

Software Sleuth Evaluations

To our classmates:

Evaluating software has been a fun but time consuming project plus there is so much software out there to choose from. We have tried to evaluate a variety of programs in enough detail so that you would know whether or not the program would work in your classroom. Keali and I have come to the conclusion that before you even look for software, you should decide what you need the software for - drill and practice, as a tool for writing, to aid in making presentations, to look up information, because whatever your need is, there is more than likely software that fits that need. There are many websites, which evaluate software and you should browse through those sites before deciding to purchase anything. Some companies allow you to download a free trial of a program before you buy. Other teachers can be a good source of information when looking for a program. Also, I was able to check out software to preview from our local library. When you have finally decided on a particular program, shop around!! Prices for the same piece of software can vary from site to site and store to store and be sure to check out the shipping costs.

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1. List of Websites which review software

<http://www.ucc.uconn.edu/~wwwpcse/wcool2.html>

<http://www.cln.org/ela/>

<http://www.connsensebulletin.com/software.html>

<http://www.iste.org/resources/curriculum/k-12/index.cfm>

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

<http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/MMStocs/MMSprodtoc.html>

<http://www.thereviewzone.com/reviews-index.html>

<http://www.worldvillage.com/wv/school/html/scholrev.htm>

2. List of good Websites, which sell software.

ebay.com

half.com

academicsuperstore.com

ccvsoftware

k12software

surplusdrom.com

kidslick.com

nothingbutsoftware.com

amazon.com

cdromhouse.com

Before you buy the software make sure you check out the shipping cost, especially on ebay. One person had a number of software programs for a .99 cents, but the shipping cost was \$15.00- yikes.

Software Evaluations

1. Microsoft Creative Writer 2
2. Kidspiration
3. Kid Pix Studio
4. Creativity Workshop
5. Amazing Writing Machine
6. Orly's Draw A Story
7. Lisa Franks Paper Play Studio
8. Reading Blaster 9-12
9. Carmen Sandiego Word Detective
10. Reading Blaster 4-6
11. Bailey's Book House
12. Sesame Street Reading Basics
13. Disney Phonics Quest
14. Jump*Start Phonics
15. Little Bear Rainy Day Activities
16. The Wheels on the Bus
17. Word Munchers
18. I Love Spelling
19. Jump*Start Spelling
20. Rollertyping
21. Axel's Whirled Math
22. Math Blaster 4-6
23. Math Blaster 6-9
24. Mighty Math Zoo Zillions

1. Microsoft Creative Writer 2

Microsoft

Perspective: cognitive psychology

Stance: transformational

Aspect: semantic, syntactic, pragmatic

Type: tool and tutorial

Ages: 6 to adult

Price: Amazon.com \$14.99 new, and \$9.99 used. (1 disk)

Sprysoft.com \$12.80 (1 disk)

This program allows the writer to create a number of different activities and projects. The user can choose between a blank page to a writing tutorial to a template which can be manipulated.

Listed below are all the functions of the program. The program is similar to using a Microsoft word program, with many added features. The main buttons are verbalized.

To begin, the user must pick an area from below.

1. Blank page

2. Greeting card

3. Project ideas: (the projects come with a template to work with)- award certificate, award ribbons, business cards, flyer/permission slip/ field trip, flyer: (lost pet, public service etc), business letterhead, adventure newsletter, club newsletter, neighborhood newsletter, school newsletter, science fiction newsletter, tabloid gossip, personal notebook, paper petition, poster for a ball game, beware of dog sign, garage sale sign

4. Banners

5. Writing ideas (these ideas give a written tutorial about the genre and a template to work with)- edit a story, change point of view, make it rhyme, create silly poem, spice up a story, translate this, a writing puzzle, write a dialog, write an editorial, write a fairy tale, write an interview, write a journal, letter of apology, letter of thanks, meet the authors, obituary, report, script for a: play, radio show, sportscast, TV commercial, short story, brainstorm sloppy copies, write song, speech, adventure, cliffhanger story, fantasy, mystery, science fiction story, tall tale

6. Web Page

Blank, Power users- using page links, Power users- using internet links, Power users- adding HTML tags, Power users- using word wrap, Sample A story web, Sample story web, Sample fun web links, Sample nature quiz, Sample explore the Amazon

After picking an area or activity, these are the options to change the activities:

Letters-change the way they look

Letter size, style, color, background color

page alignment

line spacing

special word effects (sparkle, shimmer, blink, fade)

quick styles (big first letter, number list)

Page-tools that change the way the page looks

Start new page

Tall or wide

Pages numbers

Margins

Columns
View (zoom in or out)
Spell checker

Picture-tools for adding pictures to your writing

Picture picker
Border picker
Texture picker (background)
Paint- draw or change a picture
Word art-changes words that have different shapes, patterns and shadows
Wrap around pictures-loosely or tightly, place picture on every page

Personal note: I really enjoyed this software, there seemed like endless ways this software could be used in writing, projects and presentations. This software could be used with 6- to adults, but after seeing Kidspiration (see Kidspiration evaluation) I think it would be better for upper elementary. The graphics and clip art isn't as nearly as impressive as Kidspiration and the writing ideas seemed to be maybe 2nd or 3rd grade on up.

2. Kidspiration

Inspiration software

Perspective: linguistic, psycholinguistic, cognitive psychology, sociolinguistic

Stance: transformational, aesthetic

Aspects of literacy: graphophonemic, semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, affective, automaticity

Type: tool, problem based

Ages: 5 to 12

Price: k12software.com \$65.00

academicsuperstore.com \$55.95

“Students build graphic organizers by combining pictures, text and spoken words to represent thoughts and information,” states the Inspiration web site. Students are able to think, write, and comprehend using webbing, visual maps and learning diagrams. There are so many features and possibilities of this program that I can't list them all.

Starting page options:

1.Picture-the student begins with a circle in the middle of the page for a main idea. The student can choose from these options: go to writing (see below), add symbol, link symbols, super grouper (put graphic over text to show relationship), clear, undo, listen (the computer will verbalize a the text the student has written), student name, symbol maker (opens a paint program to make your own symbol or graphic. When in the picture mode there are graphics (from animals and plants to foods, to shapes) down the right side of the screen, which may be inserted into a project by clicking and dragging.

2. Writing-the screen shows a writing page, the first line is for the main idea. The writing page and the picture page are connected. When the student writes on the writing page, they can then click on the picture button and their writing turns to a map or web picture, this happens in reverse too, the web picture can be clicked into the writing page. When in the writing mode, these are the following options: go to picture, go left, go right, clear, undo, listen (the computer will verbalize a the text the student has written), student name, put project onto a word document.

The following options are available during both the writing and picture mode:

Tool bar at the top of the screen: file, edit, goodies (background color, lined paper color, spell check), sound (record, erase, voice), teacher and help. The teacher menu has many options in which the teacher can disable functions, add activities etc (the teacher functions seem a bit complicated, I'm not quite sure of all the things the teacher could do)

Tools at the bottom of the screen: font, font size, font color, B, I , U, alignment, line width, picture with the text turned on or off, and background color of super groupers.

3. Open a saved file

4. Activities-When choosing an activity, students are given a template and directions of how to do their activity. Some are very simple such as moving pictures that start with the letter S to the screen; others are more complicated such as using a Venn diagram to compare cultures. The activities can be manipulated to fit the unit of study. Listed below are the options in the activities section. The specific writing activities have a (W) next to them, otherwise the activity is more of a graphic organizer.

Reading and Writing: adjectives, all about me, character web, journal, letter, parts of speech, persuasive essay, snake with an S, real or make believe, story of my life, story web, tell a story, thinking about poetry, verb forms, vocabulary words

Social Studies: a time in the past, citizenship, community comparison, community services (W-writing activity as opposed to a graphic organizer), culture comparison, effect of an event, goods and services, historical event, holidays, neighborhood map, now and long ago, rules rule, signs, state report, wants and needs

Science: animal classification, animal concept map, balanced meal, cause and effect, clouds, experiment (W), explore with senses, food web, habitats, measurement tools, recoding observations (W), seasons, simple cycles, simple machines, this weeks weather.

Math: alike and different, alternative solutions, building rectangles, caterpillar subtraction, estimation, factor maker, fraction action, fraction and decimals,

making change, making sets, math puzzles, patterns, rectangles and triangles, shapes, tens and ones.

More: cause and effect, chain of events, classifying ideas, comparison, concept map, fact or opinion, five facts, get ready (dressing children for the weather), KWL, responding to questions, supporting details, the question wheel, Venn diagram, webbing, writing directions.

Personal note: I was able to download this program through Kidspiration for a thirty-day trial. I was very impressed with everything this program could do. I especially liked the way the computer would verbalize what the students had written. Inspiration is the partner to Kidspiration and it is focused on grades 6-adult. Inspiration is also available for a thirty-day free trial.

3. KidPix Deluxe

Broderbund

Perspective: semiotic, sociolinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspects of Literacy: pragmatic, affective, semantic

Type: tool

Ages: 6 on up

Price: \$5.95 Smart-eStore.com

Of all the programs reviewed, Kid Pix Deluxe has the most features for a making a presentation. There are so many things you can do, that I couldn't describe them all. I tried to give you most of the main features so that you would be able understand the program and its uses to see if it fits your classroom needs. Also this is the only program I reviewed with a Spanish mode.

Main Page- 6 main options described below, plus top tool bar at the top

File: open, quit

Goodies: small kids mode (I wasn't sure what this option was all about), turn tool sounds off/on

1. Wacky TV-choose a movie to watch (short 20 minute moving graphics), after you pick a movie, you can stop, play, pause, rewind, sound off/on and use the mixer (adds special effects to the movie)

2. Paint a picture

File: new, open a picture, import graphic, save a picture, export a graphic, print, printer setup, return to picker

Edit: undo, cut, copy, paste

Toolbox: edit a stamp, alphabet text, turn tool sound off, switch to Spanish, paint text to background

Goodies: pick a stamp set, pick a hidden picture, pick a draw me (gives an verbal and text description and the student draws it), pick a color me (coloring book), pick more pictures, pick a movie, play movie, record sound, play sound
Speech: read text aloud (reads what you wrote), pick a voice, how to pronounce

Side tool bar: pencil, line, square, circle, paint brush, paint can, mixer, eraser, Large A (stamps letters), typewriter (type text), stamp (stamp pictures), truck (moves pieces of picture around), eye dropper (couldn't figure out what this did), face (oops button). Each time you click on a button from the side tool bar, a tool bar opens at the bottom of the screen, which allows for more options when using the chosen side bar feature. For example when choosing the pencil- the bottom choices are line width.

3. Slide show- make a show with pictures and movies

File: new, open slide show, save slide show, save *.avl, save as stand alone, return to picker

Edit: undo, cut, copy, paste

Goodies: play once, play looped, clean up, turn tool sound off, background color, turn manual advance on (?)

The screen shows 9 delivery type trucks and on the side of each truck there is a space for your slide. Below the space for the slide, you have the options to pick a picture, pick a sound and pick a transition (how each slide is transitioned to the next.)

4. Moopies-use the wacky brush to make a moving picture

File: new, open moopi, save a moopi, import graphic, save for slide show, save as a stand alone, return to picker

Edit: undo, cut, copy, paste

Toolbox: edit a stamp, turn tool sound off

Goodies: pick a stamp set, pick a background, pick a sound, stop sound

Side tool bar: same as in paint a picture except the paint brush, mixer, A large, and stamps all create moving graphics.

5. Stampimater- drag stamps across the screen and they'll keep moving

File: new, open a stampimation, save a stampimation, import graphic, save for slide show, save as stand alone, return to picker

Edit: undo, cut, copy, paste

Toolbox: edit a stamp, turn tool sound off

Goodies: pick a stamp set, pick a background, pick a sound, stop sound

Side tool bar: same as in paint a picture except when you pick a stamp, there are many options to make it move.

6. **Digital Puppets:** make the puppet move by typing on the keyboard

File: new, open a puppet, save a puppet, import graphic, save for slide show, save as stand alone, return to picker

Goodies: pick a puppet, pick background, pick sound, stop sound

The puppets are graphics of people, animals and aliens. When you type on the key board, the puppet moves (like the mouth opening and closing). You can record the movements and play them back.

Personal note: This program had great features for making a presentation, it was really fun to play around to see what it could do, I think students would have fun too. I do wish though that it had a help or tutorial program or a verbal statement about each button before I clicked on that particular button. It also used some more advanced saving and opening techniques, which might be a bit confusing at first.

4. Creativity Workshop

ARKOSE Software, Inc.

Perspective: Sociolinguistic

Stance: neutrality, and aesthetic

Aspect: affective

Type: Tool based

Age: 1st Grade and up

Price: \$11.99

Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to the Creativity Workshop™. This is the place for children to have fun while building critical literacy and computer skills. In the Creativity Workshop, youngsters can improve their reading, writing, and computer abilities as they let their natural creativity run free.

What Can I do in the Creativity Workshop?

The various activities in the Creativity Workshop are suited to children of different ages and skill levels. Use **Parent Setup** to select which activities will be available for each child. The activities include:

ABC Book • This activity helps younger children learn the alphabet by associating letters with words and pictures.

Me! By Me! • This activity allows children to write a simple book about themselves. They answer questions about themselves and illustrate the book with fun pictures. An advanced book for older children stretches their creativity and writing skills.

Sign Studio • This activity lets children create signs and posters to hang around the house.

Card Maker • With this activity, children can make cards for family and friends.

Calendar Maker • Children can illustrate monthly calendars using this activity.

Letters, Etc. • This activity provides a simple word processor that children can use for many writing activities. They can use templates to help them write letters, book reports, and a journal, or they can use a blank page for complete creative freedom.

Address Book • This activity gives children a simple resource to help them contact emergency services as well as keep track of friends and family.

Chapter 3: ABC Book

Let's make an ABC Book!

1. While you're in the workshop, click the clouds in the sky to start your ABC Book.

1. Type the letter **A**.

Look at the sentence that came up. It is full of A words.

1. Click the **Stamps** button.

1. Click the top button to look at the Letters category of stamps.

The stamps you see are all things that begin with the letter A.

1. Click the airplane stamp to choose it.

The stamp will move around on your page as you move the mouse.

1. Click the size monsters until the stamp is the size you want, then click on your page to place the stamp.

Now let's draw an "A" thing of our own.

1. Click the **Drawing Tools** button.

1. Click the red dab of paint, then click the pencil.
2. Click the **Smaller** monster to draw a thinner line.
3. Use the pencil to draw an apple shape.

HINT: If you make a mistake, use the eraser. Be careful not to erase the stamp!

1. Click the red dab of paint, then click the paint can.
2. Click inside the apple shape you made.

Now you have a nice, red apple!

1. Click the **Next Page** arrow to turn the page.
2. Make B, C, and D pages like the A page you just finished.
3. Click the **Read** button to have your computer read your book to you.

Now have fun finishing your ABC Book! When you're finished,

1. Click the **Print** button to print your book.

Notes for Grownups

The ABC Book familiarizes children with the alphabet by associating pictures and words with letters. In this activity, the child creates a book with one letter per page. The child illustrates each page with pictures associated with the letter. The child can print the book when it is complete.

Chapter 4: Me! By Me!

Let's make a book all about you!

1. While you're in the workshop, click the big locked book to start the book about you.
2. Click on the **Written by** line, then type your name.
2. Click the **Next Page** arrow to turn the page.
3. Click on the **My name is** line, then type your name.

4. Click the **Stamps** button.

2. Use the **Heads, Hair, and Faces** stamps to create a picture of yourself.

or

2. Click the **Next Page** arrow to turn the page.

3. Use stamps or drawing tools to draw pictures of your family.

HINT: You can press **CTRL+V** to paste any bitmap (*.BMP) image from the Clipboard into your book.

2. Use the text tools to type the names of your family members, then turn the page. Fill in the blanks and make pictures on each page. You can make pictures of your house, your favorite foods, your hobbies, and more. You can make the pages silly or serious. Soon you will have a whole book all about you!

2. Click the **Print** button to print your book.

Notes for Grownups Regarding Me! By Me!

The Me! By Me! book allows children to write a book about themselves while learning about words and word processing. This activity has two levels. Use **Parent Setup** to choose the appropriate level for each child. Me! By Me! has two different levels of interaction that change based on the age of the child using Creativity Workshop. Level 1 of the Me! By Me! book contains several pre-defined pages. On each page, a question or uncompleted statement about the child (physical appearance, favorite food, and so on) will guide the child in creating the book. Children can continue to fill blank pages after completing the pre-defined pages. Children can also skip pre-defined pages.

When at least four of the pre-defined pages are complete, the child can print the book. Skipped pages will not print. Older children who use the Level 2 version of Me! By Me! will have the opportunity to write more. For example, they will be asked to describe what they like about their best friend.

You should be prepared to guide your child when he or she experiences a first case of "writer's block." When a child says "I don't know what to write," have them finish the following statement verbally: "Well, what I really mean to say is..." Then have the child type what he or she said. ***Tips on Printers and Page Layout***

You can change the page layout from portrait to landscape from the Printer settings (**Start > Settings > Printers > Properties**), and the Creativity Workshop will change the orientation of the full-page activities (Writing Activities, Calendars, Signs) and scale graphics to match.

Tips on Pasting Bitmap (BMP) Images into Documents

You can put a graphic in a Creativity Workshop document as long as it is in BMP format or can be saved to a BMP format (many graphics packages, Arkose Works, Corel Draw, and Corel Presentations will save files in BMP format.). This could be a picture of Mom or Dad, a NASA image of the solar system from the NASA Internet site, or a graphic from any CD-ROM collection you have. If it's a BMP image, just click on the filename in Explorer. If you like to play with pictures, you can personalize e-mail to friends with your family photo or a picture of yourself, or bring in images for school work such as science reports.

Chapter 5: Card Maker

Let's make an invitation to your birthday party!

2. While you're in the workshop, click the card to start your invitation.
2. Click the **Stamps** button.
3. Click the **Borders** button, then choose a border for your card.
4. Click the **Covers** button, then click the **Down Arrow** until you can choose the "You're Invited" cover.
5. Use the size monsters to make the "You're Invited" stamp the size you want, then click on the card to place the stamp.
4. Click the **Next Page** arrow to open the card.
5. Click the **Text Tools** button.
3. Click the **Text Styles** pad, then choose how you want the letters to look.
4. Click the card where you want the words to be, then type:

Come to my party!

HINT: Click to put the cursor (that little blinking line) in the words you typed. Then hold down the CTRL key and use the arrow keys to move the words around on the card.

4. Type your name, address, and the time and date for your party.

HINT: If you make a mistake, click the **Undo** button and start over.

2. Click the **Drawing Tools** button, click the **Shapes** star, then click the **Down** arrow until you can choose the star shape.
3. Click the **Smaller** monster to make the star smaller, then put a few stars on your card.
4. If you want, use the stamps and drawing tools to decorate the inside of your card even more.
5. Click the **Print** button to print your cards.
6. Fold your cards and send them to your friends!

Notes for Grownups Regarding the Card Maker

Children learn basic word processing skills in this activity by making cards for friends and family. Children can choose from many pre-defined card templates (such as "You're Invited," "Happy Birthday," and "I Love You"). They can also design their own cards using stamps and drawing tools.

Tips on Placing Text in Graphics Activities

You can add text to most of the activities, even if they're graphics-oriented, like the Card Maker. Kids will enjoy writing poems or stories over a background in the Card Maker or Sign Studio. Sometimes this requires a color printer to print well, but often the background will be light enough that black text looks great.

When you click the Text tools button while in the Card, Sign, or Calendar activities, adding text works differently than it does in the Writing Activities. Each time you click the mouse to locate text in a different part of the picture, you can create a separate piece of text. This gives you lots of control over exactly where that text is located. You can create a poem in which each stanza is in a different part of the screen, with different fonts and color. Because each piece of text is separate, though, you have to spell check each piece separately. And you can place two pieces of text so they overlap each other.

Chapter 6: Sign Studio

Let's make a sign to hang on your bedroom door!

3. While you're in the workshop, click the electric sign to start you sign.
 1. Click the **Stamps** button, then click the **Stop Sign** button.
 2. Click the **Down Arrow** until you can choose the **Do Not Disturb** sign.
 3. Click the **Text tools** button.
 1. Click the **Text Styles** pad, then choose how you want the letters to look.
 2. Click the sign just under the word "Disturb," then type **Genius at work! Please Knock!**
 3. Click the **Center Text** monster.
 1. Click the **Print** button to print your sign.

Making Pictures

You can use Sign Studio to make pictures.

1. While at the Sign Studio activity desktop, click the **Stamps** button, then click the **Colored Background** button.
2. Choose the **Scary Castle** background.
 1. Choose some fantasy characters to put into the castle.
 2. Now try using the drawing tools to draw your own dragon.

HINT: You can use the **Eyedropper** to choose a color from something already in the picture. When you click the eyedropper on something, the paint can fills with that color. The pencil will be that color, too. You can also choose a black and white background and color it yourself.

Notes for Grownups Regarding Sign Studio

In the Sign Studio, children can create signs and posters. This activity encourages self-expression and communication, as well as letting children decorate their homes and classrooms. There are many sign templates to choose from. Children can also choose colored or black and white backgrounds. Backgrounds can be decorated with stamps and drawing tools. Black and white backgrounds can be colored with drawing tools or printed and colored with crayons.

Tips on Moving Blocks of Text Around the Page

In the Sign, Card, and Calendar activities, you can easily place a block of text right where you want it. This lets you combine text and graphics really well. Place the I-beam cursor within the text block you want to move. Hold down the Control key and use the arrow keys to move the text block around. You do have to left-justify the text block for this to work; centered text and right-justified text will stay where it is.

Chapter 7: Calendar Maker

Let's make a calendar!

1. While you're in the workshop, click the calendar to start your calendar.

1. Click on the current month.

Is there a holiday this month? Does anyone you know have a birthday this month?

Choose a special day for this month.

1. Click the **Stamps** button.
 1. Choose a stamp to put on your special day.
 2. Click the **Smaller** monster to make the stamp fit, then click on the special day to place the stamp.
 3. Click the **Text Tools** button, then type the name of the special occasion--it might be **My Birthday** or **Susan's Party**.
 4. Use the drawing tools and stamps to decorate your calendar.
 5. Click the **Print** button to print your calendar.

Hint: To place a fancy month stamp on your calendar, you'll need to cover up the existing black-lettered month name on the calendar. To do this, choose the drawing tools and click on the white-colored paint dab. Then color over the black-lettered month name. This will allow you to stamp the fancy month name on your calendar without the black-lettered name showing through.

Notes for Grownups Regarding the Calendar Maker

This activity not only provides a creative outlet for children, it can also help you teach them about time. You can teach them to plan ahead and anticipate special events with them. Making a calendar can be a regular, monthly activity you do with your child.

Chapter 8: Letters, Etc.

Let's do some writing! Writing can be a lot of fun, especially if you write to tell someone else all about something.

1. While you're in the workshop, click the computer keyboard to start writing.

1. Choose the kind of writing you want to do.

The **Writing** area of Creativity Workshop includes special forms called "templates." (A template is a special document that already has words in it to guide you in your writing.) There are templates for letters, book reports, or journal entries. If you choose to use a template, click right after the words on any line to write more on the topic of those words. You can also erase the template words if you want to. If you choose **Blank**, you will have a blank area where you can write whatever you want to.

Write a Letter

Writing a letter to someone can be very exciting. You can write to friends and family. You can even write to famous people. You can tell them about things you like, and things you don't like. They may even send you an answer! When you Choose **Letters**, you will see several letter templates on a cork board.

1. Choose a letter template.

Note: When you drag your mouse over each letter on the corkboard, Creativity Workshop will announce out loud what type of letter each template is for.

1. Hold the mouse button down and drag over the **recipient's name**, then type in the name of the person you're sending the letter to.

2. Finish your letter. You can select and type over any or all of the suggestions on the template.
1. When you finish typing, click the **Spelling Bee** so he can check the words you wrote.

IMPORTANT: Although the Spelling Bee knows how to spell lots of words, he doesn't recognize many people's names. Please be patient with him.

1. If you want, you can use stamps and drawing tools to decorate your letter.
2. Click the **Read** button to hear how your letter will sound.
3. Click the **Print** button to print your letter.
4. Have your parent or teacher help you mail your letter. Don't forget the postage!

Write a Book Report

If you go about it the right way, even homework can be fun. Use the Book Report template to help you write a book report you can be proud of.

1. Click the **Text Tools** button.
2. Type your book report. You can select and type over any or all of the suggestions on the template.

1. If you want to move a sentence to a different place, hold the mouse button down and drag the pointer over the sentence.
2. Click the **Scissors**.
3. Click in your report where you want the sentence to be, then click the **Glue**.
4. When you finish typing, click the **Spelling Bee** so he can check the words you wrote.

IMPORTANT: Although the Spelling Bee knows how to spell lots of words, he doesn't recognize many people's names. Please be patient with him.

1. If you want, you can use stamps and drawing tools to decorate your book report.
2. Click the **Read** button to hear how your report will sound.
3. Click the **Print** button to print your book report.

Tips on Easy Ways to Find and Manage Documents

To make it easier to find documents after you save them, try a few ways to give each one a different first page. For reports, use a title with large type that shows up on the corkboard. With letters or other documents, you might use a stamp graphic or picture on the first page.

Tips on Using Writing Activities Templates or Making Your Own

For text documents like letters and homework reports, you might want to use one of your past documents as a template the next time you create that same type of document. That way, things like your name, your teacher's name and special formatting are already done. If you do this, you just have to be careful to change the titles, dates and other important things that are different. And don't forget to use the Address Book so you only have to type in addresses once! (The Copy and Paste buttons help you do this easily.) The new version of your letter or book report will show up on the main corkboard.

Keep a Journal

Keeping a journal can be like writing a letter to yourself. When you write regularly in your journal, you tell about how life is for you. You write things that you want to remember. Reading your journal a year from now will be lots of fun!

When you first come into the journal, today's date is at the top of the page.

1. Click the **Text Tools** button.
2. Type your journal entry.
3. Click the **Help** apple for suggestions on what to write about.

1. When you finish typing, click the **Spelling Bee** so he can check the words you wrote.

IMPORTANT: Although the Spelling Bee knows how to spell lots of words, he doesn't recognize many people's names. Please be patient with him.

1. If you want, you can use stamps and drawing tools to decorate your journal entry.
2. Click the **Read** button to hear how your entry will sound.
3. Click the **Print** button to print your journal.

IMPORTANT: The journal module only saves the most recent copy of your journal. Each time you make changes and save them, the version you save becomes the current version. There is no way to go back to an earlier version of your journal, so be sure you want the changes you've made before you click save!

Writing Other Things

By choosing the **Blank** option, you can write about anything you want. You can write a play, or a story, or even a report for school.

Of course you can use stamps and drawing tools to illustrate and decorate your writing.

You can even paste in text that you have copied from somewhere else, like an online site.

Have your parent or teacher help you.

Notes for Grownups Regarding Letters, etc.

This word processor is designed to let your children explore the world of writing. They will be able to learn all the basics of word processing, including printing, saving, fonts, cutting, pasting, and so on.

Children will almost certainly turn to you for guidance for the first time they face a blank page. Be prepared with suggestions to help them into self-guided creativity.

Children love to write notes and letters to their friends and family. This activity will help older children draft letters to many different people. Different letter templates (such as concern, thanks, get well, and invitation) guide children in the fundamentals of good communication.

Teaching children to study and do homework is critical to their success in life. This activity can help them enjoy their school work.

Older children will enjoy writing in the journal about significant events in their lives. Be sure to help your child think of things to write about. Keep in mind that the journal is a cumulative document and only the most recent version is saved. In other words, it is designed so that children can keep adding entries, and all the entries stay in one document. Children can make changes in what they're written previously, but once they have saved those changes, there is no way to go back to an earlier version of the journal.

Chapter 9: Address Book

Let's make your very own Address Book!

1. While you're in the workshop, click the rotary address file to start your address book.
1. Click the **Add a New Card** button.
2. Type your name, address, and phone number on the card.
3. Use stamps to decorate the card.
4. Click the **Add a New Card** button again, then type your best friend's name, address and phone number.
5. Add cards for other important people, like parents, grandparents, teachers, doctors, and so forth.

Using Address Book as Your Communications Center

You can use the Address Book to send electronic mail (e-mail) to people.

Click the **Add a New Card** button.

1. In the **E-Mail** field, type the E-Mail address of the person you want to add.

Sending E-Mail

You can send cards, letters, signs, or anything you make with the Creativity Workshop to someone via e-mail.

1. When you finish your project, click the **Address Book** button.
2. Use the **Previous Card** and **Next Card** arrows to find the card you want.
3. Click the **E-Mail** button.

1. Have your parent or teacher show you how to use the e-mail program on your computer.

The message will already be addressed to the person on your card, and your project will be attached to the message.

HINT: If you type **fax:number** in the **E-Mail** field of the address card, then click the **E-Mail** button, you can send your work via fax.

Notes for Grownups Regarding the Address Book

This valuable resource helps your children keep track of friends and family, as well as services they may need. Adding information to the address book will encourage thought and develop organizational skills in the child. Help your children fill the Address Book. The Address Book can be helpful tool when teaching children how to deal with emergencies. Create cards for Emergency 911 and Poison Control as you instruct your children.

Children can also use the Address Book when they write letters. **Faxing from the Creativity Workshop** Using the Windows 95 fax services requires that you have installed software called a 32-bit MAPI server. You will also need to have a modem. Microsoft Exchange is the most common MAPI server used in the home environment. You may already have this installed, especially if you subscribe to the Microsoft Network online service. See your Windows 95 documentation for more information.

Chapter 10: Bonus Activities

Have you found the bonus games and stories yet? You need to click on all the things in the Creativity Workshop to find them.

There is a story about a dog who brings home an unusual bone. Watch out! There is also a story about some funny bugs. Click on the pictures in the stories to see some fun animation.

You can also play a typing game.

1. When you first go into the game, choose a face to represent you.

In the jungle you will meet a monster. He does not want you to learn how to type!

1. When you see a letter or number, quickly type it on the keyboard.

When you type the right letter or number, you will get a point. See your score by your picture? Look how disappointed that monster is!

But if you take too long, or type the wrong thing, the monster gets a point and looks very happy.

If you can get 20 points, you win!

Notes for Grownups Regarding the Bonus Activities

The bonus activities promote development of two critical skills, reading and keyboarding. The keyboard skills game is a good way to help young children become familiar with the location of letters and numerals on the keyboard. The two stories, with their interactive animation, can help develop a love of reading. *Secret Hot Spots Revealed*

We didn't want to spoil the magic of letting you discover things for yourself, but here are a couple of really neat hot spots you'll want to know about, especially for preschoolers who are just learning to use the computer.

- Ladybug on spine of book: "Bugs" interactive storybook
- Bone on spine of book: "Bones" interactive storybook
- Purple "Monster" bookend: keyboard activity which helps kids learn where keys are on the keyboard

5. Amazing Writing Machine

Broderbund

Perspective: cognitive psychology

Stance: Transformational

Aspect: Semantic, Pragmatic, and Syntactic

Type: Tool based and Tutorial

Age: 1st grade-12th grade (I feel that this could be used all the way up into high school)

Price: \$15.99

The Amazing Writing Machine is a wonderful creative writing and drawing experience. It has a variety of writing forms to choose from. There are 4 different essays, 4 different letters, 10 different stories, 16 different poems, and 4 different journal entries. Children can create in their own words or pick from different styles that they can fill in certain key places with words, or phrases. The children can decorate with pictures, borders, etc. They can print only the finished product and they have the option to: check spelling, use the info saurus, address book, swamp stamps, alphabet texts, tool sounds, and noisy typing. These choices are written in childlike manner. The neat thing about this is that

the main menu is a picture of a machine with blinking lights and sounds. It is very neat and totally eye catching.

6. Orly's Draw-A-Story

Broderbund Software

Perspective: cognitive psychology, sociolinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspects of literacy: pragmatic, affective

Type: problem based, some tutorial, tool

Ages: 5-10

Price: \$14.95 smartkidssoftware.com

Draw a story is a unique program, which allows students to interact with a story by adding their own drawn pictures, which actually appear in the story. They can also create their own story by adding pictures and words. The program is set in Jamaica and is narrated or directed by an 8-year-old girl name Orly. Through out the program Orly gives directions and makes funny comments.

The main screen gives you the following options

1. **Menu**-with these options: quit, delete story, print, sound control, go back and credits
2. **Learn**-students are given a step-by-step interactive tutorial on how to use the draw/doodle function of this program.
- 3 **Play**- the students may pick from 4 stories to interact with (The Strange Princess, Lancelot: Bug Eater, The Ugly Troll People and One Big Wish) or they may create their own story or play on the doodle pad. When the student chooses a story, Orly then tells the story and at certain parts the student is directed to draw something, which then appears in the story when Orly tells the next part of the story. When the story is finished, the students can give the story a new title, change the pictures if wanted and then watch the finished story with no interruptions.

When the student chooses to create their own story (the screen is set up like a book), they pick a background scene, add a picture or make their own, pick a sound, and then add words on the adjacent page. The student can then turn the page and continue with their story.

4. **Junkyard**-All the save stories and pictures are located here.

Personal note: This is my favorite program that I reviewed. It is unique and I like the way the user could interact with the story by adding their own pictures. My five year old loved this program too and could easily navigate through it.

7. Lisa Franks Paper Play Studio

Mindscape

Perspective: sociolinguistic

Stance: neutrality, aesthetic

Aspects of literacy: affective

Type: tool based

Ages: 8 on up

Price: \$10.00 cdromhouse.com

This is a colorful program focusing on making artsy type projects from a template. Most directions are verbalized.

The opening screen gives the following options:

New, open, go online, tutorial and exit.

When new is selected the student goes to:

Step 1-pick a project from the following: greeting card, envelopes, stationary, stickers, photo pages, certificates, invitations, post cards, card boxes, note paper, note cards, signs, book marks, pencil wrappers, postalletts (?), wrapping paper, Avery projects.

Step 2 Create a design or pick from one of their templates (i.e. greeting card-birthday card)

Step 3 Graphics-add backgrounds, characters, cool sayings, extra stuff, holiday pictures and flip, rotate and crop these graphics.

Step 4 Text-add or change text, add Lisa Lingo (awesombilities, checksellent etc), spell check, change font, color, size, B, I, U and alignment

Add effects to the text: shape, shadow, gradient fill and shape, pattern fill, color fill, text color, outline color, width color.

At the top of the screen there is a tool bar with the following options:

File Edit View Graphics Text Effects Address Book Help

Personal note: Lisa Franks has a line of toys or stationary or something like that, she also has an on-line site, but I didn't explore it except to open it up. All of her graphics are very girlish. The user must have some knowledge of how to use the top of the screen tool bar functions to create projects. I'm not sure of the value of this program in a classroom when there are so many other paint type programs with more options.

8. Reading Blaster 9-12

Knowledge Adventure

Perspective: psycholinguistic and cognitive psychology

Stance: utilitarian

Aspects of Literacy: semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, affective, (it's fun to play)

Type: drill and practice, problem solving

Ages: 9-12

Price: 5dollarsoftware.com \$5.00

In this game, the player must move through out a house of a mad scientist collecting clues to trying and figure out what the scientist did with 6 citizens from the town. To collect the clues, the students must play games in which a number of skills are practiced. The clues are then put together to figure out what happened to the citizens. Through out the game there are a number of additional reading opportunities about the different characters.

The main screen gives you the following options:

1. **Play** (see explanation below)
2. **Sticker maker** (use a paint type program to make printable stickers (not sure what it had to do with the whole reading blaster program)).
3. **Activity Books** (Lydia the ghost's diary- extended reading)
4. **Exit**
5. **Reading Tips** (see explanation below)
6. **Demo-** Math Blaster

Play

1. Mystery mode or explore mode (the mystery mode allows the player to collect clues after playing each game, while in the explore mode, the player doesn't collect clues after playing the word games)
2. Sign in
3. Choose new or saved game
4. Pick level for a new game

The following is a list of the skills that the students practice while playing in the mystery mode. There is a help mode if a student doesn't understand the game or the skill.

Kitchen: drawing conclusions, reading for detail, comprehension

Graveyard: visual memory, figurative speech, sentence construction

Sentence Spinner: parts of speech, sentence construction, sentence completion

Catacombs: synonyms and antonyms

Word Ladder: analogies, multiple word meaning and definitions

Fortune Cookie/Message in a bottle: main idea

Sequencing: logical reasoning, problem solving

Hidden clues: reading for detail, deductive reasoning, extracting key information, and inferences

Misc: reading for entertainment, reading for information

Reading Comprehension: verbal strategies and critical thinking

Reading Tips: This section gives a number of ideas to parent or teacher of how to work with their child while playing the game (questions to ask etc.). They then give a number

of activities that a parent or teacher could do with a child while not playing the game to reinforce the skills learned in the game. There is also a reading list of books for students in grades 3-7 and a list of books for parents.

Personal note: I loved this game; it was definitely challenging, but it was also fun. The game would take several hours- plus to complete the whole challenge.

9. Carmen Sandiego Word Detective

Broderbund

Perspective: psycholinguistic and cognitive psychology

Stance: utilitarian

Aspects of Literacy: semantic and syntactic

Type: drill and practice, problem based

Ages: 8 to 12?

Price: \$5.00 5dollarsoftware.com

This program is similar to Reading Blaster. The user must navigate through different villain hideouts collecting passwords. To collect a password, the user must play a grammar type word game (see description below). After they have collected all the passwords, then the student can collect a key to free an agent. The freed agent will give you clues to help you find the next passwords and keys. Once all the agents are freed you can go to the master Babble-On panel to save the world from the Babble-On laser by putting a sentence together using all the clues from the agents.

1. **Log-in** or select from list

2. **Main screen**

Options

Training simulator: allow the user to practice all the word games

Progress: shows students progress in a % plus shows problem words

Login new detective

About Carmen

Quit

Transport: The user must select a hideout to investigate and then click launch to take them to the hideout. In each hideout there are 2 word games to play to collect passwords.

E-mail: gives written and verbal directions regarding the mission

Word games or what they call them device panels. In each word game there are several options, they include, level, dictionary (in case you want a definition), rules, reset (resets the current activity so you can start over), undo and lesson number. The user must play the game several times before the computer gives them a password.

Fusion Chamber: The user is given a part of a word and they must click on the definition. Then another part of the word is shown and the user must click on that definition. The parts are put together to create a new word and the user must pick the new definition. Works with base words, suffix and prefixes.

Spellanyzer: The computer verbalizes a word and shows a sentence with a missing word. The player must type in the missing word. When using the spellanyzer, the player has the option of using a custom spelling list.

Code Breaker: This section is like a seek and find only with depth. When a word from the list is found the tiles that the letters are on disappear and there may be another tile underneath to use for another word. There are two ways of playing this game depending on your level and lesson, 1.as a searcher for given words and 2.as a builder of new words.

Micropix: The student is given a story and words of different parts of speech are left out (noun, verb, adj. Etc.). The player must pick from a list, a word which will fit in the sentence.

Power Pack: The student must put a list of words in alphabetically order.

Special options: Teachers may log in to the program and create customized spelling lists and edit the player roster.

Personal note: I really like the fact that you can create your own customized spelling lists. The graphics and story are entertaining. The program wasn't as challenging as Reading Blaster 9-12.

10. Reading Blaster 4-6

Knowledge Adventure

Perspective: Psycholinguistic- helps to understand the reading process; children's efforts become generative instead of negative.

Stance: Utilitarian

Aspect: Metacognitive

Type: Problem-Solving

Age: 4-6

Price: \$9.99

This software has different games that involve reading. There is the Clamshell Scramble where children have to put the letters in the correct order to spell the word that was called out. The Sanddollar matching is matching the letters to the correct sound that it makes. It is sort of like a memory game, where the sound is heard and then the child picks a card that flips to see if it is the right letter that matches that sound. The Letter Dive is where the children find the upper and lower case letters in a stated order. The Seahorse Race is where the children click on the correct shapes that match speed the seahorse up so that

they can win the race. The Hidden Picture is where they match the correct groups, like vegetables, toys, pets, clothing, things that you see in a city, etc.

There is a Treasure Room that has the name of the child printed at the top. This part allows the child to print flash cards. There is a message board where they can make cards, signs, pictures, etc. A star chart also shows how many stars that the child has earned. The stars show that they have mastered that reading game on that level. It is also printable. There is an option to color the hidden pictures that they have found. A story corner that can be read silently by the child, or the computer can read it to them. The story corner can also be printed. There is B-mail, and this is where the child can write a letter to the characters in the game. The letter has been started for them, but there are missing words. They can click the blanks to choose from the word choices. After 5 stars are earned then the treasure hunt begins.

11. Bailey' Book House

Edmark

Perspective: linguistic and psycholinguistic

Stance: Utilitarian

Aspects: graphophonemic, semantic, syntactic

Type: drill and practice, tutorial and problem based

Ages: 2-5

Price: \$2.95 Half.com (no I'm not kidding it was \$2.95)

The main screen shows a picture of Bailey the cat sitting in a chair reading a book. The student can pick from several different activities. Each activity is represented by an object in the room. The student clicks on the object to do the activity. Listed below are the objects/activities the student can choose. Within each activity there are a couple of different options. Any verbal directions can be repeated by clicking on the red circle next to the text. Text is highlighted as it is verbalized.

1. Clock (rhyming) The computer says a sentence and the student must click on the word that rhymes to fit the sentence. Words chosen are represented by a graphic picture and text.

Option: The computer says a sentence and then asks the student to find a word that rhymes with _____.

2. Potato Head looking person (vocabulary and adjectives)- The student is told to make a friend. There is a picture of a potato head and the child clicks on different words to change the potato head. For example: straight, curly or big arms. As the student clicks the options, the picture changes to represent what they have chosen. The student can change arms, eyes, legs and mouth.

Option: The computer verbalizes a sentence describing the potato head. For example “My friend has orange arms”. The student must click on the correct describing word from a list. In the example they would click orange.

3. Letter carnival (rhyming, beginning sounds and ending sounds). The first screen shows a number of different pictures (like dog, bat etc.). When the student clicks on the picture, the computer says the words and spells it, then says it again sounding out each letter of the word.

Options: The rhyming coaster. There are 3 cars on a roller coaster, the first car has a word in it and the student must click on pictures that either rhymes with the first word or the other option is that has the first letter sound of the first word. Once a correct picture is chosen, the new word goes in the next roller coaster car. The student must pick another word to fill the last roller coaster car.

4. Make a story: The computer verbalizes a sentence and the student then clicks on a picture to finish the sentence. For example: This is a story about _____. The student then goes to the next page and picks another option to the story. After the whole story is composed, Bailey the cat will read the story back to the student. The student can also print the story.

5. Clown and dog (prepositions): The student clicks on a word and the clown then tells the dog what to do. For example the clicked word is “behind.” The clown then says “Go behind the dog house.” The dog will then go behind the doghouse. The student can pick whether or not the clown or the dog gives the directions.

Option: The computer verbalizes a sentence, “The dog is behind the doghouse.” The student must then click on the word “behind” from a list of words.

6. Letter machine: The screen shows a picture of a keyboard and computer screen. The student clicks on any letters of the alphabet and the computer verbalizes the letter, and shows a word that starts with that letter.

Option: The computer tells the student to find the letter _____. The student must click on the letter.

7. Let’s make a kids card: The student first picks a saying to go on their card. The student can either pick from a list of sayings to go on the card or they can fill in the blank of a saying, for example: Have a _____ Day. A _____ for you. Come to _____. The students then pick a picture to go on the card. Students click on an arrow key to see the different pictures and when they find a picture they like, they click on the picture and it is automatically stamped on the card. The students can print out the card.

12. Reading Basics Sesame Street

Encore

Perspective: linguistic, psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspects of literacy: graphophonemic, semantic, syntactic

Type: drill and practice

Ages: 3-7

Price: \$5.95 smart-e store.com

This is a fun and easy to navigate reading program. The main screen gives the user 6 different books (activities) to choose from. After choosing a book, the student chooses a level. Listed below are the 6 different books to choose from.

History Mystery

The student makes three words from a word family by using beginning letter sounds that match the picture.

To complete the words

1. When you click on a letter, the cursor becomes that letter. Elmo names it and sounds it out
2. Move the letter to the correct spot to complete a word, and click.
3. When all three words are complete, the great stone doors will open to a guest Muppet reinforcing the word family
4. Rest your cursor (or letter) over one of the three options and one of the Muppets will identify it for you.

Easy Level: Make three two-letter word families (e.g. sea, tea, pea).

Medium Level: Make three three-letter word families (e.g. cake, rake, lake).

Hard Level: Make three three-letter word families with at least one word in each family that begins with a consonant blend (e.g. tr- for train, cl- for clock).

Skills: Building word families, letter-sound recognition, consonant blends, recognizing word-object relationships.

Super Grover

The student makes a word by connecting the initial letter sound to its correct ending.

To complete the word

1. Listen to Grover's instructions.
2. Move the first part of the word (it will be your cursor) to the correct word ending to complete the word that names the object to be rescued
3. When the correct word is completed, the item will be rescued
4. Hold the word-beginning next to the word-ending so that it sparkles and Grover will sound-out both word parts together

Easy Level: Make a three-letter word beginning with a consonant. Only the correct answer will form a real word and the object will have a name tag to identify it.

Medium Level: Make a four-letter word beginning with a consonant. All of the word endings make real words.

Hard Level: Make a word beginning with a consonant blend. Only the correct answer will form a real word.

Skills: Word-building, letter recognition, word-object recognition, consonant blends.

Beam Me

The student matches a letter and it's sound to an object that begins with that letter.

To select an object:

1. Observe the letter or consonant blend as it is named and sounded-out
2. Click on the object or objects that match the given letter or consonant blend
3. After the correct objects are selected, the Martians will beam them home
4. Leave your cursor over any object that sparkles and the Muppets will identify it

Easy Level: Collect one object beginning with a given consonant. The answer pool consists of three objects.

Medium Level: Collect two objects beginning with a given consonant. The answer pool consists of five objects.

Hard Level: Collect two objects beginning with a given consonant blend. The answer pool consists of five objects.

Skills: Letter-sound recognition, consonant blends

Cooking With Cookie

The student must identify letters to create three-letter, four-letter and five-letter words.

To create the word:

1. Observe and listen as the correct word is revealed
2. Click on the letter you want to choose from the pans on the wall, and the cursor becomes that letter
3. Move the letter to Cookie Monster and click. (If the letter is correct, it will go into the mixing bowl)
4. Give Cookie Monster all the letters in order from left to right to create the word
5. When the word is complete, Cookie Monster prepares the food
6. If you want help, click on Elmo or Cookie Monster
7. If you give letters to Elmo, he will identify them

8. To hear the food name again, click on the menu item

Easy Level: The child must identify letters to create three-letter words. There is a five-letter pool to choose from and the word and picture are visible.

Medium Level: The child must identify letters to create four-letter words. There is a six-letter pool to choose from and the word and picture are visible.

Hard Level: The child must identify letters to create five-letter words. There is an eight letter pool to choose from and only the picture is visible.

Note: Elmo will ask for the letters by name, one at a time.

Skills: Letter recognition, introduction to spelling.

Zoetry Poetry

Students match words with objects that rhyme.

To complete the rhyme

1. Listen to Zoe's rhyme
2. Click on the object sitting on the table that completes Zoe's rhyme
3. When the correct object is chosen, Zoe will recite the complete rhyme
4. Leave your cursor over any object that sparkles and Zoe will identify it
5. If you want help, click on Zoe or Elmo

Easy Level: Zoe recites three rhyming words and the child must pick the fourth from an answer pool of three objects.

Medium Level: Zoe recites a couplet and the child must pick the rhyming word from an answer pool of four objects.

Hard Level: Zoe recites two couplets and the child must pick the rhyming word, one at a time, picking from an answer pool of five objects.

Skills: Rhyming, word-object recognition

Elmo's Wild Kingdom

Students pick the appropriate word to complete the sentence

1. Observe the sentence as it is read. (A sound effect will play in place of the blank)
2. Click on the word that completes the sentence
3. Move the word to the empty space in the sentence and click
4. When the sentence is completed correctly, Elmo will celebrate and turn the page
5. Click on the sentence or on Elmo to hear the sentence read again
6. Leave your cursor over any object that sparkles and Elmo will identify it

Easy Level: The legend provides both pictures and words of three choices.

Medium Level: The legend provides both pictures and words of four choices.

Hard Level: The legend provides three choices, each with a three letter word but no picture.

Skills: Word-meaning connection, speech-print relationship, writing.

Personal note: My preschoolers love this game because they love Sesame Street.

13. Disney Phonics Quest

Disney Interactive

www.disneyinteractive.com/learning

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: problem-solving, and drill and practice

Age: 5-8

Price: \$10.99

The Active Leveling Advantage Technology adjusts the game's difficulty to suit your student's current level of ability, this way the student is always challenged and never frustrated. There are some goal-based activities that require a series of correct moves for the student to advance your student to more difficult questions. These adjustments are made automatically, without the student being aware that he or she has changed difficulty. Voice recognition is included, but you must install it first. This new technology allows the student to answer challenging questions by speaking into the microphone. During the activities the mouse can be used at anytime. You can deactivate the voice recognition anytime during play.

In The Mountains there is Mickey's Dragon Daycare and it include these skills: Individual Letter Sounds, Matching Image to Phonetic Sounds, Categorizing, Reading, Understanding Written Words, Consonant Blends, Vowel Diagraphs, and Onsets & Rimes.

In The Genie's Riddles these skills are included: Reading, Understanding Meaning, Exposure to Sight Words, Deductive Reasoning, Rhyme, Identification of Pronunciation Errors, Homonyms, and Multiple Meaning Words.

In The Forest there is Minnie's Musical Meadow and these skills include: Rhyming, Onsets & Rimes, Consonant Blends, Vowel Diagraphs, Letter Neighborhoods, and Sounds.

In Pete's Phonics Quarry these skills are included: Word Building, Single Letter Sounds, Onsets & Rimes, Medial Vowel Sounds, Consonant Blends, Diagraphs, Letter Neighborhoods, and Correct Misspellings.

In The Town there is Duckbill Printin' Press and it includes these skills: Sight-Reading, Multiple Pronunciations, Vowel Diagraphs, Consonant Blends, Homonyms and Word Context.

In Goofy's Metalworks these skills are included: Word Structure, Letter Recognition, Syllable Recognition, Single Letter Sounds, Onset & Rimes, Rhyme, Consonant Blends, Vowel Diagraphs, and Divergent Reasoning.

This software program includes the complex system of language, and has a wide range of different activities aimed at achieving success in language topics such as comprehension, word structure, and spelling.

14. Jump*Start Phonics

Knowledge Adventure

www.knowledgeAdventure.com

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: problem-Solving, and drill and practice

Age: 4-6

Price: \$10.99

Welcome to JumpStart Learning Games Phonics!

Why Did the Bus Stop? goes from educational video to interactive learning wonder in *JumpStart Learning Games Phonics*. Hopsalot guides young learners through the JumpStart world, driving a school bus equipped with a Look-and-Listen Window which allows you to visit interesting places and play games. When you complete each game you'll earn one clue that will help you figure out why the bus stopped. Earn 3 clues and you'll get the chance to answer the question, *Why Did the Bus Stop?* Ready to play?

Sign-In

To sign in on the Look and Listen Window, type your name and click on the Hopsalot button. If you've already signed in, click on your name. If you don't see your name, click on the ARROW buttons until it appears. Then click on it.

Print Out the Look and Listen Window

Hopsalot invites you to print out the Look and Listen Window and 15 clues. That way, as you earn clues by playing the games in *JumpStart Learning Games Phonics*, you can place the clues on your own Look and Listen Window.

- Click on the PRINT button to print out the Look and Listen Window and all 15 clues.
- Color them in, ask an adult to help you cut them out, and you're ready to go.
- Click on the ARROW button to continue playing.

Main Menu

Click on any of these locations on the Main Menu to play a game:

- **Fire House**
- **Farmer MacDonald's Barn**
- **Train Station Cuckoo Clock**
- **Band Stand**

If you've already visited a location and completed that game, you can revisit it, but you won't earn any more clues at that location. No clues are found at the Band Stand.

Bus Button

Click on the BUS Button on any screen to view the Options Screen. The Options Screen allows you to access the following options:

- **Volume** - Slide the BUS button to control the volume.
- **Look-and-Listen Window** - Click on the clues you've earned so far.
- **Levels** -
 - *Content*: Click on a CONTENT LEVEL number, 1, 2, or 3, to control the content level.
 - *Gameplay*: Click on a GAMEPLAY LEVEL button, EASY, MEDIUM, or HARD, to control the gameplay level.
- **Credits** - Click on the CREDITS button to see the names of the people who worked on this product.
- **Exit** - Click on the EXIT button to exit the program.
- **Arrow** - Click on the ARROW button to return to the previous screen.

The Games

All games feature sticky "click and move" cursors. During gameplay, if you need to hear a question repeated, click on the card displaying the target item. Click on the ARROW button in any game to return to the Main Menu.

The Fire House

Help train Firefighter CJ to get ready quickly when the Fire Alarm sounds!

- An object or word appears in the top right corner of the screen.
- Press the ARROW keys to move Firefighter CJ over objects or words in the Fire House, which rhyme with the object or word in the top right corner of the screen.
- Press RETURN or ENTER key to select the rhyming object or word.
- When you've found enough rhyming objects or words on screen to complete a round you'll earn one of these items: a firefighter's helmet, a coat, pants, and boots!
- When you've completed all the games you can print them out and use them to dress up cut-outs of Firefighter CJ and Firefighter Edison!

- Dog biscuits appear throughout the Fire House. Move Firefighter CJ over the dog biscuits to pick them up.
- When Pepper the Dog blocks Firefighter CJ's way, press the SPACEBAR to throw him a dog biscuit.
- Click on the ARROW button to return to the Main Menu.

Farmer MacDonald's Barn

Rip Rat needs to clean out the loft. Can you help him by catching the correct objects?

- An object or word appears on Hattie Hen's card.
- Using your mouse, move the basket to catch only those falling objects whose names begin or end with the same sound as the word or object on Hattie Hen's card, according to her instructions.
- Each time you catch a correct object, an egg appears in the top left corner of the screen. If you catch an incorrect object, one egg is removed. When you've earned enough eggs to complete a round you'll earn a colorful Boo Boo Strip!
- When you've completed all the games you can print them out and wear them, just like Boo Boo Bunny!
- Click on the ARROW button to return to the Main Menu.

Train Station Cuckoo Clock

Tickle Cuckoos and learn about vowel sounds at the same time!

- A letter, object or word appears on Aggy Astor's card and a feather sticks to your cursor.
- When Cuckoos pop out of the Cuckoo Clock, tickle them with the feather if they display a correct letter, object or word according to Aggy Astor's instructions. Each time you tickle a correct Cuckoo, a little Cuckoo appears in the top left corner of the screen. If you tickle an incorrect Cuckoo, a little Cuckoo is removed.
- When you've earned enough Cuckoos to complete a round you'll earn one of these items: a cuckoo, a clock face, a big hand, and a little hand.
- When you've completed all the games, you can print them out and make your very own Cuckoo Clock (see instructions below)!
- Click on the ARROW button to return to the Main Menu.

Here's what you need to assemble your Cuckoo Clock:

5. Your printout of Cuckoo, the clock face, the little hand circle, and the big hand (*If you'd like to color them in, go ahead and do this before putting your Cuckoo Clock together.*)
6. A piece of cardboard that's at least as big as the clock face
7. A tack, pushpin, or brass paper fastener
8. A crayon, marker, pencil or pen
9. A pair of scissors (*Be sure to ask for cutting-out help from a grownup!*)
10. White glue

Here's how to assemble your Cuckoo Clock:

3. Using the scissors, cut out the Cuckoo pictures, the Big Clock Face, the Little Hand Circle, and the Big Hand. Cut the triangular wedge out of the Little Hand Circle. Be careful not to cut the Little Hand out of its Circle.
4. Lay the Big Clock Face down flat on the cardboard.
5. Using the crayon, marker, pencil or pen, trace around the outside of the Big Clock Face until you've drawn a complete circle. Then, put the Big Clock Face down and pick up the cardboard.
6. Using the scissors cut out the circle you drew on the cardboard.
7. Spread white glue over one side of the cardboard. Don't use too much! Use a piece of scrap paper to spread it around.
8. Hold the Big Clock Face over the glued cardboard so that you can see the numbers printed on the front. Gently place it down on top of the glued cardboard. Make sure the edges of the Big Clock Face are even with the edges of the cardboard circle.
9. Place the Little Hand Circle on top of the Big Clock Face. Make sure it's right in the center, so that the edges of the Little Hand Circle don't touch any numbers on the Big Clock Face.
10. Place the Big Hand on top of the Little Hand so that the circle on the wide end of the Big Hand overlaps the circle on the wide end of the Little Hand.
11. Carefully push the tack, pushpin, or brass paper fastener through the center hole in the circle on the wide end of the Big Hand. Keep pushing until you've pushed all the way through the Little Hand Circle and the cardboard. If you're using a brass paper fastener, bend the ends to the side after you've pushed them through the cardboard.
12. Now, slowly turn the Little Hand until it points to numbers on the clock. When it points to the time you eat lunch, glue the picture of Cuckoo eating lunch onto the Big Clock Face so that he peeks out through the window in the Little Hand Circle. When the Little Hand points to the time you go to bed, glue the picture of Cuckoo yawning in bed onto the Big Clock Face so that he peeks out through the window in the Little Hand Circle. Do this with all the pictures of Cuckoo.

That's it! Your Cuckoo Clock is complete. Turn the Little Hand around to see the things you and Cuckoo do at each hour of the day. Ask an adult to help you hang your Cuckoo Clock on the wall.

Band Stand Sing-Along

Join Hopsalot in the Band Stand for a rip-roaring Phonics sing-along!

- Just click on the name of a song you'd like to sing:
 - **Why Did the Bus Stop?**
 - **Stop! Look and Listen**
 - **Cuckoo Cuckoo**
 - **Old MacDonald Had a Farm**
 - **Where is Pepper the Dog?**
- Then sit back and enjoy a colorful music video. The words to the song will appear and highlight as the song plays. Just read and sing along!
- Click on the ARROW button to return to the Main Menu.

Putting the Bus Away

Playing with JumpStart Learning Games Phonics is busloads of fun, but every now and then you'll need to put the bus away. So what should you expect at the end of the line?

Why Did the Bus Stop?

After you've found three clues, Hopsalot asks you if you know why the bus stopped. Four possible answers are shown. Click on what you think is the correct answer.

Your Official Letter Learner's Certificate

After you've completed all the activities in JumpStart Learning Games Phonics, Hopsalot presents you with your very own Certificate of Completion.

- Click on the PRINT button to print it out.
- Click on the ARROW button to put it away.

Print-Out Fun

Hopsalot invites you to print out all the goodies you've earned while playing JumpStart Learning Games Phonics.

- Click on the ARROW button to see the different sets of printables in the Print Window.
- Click on the PRINT button to print out those, which are displayed in the Print Window. *Here's a suggestion: If you have sticker paper, why not try printing out your goodies as stickers? Then you can cut them out and make great decorations!*
- Click on the EXIT button when you're through printing.

15. Little Bear Rainy Day Activities

Creative Wonders-The Learning Company

Perspective: sociolinguistic and cognitive

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: affective

Type: tool based and tutorial

Age: 4-6

Price: \$7.99

This software was really about games and activities that small children can play, but I was looking through it anyway and there is a part of it that had cute ideas for teachers and/or parents that they could do for science activities. For instance: Bird Feeders, A Mini Garden, Ocean in a Bottle, Fizzy Lemonade, Vegetable Stamps, Nature Collage, Nature Window (making pictures with leaves), Water xylophone and Musical matching, Animal sound bingo, How many? (How many of the printed objects can you find in your house?), Guess who? (Charades with printout cards), and Memory game of animals. As a teacher you could incorporate different units or themes to some of these activities. There are also directions and printouts for these activities.

16. The Wheels on the Bus

GT Publishing

Perspective: sociolinguistic
Stance: utilitarian
Aspect: affective
Type: tool based and tutorial
Age: preschool-kindergarten
Price: \$5.99

This software sings the whole song of “The Wheels on the Bus” and it includes interactive pictures that the child can click on to see the action. There are games also: Musical Keyboard, Sing Along (the child can sing alone or along with the music), and Musical Concentration Level 1 or 2 (this is where a note is played or a few notes and the child must play the same thing back-sort of like Simon with the lights).

I’ve never really seen just musical software like this one before. I thought that it was really neat, and younger children would enjoy it. It is very happy and upbeat.

17. Word Munchers

MECC

Perspective: linguistic
Stance: utilitarian
Aspects of Literacy: graphophonemic, syntactic, semantic
Type: drill and practice
Age: 6-10ish
Price: Amazon.com \$4.25 new and used
Surplusdrom.com \$9.97

This is a basic game in which the player must move a little green monster (by clicking the mouse) to different squares on the a checkered board of 20 squares. On each square there is a picture or word. The student must make the monster eat the word or picture if it fits the stated criteria (eat all the yellow objects, or eat all the action words etc.). The player may choose to play with or without troggles. The troggles hop around the board trying to eat the green monster. After playing the board game 3 times, the computer plays a short animated story, before the student resumes play.

After choosing to play with or without troggles the player may choose the grade level and the grouping (i.e. Classification, grammar etc). The student also chooses whether or not the skill will be presented randomly or in order.

Grade 1 or 2- they work on the same groupings, but at different difficulties. The player chooses the grouping and the computer chooses the skills.

Classification: color, shapes design, classification

Grammar: naming, action and describing words

Phonics: initial and final consonants, vowels

Vocabulary: rhyming
Sentences: naming, action and describing words

Grade 3 or 4

Grammar: nouns, action verbs, adjectives, pronoun, adverbs
Phonics: vowels
Vocabulary: synonyms and antonyms
Sentences: nouns, action verbs, adjectives, pronoun, adverbs
Challenge: random picking of groupings

Grade 5

Grammar: nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronoun, adverbs, prepositions, interjections
Phonics: vowels
Vocabulary: synonyms and antonyms
Sentences: nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronoun, adverbs, prepositions, interjections
Challenge: random picks of the different groupings

Personal note: If your students need practice on any of the above skills, this software is a great way to target these skills.

18. I Love Spelling

DK Interactive

Perspective: psycholinguistic
Stance: Utilitarian
Aspects of Literacy: graphophonemic, automaticity
Type: drill and practice, problem based
Ages: 7 to 12
Price: kidsclick.com \$12.95

Students travel to 4 different planets in a hot air balloon, on each planet the student plays a spelling game. All directions are verbalized.

The first few screens offer the following choices in order.

1 or 2 players (when playing with 2 players, each player spells one word, then the other player spells)

Name-new or saved game

Level-1, 2 or 3

Choose one of the following challenges:

Astro Adventure-choose route and stay as long as you want

Incredible Space Challenge-earn game show points

Word Attack- After the computer verbalizes a word, students click on the correct spelling of a series of 3 words coming at them on the screen.

At the bottom of the screen where you pick the challenges, there are 3 other clicks they are: **Personal progress**-shows which words the student had trouble with

High scores- shows high scores

Word groups- for each level there is a series of word groups you may choose from if wanted, other wise the computer chooses for you. Some of the word groups work on a certain category i.e. A hairy spell (bald, basin, bun, coffee, cut) or other word groups work on word patterns like: cUE, dEW and rULE

The Astro Adventure and Incredible Space Challenge travel to the same planets and play the same games (see description below), the only difference is the Astro Adventure lets you play at will, and the Space Challenge lets you earn game show points.

These are the planets you travel to after you have chosen Astro Adventure or Incredible Space Challenge.

Planet Aquatica- After a word is verbalized, the student must pop bubbles containing letters to spell the word. (level 1-sooner, mother, mole, teacher, fill)

Planet Anagrama- Words are scrambled and the student must unscramble them. (level 1 milk, mall, twig)

Planet Amphibia- This is like a hangman game, the first letter is given and the students try to guess the word by picking letters. (level 1-face, rock, block ant)

Planet Arachna- The computer verbalizes a word and the student must spell the word by picking letters off a spider web. (level 1-bring, spell, hay, swim)

Personal note: This is a great way to practice spelling words. I was a bit disappointed that you could not make your own word list.

19. Jump*Start Spelling

Knowledge Adventure

www.jumpstart.com

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: drill and practice

Age: 5-8

Price: \$10.99

CJ the frog is searching for the fossil remains of his long-lost ancestors in a journey that takes him through dense jungles, over smoking volcanoes, and by giant dinosaurs! When the roar of a ferocious Tyrannosaurus Rex scares CJ and separates him from his trusty friend Edison, a family of cold cave dwellers captures the defenseless firefly -- and believe they have discovered fire! Can CJ come to the rescue before Edison's bulb burns out? Not without your help!

Put your spelling skills to the test as you guide CJ through ten levels of fun and adventure, leading him closer and closer to his final encounter with prehistoric man!

Any time you sign in with a new name, you will be prompted to select your grade level. This allows *JumpStart Spelling* to start you off with words and spelling challenges that will best suit your educational experience. As you play, the program will automatically adjust your level based on your ability. Make your grade selection and the game will begin.

How Do You Play?

JumpStart Spelling puts you in control of Perry, a perky pterodactyl. It's Perry's job to act as guide to CJ as he travels. Use the mouse to fly Perry around the screen. CJ will do his best to follow on foot. If CJ seems to get stuck, click to get him started again.

Spelling Obstacles

In order to proceed with the quest, you must direct CJ around the screen and clear all the glowing stone tablets.

- Each tablet contains a word with missing letters.
- A pterodactyl will fly by and drop letters. Use Perry to catch a letter by flying him over it and clicking. If you catch a letter you don't want, just click to release it.
- To place a letter in the word, guide Perry over the spot on the tablet where it belongs and click to have him drop it into place.
- If you drop a wrong letter into a space it will crumble. You'll have three chances to correctly spell the word. After that, you'll get a new word to spell.
- When the word is complete, CJ can continue his search!

Once you've cleared all the tablets, a dinosaur will wave you in the right direction. Guide CJ off the screen and enter the bonus round!

Timing Obstacles

Every screen contains an obstacle that requires a little extra game skill to get across. For example, you may need to guide CJ across a swinging vine, or a sporadic geyser. The way to get across these Jurassic hurdles is to correctly time CJ's approach. If your timing is off and CJ doesn't make it through, just try again.

Bonus Round

A group of dinosaurs are having trouble with their spelling and need your help.

- CJ will say a word, and each dinosaur will flip his or her signs to show a possible choice of the word.
- Click on the dinosaur with the correct word.

There are three questions total in the bonus round. The more you get right, the bigger the bonus!

Scoring

There are all sorts of ways to get points.

- Complete game screens.
- Spell words correctly.
- Prove your spelling skill to the dinosaurs!

After each round, your points will be totaled.

The Rescue!

Once you've completed all 10 screens, your way lies clear for CJ to rescue Edison. Sit back and enjoy the show!

Certificate

As a reward for rescuing Edison, you will get a Certificate of Completion. If your computer has a printer, you can print it out, along with a report showing you exactly what words you know and what words you need to work on.

20. Rollertyping

EdVenture

Perspective: semiotic and linguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspects of Literacy: automaticity

Type: tutorial, drill and practice

Ages: 8-adult

Price: \$19.99 Amazon.com

This program teaches and practices typing skills.

The first screen asks for a new or saved name of player and the gender of the new player.

Main screen:

File: new, saved (roller)blader, delete blader, level and event list

Options: music on/off, sound on/off

Charts/stats: z-hall of fame, star row, progress report, accuracy by keys and fingers, ergonomics screen

Instructions: rules

Choose level: 1 g,h

2 f,j

3 r,u

to level 20 which works on 5, 6

Choose event: Orange cones-works on accuracy

Cow jumping-accuracy

Half pipe-speed

Speed blading- speed

Sidewalk action-speed

After choosing the level and event, the computer gives a verbal tutorial and some practice on the new skills. The student is then moved to the event (orange cones, cow jumping etc). In each event the student must complete the task several times before the event is completed. After each task a report is given on words per minute, accuracy and how they did on the event (number of cows jumped etc.). At the end of the task, the student is given an average report for the event. After all the events for that level have been completed the student is given a progress report for that level.

Personal note: Seemed like a good way to teach typing but from some of the reviews I have read there are other typing programs out there that students may like better.

21. Axel's Whirled Math

Great Wave Software

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: problem-solving, and drill and practice

Age: 2nd Grade

Price: \$9.99

This software includes number concepts-understanding what # 1,2,3,4, etc. stand for. It has matching numbers with the correct number of dots on numbered tiles. It has pictures of fingers with the correct numbers, and then pictures with the correct numbers.

It also includes sorting with tiles and dots, and tiles with pictures that go into the correct basket. It also sorts the correct number of fingers and objects in the correct basket. There is a scale that shows equality between the same numbers and the same dots. The numbers do get higher and higher for the children, and the software will also break down the tens and ones for them.

22. Math Blaster

Knowledge Adventure

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: problem-solving and drill and practice

Age: 4-6

Price: \$5.95 e-smartstore or \$12.95 surplusdrom.com

This software has two modes that it can be played in: Mission Mode and Free Play.

Mission Mode has a mission that the child must complete and it will assign them to a team. One assignment must be completed before they can move onto the next mission. They can earn medals and award certificates, and there are 3 levels of difficulty on the mission, and each completed assignment is automatically saved for them.

Free Play is where the children can explore each planet on their own. They can select any activity and any difficulty level. Progress records, medals, and certificates are not available in the free play mode.

There is an awards case that they can view their medals and certificates that they have earned. The navigation map is where it shows how far they are traveling in space.

The ship tour is where the program activities are explained, and this is only done in the Mission Mode for the first time user.

The interstellar radio lets them hear a song.

The Constellations is where they can count by 1's, 2's, 5's, or 10's to connect the planets.

The Shape Circus they click on a shape to hear the shape's definition, hear a sound, or a joke. If they click on the arrow they can hear a story poem about the shape circus.

The Grow Worms is where they can click the head of the worm and drag it up and down. As the worm is pulled up more of his segments appear. If they push him down his segments disappear. There is a worm on the right that shows the total of or difference between the number of segments showing on the green and red worms. There is an equation below the worms that reflects the numbers of segments showing on each worm. Each worm as a maximum of 20 segments. If the child clicks the bubble between the green and red worm to toggle between the plus and minus signs.

The Number line works by letting them click a number and then moving the cursor to the right to add, and to the left to subtract. They can click again to select a number and the equation that they created appears above the number line.

23. Math Blaster

Knowledge Adventure

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: problem-solving and drill and practice

Age: 6-9

Price: \$9.99

Gelator, the Brain Drainer, has oozed the planet Moldar and captured Blasternaut's best friend, Spot. Blasternaut, and Galactic Commander need your help to defeat Gelator and rescue Spot.

As each subject and subject level are mastered a passport can be updated with mastery stamps. Really this is a progress report for you. There is a window that displays the date that the mission (task) was completed, along with the percentage setting, the percentage that the child answered correctly, and the file name of the data used. For a child to master a subject area, he/she must answer 85% of the equations correctly on their first try. Mastery percentages can be raised for a greater challenge.

There is a scoreboard that provides information on their progress, and the scoreboard is printable. This program includes math tips to help solve equations: a number line for addition and subtraction, and a math grid for multiplication and division. Tips are also available for fractions, decimals, percents, number patterns, and estimation. To earn energy for the bonus rounds, the child must find the missing value for each equation. In one part of the game, special contraptions must be used. To activate them, the number that Blasternaut carries must fit between the two numbers shown on each machine. To help power up the generator with energy crystals, numbers and operation signs must be analyzed. The child must determine which numbers and operations can be used together, and create as many correct equations in the Equation Window as they can. The child can solve the equations on the control panel by zapping the space objects with the correct answers. They can earn an energy unit with a correct answer; lose an energy unit with an incorrect answer. A low energy sound will play when they're down to their last three energy units. They can zap objects for bonus points. A list of the top 10 players can be displayed and printed out.

24. Mighty Math Zoo Zillions

Endmark

Perspective: psycholinguistic

Stance: utilitarian

Aspect: metacognitive

Type: problem-solving and drill and practice

Age: grade K, 1st, and 2nd

Price: \$9.99

This software has different learning activities.

The fish stories have word problems and they contain addition, subtraction, division, or multiplication. An example would be: There are 6 red fish in a tank, take 4 of them out. How many fish are in the tank? The word problems are shown with pictures, as a written problem, as a mathematical equation and stated verbally.

The Money Boutique is where they can go to help the customers with their purchase. The children must know the value of money and be able to identify coins and bills. The math problem will show an equation for subtracting money.

The Race to first is a jungle trail and this part contains addition, subtraction, place value, skip counting, and rounding.

The Otter twins have a 3-D gallery of geometric shapes that show the concepts of identifying, spatial and visual relations.

The Endmark Math products have math basics for grades K-8th.