

# Custom Message Boxes

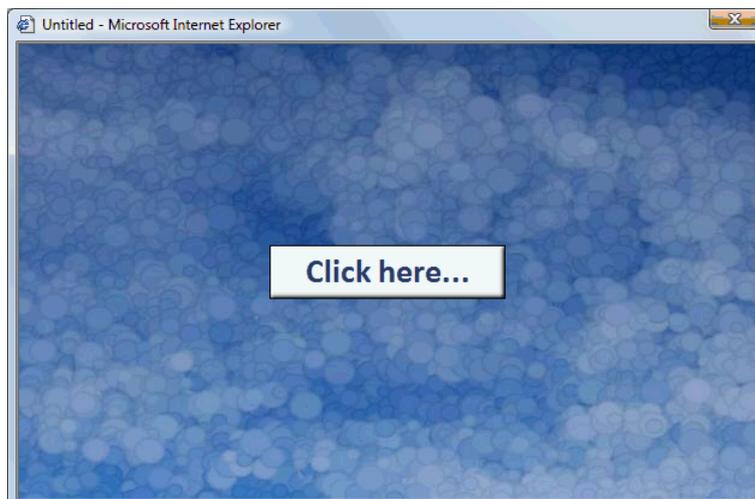


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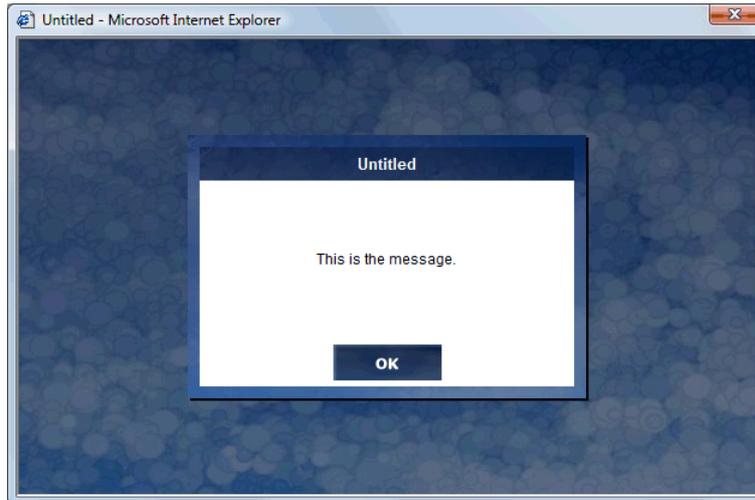
## What are Message Boxes?

Many features of KnowledgePresenter allow you to use a Message Box. A very simple example is this – create an object, select **Objects/Event**, and select **Display Message** as the **Action**. Then enter a message to display. When you preview or run the lesson, it will look something like this:



Here we have a lesson with a **Display Message** event associated with this button...

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...and when this button is selected, the message box appears.

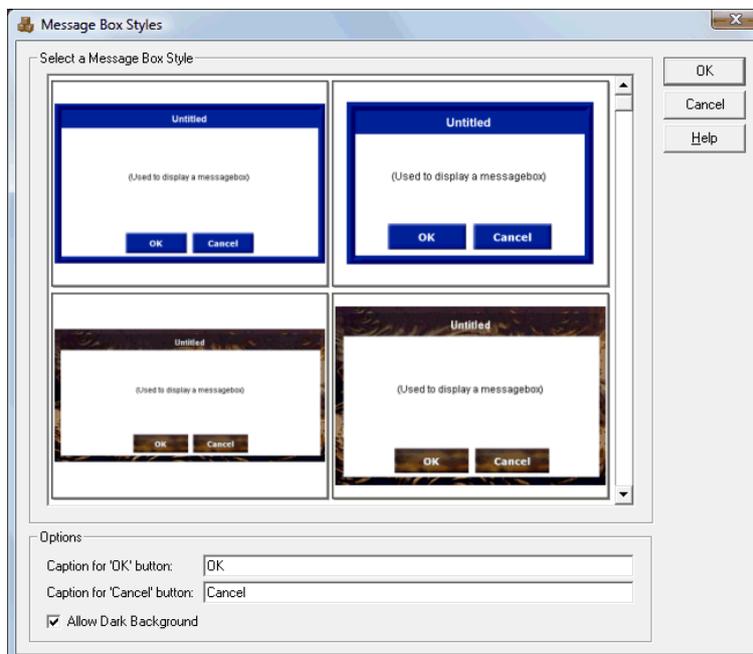
### When are Message Boxes Displayed?

Message boxes are used when any of the following events are added to objects in a lesson:

- *Display Message*
- *Close Window (with confirmation)*
- *Check Answer* (to display feedback to the user).

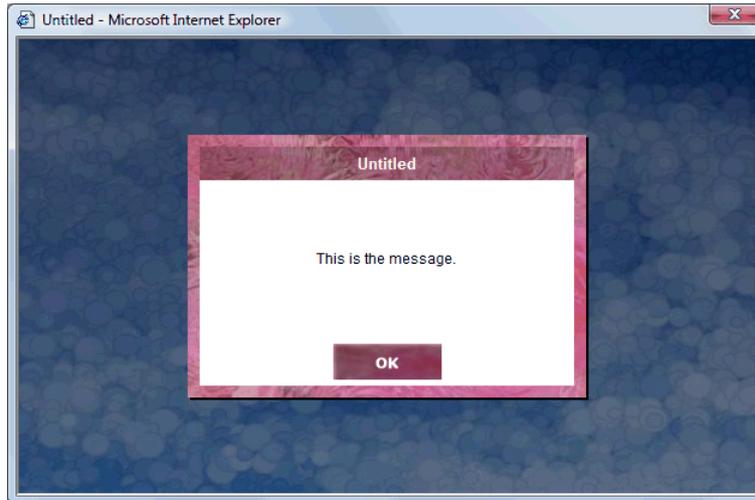
### Selecting from Provided Message Boxes

How this message box looks depends on options you have selected in KnowledgePresenter. You can use the **Edit / Custom Message Boxes** command, and select one of the default message box styles.



This allows you to select from one of a number of provided Message Boxes – but now we make it even easier than before to customize your own message boxes.

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## Message Box Features

Message Boxes in KP have a number of features.

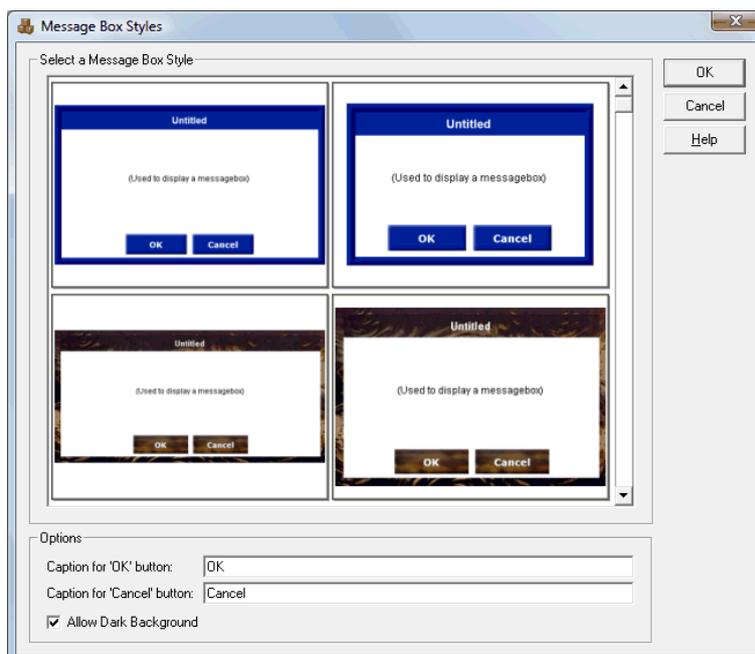
First of all, they always appear on top of other objects – (except embedded PDF documents, due to the way these objects are displayed by the PDF plugin), they can be dragged to a new position by dragging the titlebar, they always contain the lesson titlebar in the message box titlebar, and the **OK** button will change it's action depending on the context in which the message box is displayed.

Additionally, the message to be displayed cannot fit in the required area, a scroll bar is added automatically.

Message Boxes are always displayed modally – this means that once a message box is displayed on screen, the user must interact with this object, and cannot interact with other objects current displayed.

## Standard Message Box Options

Using the **Edit / Custom Message Boxes** command, there are a few more options for Message Boxes than just selecting a new style.



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**Caption for 'OK' Button.** Use this option to set the default caption for the **OK** button in a message box.

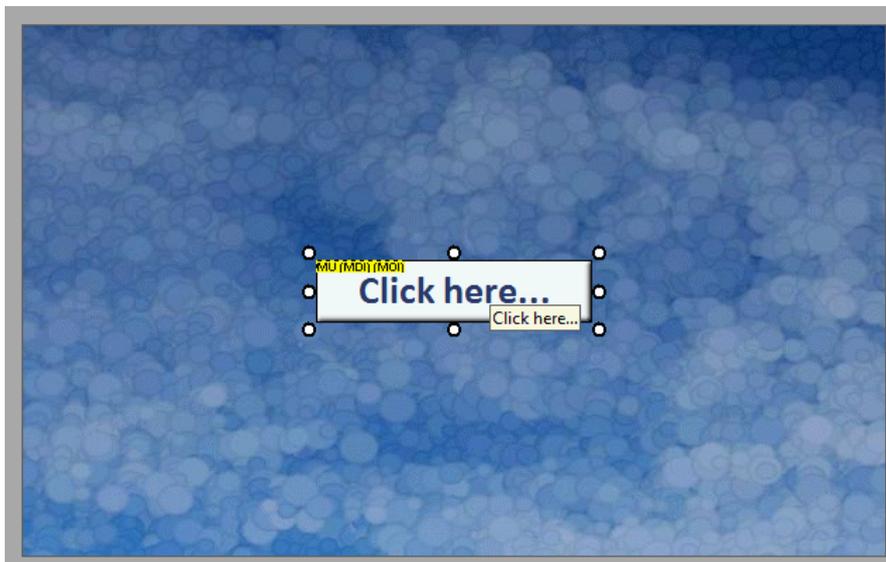
**Caption for 'Cancel' button.** Use this option to set the default caption for the **Cancel** button in a message box.

**Allow Dark Background.** When this option is selected, when a message box is displayed in an exported lesson, the other visible objects are covered with a party transparent black rectangle – much like you'll see in Windows Vista on some system messages.

### Creating a Custom Message Box

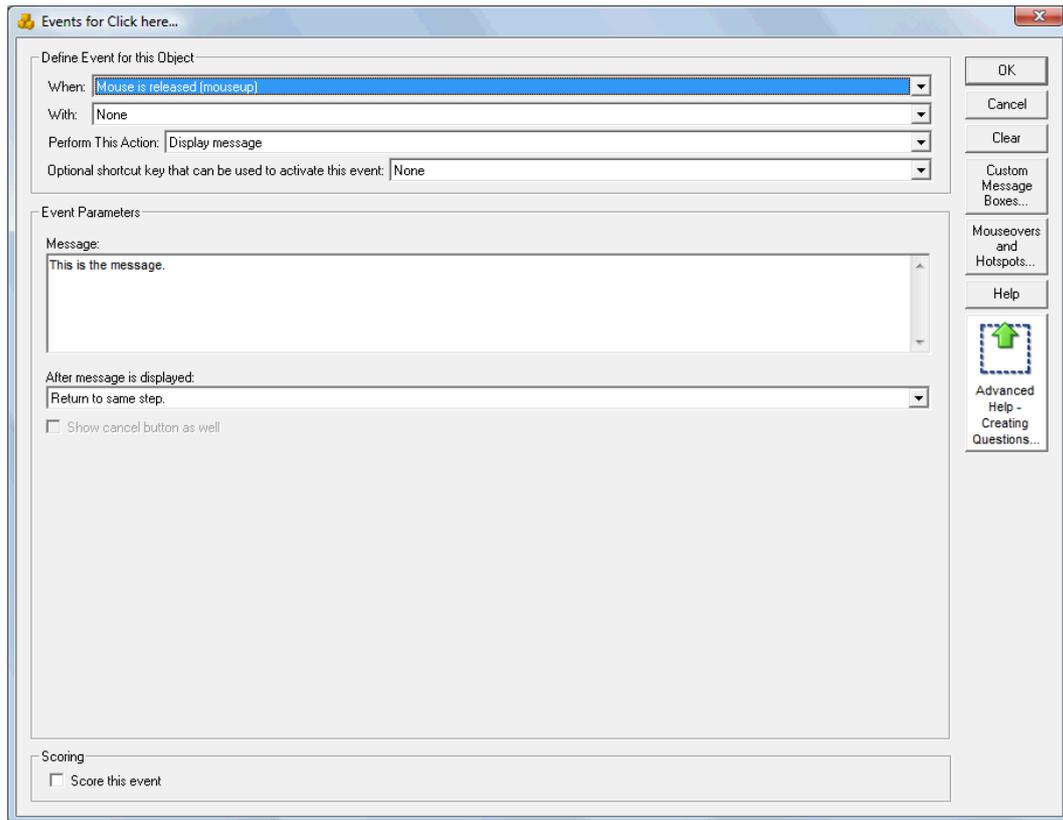
We've now made it easier to customize how a message box appears. It really is quite simple.

First, let's look at the lesson we created for the above example. It only has one object, a button, and to this button, we have added a **Display Message** event.



*Here is our button...*

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*...and here is the event we have applied to it.*

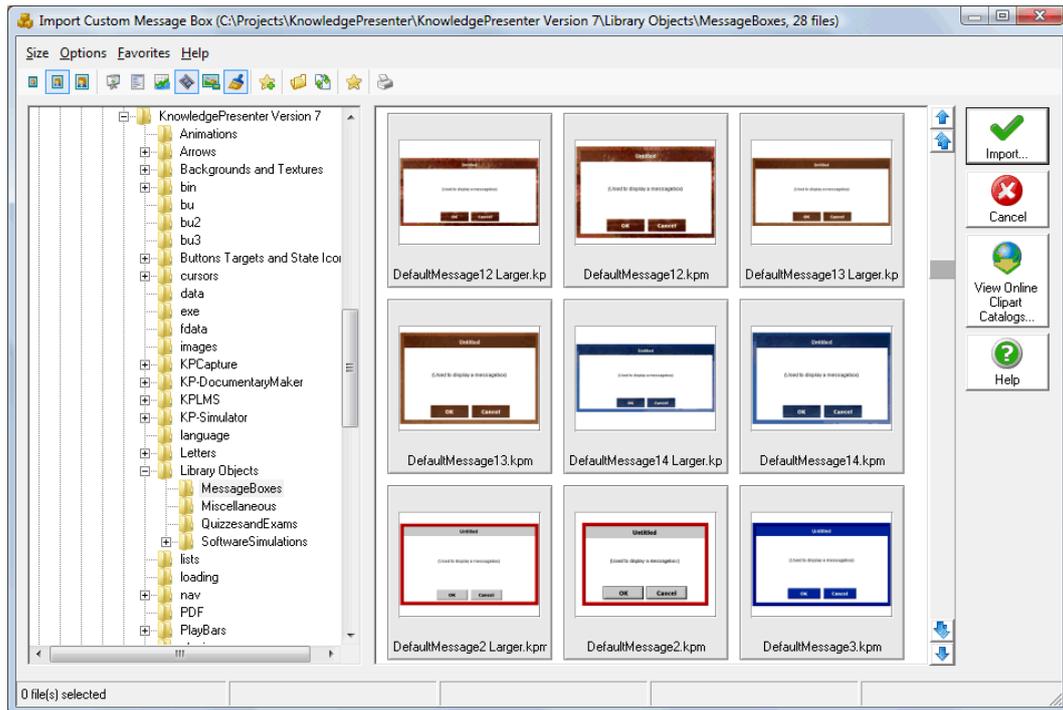
If we do nothing else, it will use the message box as selected using the **Edit / Custom Message Boxes** command (see above for more info on this).

So – if we want to customize a message box – here is what we do.

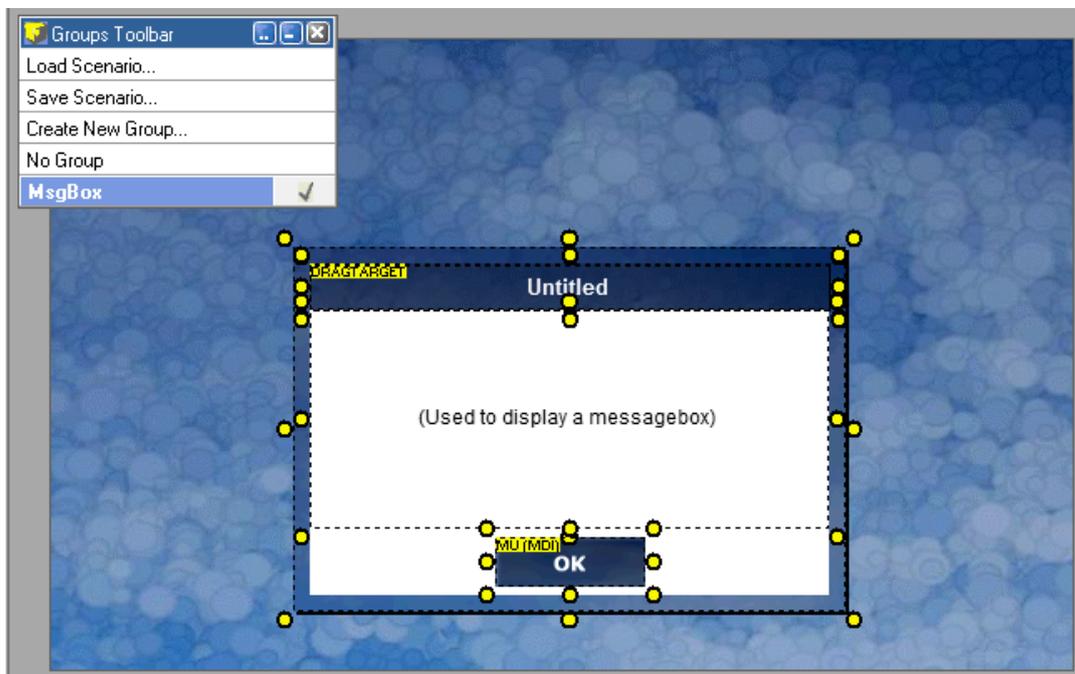
In this case, we will add a graphic to the Message Box.

Step 1, is to select the **Custom Message Box** command in the **Insert** menu (if this is not visible in your version of KP, you may need to download the latest version). The following dialog box will appear:

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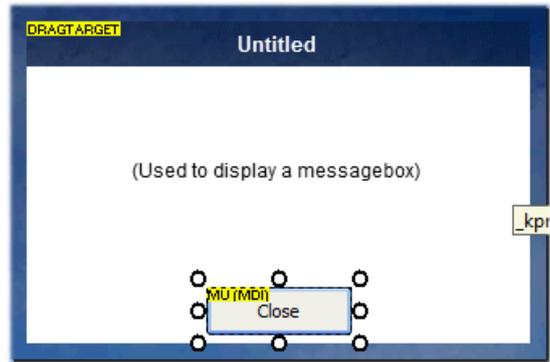
From here, you can select any one of the displayed *Message Boxes* as one you are going to use and edit. So select one that looks most like the one you want to use, and click on Import. That message box will then be added to the lesson, as below.



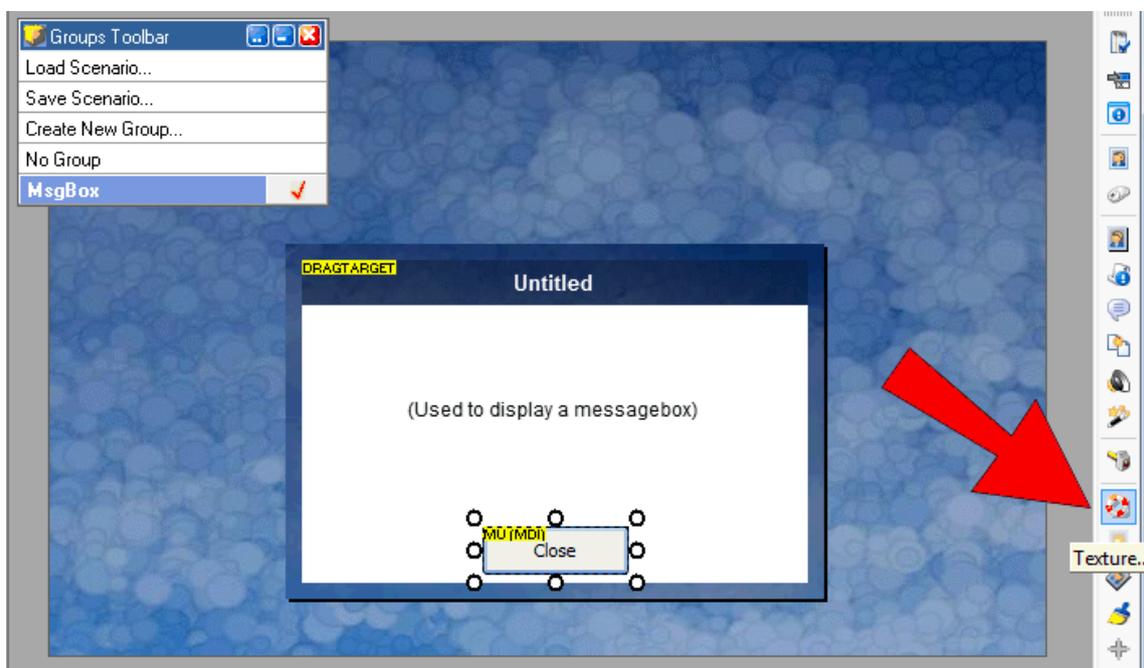
What has basically happened is that the Message box objects are added to the current lesson. Each message box is generally made up of a number of objects, including buttons, rectangles, and text objects.

As these are now normal KnowledgePresenter objects, you can edit any of these however you like. For example, we can edit the button by double-clicking on it. Below, we've changed the style and text in this button.

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Note that many of the objects in the default message boxes have a texture associated with them – and to edit these, you'll need to use the **Texture** button in the right-hand toolbar.



So not only can you edit any of the existing objects in the Message Box (change text, change fonts, change textures, resize, move, change everything you like), you can also add objects.

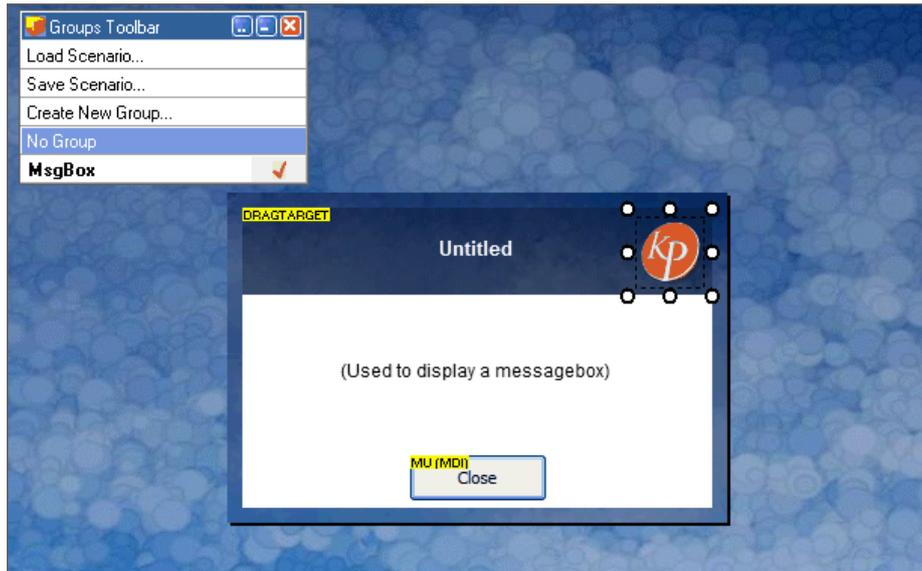
**There is one important thing to note when editing and adding objects to this group. Do not remove the OK button. You can edit it, resize it, change its appearance in any way – but do not remove it, and do not change the event associated with this object. Doing so *may* allow it to work, but not the way as designed by KP.**

Before we do this – a quick note on the group called **MsgBox**. All of the objects in the Message Box you've just imported are a part of this group. This is how KnowledgePresenter knows which objects to display when a Message Box is required. Note that the *Groups* toolbar will also have been displayed when you imported this Message Box.

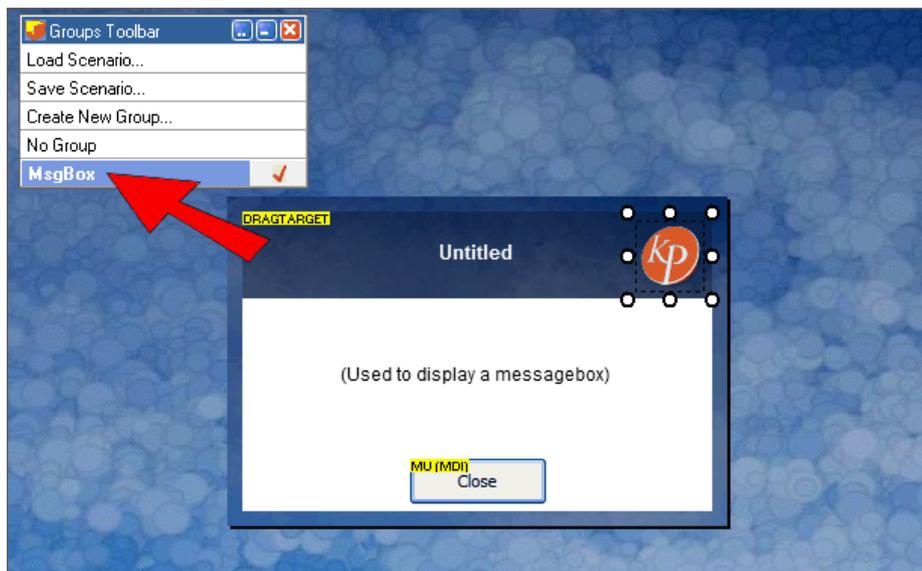
## Custom Message Boxes



So, any objects you add – and place in this group – will be displayed when this Message Box is displayed.



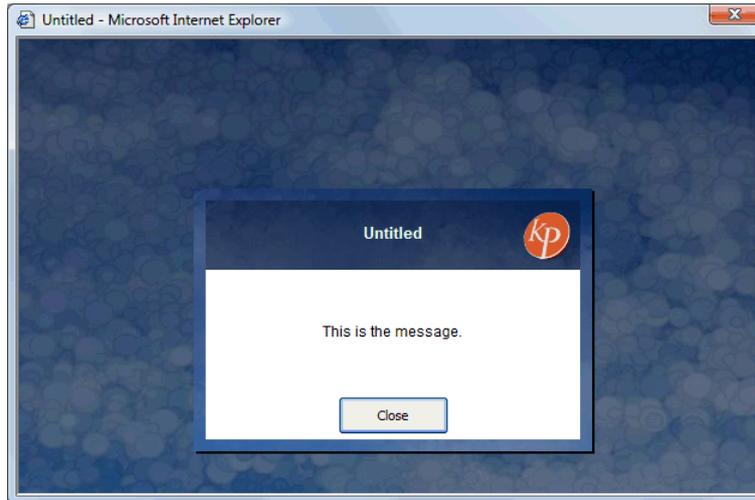
Above, we've added our logo to the current screen. This is just a standard image, we've added to the lesson. We also enlarged the titlebar to allow this logo to fit.



Then, we add this object to the **MsgBox** group, by clicking on this group name in the **Groups** toolbar when this logo is selected.

Once you've done your editing, it is all done – this message will be displayed as designed when the lesson is run. See the example below.

## Custom Message Boxes



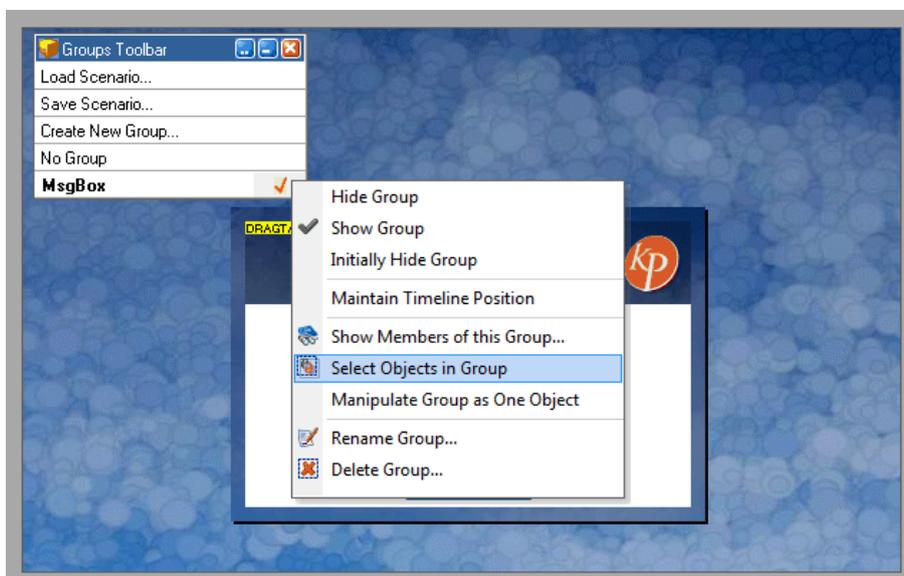
### Where Should This Custom Message Box Appear in My Lesson?

It does not really where this Message Box is displayed in your lesson. It is added at whatever step you were on when you selected the **Insert / Custom Message Box** command, but it could be on a blank step at the end of a lesson, if you wish.

When the lesson is run, the Message Box can be used on any step it is required on, regardless of whether you placed it.

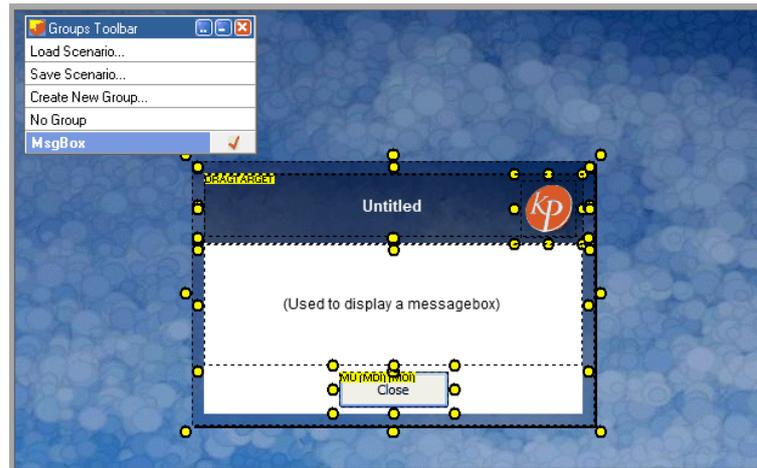
If you want to move the MsgBox in your lesson to another step, follow these steps:

- Go to the step where the Message Box is currently displayed.
- Right-click on the icon next to the Group Name **MsgBox** in the *Groups* toolbar, and select the **Select Objects in Group** command.

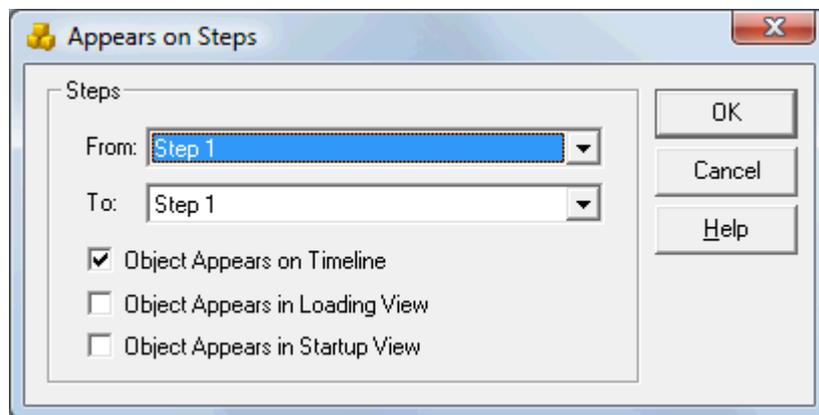


- All of the objects in this group will then be selected.

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You can now choose the **Objects / Objects Appears on Steps** command to select a new step where this MsgBox should appear.



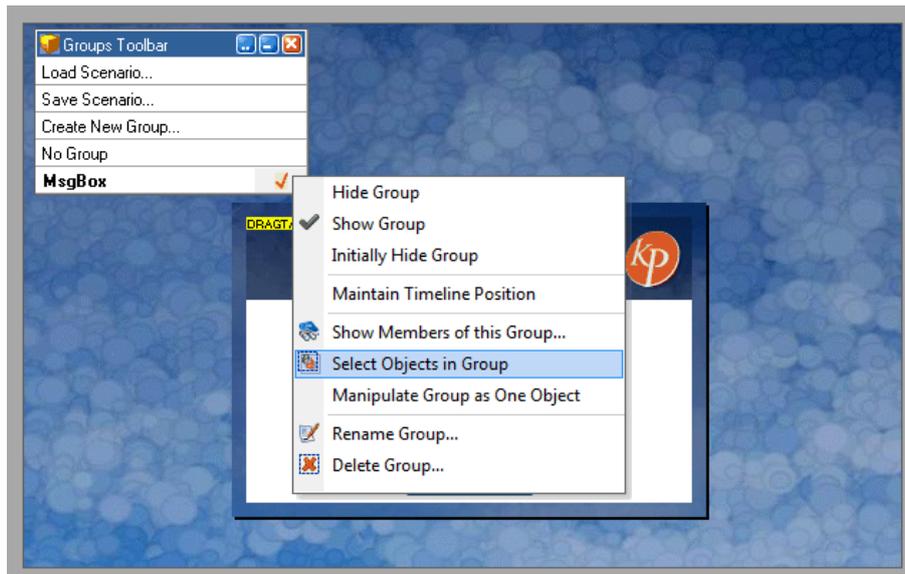
*From this dialog box, you can select a new step to move the Message Box to.*

### How Can I Remove the Custom Message Box From a Lesson?

If you want to remove the custom message box – if you do not like it, or have made a mistake, or are not sure why it is not working, follow these steps.

- Go to the step where the Message Box is currently displayed.
- Right-click on the icon next to the Group Name **MsgBox** in the *Groups* toolbar, and select the **Select Objects in Group** command.

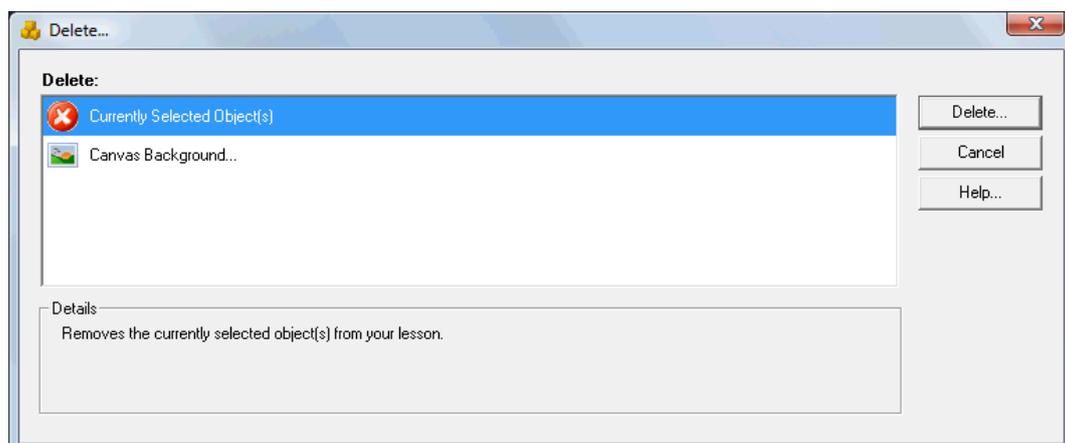
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- All of the objects in this group will then be selected.

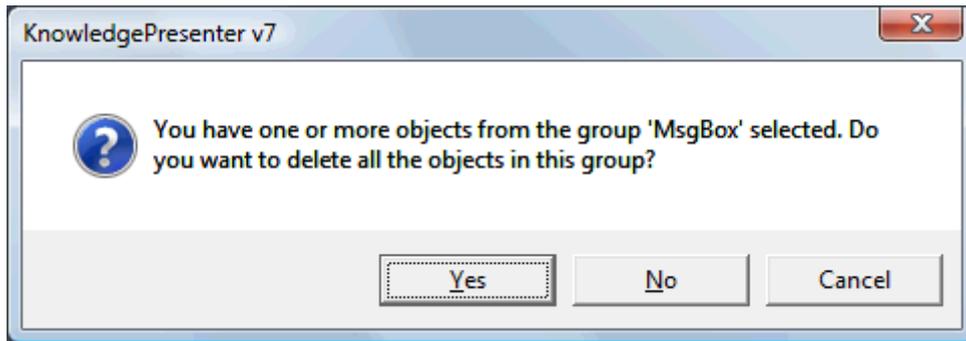


You can now choose the **Edit / Delete** command, or simply select the **Delete** button, and remove the objects from the lesson.



Ensure you select **Currently Selected Objects** from the Dialog Box that appears.

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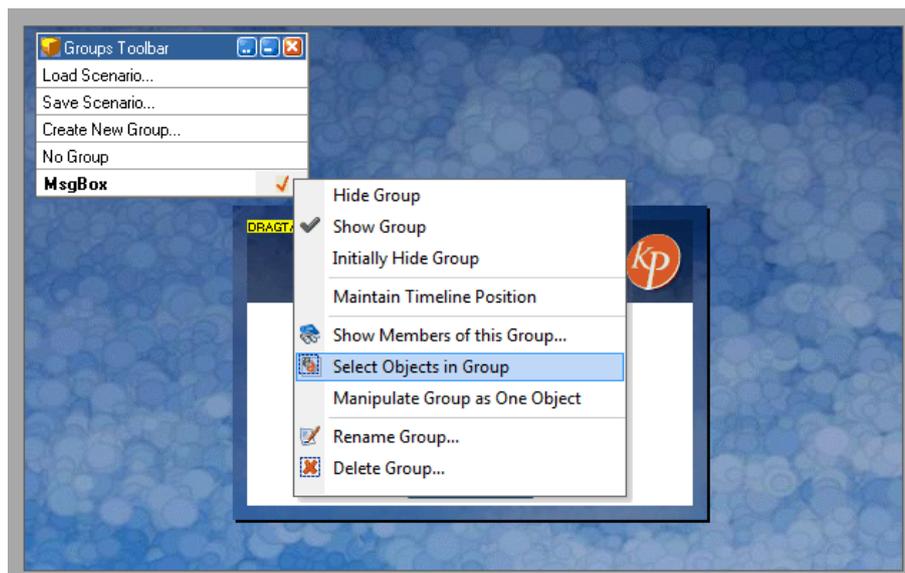
When you delete a number of objects in a group, you will get this warning. It is fine. You can click on **Yes**.

Once your message box is removed from a lesson, you will then go back to using the default Message Box, as selected by the **Edit / Custom Messages Boxes** command.

### Can I Use This Customized Message Box Again in Another Lesson?

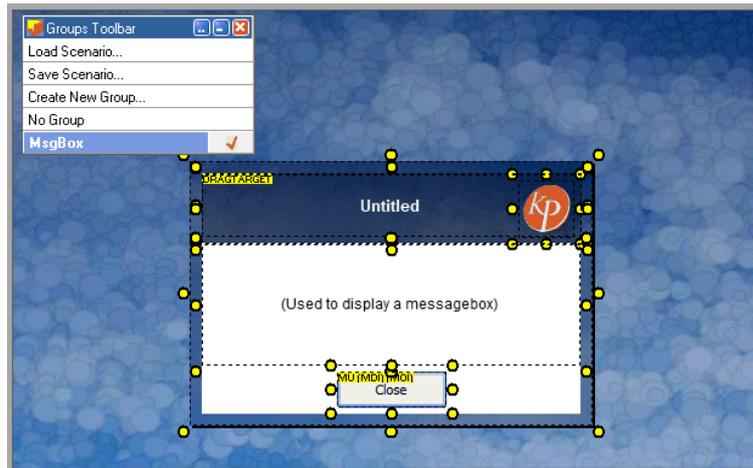
Yes – you can. Follow these steps.

- Go to the step where the Message Box is currently displayed.
- Right-click on the icon next to the Group Name **MsgBox** in the *Groups* toolbar, and select the **Select Objects in Group** command.

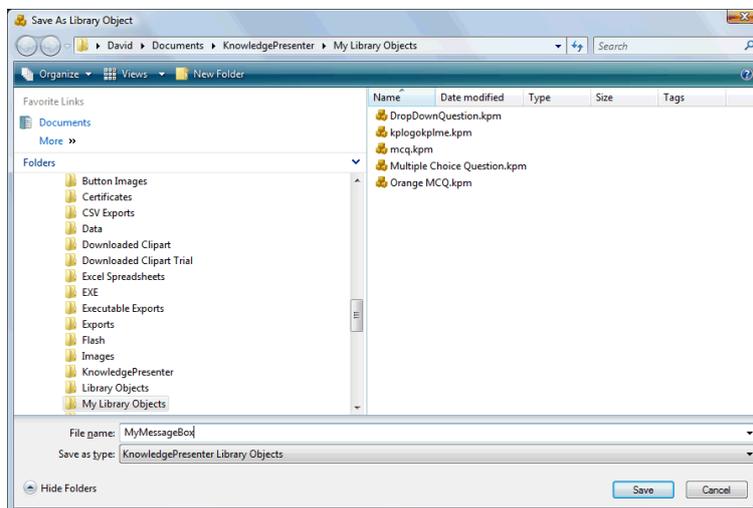


- All of the objects in this group will then be selected.

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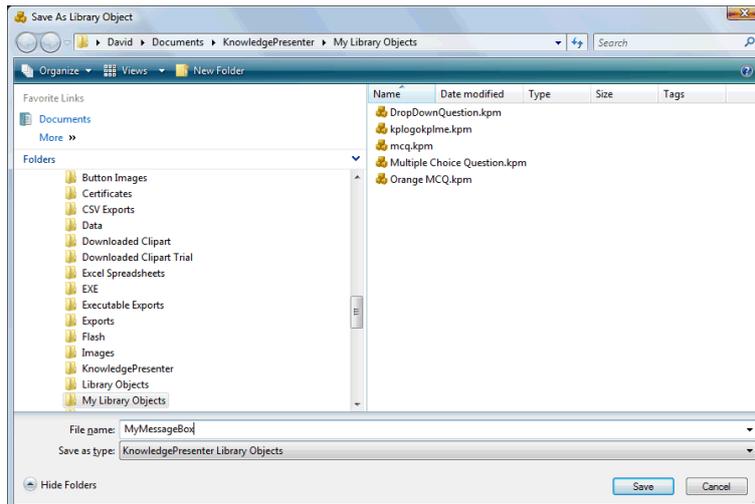


- Choose **Objects / Save As Library Object**. You'll then be able to select a folder to save this object, as well as give it a name.



- Once the object has been saved, you can load this object into another lesson, using the **Insert / Custom Message Box** command. The only difference is that you will have to navigate to the folder where you saved this library object to load it.

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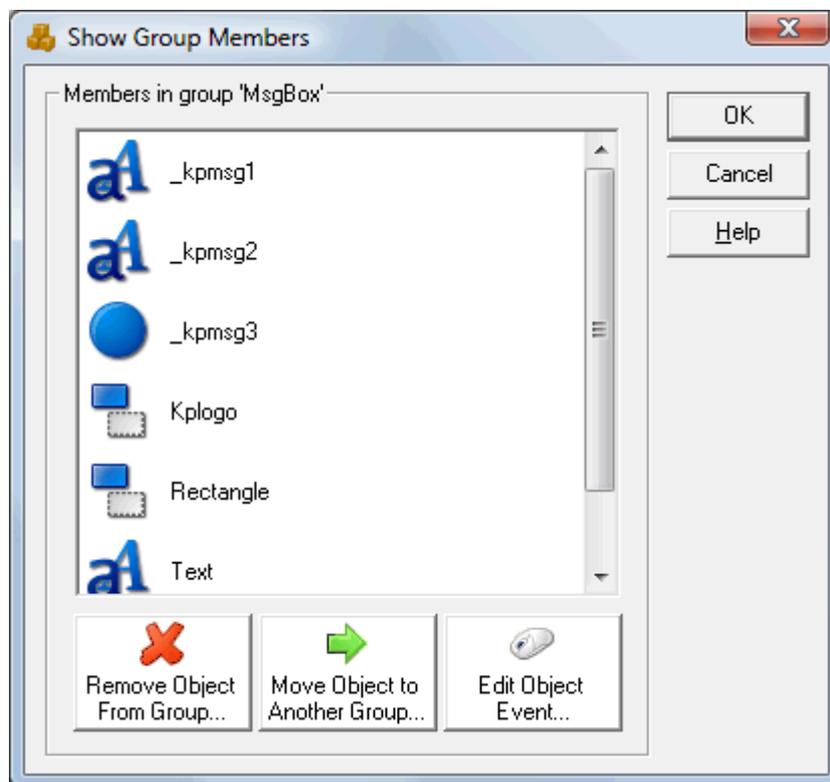
## Technical Details

For those interested, here are some technical details of how the Message Box feature works internally in KP. It may help you do some debugging if things are not going as planned.

When a Message Box is required, KP simply displays all objects in the **MsgBox** group.

No groups, including any Message Boxes, can be displayed in loading, or startup view.

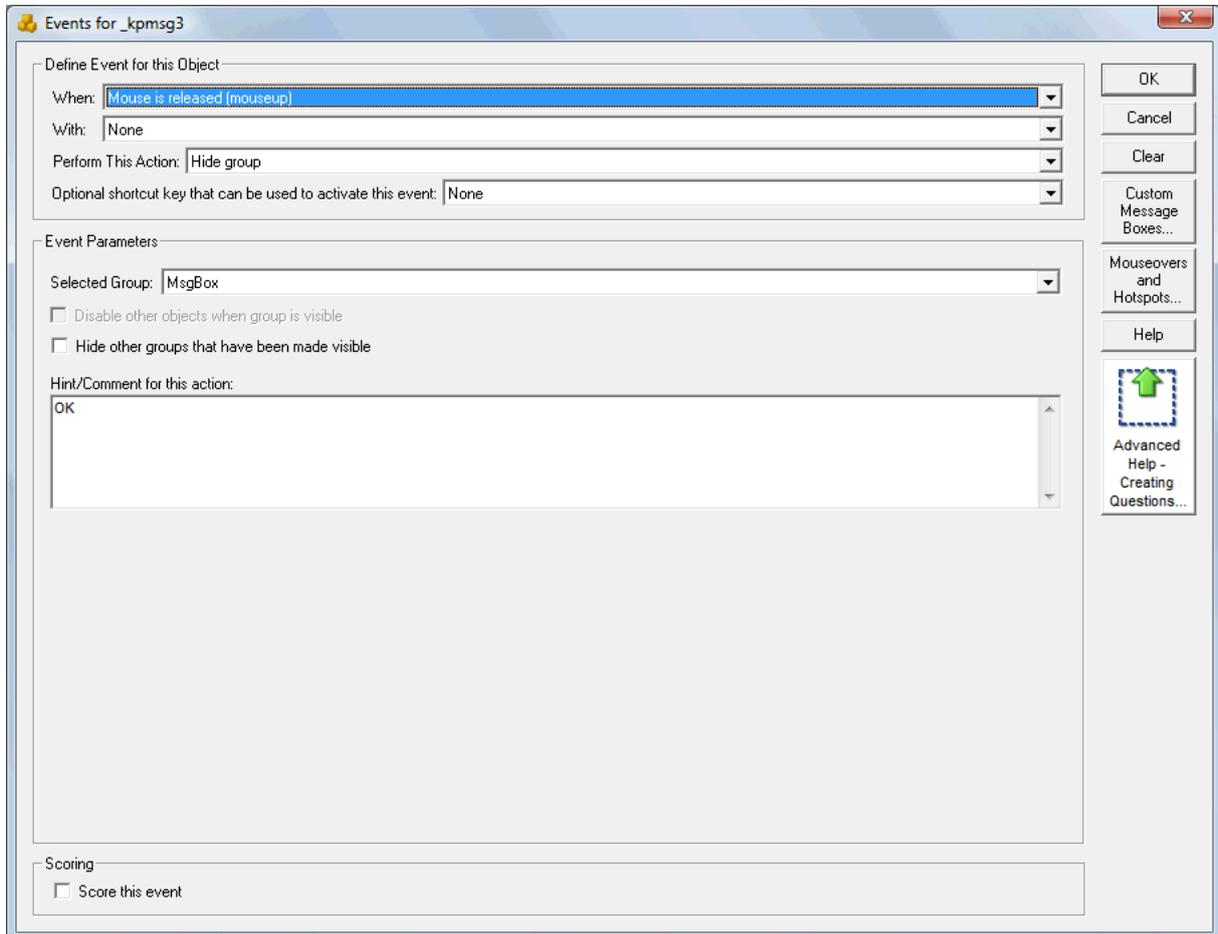
If you want to see what objects, throughout your lesson, are placed in the **MsgBox** group, try this. Right click on the icon next to **MsgBox** group name in the *Groups* toolbar, and select **Show Members of This Group**. You'll then see a list of all objects in this group, and it should make it easier to locate any errant objects.



## Custom Message Boxes

As mentioned, KP alters the event associated with the **OK** button depending on where and why the message box was displayed. In order for this to work, the **OK** button – or any object acting as the **OK** button, must have the following properties:

- **Event . Hide Group** must be selected as the Action, and I must be the group selected to hide. In the *Events* dialog box, also ensure that the **Hint** for this object is set to **OK**.



When a lesson is exported, the **MsgBox** group is automatically set to *Initially Hidden* – regardless of the visibility option selected for the group. This ensures the group is not visible until it is required.

When using customized message boxes as described in this White Paper, only the **OK** button is displayed. Some events have an option (such as **Display Message**) that reads *Show Cancel Button as Well*. These options are ignored if you have customized your Message Box.