

Case Study

DUKE UNIVERSITY TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

Since 1980 the Duke University Talent Identification Program (Duke TIP) has identified gifted children and provided resources to nurture their development. Besides 4th/5th Grade and 7th Grade Talent Searches, Scholar Weekends, and Summer Studies Programs, Duke TIP offers an e-Studies program (featuring online distance-learning courses) and an Independent Learning Program (offering two different educational formats: Learn On Your Own courses and CD-ROM Enrichment courses).

Instructors in the e-Studies program use SoftChalk's LessonBuilder to present their content in interactive and visually engaging ways via the Blackboard Learning Management System, and curriculum developers creating Learn on Your Own materials use LessonBuilder to create interactive and student-friendly independent study CD-ROM courses. The leaders and developers of TIP are not technologists; they are teachers, which is another reason why LessonBuilder was an ideal choice for them. The easy-to-use interface and built-in style templates make it easy to create professional results quickly.

LessonBuilder helps to make both online and CD-ROM courses self-paced by integrating practice, reinforcement, and problem solving features into the curriculum. The direct feedback that is provided through LessonBuilder is extremely important to the learning process. In fact, Duke TIP found that interactive learning enables more diverse learning styles, an important factor when designing curriculum for non-traditional learning environments.

While initial efforts utilized LessonBuilder primarily in the development of CD-ROM Enrichment courses, plans are quickly moving forward to convert the Learn On Your Own workbooks into an interactive online/CD format, as well. In addition to enhanced learning, switching from a printed workbook to an electronic format greatly reduces printing costs, and allows course developers to more quickly and easily integrate up-to-date curriculum changes and enhancements.

Along with the instructor-paced e-Studies courses that they already offer, Duke TIP does have plans in the works to offer self-paced online courses. Because LessonBuilder so easily integrates with Duke's Blackboard Learning Management System, it will be easy to customize course content and make it available on a self-paced, just-in-time basis.

About Duke University TIP!

Since 1980, the Duke Talent Identification Program (Duke TIP) has been a world leader in identifying academically talented students and providing innovative programs to support the development of their optimal potential. Often schools do not have the resources and staff to adequately provide for the academic challenges and social and emotional support that gifted children require. Through Duke TIP a whole range of activities and programs are accessible to parents and teachers to meet the individual needs of gifted children.

LessonBuilder's easy-to-use interface and built-in style templates make it easy for teachers to create professional lessons quickly!

SoftChalk LLC is a leading provider of e-learning software for educational institutions worldwide. Specializing in the development of tools that are intuitive and easy-to-use, SoftChalk products allow instructors to create powerful, sophisticated and professional-looking content for e-learning classrooms in K-12, higher education, and corporate training markets.

The partnership between Duke TIP and SoftChalk includes co-development of a new feature, LessonManager, which will support and integrate multiple lessons created with LessonBuilder. Previously SoftChalk worked with Duke TIP on the Table of Content capabilities; when TIP made it clear that this feature was critical, SoftChalk made it their priority to include it in their next major software release.

“LessonBuilder lets us present our elementary and secondary curriculum for the gifted in an engaging, kid-friendly way. The textpoppers, sidebars, hyperlinks, activities, and colorful template arrangements expand our content in myriad ways, allowing us to provide rigorous material while making it lively and age-appropriate.”

Lyn Hawks
Coordinator of Independent Learning
Duke University Talent Identification Program

Forging partnerships with leaders in the e-learning field is one of SoftChalk's most important assets. It has helped to keep them at the forefront of this emerging technology, and has resulted in a product that promises to evolve to fit the needs of educators today, as well as tomorrow.

Contact our sales staff for more information.

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Sample e-lessons created using LessonBuilder, from Duke TIP's The Writer's Journey, Volume 1 Learn on Your Own curriculum. Content created by Lyn Fairchild, with original illustrations by Robin Follet.