

# Starlink



Issue Number 76

May 2009

*The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.*

(Denis Waitley)

## Zamzar

<http://www.zamzar.com/>

Excellent online resource for converting files with no need to download or install software.

Simply upload your files, select conversion format(s), and you'll be sent an email link to download your converted files. There are five distinct categories of file formats - Document, Image, Music, Video and Other Formats. See the very large list of exact conversion types on offer at

<http://www.zamzar.com/conversionTypes.php>

You can also convert YouTube or Google videos. Zamzar provides a convenient browser add-on to make this task even easier. A great resource for educators, for example, who'd like to a video, but don't have internet access in the classroom



There are free and paid versions of the Zamzar service. The free version may be all you need. Paid subscriptions start at \$7 USD per month and offer the ability to convert larger files, a personal inbox for online file storage and faster file conversions. (All subscriptions are on a monthly basis and can be cancelled at any time.)

For a comparison of features in the different versions, see <http://www.zamzar.com/signup>

Finally, here's a snippet from the FAQ for Starlink readers who, like us, are fascinated by

etymology or by a Kafkaesque view of the world. :)

*The name "Zamzar" is based on a character from the German author Franz Kafka's book "The Metamorphosis". In the novel Kafka describes the extraordinary story of a young man who is transformed whilst sleeping into a gigantic insect. The man's name - Gregor Samsa - was used as the basis for our company name because of its powerful association with change & transformation.*

## Great Sites for Kids

### Fun4TheBrain

[www.fun4thebrain.com/](http://www.fun4thebrain.com/)

A collection of online games related to different subjects for children from Kindergarten to 6th grade

### CTK Maths Games for Kids

[www.ctkmathgamesforkids.com/](http://www.ctkmathgamesforkids.com/)

Almost 100 interactive, online maths games

### The Land of Magic

[www.landofmagic.co.uk/index.htm](http://www.landofmagic.co.uk/index.htm)

A huge collection of resources – stories, jokes, poems and other activities around different themes.

### Silly Books

[www.sillybooks.net/](http://www.sillybooks.net/)

Early reading stories, many with a 'twist in the tail'.

### Audio Books for Kids

[www.kidsaudiobooks.co.uk/](http://www.kidsaudiobooks.co.uk/)

A wide range of stories books for listening and download.

### Kids.Net.Au

[www.kids.net.au/](http://www.kids.net.au/)

Child-friendly Australian search engine, with web search, dictionary, thesaurus and encyclopedia.

### Ask Kids

[www.askkids.com/](http://www.askkids.com/)

Another child-friendly online search engine. There's also a fun tool on the home page for children to draw and add 'stamps' to create their own pictures.

*Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolutions.*

**(Kahlil Gibran)**

## A Million Moments of Kindness

[www.onemillionacts.com/blog/](http://www.onemillionacts.com/blog/)

Be uplifted and inspired when you visit this website, created by Jerilynne Knight - who is also MamaRed on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MamaRed>

As well as reading the snippets and stories shared by others, you can also reflect on and share one or more of the 'moments of kindness' you have experienced in your own life.

As Jerilynne says: *Remember, there is no moment of kindness too small to wonder over, enjoy and share. Whether you unexpectedly heard "I love you" or have a detailed story, this is the place to share it with the world!*

## Network for Good

[www.networkforgood.org/npo/](http://www.networkforgood.org/npo/)

Network for Good is an online service that provides help with fundraising:

*Imagine what the world would be like if every time you were inspired to help someone or something, you could – with just a few clicks of a mouse, anywhere online. That's the mission of Network for Good. We make it as easy to donate and volunteer online as it is to shop online, and we make it simple and affordable for all nonprofits, of any size, to recruit donors and volunteers via the Internet.*



## Drug Issues

*Many thanks to Anne Hugo of Youth Field Express for these resources!*

### New Cannabis Resources

The new National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre has produced a series of resources designed to help people deal with cannabis-related issues. The resources are titled *What's the deal? Cannabis facts for parents, What's the deal? Cannabis facts for young people, What's the deal? Talking with a young person about cannabis and What's the deal on quitting? A do-it-yourself guide to quitting cannabis*. These resources can be downloaded from the NCPIC website and hard copies can be obtained by filling out an order form which is also available on the website:

<http://ncpic.org.au/workforce/cannabisinfo/resources/>

(Source: NCPIC website, viewed 17 March 2009.)

### Alcopops debate

The failure of the Australian Government to secure its bid to increase the tax on ready-to-drink alcoholic beverages or 'alcopops' means that cheaper pre-mixed alcoholic drinks might be available in Australia within weeks. Consumption of ready-to-drink alcoholic beverages fell in Australia after the 70 per cent tax increase

The site also has a resource section, containing a wide range of useful articles and tips at [www.fundraising123.org/](http://www.fundraising123.org/)

*Thank you to Starlink reader Felicity Zwalf for this resource!*

Too many have dispensed with generosity to practice charity.

(Albert Camus)

## Resources for Teachers

### Christo's Lucky Dip

<http://christopoulos.chris.googlepages.com/>  
Resources for Secondary English teachers

### World of Teaching

[www.worldofteaching.com/](http://www.worldofteaching.com/)  
Free, downloadable PowerPoint presentations for primary or secondary classrooms

### TeacherXpress

[www.teacherxpress.com/](http://www.teacherxpress.com/)  
HUGE collection of links to sites of interest for teachers. A focus on resources from the UK and Europe, but also very widely applicable elsewhere.

### A-Z Teacher Stuff

[www.atozteacherstuff.com/](http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/)  
Thousands of pages of resources here, including lesson plans, thematic units, downloadable materials, e-books, worksheets, discussion forums

### Cut the Knot

[www.cut-the-knot.org/](http://www.cut-the-knot.org/)  
Interactive mathematics tasks, puzzles and

### Eclectic English

[www.eclecticenglish.com/](http://www.eclecticenglish.com/)  
Resources for learners of English as a second language

### Heads Up English

[www.headsupenglish.com/](http://www.headsupenglish.com/)  
Another collection of resources for learning English as a second language



# Crayon Physics Deluxe

[www.crayonphysics.com/](http://www.crayonphysics.com/)

During our web travels, we came across a fascinating game for all those who love to experiment with how different objects work or interact with one another.

Perhaps you are one of those who remember with fondness that old computer game "The Incredible Machine"? If so, you'll love this one!

Crayon Physics Deluxe is a *2D physics puzzle / sandbox game*, in which you get to experience what it would be like if your drawings would be magically transformed into real physical objects. Solve puzzles with your artistic vision and creative use of physics.

There are 70 levels – although every one can have almost an infinite number of ways to solve the puzzle, limited only by your creativity and the objects you can draw.

You don't have to be an artist – sketched outlines of various objects work just as well.

There's a downloadable demo and the game is \$19.95 USD to purchase. (We have absolutely no affiliation, by the way – we just appreciated the fun, flexibility and cleverness of this game!)



## Ode Magazine



[www.odemagazine.com/](http://www.odemagazine.com/)

Tired of all the doom and gloom with which our media abounds? We've mentioned Gimundo in previous issues of Starlink. Ode is another source of good news stories to inspire and uplift the spirit.

Ode is a print and online publication about positive news, about the people and ideas that are changing our world for the better.

Husband and wife team Jurriaan Kamp and Helene de Puy began Ode in 1995 in Rotterdam. Ode was published in Dutch for the first 9 years of its life until the first English edition was produced in 2004. The magazine is produced 10 times each year in both Dutch and English.

Ode has built a community of readers who are passionate about the magazine and the issues for which it stands: positive social, environmental and economic change. Because these readers have a lot to say for themselves – and to each other – Ode created a new website that allows them to communicate, socialize and contribute to Ode. Odemagazine.com's mix of print and online journalism with user-generated content and social networking makes it unique on the Web.

Do visit Ode's website and, if you are so inspired, join the community. A wonderful way to help you stay focused on the positive news – and an real antidote to mainstream media gloom!

*Our thanks to Starlink reader Jim Evers for this resource!*

## Carl's Corner - Resources for Teachers

[www.carlscorner.us.com/](http://www.carlscorner.us.com/)

This website, owned and maintained by Cherry Carl is an excellent resource for early learning educators! Here's information about the site in Cherry's own words.

*My name is Cherry Carl, and I retired in June, 2003, after 35 years as a teacher and Language Arts Specialist in Santee, California. However, I am continuing my role as an instructor at the University of California, San Diego, in the Reading Specialist Certification Program.*

*I wasn't ready to retire. Teaching is in my blood! (My mother always reminded me that when I was little, I dragged the neighborhood kids in to play school whether they wanted to or not!) I still*

*have the strong desire to make a difference for teachers, parents, and students. I'm passionate about the joy of knowing how to read and write and want every child to have the experience of closing a book with a sigh, "Wow, that was a good book!" The only way they can do that is by having the necessary skills and strategies to become independent readers. Teachers and parents need to be aware of the all-important instructional tools and "promising practices." This website has been created to provide resources and materials for classroom teachers, reading and resource specialists, speech therapists, parents and students in the area of language arts.*

*Please feel free to download and print anything that catches your eye, but please*

*make sure to leave my name on the poetry and worksheets!*

*If you have specific needs or suggestions, please don't hesitate to ask. I'm always open to new ideas and requests. That's how the site continues to grow. You can email me at [carl1404@msn.com](mailto:carl1404@msn.com)*



## BJ Seminars International

- HumourAdventure®
- Inspired Performance
- Stand & Deliver
- Bee Haven
- Student Programs
- Change
- Strategic Planning
- Organisational Development & Learning
- Conference Energizers
- Speaking

Address: PO Box 197, Boronia, VIC , 3156

Phone: +61 3 9758 2528

Email: [starlink@bjseminars.com.au](mailto:starlink@bjseminars.com.au)

Web: [www.bjseminars.com.au](http://www.bjseminars.com.au)

- ... inspiring and connecting people

## Blogging

Since the last issue of Starlink, we have created individual blogs and begun writing personal and professional reflections. It remains an interesting journey for both of us!

Here are the website links:

Chris: <http://chrischats.com>

Sue: <http://suejames.com>



We'd love to hear from you if you visit our blogs and feel inspired to comment on something you read!

Cheers, Chris and Sue

## Kids Speak Out About Mobile Phones

<http://star7601.notlong.com>

Published online on 4 April, 2009, this report is from the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

More than 1,500 children and young people in Years 6 and 9 were asked about how mobile phones fit into their lives. The survey found that *mobile phones support kids by helping them to be independent*.

Mobiles also help kids organise their daily lives, support their relationships including family relationships when parents are separated, provide entertainment, and help them feel safer.

The full report can be downloaded from the above website in either pdf or text formats.



## Waltzing Matilda



One of my few treasured possessions is an old music box that plays Waltzing Matilda.

The two rusted screws, metal cover and wood backing panels are loose and the wind up handle is missing.

**Reflections**  
**CHRIS BENNETT**



To play it you need to turn the shaft that winds the spring with pliers, press directly onto the bracket that holds the flywheel in place and hold it against a wood surface.

I remember when I swapped my cheap plastic camera for the music box 48 years ago.

I was 8 years old and hanging around with my mate John, near Frank Dempsey's butcher shop in Kerr Street, Fitzroy.

John's dad walked up to us and spotted my camera and offered to swap. He turned the handle on the music box several times and Waltzing Matilda played. I was instantly captivated by the sound, ignoring his alcoholic breath and dishevelled appearance.

I can still see his tilted head and smiling eyes watching my fascination at a small tin box that played music.

If someone were to see my music box now they would throw it away as a piece of junk. I could never do that because it's a connection to my youth and an experience that still makes me smile.

Sometimes our most treasured possessions can be as simple as a rusted old music box.



Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong...♪