



THE ALICE NEWSLETTER

LEARNING TO PROGRAM WITH ALICE

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All,
Here is our latest Alice newsletter.

Topics for this newsletter:

- * Keynote addresses and pictures from the Summer 2006 Duke workshop
- * Changes to the [aliceprogramming.net](http://www.aliceprogramming.net) website: Test bank
- * Changes to the [aliceprogramming.net](http://www.aliceprogramming.net) website: 3D Models
- * Alice in Middle School
- * A new website: visualization.sju.edu
- * A great tip on how to help students see rotation of object parts

Keynote addresses and pictures from the summer, 2006 Duke Workshop

Slides from Owen Astrachan's and Caitlin Kelleher's excellent keynote addresses are now available. Please go to:

<http://www.cs.duke.edu/csed/aliceworks-hop/>

And then click on the **Invited Speakers** link to access their slides. Also, please enjoy the many "action shots" of the workshop available from the picture links.



Changes to the [aliceprogramming.net](http://www.aliceprogramming.net) website: Test bank

Based on many comments we have received, I have added two new additions to the

<http://www.aliceprogramming.net> website. The first is a test bank of questions, available in MS Word, Acrobat (pdf), Blackboard, and Respondus formats. There are approximately 40-80 questions per chapter, and are available from: <https://www.aliceprogramming.net/exams/exams.html>

or from the main page by clicking on the **Instructor Materials** link and then the **Sample Tests/Test Bank** link. Please note that the level of difficulty varies significantly, with easier problems tending to appear earlier in the list for each chapter. Special thanks to my graduate student Richard Burns for his help in creating the questions. For those of you who are Blackboard schools, but are not experts in using Blackboard, here are Rich's instructions on importing the files into Blackboard:

- 1) Go to "control panel" -> "pool manager" -> "add pool".
- 2) Type in a name, such as "alice ch 3 pool", click "submit".
- 3) Using the pull-down menu, select "upload questions" (last choice).
- 4) Upload the file (should be a .zip "blackboard" file).
- 5) Now go to "control panel" -> "test

- manager" -> "add test".
- 6) Type in a name, such as "alice ch 3 test", click "submit".
 - 7) Using the pull-down menu, select "from a question pool" (second to last choice).
 - 8) Find the pool that was just uploaded, and check "all questions". Then "search".
 - 9) After waiting for the page to load!!!!, "select all" questions. "Submit". Then "OK". And make any additional customizations.

Changes to the aliceprogramming.net website: 3D Models

The second addition to the <http://www.aliceprogramming.net> website concerns the steps to create your own models. Warning, creating models is not for amateurs, and for those of you wishing to use a program such as 3DS Max to create your own models, we strongly recommend creating a "gold spike" – namely getting a single model you have created to import into Alice prior to spending lots of time creating all of your models first. I will continue to house models that you are willing to share with the community. Instructions on how to create your own models, along with several Hawaiian models generously made available to us by Judy Gersting and Keith Edwards at the University of Hawaii, are available at: <http://www.aliceprogramming.net/models/index.html>

Alice in Middle School

George Thompson (gthompson@ebrpss.k12.la.us) from Woodlawn Middle School in Baton Rouge, LA, is looking for Alice

instructional materials appropriate for middle school. Please get in touch with him directly if you have materials for him, or know of folks he should contact.

A new website: visualization.sju.edu



Based on several requests we have received for copies of old newsletters, as well as requests for copies of some of our successful grant proposals, we created the website:

<http://visualization.sju.edu/>

This site mainly serves as a repository for frequently requested materials not directly related to our Learning to Program with Alice text or teaching materials for teaching with the text.

A great tip on how to help students see rotation of object parts

I am sharing with you a tip from Mary Alice Gehrdes, at Severn School in Severna Park, MD. She writes:

"I'm having a lot of fun with Alice; the Intro kids are into it.

Because of what you had said about 'center of gravity' and 'joints' in Alice and how students didn't always understand quickly how to get the objects to move the way they wanted, I was looking for something to use in class

to help me get them where I wanted them to be right away.

Since you'd said that CMU artists were the designers of the objects, I wandered around one of the school's art classrooms for inspiration and found it with a \$5.00 wood manikin that has joints.

In the second week, I introduced the Spider Robot and talked about how the Spider could be made to simulate walking with two of its legs. After discussing the Do Together and Do In Order and demonstrating what happened with and without that structure, I told them the next day to create an Alice world with a person figure and see if they could get it to 'walk'. They started out with the Spider Walk idea (upper thigh) and saw the stiffness that resulted in that walk movement, then I had them play with the manikin to see what joint was going which way in a walk for a person with a knee and foot joint.

It made the lesson fun and productive and one student asked the question, 'Can't I use this code again?' which gave me the opportunity to talk about creating your own method (Walk). I showed that student how to create a walk method for the figure and then showed the cut and paste of his already tested code and he saw how to reuse the method in his world method – and then he started teaching his buddies how to do it when I was on the other side of the room talking to someone else.

Using Alice for Object Oriented Design with beginners – we've been in school less than a month, I haven't even had the students every single day, they're getting

the ideas and it still hasn't been painful."



Hope that all is going well with your teaching this fall!

Regards,
Wanda Dann
Steve Cooper

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

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