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Draft:Builder™

Co:Writer® Study Leads to Draft:Builder

Don Johnston Incorporated had heard from teachers that there was a need for a tool to help students through the writing process. One group did a study that focused on Co:Writer. In general, observers found that the only students that did not benefit from Co:Writer immediately were the students who were struggling with identifying what they wanted to write and organizing their thoughts. The search began for a tool that would help students with this challenge.

Education Development Center

Education Development Center (EDC) is an educational research and development organization that is widely recognized for establishing the National Center for Improving Practice (NCIP), a collection of resources about technology and special education. (You can visit the Center at www.edc.org/NCIP/.)

EDC's Knowledge Navigator Project was in answer to a grant awarded by the United States Department of Education. The goal of the project was to research and develop a software application based on best educational pedagogy which would help middle school students with disabilities gather, organize, analyze and synthesize ideas and information for research/writing projects. That researched, field-tested software has evolved into today's Draft:Builder!

Draft:Builder Grows Toward Release

Though the product has undergone revisions and name changes, Draft:Builder still remains the answer for the struggling writer. A simple interface, three views with two windows each, support a student with everything from identifying what they want to write about to organizing their thoughts to naming their sources. Big buttons help them move their information between views.

Draft:Builder devotes one tabbed view to each of the three parts of the writing process—outline, notes (research) and draft. They are arranged left to right and lead a student to success with writing. In a single Draft:Builder file, a student can see the whole writing process, from the idea they began with to the writing they did about their chosen subject.