**.

Adding Notes

Notes allow you to further develop the concepts in your symbols. To add a note to a symbol, make sure it is selected and then click on the **Notes** button in the toolbar. The new note will be created below your symbol, but you can move it anywhere on the canvas by selecting it and dragging it to a new location.




As with symbols, you can use the fill and line color buttons on the Formatting toolbar to change the appearance of your notes. You can also change the size of a note by dragging on

the diagonal lines on the lower right hand corner. You can also optimize a note's size so that it fits the text you've entered by clicking on the button next to the X in the upper left corner. To hide a note, click on the X. A note icon will appear next to the symbol, and you can display the note again by clicking on that icon.

Using Links to Show Relationships

Links allow you to show the relationships between the various concepts in your diagrams.

To add a link:

1. Select the symbol you want the link to start from.
2. Click on the **Link** tool in the toolbar. 
3. A line starting from your selected symbol will appear (it has a chain link icon at the end of it). To create a link to another symbol, drag so that the line extends to that symbol. Once the symbol you want to link to is selected (a series of squares appear around its outline), release your mouse to create the link.
4. Repeat the procedure described above to create any additional links. You can change where on the target symbol the link appears by selecting a different square when the symbol becomes selected.
5. When you're finished creating your links, click on the Link tool again to deactivate it.

You can add labels to your links to further clarify relationships. To add a label, click on the link until a text box appears, then type in your label. When you're finished, click outside of the text box to create your label. Both the link and the label will follow your symbol if you decide to move it.

Arranging Symbols

Once you have brainstormed some ideas in Inspiration, you can use the Arrange button to quickly organize your diagram.

The **Arrange** button has a pull-down menu that allows you to select three different types of arrangement for your diagram. If you select **Tree**, your diagram will be organized with the Main Idea at the top and the links flowing down from it. **Web** allows you to create a diagram with the symbols spread out around the Main Idea, while **Split Tree** divides the diagram into two branches flowing out of the right and left sides of the Main Idea.



Once you have selected an arrangement type for your diagram, you can turn on **Auto Arrange** by selecting it from the pull-down menu on the Arrange button. Any new symbols you create will be automatically arranged according to the arrangement type you selected. You can select **More** from the pull-down menu on the Arrange button if you want to change how your links show up in your arrangement and other options. For example, you can change your links so that they are rounded instead of straight.

Outline View

As you work on your diagram, Inspiration creates an outline in the background. You can view this outline by clicking on the **Outline** button on the upper left corner of the Inspiration window to change the view.



While you are in Outline view you can create new topics and subtopics by clicking on the appropriate button on the toolbar at the top of the window. You can also move topics and subtopics around by dragging and dropping them in a new location. The topic or subtopic will remain in its original location,



but a line will appear as you drag to let you know where it will be placed when you release the mouse.



You can change the level of a topic or subtopic using the **Left** and **Right** buttons on the toolbar. These buttons can be used to change a topic into a subtopic and vice versa.

Once you have created a number of subtopics underneath a topic, you can use the quick control that appears on the left (the right-pointing triangle) to expand and collapse the contents of that topic.

As with diagrams, you add notes to your topics and subtopics by clicking on the **Notes** button on the toolbar. You can also quickly add a note by pressing Enter or Return at the end of a topic or subtopic. You can quickly hide and display notes by using the quick control that appears to the left of the topic or subtopic.

You can change the prefixes used in your outline by clicking on the **Change prefix labels** button in the Formatting toolbar (the last one on the right). You can also click on the **Set topic defaults** button to change the font size and other text options for your topics, subtopics and notes.



Hyperlinks

Inspiration allows you to enhance your diagrams by including links to resources on the Web. You can also use the hyperlink feature to link different Inspiration files together. To create a hyperlink to another file or website, select the text you want to use as your hyperlink text, then click on the **Hyperlink** button. In the dialog box that opens up, select **Web** if you want to link to a web page and then enter a URL in the **Link To** field. If you want to link to



another file, select **File** in the hyperlink dialog box, then click on the **Select File** button in the Link To section.

Adding Multimedia

Inspiration makes it easy to add sound annotations to symbols. To add a sound annotation, select a symbol, then select **Tools, Insert Video or Sound, Record Sound**. This will bring up a window with controls you can use to record your sound annotation.



Inspiration 8 also gives you the option of importing MP3 sound files or Quicktime videos to use in your diagrams. To add an MP3 file, select **Tools, Add Video or Sound, Sound File**. You can then navigate your hard drive to find the MP3 file you want to use.

You can also use Quicktime movies with your diagram. To add a Quicktime video file, select **Tools, Add Video or Sound, Video**. When you use a video file as a symbol, the first frame is used as the image for that symbol. You can play the video by using the quick control next to the symbol.

Another way to add sound and video files to your Inspiration diagrams by dragging them in from an Explorer or Finder window, or by using copy and paste.

Miscellaneous Formatting

Using the menu options, you can further customize your symbols. For example, you can change the fill or the line so that it uses a pattern by selecting **Effect, Fill Pattern** or **Effect, Line Pattern**. You can also use dashed lines for the outline of your symbol by selecting **Effect, Dashed Lines**.

The Effect menu also has several options that allow you to easily align and evenly distribute your symbols. The **Send to Back** and **Bring to Front** options allow you to layer your

symbols so that they can be on top of each other in a stack.

Under the **View** menu, you can turn on **Page Lines**, **Rulers**, and the **Grid** to help you precisely align symbols. You can even have symbols automatically snap to the grid lines by selecting that option from the dialog box that opens when you select **View, Grid Settings**.

Under the **Symbol** menu, you can toggle the drop shadow on your symbols on and off, or you can assign a caption to a symbol that does not have one.

The **Link** menu has many options for changing the appearance of the links between symbols. You can change the type of arrow used, as well as whether one or two arrows are used. You can also select straight or curved links, and you can reverse the direction of a link by selecting **Link, Reverse Link**.

If you want to change the background for your entire diagram, you can select **Effect, Background Color**.

Printing and Exporting

Before you print your diagram, mind map, or outline, you can determine its layout, margins, headers and other options by selecting **File, Page Setup**. **Page Setup** also allows you to get a preview of the print version of your diagram, mind map, or outline. Once you're happy with the look and layout of your diagram, select **Print** from the **Page Setup** dialog box (you can also select **File, Print** if you do not have the dialog box open).

You can transfer your Inspiration document to a word processor by using the **Transfer** button in the toolbar. This will open your default word processing program, such as Microsoft Word. In the **Transfer Options** dialog box, you can determine if you want just the outline, or if you want to only



print your notes. This is a handy way to create a paper using Inspiration. If you transfer only the notes, each note will be transferred as a separate paragraph.

Inspiration allows you to also export your diagrams so that they can be used in other programs. To export an Inspiration document, select **File, Export**. You can export your Inspiration document as Powerpoint slides, or as images you can insert in your web pages. You can also create a **Site Skeleton** by selecting that option in the **Web Pages** tab of the **Export** dialog box. The **Site Skeleton** will consist of a series of linked HTML files with images, hyperlinks, media, etc.

Keyboard Shortcuts

- Show/Hide Symbol Palette: Command + 8
- Zoom In: Command + =
- Zoom Out: Command + -
- Fit to Window: Command + E
- RapidFire: Command + R
- Switch Views: Command + T
- Add a Note: Command + Y
- Insert a Topic in Outline: Command + G
- Insert a Subtopic in Outline: Command + K
- Move a Topic Left in Outline: Command + L
- Move a Topic Right in Outline: Command + R