

## **FAQ: Microsoft® *blink* - A Web Design Contest for New Mexico MESA Students**

### **What is the *blink* Web Design Contest?**

Blink is a Web design contest for New Mexico MESA school students to encourage them to think creatively while building their technology skills. Student participants will design and develop a Web site using Microsoft's Expression Studio of software tools. The theme of this year's competition is "*I Imagine My Future.*"

This challenge is part of New Mexico MESA annual competition. Student participants develop their analytical abilities by working on interdisciplinary teams to solve real-world problems using leading-edge information technology tools.



### **What are the Goals of this Contest?**

Microsoft is committed to connecting with high school students to engage their interest in technology and enhance their educational and career opportunities. This contest is designed to:

1. Provide incentive for students to build their technical skills.
2. Engage students in expressing themselves with technology.
3. Encourage students to create with technology -- rather than only consume it.
4. Include students in a technology competition who do not usually take computer science classes.
5. Empower young people to change the world through the creative use of technology.

### **How Will Students Create Web Sites?**

Expression Web software will be provided at no charge to qualified secondary MESA schools\* via a subscription to MSDN AA (Microsoft Developer Network Academic Alliance) for High Schools that Microsoft will donate. Students can install the software on their home computers at no charge after their school registers for Microsoft DreamSpark. In addition, Microsoft has created tutorials and learning materials that will help any beginner create a potentially winning site. These free materials are available at: <http://expression.microsoft.com/education>

### **How does this Contest fit into the Courses I Teach?**

Microsoft designed this contest to support academic technology and communication learning goals. All of the web design tutorials and learning materials are pedagogically sound and were created and tested by classroom teachers. Some teachers may choose to integrate the competition into their classes. Others may choose to offer the contest as an out-of-class activity.

### **What are the Participant Eligibility Requirements?**

- Participants must be New Mexico MESA students currently registered / enrolled in an accredited New Mexico middle or high school
- Participants must be between the ages of 13 and 19 years of age.
- Participants must compete as part of a team of 2-4 students. Entries from individuals are not eligible.
- Each team member must register individually and identify a teacher at their school to validate their student status and entry.

### **How are Entries Judged?**

Microsoft will convene a panel of judges that will include an educator, a professional Web designer, employees, an environmental advocate or policy expert, and an artist. Web sites will be evaluated on the following criteria: Creativity/Original Ideas (25%), Communication (20%), Organization/ Navigation (20%), and Visual Presentation/ Design (35%). Points will be deducted for non-functioning aspects of Web sites and copyright violations. Finalists will compete in a presentation competition at the MESA Day in April, 2010. Winners will be determined from the combined results of all scoring.

\* Offer good only for public and private high schools in Illinois fully accredited by the US Department of Education. The offer is made available through a complimentary subscription to the Microsoft Developer Network Academic Alliance (MSDN® AA) High School program, offering qualified schools a limited site license. Limit one subscription per school. This offer expires on 6-30-2010, is non-transferable, and is not redeemable for cash. Taxes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the recipient.

## Opportunities for Students

- Chance to win cool prizes.
- Opportunity to develop real-world, workforce and academic technology skills.
- Participate in an activity that can be listed on college applications and resumes.

## Opportunities for Teachers

- Free software for high schools through an MSDN AA subscription donated by Microsoft.
- Teaching resources aligned with standards in NETS, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and CSTA/ACM Model Curriculum.
- Innovative and exciting lesson plans, tutorials, and teaching materials.
- Recognition for student-centered learning with a certificate of participation and letter to the principal recognizing teacher's participation (which can be added to professional files).

## What are the Prizes?

- Grand Prize: Each team member receives an 8G Zune® MP3 Player and \$150 cash\*\*
- Second Place: Each team member receives an 8G Zune MP3 Player and \$100 cash\*\*
- Third Place: Each team member receives an 8G Zune and \$50 cash\*\*
- Honorable Mention: Each team member receives an 8G Zune
- Sweepstakes: One participant who submits a Web site will be randomly selected to receive an 8G Zune.

\*\* Cash awards will be in the form of a bank gift card.

## What are the Dates of the Competition?

- Registration opens on 12-2-09 at [www.bliinkcontest.com](http://www.bliinkcontest.com).
- Participants must register by 11:59 pm 2-10-10. The referral code is **NMMESA**.
- Every team member must register individually. Students who register are not obligated to submit a Web site; however, students who do not register by the above date cannot submit a Web site entry.
- Final submissions must be received by 11:59 pm PT on 3-4-10.
- The top 3 finalists will be announced by 3-29-10.
- The finalists will compete in a presentation competition at the 2010 NM MESA Day Competition.

## What is the Theme?

The theme is "I Imagine a My Future." Students are invited to envision the world they would like to live in.

Dream big! ***Imagine how you would like to solve a local, regional or global challenge.***

How can you improve your community and world? What technologies will be needed to achieve your goals?

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Imagine your future: Tell us about your dream career and how it will be similar to or different from careers today. What will you do? What preparation will you need? How will your achievements change the world?
- Imagine how you will solve a local, regional or global challenge: Dream big! Would you like to end world hunger, help educate children, negotiate world peace, clean polluted rivers or oceans, provide drinking water for everyone, or cure or prevent a deadly disease? How will you do it? How will you improve your community? The planet?
- Imagine how your ideas can help sustain a "greener" planet. How will you invent a new form of clean, renewable energy? Encourage teens to conserve energy and recycle? Design new uses for recycled materials? Redesign transportation systems to make them more ecologically friendly?
- Imagine how we will have fun in the future: Today we play with an Xbox 360, play a game of soccer outside, build robots or throw pottery on the wheel. Tomorrow will we be playing catch with our friends half way around the world in virtual reality? What is the entertainment of the future? How will teens have fun 10 years from now?
- Imagine how we will travel in the future: How will we move from place to place? Will each person have their own jet pack to fly? Imagine the places you will go... Will light-speed space shuttles replace Boeing 747s?

## How do I get started?

Visit [www.bliinkcontest.com](http://www.bliinkcontest.com) for more information or send an email to: [ew4hs@InnovativeTeachers.us](mailto:ew4hs@InnovativeTeachers.us)