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www.schoolrooms.net

SCHOOLROOMS

A new learning portal for the K-12 community

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SchoolRooms at a glance

SchoolRooms™ by SirsiDynix is a new online portal that encourages K-12 students to explore, discover, and learn. Anywhere. Anytime. Using SchoolRooms, students can search libraries, interactive educational media, and the Web — all at once — to find resources hand-selected by educators to meet their needs. SchoolRooms can also help parents play a bigger role in helping their children learn and succeed in school.

Already proven through extensive testing, SchoolRooms covers the entire U.S. K-12 curriculum, covering 25 major topic areas (like geography, world literature, and life sciences) at three different levels: elementary school, middle school, and high school. Using the highest quality images, multimedia, and interactive content, plus links to thousands of educator-selected and -certified Web sites, SchoolRooms is a portal to the best content available in the world. And it's all updated and maintained by SirsiDynix.

While there are other K-12 portals on the market today, they typically line up publishers' content with the curriculum, as opposed to starting with the curriculum itself and then searching for the best content to support and reflect state and national standards.

What about SchoolRooms' hardware and IT requirements? SirsiDynix offers SchoolRooms in a secure, hosted environment where our experts maintain everything. Getting SchoolRooms up and keeping it maintained is quick and easy. And it's all backed by a solid company who's been in the information management business for more than a quarter-century.

So what is SchoolRooms? It is a new kind of learning environment that brings together the best content from all sources into a single portal that's aimed at meeting the real needs of real students (parents and educators, too!) in real schools.



Explore. Discover. Learn.

A unparalleled K-12 learning environment

SchoolRooms is a state-of-the-art Web site designed to help students explore, discover, and learn. SchoolRooms integrates thousands of pages of multimedia content, Web links, and powerful search capabilities — all within the context of K-12 curriculum. In subject-oriented 'virtual rooms' visitors find the relevant resources and information that meet their needs — from researching a paper to better understanding new concepts to simply delving deeper into an area of special interest.

A new kind of learning environment, SchoolRooms offers unique benefits to students, parents, and educators.

Clear focus on curriculum.

Because it's curriculum-based, SchoolRooms fits perfectly into the student's overall learning process. SchoolRooms organizes topics the same way students come across them in their school work, and it's all aligned with national and state guidelines.

Teacher-approved, student-tested.

All the pages in SchoolRooms were built by teachers and librarians — the people who know exactly what topics have to be covered and where to find the best information.

Eighty-eight percent of students said they wanted to use SchoolRooms again to help with homework.



SchoolRooms is a curriculum-based exploration and discovery portal.

Featuring content and Web links hand-selected by teachers and librarians, SchoolRooms is designed specifically to help students find the information they need to do better in school.



And every page was tested by students. Over 1,000 K-12 students (at all levels) tested SchoolRooms and told us what they thought.

Eighty-eight percent said they wanted to use SchoolRooms again to help with homework.

Best content available for K-12 students. SchoolRooms does not promote particular content or Web sites, as do many commercial K-12 portals. SchoolRooms editors (teachers and librarians) choose links, images, and content of all kinds from the best sources available. The result is a learning tool that supports the curriculum with high-quality, relevant, and engaging content.

Searching... easy and on-target. With SchoolRooms, students can search libraries, the Web, the *Best of Web* (see below), and other available resources — all at once. With a simple click, they can see more results or go directly to the information. And searching is context-driven, which means within a given subject-oriented 'virtual room,' the searcher will only see results that make sense for that subject.

Best of Web™ ensures the best results get to the top. Not only do SchoolRooms editors select the best Web sites, SchoolRooms crawls and indexes these Web sites separately. This allows the results from the *Best of Web* to be displayed separately and featured in searches executed by students. This brings the absolute best results to the top.

Quick, easy implementation, maintenance, and customization. SchoolRooms is delivered to clients using the software-as-a-service, or SaaS, model.

This means SirsiDynix maintains all the hardware and software. SirsiDynix also takes care of content updates. For clients who need to localize SchoolRooms, the portal offers a 'Builder tool' for customizing existing content and creating entirely new content.

Backing of a solid company. SchoolRooms is a SirsiDynix portal. The largest software company in the world specializing in the library markets, SirsiDynix software runs over 10,000 school, public, academic, government, and corporate libraries in over 50 countries.

That means SchoolRooms customers can count on an organization that has a proven track record of delivering solutions that meet real-world needs.

In short, SchoolRooms provides K-12 schools, school districts, public libraries, and entire communities (even states!) with a powerful, flexible platform that helps students and parents find what they are looking for, explore subjects they are interested in, and make sense of the vast world of information around them.

Explore. Discover. Learn.

Learn focus on curriculum

SchoolRooms is built around the K-12 curriculum. The SchoolRooms team analyzed state standards for California, New York, Florida, Texas, and Ohio, and created a superset that fused all five state curricula into one, all-inclusive curriculum that forms the taxonomic framework of the SchoolRooms portal.

Then, teachers and librarians built each page — aligned to that framework — using only the best content.

Unlike many K-12 Web sites, SchoolRooms didn't start with content and make it 'fit' the K-12 curriculum. Just the opposite. Starting with the curriculum — and the needs of the community, including students, teachers, and parents — the team built content and features to meet those needs.

Teachers know the curricula. Librarians know where to find quality information. It's the perfect partnership: teachers and librarians working together to connect educational objectives with the resources needed to help students succeed (and to help parents help them succeed!).

The foundation of SchoolRooms is its curriculum-based structure, which lays out the subjects students study at three different levels: elementary, middle, and high school. Aligned with this taxonomy, teachers and librarians built subject-based 'rooms' in which quality content, Web links, and advanced search capabilities are brought together to create a dynamic, engaging environment.

Shown below is the opening page of the Middle School Life Science room.



The foundation of SchoolRooms is its curriculum-based structure, which lays out the subjects students study at three different levels: elementary, middle, and high school. Aligned with this taxonomy, teachers and librarians built subject-based 'rooms' in which quality content, Web links, and advanced search capabilities are brought together to create a dynamic, engaging environment.



In the upper left of this screen is the taxonomy — the curriculum-based structure of SchoolRooms. This structure helps students find the information they are looking for because the entire portal is built around the very curriculum they are studying.

Indeed, the portal is designed not only to make finding relevant information easy, but also to encourage students to explore new subjects by presenting interesting and related content within the context of the core topics.

To find information, students can use the search feature or drill down through the taxonomy. At each sub-level of the taxonomy, new information, images, and multimedia components are featured, and new links to additional resources displayed.

In the example to the left, the student has drilled down into Life Science to the sub-room on Ecology, and new page views present new opportunities to explore, discover, and learn.

SchoolRooms also has many special features like *Fun & Games*, *What's That?*, and *How Do I?*, which add interactivity and make the site more engaging, and they are all linked to the basic curriculum, leading the students deeper and deeper into the subjects they are studying.



Built by teachers / tested by students

SchoolRooms was built by over 200 teachers, librarians, educational consultants, and usability experts, brought together by SirsiDynix, INFOhio (a statewide network of more than 2,000 school library systems in Ohio), and the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science.

Working together, the contributors created a powerful, on-point, standards-based resource that can be delivered online to help everyone in the K-12 community.

Organized by subject, all content featured in SchoolRooms was selected, reviewed, and certified by teachers and librarians. This includes every Web site SchoolRooms links to — and crawls and

indexes — as part of the *Best of Web* feature, and all the interactive media featured throughout the portal.

Contributors

In the top left of every page is a link to the SchoolRooms contributors' list. All contributors are librarians and teachers, many with special training and advanced educational credentials. The professionals who built the rooms also maintain them throughout the year, adding new content and updating pages all the time.

Although the basic curriculum does not change during the school year, it is important to keep the site dynamic and engaging.

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Students

Once the prototype was built, it faced the final test: students...

In January 2005, a field test was conducted with approximately 1,000 students from all grade levels in the Shaker Heights School District in Cleveland, Ohio.

The results were very positive.

88% of students said they would like to use SchoolRooms again

51% said they prefer SchoolRooms to sites like Google and Yahoo!

49% said they accomplished more using SchoolRooms than otherwise

70% said they thought SchoolRooms looked 'really good'

58% said using SchoolRooms was 'fun'

What students have said about SchoolRooms...

"It is really comprehensive and covered a lot of different subjects. I would definitely use this for help with homework."

"I like the Web site because everything was easy to find."

"You don't get stuff that isn't relevant."

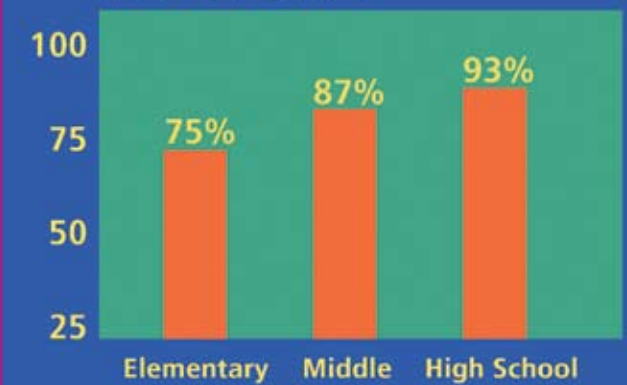
What teachers have said about SchoolRooms...

"Very well aligned to our standards."

"It was helpful for the kids to have pre-defined sites as opposed to using Google."

"They [students] came to the consensus that Google is no good..."

Percentage of students who use computers to study or do homework



Best K-12 content available

Most K-12 portals on the market today simply align commercial content with the K-12 curriculum. SchoolRooms, on the other hand, starts with the curriculum as the underlying structure. The editors who built SchoolRooms (teachers and librarians) then sought out high-quality content that met their educational objectives — from many different sources.

In short, SchoolRooms is content neutral.

Drawing on more than 15 million videos, audio recordings, photographs, and digital images, SchoolRooms incorporates the best in multimedia and interactive content, all selected and approved — and aligned with specific educational objectives — by teachers, media experts,

and librarians, at three different levels (elementary school, middle school, and high school).

The same is true for Web links. Only the best sites are used in SchoolRooms. Every site is reviewed and certified by teachers and librarians to ensure it is accurate, up to date, and age appropriate.

Because today's K-12 students are so visually oriented and accustomed to vivid, dynamic images on the Web, SchoolRooms features the most engaging digital content available. Exploration, discovery, and learning don't have to be boring. SchoolRooms is proof of that.

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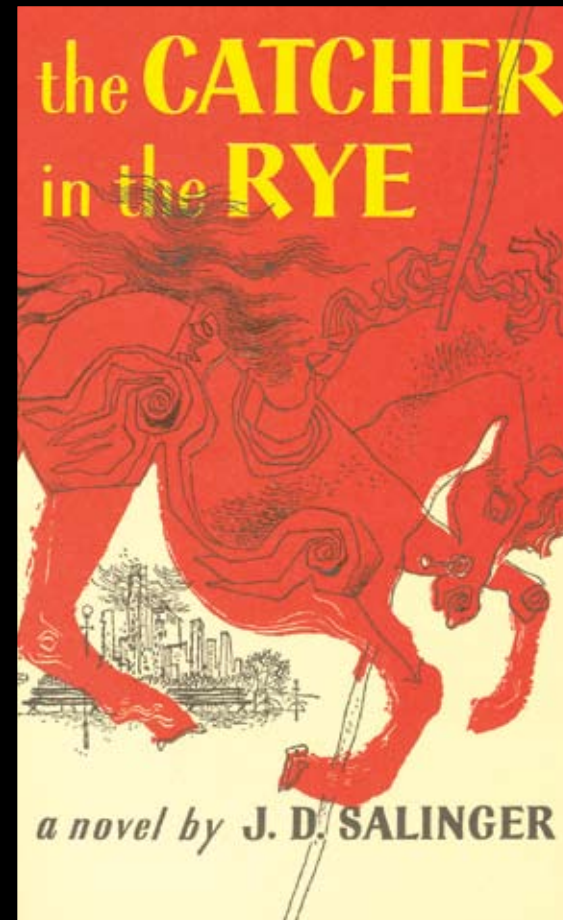
SchoolRooms offers...

71 virtual rooms of content for elementary, middle, and high school levels

Nearly 2,000 unique page views for students to visit

23,000+ links to high-quality Web sites

Over 5 million Web pages crawled and indexed for *Best of Web*



Usability

From January through March 2006, the prototype version of SchoolRooms was released to approximately 1,000 students in the Shaker Heights School District in Cleveland, Ohio. These students not only used SchoolRooms to help with homework and other tasks, they also participated in formal, structured usability tests designed and supervised by experts from Kent State University.* For these tests, students were asked to conduct specific searches and other tasks, while being timed and videotaped.

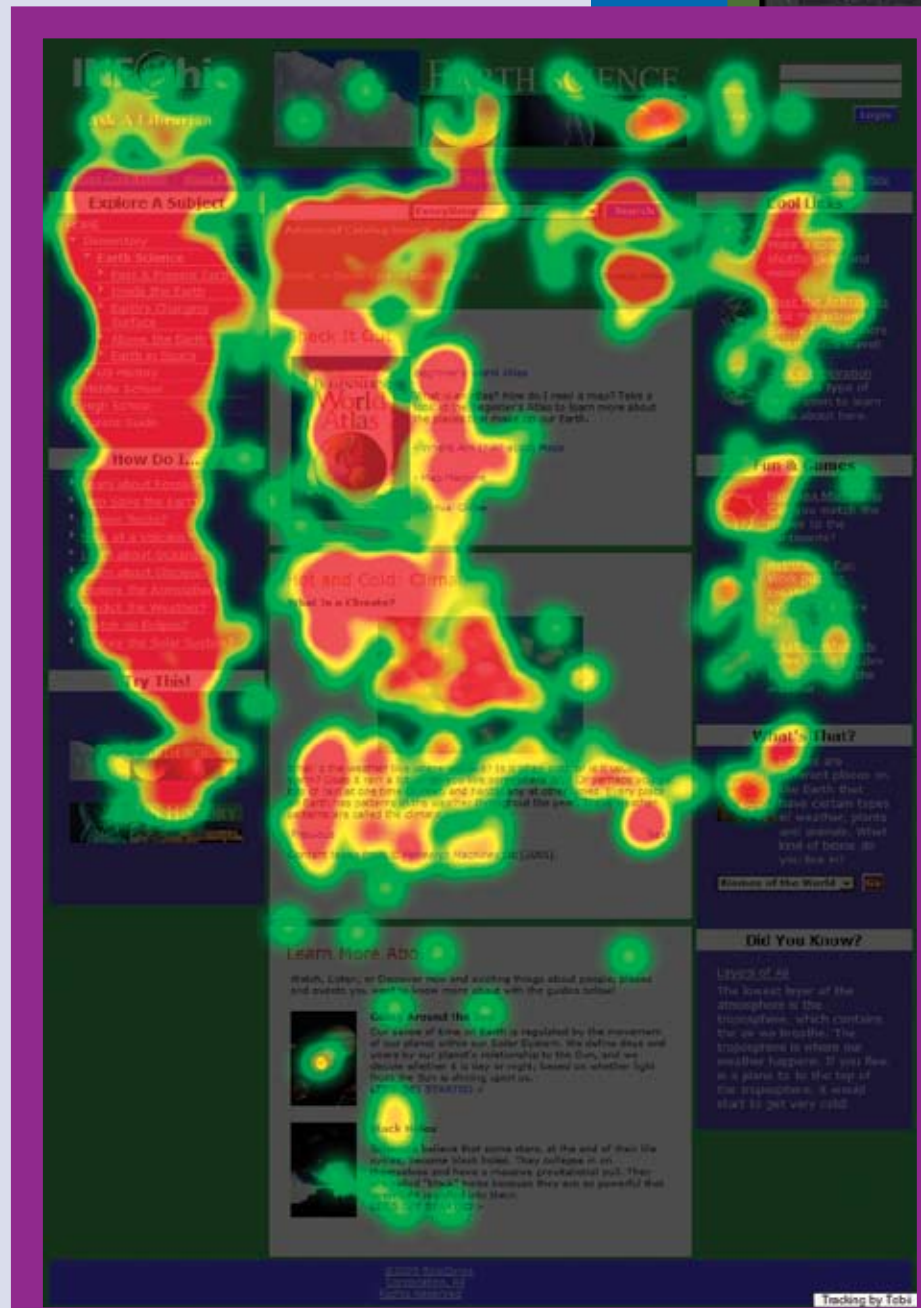
In addition, a sub-set of students was 'eye-tracked.' This technology 'tracks' eye movements to determine what strategies students use to find the information they are looking for. By combining the tracks of multiple users it is possible to create 'heat maps' for different levels of students which show how they use SchoolRooms.

Comparing the heat map for elementary school students with the heat map for high school students, it is clear the older students are very goal-oriented: they go immediately to the taxonomy or the search box to drill down and find the information they seek. Elementary school students behave differently. They "look around" at everything. In fact, the elementary students did not even rate the search feature (the only group that did not).

Why is this important? It tells us that educators, librarians, and organizations designing K-12 technology solutions must approach students differently at different levels. Because high school students know how to find the information they are looking for, the content on each page does not have to be core material — it can be related content designed to make

the subject more interesting or to provide greater depth to the topic. For elementary students, on the other hand, the content presented needs to be core content because that may be all the students see.

"I like how everything was easy to read and colorful, not boring."



High School

At left is the heat map for the high school students. Very clearly this group goes directly to the search box or drills down through the taxonomy in the upper left of the screen (this is where all major Web sites locate taxonomic navigation). High school students will glance at featured content. But they will not spend much time on it, and they never explore 'beneath the fold.' For high school students, SchoolRooms focuses on putting eye-catching content front and center to lead the student deeper into the topic.



Elementary School

Elementary students look around the entire page. They are not looking for something in particular — just the opposite. They look at everything. For elementary school students, core content must be featured because they may not drill down any further.

* A full independent report by Kent State University, School of Library and Information Science and the Information Architecture/Knowledge Management Program (IAKM), is available from SirsiDynix.

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earching... quick, easy, and on-target

SchoolRooms incorporates powerful search technologies that make it possible for students to spend less time searching for information and more time using it. In SchoolRooms, students can make a single, simultaneous search of all the resources available to them:

- Books from local school and public libraries
- Electronic databases of magazines and journals
- Reference materials — dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedia
- Digital archives of photographs, videos, and other media
- Web sites
- *Best of Web*™

When a student conducts a search in SchoolRooms — shown below as a search on 'dinosaurs' — results are displayed by source. Students can then drill down and see more results or click on a result to go directly to the library record, Web site, or database.

These powerful search capabilities ensure that SchoolRooms yields the most meaningful search results — while still being easy to use.

But what about all the irrelevant search results students are accustomed to wading through to find what they are really looking for? Because SchoolRooms knows what 'virtual room' a student is visiting, SchoolRooms helps ensure that search results are on-target. For example, if the

Because SchoolRooms knows what 'room' a student is visiting, SchoolRooms helps ensure that the search results are on-target. For example, if a student searches for 'mercury' within the astronomy room, he or she won't get results on outboard motors, automobiles, or Roman gods — only on the planet Mercury. This helps eliminate the (literally!) millions of results that typically come back from standard search engines.



student searches for 'mercury' within the astronomy room, the student won't get results on outboard motors, automobiles, or Roman gods — but only on the planet Mercury. This helps eliminate the (literally!) millions of results that would come back from typing the search term into a standard search engine.

An additional benefit of SchoolRooms' search capabilities is related to the tremendous investments schools and libraries make in electronic resources, which often go underutilized because of the difficulty associated with searching each database one at a time. With SchoolRooms, all sources are searched simultaneously.

What students like most about SchoolRooms...

- Ability to explore subjects
- Search all sources at once
- Ease of use
- How information is pre-organized for students
- Use of graphics and images



A drop-down box allows students to search by keyword, type of material, and source.



Best of Web™ ensures great results

The *Best of Web* search feature is unique to SchoolRooms. Unlike normal Web searches that return millions of hits that students must wade through — with no guarantee of the quality of the hits — *Best of Web* searches yield only high-quality, relevant hits. How? By searching only the Web sites that were hand-picked by the teachers and librarians that built SchoolRooms.

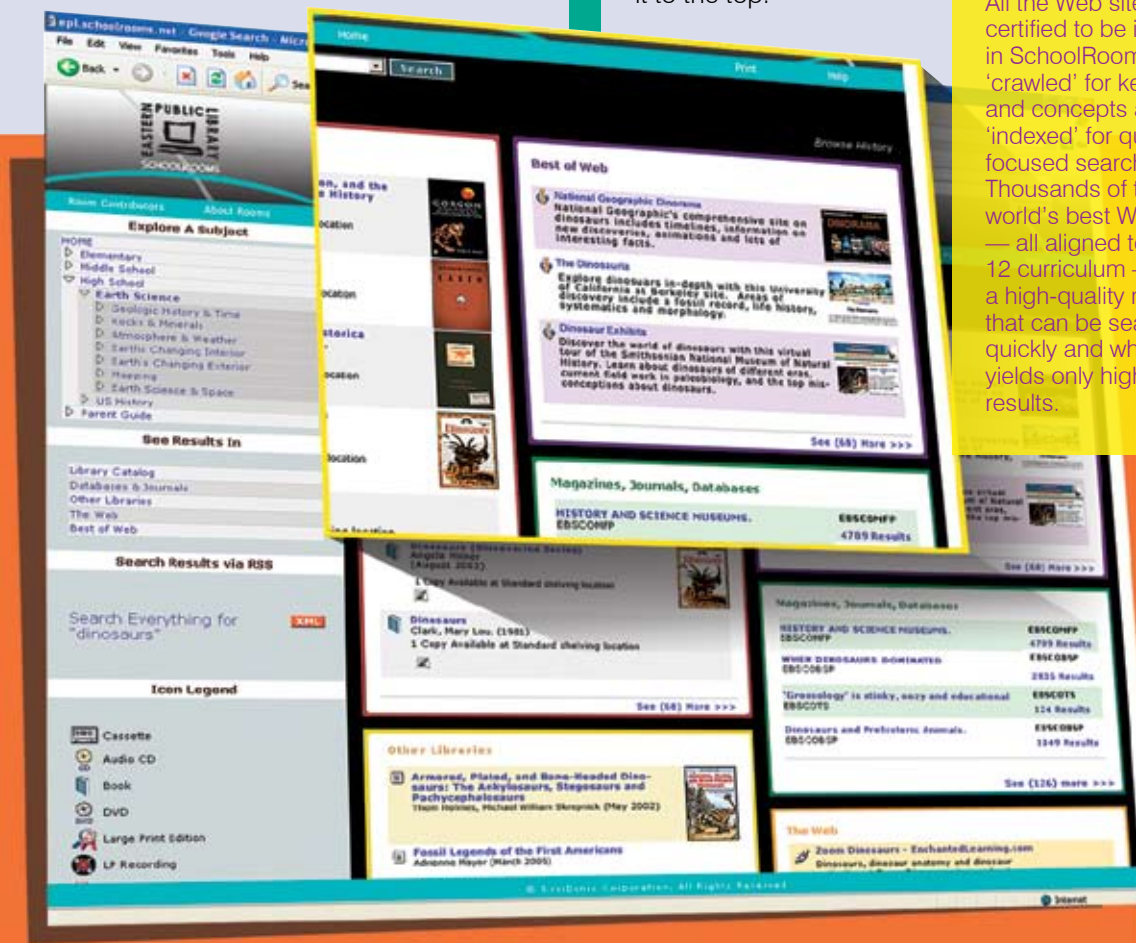
Here's how it works: all the Web sites certified to be included in SchoolRooms are 'crawled' for keywords and concepts and then 'indexed' for quick, focused searching. Thousands of the world's best Web sites — all aligned to the K-12 curriculum — create a high-quality mini-web that can be searched quickly and

which yields only high-quality results. Another important advantage *Best of Web* brings to SchoolRooms is the ability to target grade- and age-appropriate content. Appropriate Web sites for elementary students are often entirely different from those used by middle and high school students. So using *Best of Web* searches, students at different grade levels will only see results that are right for them.

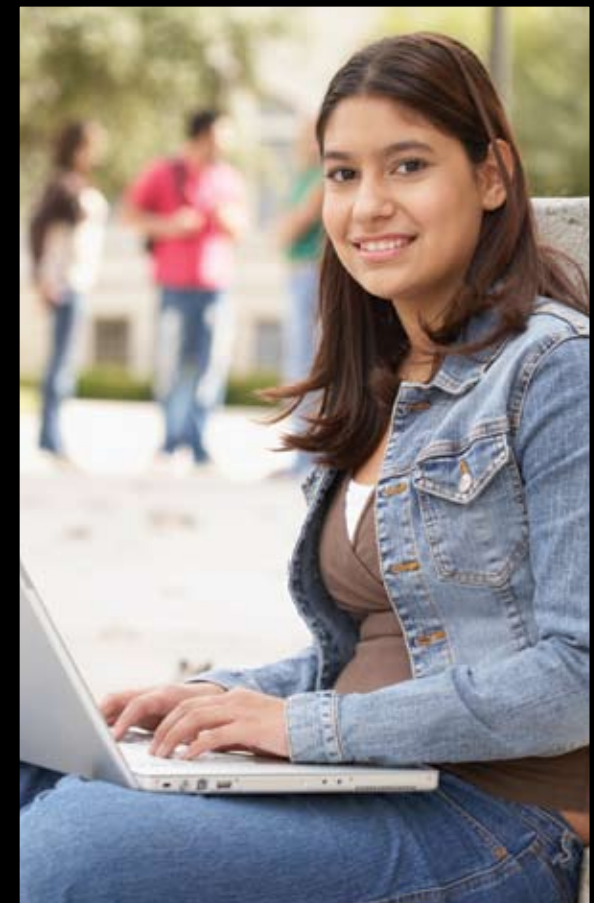
For elementary students, the Web-at-large can be turned off, and results returned only from the *Best of Web*, ensuring that younger learners do not end up at the wrong Web sites.

Best of Web makes sure the very best, most relevant results make it to the top.

All the Web sites certified to be included in SchoolRooms are 'crawled' for keywords and concepts and then 'indexed' for quick, focused searching. Thousands of the world's best Web sites — all aligned to the K-12 curriculum — create a high-quality mini-web that can be searched quickly and which yields only high-quality results.



Best of Web includes over 23,000 Web sites hand-picked by teachers and librarians — all aligned to the K-12 curriculum. SchoolRooms crawls and indexes over 5 million pages associated with the Web sites in *Best of Web* to create a mini-web of the highest quality, most relevant information.



"I found the site very cool and think it could help my school performance."

"It's the best 😊"

Great resource for parents

For most parents, it's been quite a while since they studied history or science, not to mention math! Yet they play an important role in the learning process. Indeed, a parent's role in the success of his or her child's education can be as important, if not more important, than the teacher's role.

But how do parents keep current on subjects their children are studying?

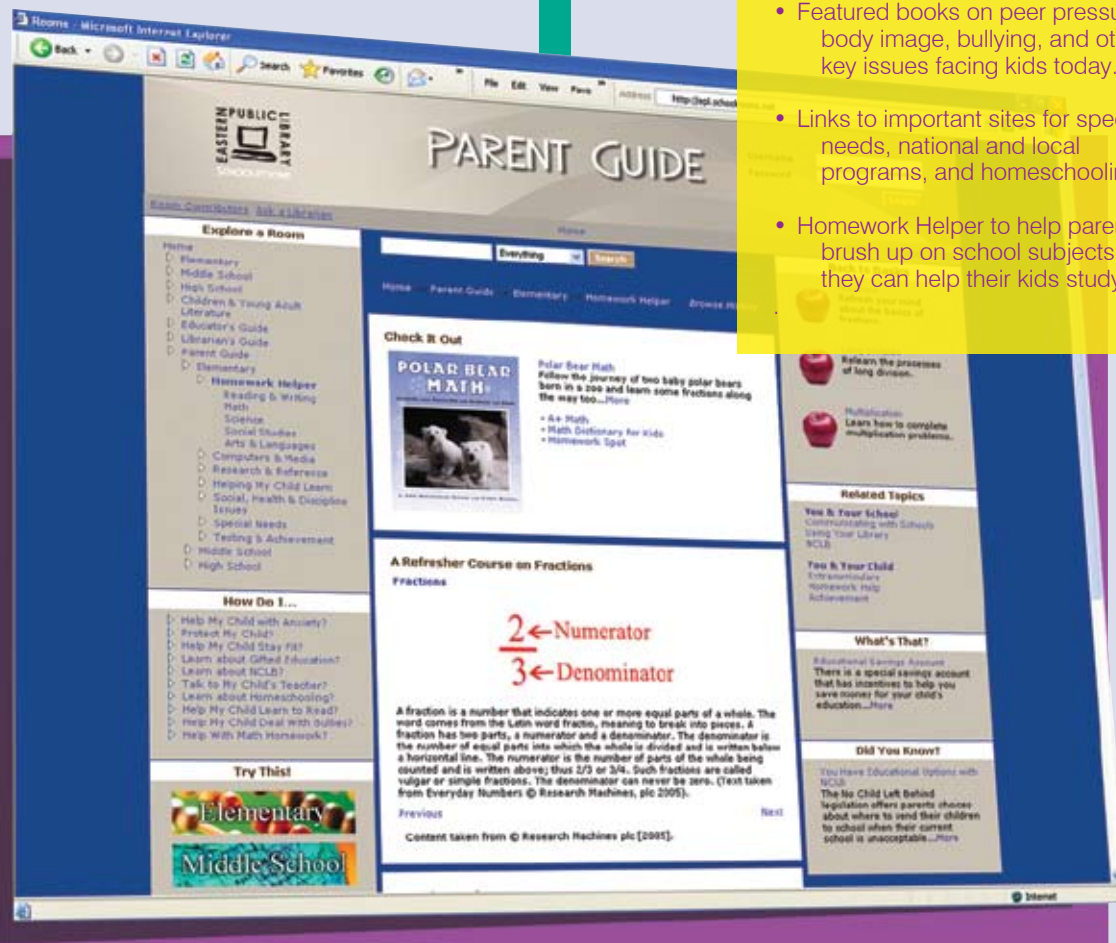
SchoolRooms can help. At every level — elementary, middle, and high school — SchoolRooms offers resources to help parents, including refresher courses on key subjects. In addition, the Parent Room also features recommended books, Web

sites and other resources on subjects like bullying, dating, body image, nutrition, and substance abuse.

From information on national programs like No Child Left Behind, to the latest books on Internet safety, the Parent Room is an invaluable resource for today's K-12 parents.

“SchoolRooms will help a lot on projects and homework.”

- Hundreds of pages of information on study habits, special programs, and testing and achievement.
- Featured books on peer pressure, body image, bullying, and other key issues facing kids today.
- Links to important sites for special needs, national and local programs, and homeschooling.
- Homework Helper to help parents brush up on school subjects so they can help their kids study.



“SchoolRooms is great and it would be helpful with homework.”

Easy to implement, maintain, and customize

Hardware investments, software upgrades. These are typical concerns of organizations interested in implementing strategic solutions like SchoolRooms. That's why SchoolRooms is delivered via the software-as-a-service (SaaS) model. What benefits does the SaaS delivery model provide?

First, SchoolRooms requires no hardware investments or maintenance, because the portal is fully hosted by SirsiDynix and runs on secure servers at the SirsiDynix state-of-the-art computer center in Atlanta, Georgia. All the necessary hardware to support SchoolRooms is taken care of, as are software maintenance and the support services required to keep the system up and running, 24x7. All students (and parents!) need to access SchoolRooms is a standard Web browser.

And second, SchoolRooms content is also managed on SirsiDynix servers, which means all content updates are delivered automatically to SchoolRooms

client sites by the SirsiDynix content team. (Although the basic structure of the curriculum does not change during the school year, we update all the rooms regularly to ensure the site is dynamic and engaging for the students.)

What about customization? More good news: each implementation of SchoolRooms is completely independent, so each client can customize their system to meet local needs.

SchoolRooms comes with a 'Builder' tool that enables clients to edit existing SchoolRooms content and even create entirely new rooms and modules that address unique needs.

All this means that SchoolRooms can be turned 'on' — for a school district or a city or county — at the flick of a switch. Then clients can customize the site at their own pace, by using the 'Builder' or contracting the SirsiDynix content team to build rooms for them.

Easy as ABC

- A.** No hardware or software requirements — it's all run at SirsiDynix
- B.** Automatic content updates — updates are automatically posted to each site
- C.** Easy to customize — use the Builder to create custom pages in minutes



All SchoolRooms sites are run by SirsiDynix at its main server farm in Atlanta, Georgia. SirsiDynix takes care of all hardware, software upgrades, and content updates. SirsiDynix also makes sure there is always enough bandwidth so the sites are fast.



Even though SchoolRooms sites are run by SirsiDynix, clients have their own 'copy' and can customize their site to reflect local history or include special Web sites they have identified themselves. Above is a page in U.S. History that Boston Public Library custom-built on the Boston Tea Party. Currently, it appears only on the Boston site. SirsiDynix plans, however, to make such custom modules available to other clients if they wish to use them. In this way SchoolRooms will truly become a collaborative educational site, reflecting the work of contributors across the country.

A technology partner you can count on

SchoolRooms is part of a tradition of innovation from SirsiDynix, one of the most trusted providers of information management solutions. Educators, government agencies, and corporations have turned to SirsiDynix for help for more than 25 years.

Throughout its history, SirsiDynix has maintained a strong track record of innovation, bringing to market the most advanced technology solutions that not only meet current needs but also anticipate our clients' needs down the road.

As a result, SirsiDynix has become the world's largest technology provider to public and school libraries. In fact, eight of the top 10 libraries in the world run on SirsiDynix, as do thousands of schools, school districts, and statewide school networks.

When a new client organization makes an investment in SchoolRooms, it gets the backing of a global company with the infrastructure in place to meet the market's ever-changing needs. With offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia and 650 employees worldwide, SirsiDynix is a company that clients can rely on today and into the future.

SirsiDynix around the globe

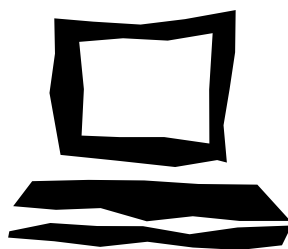


10,000 libraries in more than 50 countries ... serving an audience of 300 million people ... including thousands of schools and millions of students, parents, and educators

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