

# MICROSCOPE-

► Issue 42

► Summer 1994



- Focus on multimedia
- Notebook computers
- Speech!
- Let's ask Chris
- Software reviews
- MAPE annual reports

NEWMAN COLLEGE with MAPE



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# MICRO-SCOPE 42

## MICRO-SCOPE matters

**Chris Robson**  
*Editor*

All things considered, I suppose I've been lucky to have a honeymoon that lasted for three years! Looking back, I was amazed to find that my first *MICRO-SCOPE* as Editor was issue 33, back in the summer of 1991 – I can't decide if it feels more like three months or thirty years! For my first few issues, I had more than enough articles to fill every issue, but I regret to say that the flow has now diminished to a trickle and drought is about to set in. I realise that there are many reasons for this; one undoubtedly is the increasingly heavy workload to which teachers are subject. Ironically, I suspect that another reason is that very many more teachers are now integrating IT into their lessons as a matter of course, and see this as nothing exceptional. The early 'pioneering' days with IT generated many feelings; nervous apprehension (that the technology might fail); amazement (that it didn't do so as often as we expected it to); relief (that the computer was *not* going to replace us); excitement (at the effect computers had on both our teaching and children's learning); and for many, the desire to convince more cautious colleagues of the added benefits of IT. This missionary zeal has been responsible for much of the content of past issues and I believe that it is as relevant and necessary now as ever it was. The new generation of highly sophisticated machines and their associated software, together with continually evolving curriculum requirements, require us to keep our use of IT in schools under review. Articles in this issue by Paul Shefford, Peter Stanbury and Mick Harwood and NCET's Mick Thomas look at ways in which technological advances can be harnessed, whilst Chris Robinson tells how his school has tackled some of the management 'challenges'. What's happening in *your* school? Are you making use of notebooks? A multimedia system? A new piece of software? Have you revived an old piece of software? A new IT policy or scheme of work? As I've often said before, please don't be modest! Other MAPE members would like to hear about your solutions. I hope that the following brief guidelines will inspire many of you to drop me a line and save me from the impending drought!

- There is no specific rule about the length or content of articles; in fact, it is reasonable to say that anything which interests *you* about the IT scene in primary education will interest many other MAPE members.
- Typewritten or wordprocessed articles are preferred, although handwritten articles will be considered.
- Photographs and/or examples of children's work add greatly to the overall appearance of the page; please number these and indicate in the text whereabouts each should be placed.
- If the article makes reference to software, hardware or published material, please add a footnote with details.
- Please include the author's name, an indication of current post and details about where they work.
- If the item is a mass of materials rather than one article, please do not send it with a note to the effect that 'there's an article in here somewhere'! Please sort it out into a coherent whole first and then send it.
- Any and all of these considerations can always be ignored and the article will still be considered. It just involves more hassle for the Editor and the author!

### A personal thank you

In the summer of 1991, Senga Whiteman exchanged the reins of Editor for those of Chairperson. During the last three years, she has steered MAPE through a difficult period of change with cheerfulness, composure and a steady hand. Latterly, she has also acted as assistant editor, giving me enormous personal support through a period of ill-health, sending me a constant stream of get well cards, and being ever present with encouraging words at the end of the phone. As she now retires as Chair of MAPE, I am sure I echo the thoughts of all MAPE members in thanking her for her work in that role, and wishing her a well-deserved restful summer.



## *'Let's ask Chris!'*

### **Christopher Robinson**

*Education Consultant*

All teachers at some time feel the need to lavish Anglo-Saxon terminology upon that technological tormentor, the computer (or 'IT') in the corner – usually a dozen times a day!

Next time you feel like screaming and tearing your hair out, reach for a pen and 'Ask Chris' – and if I can't help, I'll probably know a Chris (or someone else) who can.

Have you found a neat solution to a problem? Reach for that pen again and *tell* Chris: it may help someone else.

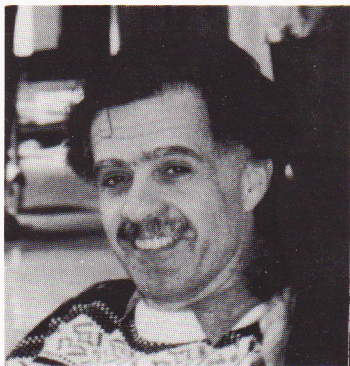
Meanwhile, to our first problems:

#### ■ **SUCH A WASTE!**

**When I try to print out work, my printer prints funny symbols and churns out lots of paper. Why?**

It sounds as though you may be using the wrong 'printer driver'. The signals sent from the computer are interpreted by the printer telling it what to print on the paper. Different printers need different sets of instructions to do the same thing. Check your printer manual and the software you are using.

I also experience this problem with some printers if I have forgotten to switch them on until just after telling the computer to start printing. The printer misses the first commands from the computer telling it how to behave. Abort the computer printing and switch off the printer for at least 10 seconds. Switch it on again and check it is 'on line' before issuing the print command to the computer again.



Don't just sit there alone, gazing blankly at your keyboard – if you've got a problem and feel you need some help, write to Chris Robinson

#### ■ **IT'S ALL TOO MUCH FOR ME!**

**I am often sent discs by colleagues during lesson times that have developed faults. They are invariably needed there and then but I am fully occupied with my own class. What do I do?**

There is a dichotomy of interests between the class teacher role and that of the IT consultant. You cannot leave your own class and yet your colleague's class may suffer if you don't. In addition, for your colleagues, it may be the final straw that makes them forsake the computer entirely. The following are techniques I employ:

1. Keep a complete 'emergency' spare set of program discs handy. You can hand over a replacement but remember to note which class has it and to create another copy as soon as possible. This provides immediate help for your colleague but involves you in more work later.
2. Create a team of child 'experts' (preferably two from each class) trained to cope with most technical problems that are likely to manifest themselves. They could form an after-school club. There will probably be no shortage of applicants. The time investment required reaps dividends in the time saved.
3. A short training session for staff in which they learn to format discs and copy files can be effective if timed correctly. This will usually be after many staff have experienced these difficulties and so see a need for that training. However, disc management techniques are likely to be forgotten when they are actually needed.

As *aides-memoire*, I have produced 'Cue cards' detailing the steps to be taken when certain situations arise. Printed within a 3.5" square, photocopied onto coloured card, and encapsulated in plastic (if you haven't got a laminator, sticky-backed plastic may be used), these are stored with the discs in the storage boxes alongside the computers and may be removed and placed on or beside the keyboard when required.

Although my cue cards are specifically relevant to my own school's situation, I have reproduced a few on the opposite page which may be useful:



**HOW TO FORMAT A DATA DISC***Using an Archimedes computer:*

1. Make sure the disc is new or has nothing wanted on it.
2. Make sure little 'write protect' window is closed.
3. Put disc in disc drive.
4. Click middle mouse button on disc drive icon.
5. Slide across **FORMAT**, down and across **OTHER FORMATS** and up to **DOS 720K**.
6. Click left-hand button.
7. Type name for disc.
8. Click left-hand button on **FORMAT**.

**HOW TO FORMAT A DATA DISC***Using a PC machine*

1. Make sure the disc is new or has nothing on it that is wanted.
2. Make sure the little 'write protect' window is closed.
3. The computer should be on with **C:** showing on the screen.
4. Put the disc in the disc drive.
5. Type **FORMAT A:**
6. Follow any instructions shown on the screen.

**HOW TO NAME A DISC***With PC computer:*

1. Put disc in drive.
2. With **C:** displayed, type **LABEL A:** name using your first name usually.

*With Archimedes computer:*

1. Put disc in drive.
2. Click middle mouse button on disc drive icon.
3. Move up and select **NAME DISC**
4. Slide right, type your first name and press RETURN.

**SWITCHING THE ARCHIMEDES OFF**

Always close down a computer before switching the power off (particularly important for 'hard disc' machines).

1. Click middle mouse button on the Acorn symbol – right end of the icon bar.
2. Move pointer onto 'shutdown' on the menu and click left-hand mouse button.

Alternatively, hold CTRL + SHIFT and press F12.

Other 'Cue cards' are specific to particular programs, eg. how to save or load work files or exit the program etc. Different coloured cards are employed to distinguish the type of help they offer. Have you produced any helpful aids for teachers? To save others reinventing the wheel, please send us copies to pass on to others.

**PIPEDREAM ON A LAPTOP PC**

Press the **ALT** key to get 'pop-down' menus and cursor control arrow keys and **ENTER/RETURN** key to select what you want.

To **LOAD** from a data disc, put **A:\*. \*** for 'Name of File' when LOAD has been selected.

To **SAVE** on a data disc, make sure **A:** starts the 'Name of File'.

If you want to use this file with PenDown, type **T** in the 'Format:' box.

To **Finish**, press **ALT** and select **EXIT** from the Files pop-down menu.

**LOGOWRITER SAVE AND LOAD***Starting:*

1. Once LogoWriter is running, select a **NEW PAGE**.
2. Type **SETDISK "A**
3. Put your disc in the drive.
4. Press **ESC** key.

*Finishing:*

If the page is not named, either type **CP** (ClearPage) or **NP "title** (NamePage whatever you want to call it.)

*Once page is named or cleared:*

1. Press **ESC**
2. Select **NEW PAGE**
3. Type **SETDISK "C**
4. Type **DOS**



# Time to work more closely together?

**Jon Coupland**

*College of St Mark & St John, Plymouth PL6 8BH*

A wide range of professional organisations are concerned with supporting and developing the use of IT in teaching and learning. Each organisation's growth over the years has been based on a desire to address the needs of a particular section of the IT community.

A brief consideration of some of the major organisations indicates the coverage they provide of IT issues and the degree of overlap between them.

ACITT	supporting IT co-ordinators and teachers of IT in schools
CEG	supporting the development of IT in schools
ITTE	supporting tutors in higher education concerned with IT in initial and in-service teacher training
MAPE	supporting primary teachers in the development of IT in the curriculum
MUSE	supporting the development of IT particularly in secondary education
NAACE	supporting advisers and inspectors of IT in schools and those responsible for IT centres
NAITFE	looking after the particular needs of those concerned with IT in further education.

Recently we have heard that two of the oldest organisations, MUSE and CEG, have merged.

## The case for amalgamation

I wish to argue the case that now is the time for these, and possibly other, organisations to work a lot more closely together and in the near future to amalgamate under an umbrella organisation. The argument is based on three elements:

1. success in promoting IT in teaching and learning;
2. as a necessary response to the increased pressures and challenges faced by education;
3. on technological change and the resulting maturity of IT as part of the teaching and learning environment.

### *1. Success in promoting IT in teaching and learning*

Due in a major part to the efforts of those involved in the IT professional organisations, IT now forms a key element in the education of people aged pre-5 to 65 and beyond. The early days of IT in education were typified by dedicated individuals struggling with inadequate and unreliable resources and a lack of any understanding by authority of the potential for IT. Most of us pursued one avenue for IT and joined fellow believers in formal and informal organisations. It slowly became clear that there was not a single, correct mode of use for IT and that all sects could learn from each other. For example, most people are now happy to take examples of successful practice from special needs and apply them in mainstream education, most people no longer have a pathological love of one type of machine over another, and most people now feel confident in arguing the role of IT in teaching and learning on purely educational terms rather than relying on some fear of being 'left behind'.

### *2. A necessary response to the increased pressures and challenges faced by education*

There are no signs that the pressures and changes inflicted on all phases of education will diminish. For some, IT is held up as a cost-effective alternative to traditional teaching, while others use IT as a subtle, justifiable cloak to push through change. There is no doubt that IT will be a key element in new approaches to teaching and learning, through extending access to education, providing alternative approaches to learning, providing new opportunities for formative and summative assessment, and modifying the very nature of what needs to be learnt. All these roles for IT need the active participation of thoughtful people with a wide-ranging understanding of the potential for, and pitfalls of, using IT. It is vital that the lessons learnt in one community are rapidly communicated to those in others. Indeed the traditional sharp divisions between primary, secondary, further and higher education are rapidly becoming blurred.



When making a proactive or reactive response to proposals by government, examination and other bodies there are tremendous benefits in being able to represent a large number of people and sectors of education and also one with a broad knowledge and responsibility base.

### *3. Technological change and the resulting maturity of IT as part of the teaching and learning environment*

All of us directly working with IT tend to see creeping technical changes rather than revolutionary advances. However, current IT developments could well form a watershed in the routine use of IT in teaching and learning. We are seeing a convergence of computer platforms with windows environments becoming the *de facto* standard and many platforms supporting the same applications. There is steadily increasing access to hardware and software and an increasing need for, and use of, authorware. Applications can now readily incorporate high-quality still and moving images as well as sound, and the general level of IT capability is reaching some kind of critical mass where actually having the skills to use the technology will be commonplace. Networking is another key element, allowing people to share information locally, nationally and world-wide. There is an argument that the emphasis of the past ten years has been on developing the hardware and software for learning and the emphasis for the next ten years will be on effectively deploying IT in the support of learning. Despite the current trends in reducing IT support, notably through the reduction in the number of LEA centres, a tremendous increase in the need for support can be anticipated. Support must be co-ordinated and not fragmented and is best designed by, and in response to the needs of, those directly concerned with the learning process.

There will be many direct benefits to members through amalgamation; for example:

- a single point of contact for members to seek information on technical issues, curriculum issues, cross-phase issues, etc.;
- ready access to a wider community concerned with IT in teaching and learning;
- a membership large enough to employ consultants to carry out specific professional tasks on behalf of the membership, for example, host special interest events, provide information services, carry out surveys;
- an organisation to be more proactive in developing IT in teaching and learning;
- a stronger relationship with developers and manufacturers to produce resources that meet

needs and support purchase at advantageous prices.

### **The case against amalgamation**

There will be many valid arguments against amalgamation. Some might consider that the ultimate aim is to integrate IT seamlessly into teaching and learning, and hence there should be no IT professional organisations at all. Others will fear being subsumed within a larger organisation and not being able to pursue special areas of interest. However, for example, there is no reason why 'primary' groups should not exist within the umbrella organisation or indeed why the very name of the primary organisation could not be part of the overall umbrella organisation if desired. At an annual conference, for example, participants would be able to pursue a programme of activities solely oriented around primary education but would also have the opportunity to participate in other activities if they wished.

The professional organisations supporting IT in teaching and learning have a lot more in common than they have differences. Working together and eventually amalgamating will enable them to provide a far better service to their members and act as a more effective pressure group in further developing and promoting IT as a key part of the learning environment.

Next year, 1995, many members of the various organisations will meet together at the World Conference on Computers in Education (WCCE 95) in Birmingham. This could be a focus for discussing the advantages and disadvantages of an amalgamation.

The organisations concerned with IT in teaching and learning are in regular contact and indeed many people will be members of more than one organisation. If you have views on amalgamation no doubt your professional organisation will be pleased to hear them. If you wish to write to me, please do so, and I will consider the replies in writing a response at a later date.

Please note that this article is not written on behalf of any professional organisation for IT!

*The Editor welcomes correspondence from members on this issue.*

MAPE Clip Art correction – the telephone number for CAPSOFT is 0332 690691 and not the one listed in the documentation booklet.



# FOCUS ON MULTIMEDIA

## CD-ROMs — a personal perspective: some questions and answers

**Peter Stanbury and Mick Harwood**  
*Blakenhale Junior School, Birmingham*

*What does a CD-ROM player do?*

It plays Compact Disc ROMs.

*What is a CD-ROM?*

A CD-ROM is a type of disc which can store huge amounts of data but as Read Only Memory (ROM). The data can be in the form of text, graphics (pictures) and sound (of any kind). I'm sure you have read articles describing the capacity as 'a pile of A4 pages nine storeys high', etc., so I won't bore you with any more of that.

Although CD-ROMs are read only, most programs have a 'print' and 'copy' facility which allows text and pictures to be printed on your printer or copied into one of your own applications. (Warning: most PC CD-ROMs are set up for the Windows environment.)

*Why did we buy a CD-ROM player?*

Several members of the staff at our school have a knowledge of the latest computer technology. This may be a personal interest, a professional interest or as a result of the enthusiasm of a partner. Consequently, almost half the staff were aware of the enormous capacity for storing information. Most had actually used a CD-ROM player with some interesting and powerful software. In time, no doubt, more appropriate and exciting software will be produced specifically for the British primary classroom. Before that day arrives we wanted the hardware and the staff expertise to be already in place.

*What machine did we buy?*

Once we came to the conclusion that we saw some potential benefit for the school we decided to make sure of a certain amount of future-proofing by

buying a 'double-speed' drive with a reasonably fast 'access time'. In our particular case, we had the funds available for a complete system but the same player, sound card and speakers are available as separate items for self-installation or installation by a technician. We have a Panasonic CR-562 player, a Soundblaster-Pro sound card and Zi-fi speakers.

*Where did we buy it?*

We bought our machine from a well-known local computer supplier with whom staff have had satisfactory dealings for many years. Evesham Micros supplied us with a 486-SX-25 IBM-compatible computer, complete with CD-ROM player, soundcard, speakers and four pieces of software for £1350.

*Why did we buy this particular machine?*

We decided on this configuration and retailer because of the price, quality and the proximity of the company.

*Why did we buy it now?*

We bought the computer at this stage because we wanted to increase the number of true IBM-compatible computers we have and complement it with a bubble-jet printer to improve the presentation of worksheets and letters still further. We also wanted, as I have said, to be experienced with the medium before the inevitable explosion of suitable software.

*What software titles did we buy?*

The particular package that we bought included five free CD-ROMs:

- *The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia,*



- *World Atlas 4*, and
- *Kodak Photo CD* (This allows you to view photographs stored on the new Kodak Photo CD media.)

and two games

- *Chessmaster 3000*, and
- *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe*

In addition we bought three other titles:

- Microsoft *Encarta* (£72.00 + VAT),
- Microsoft *Musical Instruments* (£36.00 + VAT),
- Microsoft *Art Gallery* (£36 + VAT).

*Encarta* is an encyclopaedia which contains the equivalent of 29 volumes. We bought this even though there is an encyclopaedia included with the bundle because we think that *Encarta* has a much more friendly user interface than *Grolier* although other aspects of *Grolier* prevent it being redundant.

*Musical Instruments* is a program which illustrates, in picture and in sound, many of the world's musical instruments and many of the groupings in which they are to be found.

*Art Gallery* is an absolute must, containing, as it does, the entire collection of The National Gallery (London) – over 2000 paintings in high resolution 256 colour form. Also included on the CD are descriptions of the painters and their techniques, historical perspectives on important centres in a sequential arrangement, and four guided tours of aspects of Fine Art.

*Where do we expect to store it?*

With any piece of new technology there is the problem of implementation and storage. Initially, we

were using the CD-ROM player as a teacher tool and we kept it in a central area. Later we moved it to a Year 6 classroom to assess its suitability as a pupil resource with the current limited software. The drawback to the second situation is that the system is perceived as being unavailable to other staff and groups. Sooner rather than later we are going to make it a resource for children and staff which is to be kept in the library area, which we feel is the natural home for a retrieval device based on book technology.

In time, perhaps, we will get to one per classroom and in the end, no doubt, one per child.

*What do we expect to use it for?*

We expect to have several approaches to the use of the drive:

- as a teacher resource;
- as a teaching resource (like a projector but of sound as well as pictures);
- as a pupil resource (in the way that they already use books);
- as an IT teaching tool (using the sophisticated search facilities).

*How has it fitted in after one month's use?*

As a resource the staff are very keen and have been delighted with the potential but in reality only a few actually go to it for information. Book technology is very versatile and has been around much longer. The Governors have had a presentation and hands-on experience and are knocked out by the possibilities. Horror of horrors, we are also having to 'fight off' some Year 6 children who have been introduced to the depth of the knowledge that they can access and the speed and simplicity with which it can be retrieved.

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## CD-ROM in Primary Schools Initiative 1994 – CD-ROM reviews

In February 1994 a £4.5 million CD-ROM (Primary) scheme was announced. This scheme builds on activities which began in 1991. NCET has purchased computer systems and selected CD-ROMs for approximately 2300 schools – the equipment is being distributed to schools identified by their LEAs and to grant maintained schools

identified by their Funding Committees. NCET assembled a team of evaluators who reviewed more than 200 CD-ROMs and published the reports in a document entitled *Guidance Document for Schools – CD-ROM Titles Reviews*. This publication is being sent to all those schools who are participating in the scheme.



MAPE thought that the reviews would be of value to schools who were not involved in the scheme. NCET has given us permission to reproduce some of the reviews for those discs which NCET decided to 'bundle' with the computer equipment. If you would like to read more reviews and other associated documentation, the entire publication should be available, at a cost of approximately £10.00, in the Autumn of 1994. Details will be published in the Autumn Term edition of *MICRO-SCOPE*.

We are very grateful to NCET for permission to reproduce the following reviews:

*Creepy Crawlies* (Acorn, Apple, PC)

*Sherston Naughty Stories* (Acorn)

*Frontier 2000* (Acorn)

*Information Finder: World Book Encyclopaedia* (PC)

*Anglo Saxons* (PC)

*Just Grandma and Me* (PC)

*Microsoft Art Gallery* (Apple)

Relevant contact addresses are detailed following the reviews.

Senga Whiteman  
Newman College, Birmingham

Title: ***Creepy Crawlies***

Country of origin: UK

Date of publication: 1992

Curriculum areas: Science; Modern languages

Phase: KS2

Version: **Apple**

Price: £35.00 approx

Suppliers: Macademic; Optech; Psygnosis Limited

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 4 MB total

Hard disc space required: none

Graphics: Colour display;

Software: System 6.0.7 or higher

Version: **Acorn**

Price: £36.00 approx

Suppliers: Optech; KimTec UK; New Vision

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 2 MB total

Hard disc space required: none

Graphics: Colour monitor

Software: RISC OS

Version: **PC**

Price: £36.00 approx

Suppliers: New Vision; Optech; KimTec UK

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 4 MB total

Hard disc space required: none

Graphics: VGA + 256 colour display

Software: Windows 3.0 with multimedia extensions or Windows 3.1

Other: PC 386 or higher, audio board, mouse

#### *Evaluators' review*

The disc shows 74 lower animals. For each animal there is a written description in English or French, an audio description, a photograph, a family tree and a short video clip. It is possible to view this a frame at a time.

It is useful to be able to single step through the video clips – this encourages children's powers of observation (how many legs has a spider, for example?). It is an excellent source of information for studying the lower animals – and is more versatile than a book.

The reading age is suitable for KS2. It can be displayed in a simplified form for children at the lower end of KS2. The text can also be displayed in French at two levels.

The interface is very easy and clearly indexed. There is a facility to print out a particular screen displayed. There are no hot spots to allow for elaboration or explanation of difficult words or concepts. The display is clear, but there are no levels of interactivity.

No support materials were submitted.

Overall, this CD-ROM is very clear and informative, but its use needs to be set in a classroom context to prevent meaningless browsing.

Title: ***Sherston Naughty Stories***

Country of origin: UK

Date of publication: 1994

Curriculum areas: English

Phase: KS1

Version: **Acorn**

Price: £79.95 approx

Suppliers: Sherston Software Ltd

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 1 MB total

Hard disc space required: none

Graphics: Colour monitor

Software: RISC OS

#### *Evaluators' review*

This disc consists of 12 Naughty Stories.

Each page has a full colour illustration and text in a clear 'infant' font. The package contains a set of story books – one for each story on the disc; each page mirrors accurately the graphics and text on screen. The handbook is clear and concise.

The stories offer good support for R/Y1 reading activities, and for less able older children. The different story topics could be used as starting



points for discussion of subjects such as bullying or extending mathematical language. Both the topics and the reading age are appropriate to KS1 and KS2 children with learning difficulties. There is no ethnic bias and the stories would be useful for E2L pupils.

The screen layout is clear and uncluttered and easy to use. Teacher options allow the teacher to set up the disc so that minimal prior experience is needed by children or staff. A log of all words pointed to can be kept and printed out. Each screen has a number of animations which can be selected. The accompanying books are clear and well produced. It would be helpful to be able to purchase additional copies of these.

Overall, the disc is well produced and very appropriate for primary schools.

Title: **Frontier 2000**

Country of origin: UK

Date of publication: 1994

Curriculum areas: Geography; History

Phase: KS2

Version: PC

Price: £79.95 approx

Suppliers: Cambridgeshire Software House

#### *Evaluator's review*

The CD-ROM contains an exploration of Carlisle and district from a geographical/historical viewpoint. It is both very comprehensive and makes good use of different media – text/graphics/film/digitised images – and of primary source material. The disc acts as a good source of ideas for exploring your own local environment.

The material can be linked to several different areas of the National Curriculum, in particular to Geography, History and Mathematics. The 'Trails' can be linked to topic work on the Romans, the Railways, the Civil War, Mary Queen of Scots, Robert the Bruce, and Bonnie Prince Charlie. There are music files included for the ballads.

The reading age is appropriate to KS2, though users can choose to hear some of the text spoken.

The interface is well thought out, easy to use, with a toolbox for access to different areas. The time line is very comprehensive, and offers good interactivity. Extensive Help files are available for all aspects to assist the beginner.

The quality of support materials is excellent – it includes a wide range of materials including paper, audio, video and artefact.

The overall quality of the disc is excellent.

Title: **Information Finder: World Book Encyclopedia**

Country of origin: USA

Date of publication: 1994

Curriculum areas: Reference

Phase: KS2

Version: PC

Price: £153.00 approx

Suppliers: World Book Childcraft

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 4 MB total

Hard disc space required: 5 MB available

Graphics: VGA + 256 colour display

Software: DOS 3.1 or later; Windows 3.1 or later; MSCDEX 2.2 or later

Other: PC 386 or higher, mouse

#### *Evaluators' review*

The quality of the information is excellent as you would expect from an encyclopedia which has a very high reputation in its book form, the 22-volume World Book Encyclopedia. It is accurate and current. American bias is not a real problem, as spellings have been Anglicised and the balance of information is good.

This is an excellent general-reference resource which has general applicability within National Curriculum subject areas.

The language is clear and accessible and although it is intended for the Secondary age range, it could be used at the upper end of the Primary school. The integrated dictionary allows users to look up any words they do not understand. Each article has an outline which allows the user to scan an article quickly and identify relevant information. An up-to-date atlas is also included on the disc.

Information can be downloaded and printed out.

Overall, this is an excellent product.

Title: **Anglo Saxons**

Country of origin: UK

Date of publication: 1993

Curriculum areas: History

Phase: KS2

Version: PC

Price: £89.00 approx

Suppliers: Research Machines

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 2 MB total

Hard disc space required: very little

Graphics: VGA colour display (VGA + 256 colours recommended)

Software: Windows 3.0 or later

Other: PC 286 or higher, mouse

Optional: Sound card (Windows 3.1)



*Evaluators' review*

This CD-ROM provides an exploration of the way of life, art and literature of the Anglo Saxons. The information is well balanced across different aspects of Anglo-Saxon life and contains sufficient detail to support study in KS2.

The program has been written with the Invaders and Settlers study unit of the History National Curriculum specifically in mind. Both the program and the support materials are directly relevant to this unit of work.

The reading level of the text is appropriate for KS2. Sentence structure is simple and there is no unnecessary use of specialist vocabulary.

The user interface is clear and simple. The screens are well laid out and the quality of the photographic and other images is high. Several of the topics contain a spoken narrative to complement the images and text. There is a notepad facility and most of the text can be cut and pasted to this. There is no facility for downloading images or text to disc or for copying images.

The disc is accompanied by an excellent teacher's guide and two children's reference books. Together these provide useful, high quality support material.

All told, this is a very good, specialist History title, clearly written, with a specific audience in mind and hitting the target precisely.

Title: ***Just Grandma and Me***

Country of origin: USA

Date of publication: 1992

Curriculum areas: English; Modern languages

Phase: KS1

Version: PC

Price: £32.00 approx

Suppliers: Optech Ltd; TAG Developments Ltd; KimTec UK

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 4 MB total

Hard disc space required: none

Graphics: VGA + colour display

Software: MS/PC-DOS 3.3 or later; Windows 3.0 with multimedia extensions; Windows 3.1

Other: PC 386SX or higher

*Evaluators' review*

This 'Living Book' is a multimedia version of the Mercer Mayer story. It can be used in English, Japanese or Spanish. The disc contains the full text of the book with superb, animated renderings of the original illustrations. Users can have the story read to them or 'play' with each page, using the mouse to click on objects and characters which then move or speak.

It makes an ideal program for readers at KS1, or for any child who is a reluctant reader. At KS2 (upper), a more appropriate use would be modern foreign languages.

The reading material is well matched to the age range who would enjoy the story. For foreign language learners it is not absolutely basic.

The user interface makes this very easy to use. Forward and back arrows allow you to 'turn the pages' of the book. Pointing and clicking with the mouse anywhere on a 'page' makes something happen. Pointing and clicking on any word in the text lets you hear it pronounced.

Support materials are limited to a paper copy of the storybook, although this would not be relevant to modern foreign language use.

This is an excellent, imaginative interpretation of the original story.

Title: ***Microsoft Art Gallery***

Country of origin: UK

Date of publication: 1993

Curriculum areas: Art

Phase: KS1 & 2

Version: Apple

Price: £50.00 approx

Suppliers: Unica; KimTec UK; Microsoft

Technical requirements:

RAM required: 4 MB total

Hard disc space required: 1 MB available

Graphics: 256 colour display (minimum 640 × 480 pixels)

Software: System 6.0.7 or higher

*Evaluator's review*

This disc contains 2000 paintings from the National Gallery in London. It is extensive, well presented and informative. As a KS1/2 resource it would be invaluable, but would require additional support material for use by the non-specialist (for example, starting points for investigation, suggested activities – these should be in a separate booklet). As well as looking at works of art, artists, historical settings, it also has information on how and which media have been used and explanations of specialist terminology.

It meets National Curriculum AT2 requirement at KS1 and 2 as it allows children to identify different kinds of art and their purposes (though obviously within the restrictions of the Gallery's collection), and enables both children and adults to inform themselves on a range of styles and genres while giving related historical background. It gets over the classroom management problem of having to store a lot of illustrations.

Although the script is aimed at KS2 and beyond,



this would be useful to inform the non-specialist teacher and the good KS2 (upper KS2) reader.

A user-friendly program that could be used by teachers and children with limited instruction and/or experience. The program is divided into five areas which are cross-referenced. The 'Guided Tours' section has a soundtrack which runs alongside the text and images, giving time to assimilate the information presented. The visual images are generally clear and a number of them can be enlarged to illustrate pointers from the text.

Instructions for use are clear and easily understood, but the program itself is so easy that they render these almost unnecessary. This is a high-quality program that would be of value in the primary sector.

## Contacts

*(Other suppliers may be available; this information is a guide)*

Attica Cybernetics Ltd, Unit 2, Kings Meadow, Ferry Hinksey Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX2 0DP; Tel: 0865 791346.

Cambridgeshire Software House, The Computer Centre, 8 Bramley Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE17 4WS; Tel: 0480 467945.

KimTech UK, Fairways House, 8 Highland Road, Colehill, Wimbourne, Dorset BH21 2QN.

Macademic, Trams Ltd, 54-55 Wilton Road, London SW1 1DE; Tel: 071 630 6844.

Microsoft Limited, Microsoft Place, Winnersh Triangle, Wokingham, Berkshire RG11 5TP; Tel: 0734 270001.

New Vision Development Resources Corporation plc, Cumberland House, Cumberland Park, 80 Scrubs Lane, London NW10 6AH.

Optech Ltd, East Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7XX; Tel: 0252 714340.

Psygnosis Limited, South Harrington Building, Sefton Street, Liverpool L3 4BQ; Tel: 051 709 5755.

Research Machines, New Mill House, 183 Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4SE.

Sherston Software Ltd, Swan Barton, Sherston, Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 0LH; Tel: 0666 840433.

TAG Developments Ltd, 19 High Street, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0BA; Tel: 0474 357350.

Unica, Unica House, Mowbray Street, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3EJ; Tel: 061 429 0241.

World Books Childcraft International, World Book House, 77 Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8AZ.

# Using speech

## Mick Thomas

*Senior Programme Officer, National Council for Educational Technology*

With all the noise and bustle in the average classroom you might be forgiven for thinking that 'speaking computers' are the last thing you want. Once upon a time everyone used drill and practice spelling programs with their interminable sound effects of clapping and cheering or bursts of music. Anyway, why on earth would any beginner writers want their efforts read out loud?

In fact there are lots of advantages to speech. The beginner reader for example can hear text again and learn to recognise individual words. This might be the text from a beginner's reading book, or a set of instructions for loading and using a particular program, or an article from the local paper, or some information from a particular curriculum area. If you invest in some headphones, the student can listen to the text time and again without being embarrassed and the rest of the group is not disturbed.

Of course, here we are referring to talking word-

processors using synthesised speech. But if you can use them to support reading, you can also use them for writing.

## Talking wordprocessors

At present there is an enormous amount of interest in talking word processors and their impact on learning.

There are many advantages to using speech. It gives instant feedback so that students can hear words and make judgements about the spellings. If they type *recieved* it will be pronounced *re-sigh-ved*. The student can hear the mistake. It can also help in those cases where the learner has typed in the wrong word:

*As a result of the fire his hands were badly scared.*



Since *scared* is correctly spelt, it would not be picked up by a spell-checker, but the writer can hear that it is wrong. So speech enables the student to identify mistakes, which is the first step to improved writing.

### Talking wordprocessors: a summary

The list in the table below is an attempt to pull together some of the most popular word-processing packages that have integral speech options. This is not the definitive list but merely an attempt to point out some options. The prices given should also be checked before purchasing.

Although not necessarily a cheap option, this technology is readily available and is very easy to access. But speech is not just confined to talking wordprocessors. There are numerous other possibilities such as talking spreadsheets or databases.

#### Spreadsheets with speech support

In the Windows operating system on PC machines the Microsoft Sound System allows the students to record their own text into templates that can be activated when a word is typed. A good example of this is within *Excel*. There are already thousands of pre-recorded words, such as numbers and business jargon. When one of these words is typed, *Excel* recognises the word and reads it out. In addition, students can program the software to recognise particular words that they are likely to use, such as regularly-used data fields or the students' names.

There are now different types of speech available, so you are not necessarily confined to having a Dalek in your centre.

#### Synthesised speech

Synthesised speech is composed of two main elements. The first element is text-to-speech translation software. This works by analysing the text on screen, breaking it into phonemes, or the constituent parts of speech, based on a series of rules. The software then passes on a message to the second element of the system which attempts to speak the message it receives. In this way it is possible to develop a method of interpretation for the software in order that it can understand more words and therefore 'say' more words correctly. This is achieved by creating a set of exceptions, or a look-up table, that contains all the 'difficult' words. However, some words, particularly proper nouns, will always present a problem.

#### Digital speech

All new computers have the capability to record and replay sound in digital format. In other words, if you were to speak into the computer via a microphone, the computer would be able to replay that file just like a tape recorder. This is known as **digital speech** and is fairly impressive. The quality of the speech is only dependent on the recording or sampling hardware and software available on the machine that you are using. The content is dependent on the words that have been recorded but it is easily updated, and the speech quality is brilliant. But be warned, a large disc is needed to store the information as the files can be quite large depending on the sampling rate of the sound.

There is another form of speech which is a mixture of synthesised and digital. The phonemes are sampled by the developer and are therefore human tones. The software attempts to join them

Software	Cost	Supplier	Acorn	Apple	RM	PC	Extras
<i>Full Phase</i>	£30.00	Northwest SEMERC	✓				x
<i>Talking PenDown</i>	£64.00	Longman Logotron	✓				x
<i>Big Mac</i>	£45.00	Cenmac			✓	✓	Speech synthesiser
<i>Prompt/Writer</i>	£10.75	NCET	✓		✓	✓	Speech synthesiser
<i>Write:Outloud</i>	£100.00	Don Johnston		✓			x
<i>Kidtalk</i>	£20.00	iANSYST			✓	✓	
<i>Talking Wordwise</i>	£10.00	Northwest SEMERC	✓				Speech synthesiser
Microsoft Word	£145.00	Microsoft		✓	✓	✓	x
<i>Startwrite</i>	£67.00	Icon Technology	✓				



back together again when the student asks for a certain word. The speech quality is good, but there is only one voice. This area is still in its infancy and therefore few products exist at the moment that exploit this development.

### Ways of using sound

If you want to go beyond the basics of speech-supported word processing, how about using multimedia? This means you can bring together a picture or video clip with text and a spoken commentary. In fact you can have talking worksheets so that if you want to explain or expand some of the information, such as the reasons for using particular words, you can click on an area on the screen, record your voice into the computer, and then stop recording. The content on the screen remains the same but the messages can vary for different groups of students.

For example, students on a farm visit might scan in a picture of an animal and then put their own voice labels on it describing some features of the animals.

Sound has become a common feature of many software products, ranging from home-targeted video games to 'serious' business applications. It is a facility that might also help our students.

### Product information

CENMAC (Centre for Micro-Assisted Communication), Charlton Park School, Charlton Park Road, London SE7 8HX. Tel. 081-316-7589.

Don Johnson Developmental Equipment Inc., c/o North West SEMERC (Oldham), 1 Broadbent Road, Watersheddings, Oldham, Lancashire, Greater Manchester OL1 4HU. Tel. 061-627-4469.

Iansyst Ltd., United House, North Road, London N7 9DP. Tel. 071-607-5844.

Icon Technology Ltd., 5 Jarrom Street, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 7DH. Tel. 0533 546225.

Longman Logotron, 124 Cambridge Science Park, Milton Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 4ZS. Tel. 0223 425558.

Microsoft Ltd., Microsoft Place, Winnersh, Wokingham, Surrey RG11 5TP. Tel. 0734 270000.

NCET, Milburn Hill Road, Science Park, Coventry CV4 7JJ.

North West SEMERC (Oldham), 1 Broadbent Road, Watersheddings, Oldham, Lancashire, Greater Manchester OL1 4HU. Tel. 061-627-4469.

A free information booklet called 'Sounding Out' is available from NCET. Please contact Louise Biddle for a copy.

## Competition: *Maths through Databases*

Following on from *Simply Spreadsheets*, Roger Keeling and Senga Whiteman have produced a second publication entitled *Maths through Databases*. This resource (book plus data files) focuses on the development of mathematical, problem-solving and information-handling skills. Two activities are based on the idea of 'detective' games and are designed for children at key stage 1. The other two activities are designed for children at key stage 2 and above and focus on explorations relating to shape and number. Each activity has lots of detailed suggestions for classroom-based work, ideas for extension activities and a disc of appropriate data files ready to use. The pack sells for £16.50 including p&p.

In view of their close links with *MICRO-SCOPE*, the authors are giving away one copy to each of the first ten members whose correct competition entry is drawn from a hat. Simply enter your name and school address on a postcard (or sealed envelope), together with the answers to the three questions below, and state whether you would like the software in RM, Archimedes, BBC or Apple format. The closing date for entries is 20 September 1994.

Q: In what year was the first copy of *MICRO-SCOPE* published?

Q: How many owls were lost?

Q: Which of these is the odd one out?     Nottingham     York     Leeds     Bath

Please return entries to MAPE Competition, Newman College, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT. Only one entry per MAPE member, please.



# MAPE Chairperson's Annual Report

## January 1993 – January 1994

### Membership

MAPE membership has been falling slightly over the last year. We are aware that members have not received the benefits (in terms of publications) that we hoped to provide. This has been caused by a range of problems which are inevitable from time to time given the fact that all our activities involve volunteers. However, we have a whole range of resources in store for members and we hope this will reverse the trend of falling membership numbers.

### National activities

The National Conference was held in York and it was an interesting and enjoyable event which attracted around 150 delegates. The 1994 Conference will be in Nottingham. We are reviewing whether or not to hold a conference in 1995 as the World Conference of Computer Education will be held in Birmingham in July 1995.

National publications include the MAPE journal, *MICRO-SCOPE*, which is published every term. Issues 38, 39 and 40 have been distributed to members this year. New members to MAPE received a complimentary copy of *Into Europe*, MAPE's latest Software Special, if they joined before July 1994. We still have plenty of copies left, so if you would like one, please contact MAPE Sales (021 476 1181 ext 271). The *Clip Art Collection* (Archimedes only) was distributed at cost to members during the Autumn Term, and it was very well received. Thanks are due to Chris Robson and Des Thomas for collating and publishing this excellent resource. Copies are still available (£6.00).

This has been the year during which MAPE implemented its new organisational structure. We now have working groups with their own areas of responsibility and their own (limited) budgets. The groups are: Publications; Profile; Regional Activities; Projects and Innovations and Conference. The Spring Term 1994 edition of *MICRO-SCOPE* will carry details of the way in which the groups are working and tell members how they can become actively involved themselves. We have, in the past, met three times a year as a National Council, with three executive meetings as well. After May 1994 the full Council will meet annually, the Executive will meet three times a year, and the Working Groups will meet regularly (according to their own business plans). This has been a transitory year, but we hope that members will benefit from our new organisational structure – we need a year to settle down. Members will be reassured to know that there is a range of benefits in the pipeline, not least of which is a Software Special which will be distributed at the end of the Spring Term, 1994.

### Regional activities

The level of regional activities has been varied. Certain regions are very active, others have yet to establish a nucleus from which to expand. Currently teachers are working so hard that extra activities (and responsibilities) are unlikely to succeed. Once the National Curriculum has been 'slimmed down' we can look forward to meeting members more frequently!

### Contact with external agencies

MAPE and the World Wide Fund for Nature have been collaborating on the production of a resource pack including software. This will be available to MAPE members, at a greatly reduced price, during the summer of 1994.

Representatives from MAPE have attended a series of meetings organised by the DfE to review IT in primary schools and to look specifically at resource allocation. MAPE has also been represented on steering groups relating to NCET projects (Portables, Information Handling, CD-ROMs). The Vice Chair has been a member of the Primary Steering Group; their latest task has been that of producing Information Handling support materials for primary schools.

A representative from MAPE is working with the organisers of the World Conference to ensure that



MAPE is given a chance to share its expertise with delegates from all over the world – and that we can learn from them.

MAPE has registered with NCET's LINK-IT scheme which is designed to network all those involved in education with an interest in information technology. MAPE successfully bid to hold a LINK-IT regional conference, but this did not take place as it did not recruit enough delegates. Nevertheless, we have made some valuable contacts and look forward to future developments. Members of MAPE's Council have represented MAPE at other LINK-IT regional conferences.

### MAPE support staff

MAPE membership continues to be run by Valerie Siviter Office Services, Bethesda, Gwynedd, and anyone who has had an opportunity to talk to Val will know that she is efficient and helpful. We are very grateful for her continued commitment to the smooth running of MAPE. MAPE Software is dealt with by Yvonne Peers at Newman College, and Yvonne is expert at responding to conversations which start with 'Is that MAPE?' and lead through many strange thoroughfares to the replacement of discs or journals which have disappeared. (She also processes orders, but that's not half so interesting). Gloria Jones, in Normanton-on-Trent, capably deals with everything else, including letters forwarded from MAPE's first location, from whence we moved eight years ago! We thank them all.

*Senga Whiteman  
March, 1994*

## Micros and Primary Education Financial Statements

### Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 1993

INCOME			1992	
	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions		58,966		72,208
Sales of licences, tapes and magazines (net)		3,791		9,161
		<u>62,757</u>		<u>81,369</u>
Bank interest		4,682		9,081
		<u>67,439</u>		<u>90,450</u>
Deficiency on conference		(5,034)		(1,603)
		<u>62,405</u>		<u>88,847</u>
<b>LESS EXPENDITURE</b>				
Publications	21,592		39,203	
Regional expenses	3,146		2,001	
Council expenses	13,416		16,190	
Administrative expenses	11,302		23,670	
Advertising	150		3,453	
VAT	(355)		1,159	
Bank charges	1,107		914	
Direct debit charges	959		566	
Depreciation – office equipment	1,695		2,165	
		<u>53,012</u>		<u>89,321</u>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR</b>		<u>9,393</u>		<u>(474)</u>



## Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1993

	£	£	1992	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Office equipment		5,086		6,494
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Bank current account	20,394		12,820	
Bank deposit account	96,305		96,623	
Cash in hand	567		269	
Debtors and prepayments	5,053		1,660	
	<u>122,319</u>		<u>111,372</u>	
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>				
Creditors and accruals	<u>1,036</u>		<u>890</u>	
		<u>121,283</u>		<u>110,482</u>
		<u>126,369</u>		<u>116,976</u>
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>				
Accumulated fund at 1st January 1993		116,976		117,450
Surplus/(deficit) of income over expenditure for the year		<u>9,393</u>		<u>(474)</u>
Accumulated fund at 31st December 1993		126,369		116,976

### 1. FIXED ASSETS

	Office Equipment
<b>COST</b>	£
As at 1st January 1993	10,826
Additions in the year	<u>287</u>
As at 31st December 1993	<u>11,113</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>	
As at 1st January 1993	4,332
Provided in the year	<u>1,695</u>
As at 31st December 1993	<u>6,027</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>	
As at 31st December 1993	<u>5,086</u>
As at 31st December 1992	<u>6,494</u>

### 2. DEPRECIATION

Depreciation is charged on a reducing balance basis at the following rates:  
Office equipment 25%



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## AGM Treasurer's Report 1993

The fall in subscriptions levied is roughly in line with the drop in membership figures. Sales figures are also down, partly because we no longer have software to offer on licence. In past years, income from licences has been substantial. Interest on our assets is also reduced in line with the lowering of the bank interest rates. In January 1994 the majority of our capital assets was transferred to a building society for improved returns. Interest is still received gross, thanks to the Inland Revenue Charity Division. The Inland Revenue reviews this annually in the light of our financial accounts.

While income has been lower in 1993, expenses have also been reduced. The cost of mailing has been reduced substantially using Mailsort. It should also be noted that the software issue initiated at the end of 1993 will be paid for in 1994. When publications fall between two financial years, it may give a slightly distorted view of publication expenses. It is pleasing to note that despite a change in the organisation of MAPE, council expenses are lower than the previous year. In 1992 a large amount was spent updating the computers but very little was spent on office equipment in 1993.

As intimated at the last AGM, *all* VAT was reclaimed back to 1989, which effectively cancelled out our VAT commitment for the year. We are now able to reclaim all VAT paid by MAPE. A recent inspection approved the claims made.

The balance sheet shows a surplus for the year but, as previously mentioned, the software special will more than use up this amount. Our accumulated funds are at an all-time high which underlines our correct decision to retain a subscription rate of £15 for the fourth year running and a healthy account is carried forward to our next financial review in June.

The only office equipment purchased in 1993 was a printer for Mrs G Jones at our Lincolnshire administration office.

The number of members using either Direct Debit or Standing Order methods of payment has reached one third. The number of Direct Debits has now reached economic levels and, once set up, aids the efficiency of the organisation.

While it is difficult to see how any further savings can be made centrally, it is our endeavour to become more cost effective at committee level. The reorganisation of MAPE into working groups is complete. Each working group has a financial framework within which it must operate. We will continue to seek ways in which we can provide a better service for our members.

*K.A. Whiting*  
*National Treasurer*



## Regional Development Group — a brief history

The first meeting of the RDG was held in September 1993 and was attended by 12 members.

The aims of the group are to:

- collaborate with outside agencies and organisations;
- support regions with ideas and personnel;
- provide financial support for regions as and when appropriate;
- sustain and increase membership with worthwhile regional events;
- provide a forum, ideas, and training for the regional representatives.

At the moment there are 13 members of the group including three officers:

*Convenor* — Betty Lumley

*Secretary* — Alison Galbraith

*Finance Officer* — Ron Cromie

The next meeting of the group will be during the National Council Meeting in May in Birmingham. Subsequent meetings will probably be of subsets of

the group according to geographical location with twice-yearly meetings of the whole group. At present not all regions are represented and if you would like to become involved, give me a ring.

The group has three representatives on the National Council, with a further two to be added next year. We are also represented on the Executive.

*What has the group achieved so far?*

The group has developed a New Regional Reps pack. We have given financial support to the Northern Ireland and Southern regions. We exchange ideas about regional events and arrange for members to attend events in regions other than their own. We have put forward ideas to the Executive. These include suggestions of regional boundary changes, as at the moment informal arrangements must suffice, and a proposal for EC rates of subscription to be established.

*Betty Lumley*

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## Annual Report on the activities of MAPE's Profile Group

As a result of two meetings, the Profile Group submitted a proposed Business Plan to the Executive in August 1993. A summary of that plan, which has been accepted in principle, is as follows:

1. **Group title:** Public Relations and Marketing Group (PR&M Group)
2. **Group members:** Ron Jones  
Senga Whiteman  
Keith Whiting  
André Wagstaff

(Note: Ron Jones has now transferred to the Regional Group; the new convenor is MAPE's Chairman Les Watson (March 1994.)

3. **Group Convenor:** Ron Jones (now Les Watson).
4. **Group Secretary:** Ron Jones (position vacant).
5. **Group Finance Officer:** Keith Whiting.
6. **Aims:** the PR&M Group's aims are:
  - to raise MAPE's profile both internally and externally;
  - to increase the awareness of MAPE's existence and of its activities amongst its members and the world of education.
7. **Performance indicators:** the following indicators will be used over a period of one year to



measure the success of the PR&M Group's ability to achieve its aims:

- an increase in membership (but no direct income generation);
- number of column inches in the press over a period of one year;
- a decrease in the number of lapsed members;
- an increase in the sales of MAPE-generated services;
- the regular use by other groups within MAPE of the PR&M Group's services to publicise and market their activities;
- third party involvement, ie. numbers of invitations from third parties, numbers of

links established over the period of one year.

8. **Future membership:** a maximum of four regular members with option to co-opt expertise when necessary. It is intended to establish a contact list of specialists in the PR&M field as potential members of the group (not necessarily MAPE members).
9. **Meetings:** the group intends to meet *twice per term* with *one PR&M Residential Weekend* to which experts and specialists will be invited, in addition to representatives from MAPE working groups (ie. six meetings per year plus 1 Residential Friday/Saturday).

10. **Outcomes:** The following are the proposed outcomes of the Group's activities: Target dates

10.1	the creation of a <i>network of internal communication</i> to enable MAPE working groups to use the services and support of the PR&M Group;	December 1993
10.2	the creation of a <i>marketing framework</i> for use by other MAPE Groups; PR&M group to act as a <i>fast response filter</i> ;	December 1993
10.3	to develop <i>active involvement in NCET</i> through Link IT;	January 1994
10.4	to establish a <i>total quality control mechanism</i> ;	September 1994
10.5	to encourage <i>project management techniques</i> to be used to keep to deadlines and to keep promises to members;	April 1994
10.6	to set up a <i>system of support</i> , targetting new members (our seed corn);	January 1994
10.7	to create a professional approach to the use of <i>press releases</i> and to establish a system of <i>launching</i> new products to as wide an audience as possible; explore use of ' <i>press agencies</i> ';	to coincide with next new product
10.8	to encourage a MAPE <i>presence at major exhibitions</i> and conferences;	RESOURCE '94
10.9	to explore establishing <i>closer links with other associations</i> and professional bodies;	a.s.p.
10.10	to explore ways of working with/through <i>locally-based IT support centres</i> (LINK-IT?) and schools, eg. list of schools prepared to 'host' visitors to UK; work through <i>British Council</i> ;	a.s.p.
10.11	to <i>commission professional marketing advice</i> for a 'one-off' weekend; invite key personnel from within MAPE to share common experience to speed up dissemination; part of INSET.	a.s.p.

11. *Progress to date:*

- 11.1 Business plan was approved by Executive with minor alterations concerning finance, eg. residential 'Marketing' weekend.
- 11.2. Business plan used as model for other groups . . . one of the performance indicators is to move towards a corporate image and standardised approach;
- 11.3 Business Plan was presented to MAPE Council members;
- 11.4 Have held two meetings to action some of the targets, eg. approached several Marketing Agencies for costs and type of

- 11.5 services they can offer; still at exploratory stage because of costs involved; Group is in the process of changing its convenor, ie. from March 1994 Les Watson, who has close links with TES, manufacturers etc. becomes convenor of the group.
- 11.6 MAPE has taken membership of NCET's LINK-IT.
- 11.7 Establishing links with other associations, eg. invited to present papers to the IT World Conference.

Ron Jones, for PR&M Group



# Notebook computers in the primary classroom

**Paul Shefford**

*Rochester Borstal Manor C.P. Junior School, Kent.*

Having been asked to purchase some laptop computers for use particularly by children with special needs, I have been examining the pros and cons of several notebook machines available in high street stores. My deliberations have led me to conclude that these machines are a viable way forward for a school which already has one desktop computer in each classroom, as well as being a useful device for children with language difficulties. It occurred to me that the research I had done might well be useful to others considering a similar course, and that is why I have written these thoughts down. I hope they may save others from having to go through the same lengthy process that I have in making my decision.

## *Why use notebooks?*

The most obvious advantage of a notebook computer is the price. At around £300, three notebooks can be purchased for the price of one desktop (or for that matter, laptop) Nimbus. This obviously means that more children can have hands-on experience. Size is another advantage; even on Victorian, lift-up desks there is plenty of room for a child to work. Thirdly, battery operation means that you do not need another plug point, a scarce commodity in most classrooms!

## *Which one should I buy?*

My deliberations started at Tandy's in Chatham. There I was shown the Amstrad NC200 and the Tandy WP-3. The Amstrad was priced at £349.99, while the Tandy was around £200. There were a number of things I wanted to know about each machine and although the member of staff was very knowledgeable about the product and helpful (by no means a common experience!), I was glad of his offer to take them both on approval by making use of their 14-day money-back guarantee. (I did have to pay for both machines, of course, but only temporarily!)

At first sight, the Amstrad seemed attractive, but I was suspicious that it might be a 'Jack-of-all-trades', offering too many features at the expense of their quality. Certainly, the Tandy offered twice as

many words in its spellchecker and a thesaurus, implying that its word-processor, obviously the most important feature for our use, might be superior.

The Amstrad manual was a plus-point, being both readable and well set out. On examination, I had begun to favour the Amstrad, especially when I read that the Tandy would not support a serial printer. As we use Nimbus computers, most of our classrooms have these. I was, however, concerned that the spreadsheet, date/time, games and calculator functions, although interesting to me, were irrelevant (in the case of the games, some might say counter) to our intended use. It was some consolation to discover that the calculator had an enormous display and kept a till-roll-style record on screen of all key presses!

After my manual searching, we decided to try the two machines out on the type of children we hoped might benefit from them. It was at this stage that I discovered that the spell-checkers on both machines were incapable of finding matches for these children's attempts at even simple words. The problem is that there has to be a fair resemblance between the attempt and the word that was meant. The attempts made by the Special Needs children were not close enough. I concluded that this feature was not going to be useful and therefore the Tandy's bigger dictionary was not really an advantage. The thesaurus also seemed unlikely to be used by these children, not least because their spelling skills would make it unlikely they would be successful in accessing it.

The children preferred using the Amstrad for several reasons. Firstly, the screen was easier to see, being upright and better lit. It also had more lines for text (14 instead of eight). The menu system on the Amstrad is incredibly simple, telling you which coloured keys to press for each option. However, once a child has started writing, the Tandy is very simple too. If the writers switched off the Tandy while going out to play, for instance, they only had to switch back on and they would be back in their piece of writing. With the Amstrad, they had to find it from the list of old documents first. The problem with the Tandy came in starting a new document. This involved a combined key press which was not



obvious from the screen or the labels on the keys. Indeed, the Tandy we tested became jammed at one stage and we couldn't start new work without resetting the whole machine and losing all previous work. Obviously, the Amstrad's option of saving files to disc would allow much safer storage, but again, as most work would be printed immediately, this wasn't an essential feature. One further feature which appealed to the children was the option of having the date printed on screen with a single key press, meaning they could get started on the real business of writing more quickly.

The next test was printing. Having (eventually) obtained the appropriate leads (about £10 each), we found that both machines print without adjustment to either device on a parallel printer. As mentioned, the Tandy didn't claim to drive a serial printer. The Amstrad claimed to, but I was unable to make it do so despite numerous phone calls to Kent County Supplies, Kent's computer advisory service, and Amstrad themselves (whose Helpline varied from the inane 'Is the printer plugged in?', to the very helpful, via the unobtainable!). Eventually I decided to concede that it would be easier to use the machine with a parallel printer and, as we'd found one in a cupboard, this seemed a viable option. Of course this also negated the main factor found so far in favour of the Amstrad!

I also had a quick go at saving to disc, which was no problem. I tried to load the text into another word processor on my Nimbus and failed, but this was a half-hearted attempt as this feature would again not be essential to our intended use.

On balance, the Amstrad was in the lead. I took them both back to the shop, intending to leave the matter there, but then discovered that Panasonic also do a notebook, with a 15-line, fold-up screen

and a large spellchecker and thesaurus, with no games or other gimmicks. Add to this the fact that the Panasonic was £279.99 and could be provided with a battery which would recharge within the machine whenever it was plugged into the mains (a feature I'd felt was lacking from the others) and it was evident that my search was not yet over.

The Panasonic at first seemed to do all the best things that the other two machines did. It had menus which were simpler than the Tandy but less friendly than the Amstrad. It made much more use of its disc drive than the Amstrad, requiring you to save and access files when switching on or off. This appealed to me as it seemed that these are good habits to get into and I wasn't sure that the other two machines might not be too helpful in some ways. On later reflection, I decided that for Special Needs children, the ability to write, safe from the possible frustrations of file access, is in fact more important than the practice of good computer habits. It also occurred to me that constant disc drive use would be likely rapidly to use up battery power. Finally, although it seemed convenient to be able to recharge the batteries in the machine, if this meant leaving the machines in classrooms overnight, it would increase the risk of the machines being stolen.

Apart from the Panasonic, there was also a Smith Corona version available. I didn't look closely at this, mostly because I was beginning to get a little sick of notebook computers! Apparently, Psion also make a sort of notebook, but this seemed rather small and fiddly to me. Also in the running for a time were the desk top publishing machines such as the Canon Star-Writer, which, being descended from electric typewriters rather than computers, incorporate their own printers. I was

Summary of the main features of the three notebook computers

Feature	Amstrad NC200	Tandy WP3	Panasonic
Price	£349.99	£299.99	£279.99
Power	Mains or battery	Battery (mains adaptor extra)	Mains (battery pack available)
Screen	14-line lift-up	8-line flat	14-line lift-up
Storage	Internal RAM and 3.5" disc	Internal RAM (separate disc drive available)	3.5" disc
Operation	Coloured keys, Windows-style graphic menus	No on-screen menu	List style menus
Printing	Parallel and serial (apparently!)	Parallel only	Parallel and Panasonic serial
Word processor	50,000-word spellchecker	100,000-word spellchecker and thesaurus	100,000-word spellchecker and thesaurus



quite relieved to be able to discount these on the pretext that they were about 100 per cent more expensive and tended not to run on batteries. They were also less portable and took up a fair bit more desk space.

Eventually, I opted for the Amstrad NC 200. We negotiated a very good bulk discount with Tandy's for buying five machines and they even threw in the rechargeable batteries! We are now waiting to see how they fare in the classroom. From my initial tests I think they will be very popular. An

unexpected bonus is that they seem to have created interest in members of staff not usually moved visibly by new computer products; their extreme user-friendliness might even encourage some to be more adventurous with their desktop machines.

#### *Editor's note*

Are *you* using notebook computers in the classroom? If so, do please write and let us know which machine *you* have found most useful.

## **SATCOM: ready for launching!**

During the past year you may have read references to a new program entitled *SATCOM*. This has been developed by the WWF and initially designed for Secondary schools; not surprisingly the emphasis is on environmental education. The program works on the principle of a series of 'orbiting satellites' relaying information to a central 'command station' (the classroom). In reality, the school's computer is accessing a wealth of environmental data (text and images), bringing to life problems such as oil spills and forest destruction. The Secondary version of the software won the silver accolade in the awards sponsored by *Educational Computing and Technology* magazine. (These awards are given annually to those information technology developers who have shown an imaginative and creative approach to IT education.)

When the WWF decided to produce a version of *SATCOM* designed for Primary schools, MAPE was invited to join the project with the brief of ensuring that the ideas being developed mapped to the primary curriculum. The initial module available to Primary schools is on the topic of Forests. Designed for use with 9–13 year-olds, the Forests Module will encourage pupils to explore the complexity and diversity of the world's forests. Eight 'hotspot' case studies combine to provide a graphic picture of what is happening to the forests of the world, the reasons why they are being destroyed, and the positive measures which can be taken to protect them. The presentation includes a combination of text, colour photos, satellite images, maps and animated sequences. Ten schools have acted as trial sites using hardware generously provided by IBM – those who attended the MAPE Conference at York will have been impressed by the work achieved by the children at a Primary school in Warrington; a second report on their work will appear in *MICRO-SCOPE 43*.

We are optimistic that the Primary version of *SATCOM* will prove as popular as the Secondary version. In recognition of MAPE's input to the project, members will be able to receive the program (plus the extensive teaching and resource materials) for a cost of only £20 (a saving of £30 on the catalogue price). However, this is a one-off offer and in order to take advantage of it you will need to order the program directly from WWF and enclose with your order the discount voucher enclosed with this issue of *MICRO-SCOPE*. In order to use the program successfully you will need access to a 386/486 PC or an Archimedes. The program has been developed on the PC platform and is currently being versioned for Archimedes machines. A CD-ROM version of the software will hopefully be available in the near future, as will further modules. Ensure that you help your children to understand the world's environmental problems (and successful solutions) by taking advantage of this introductory offer to MAPE members now!

*Roger Keeling*  
MAPE Business Manager



# One school's solution to the latest computer management challenges

**Christopher Robinson**  
Education Consultant

In the days of one computer per school, the management problems were generally concerned with timetabling to permit every child the chance to spend a few minutes on it at some time during his or her school career. As schools acquire more (and varied) computers and better (and more demanding) software, and children are generally more 'computer literate', with their own machines at home, other problems manifest themselves. Horndean Middle School in Hampshire, with 45 curriculum computers of different makes shared between 420 pupils, and a three-year plan to triple that number, has met many of these problems and is ready for others.

Since Hampshire is an Acorn authority, the school has equipped each class with an Archimedes computer and taken advantage of the cheap software deals offered by the county. This has become each class's 'base' machine, and will soon have all its software on hard disc. Together with its colour monitor and printer, the system requires three electrical sockets. Since most of the classrooms had only two single sockets, a floating four-way extension was provided for each class, enabling two spare sockets to remain available for other devices.

Experimenting with computerised record-keeping, a portable computer was acquired for each teacher, doubling as another machine available to the children, following up a reasonable offer for hard-disc 286 laptops seen in the computer press.

Having two entirely different computer systems available could cause software problems: what are the computers used for?

The school has a Logo policy dating back to 1989 when Chris Robinson joined the school as its deputy head teacher. At the time, the school's 16 classes were served by just eight computers, comprising BBC Bs, a couple of early Archimedes, and one IBM PC. Logo was at that time the only common platform. All the school's computers now have a choice of true Logo implementations, the preference being for *LogoWriter* (which is run on the Archimedes under PC emulation).

In common with most other schools, 80 per cent

of Horndean's computer use is concerned with word processing. To that end, the other program initially installed on the laptops' hard discs was *PipeDream* — a combined word processor and spreadsheet program that was already available on the Archimedes computers. This program is also installed within the Cambridge Computers' Z88, which was a possible consideration for future purchase. *PipeDream* is not, however, always the first choice for word processing. When wanting simply-prepared fancy text, *PenDown* has many advantages. On the laptops, *Word Perfect* has enabled the children to use the same word processor that the administrative staff use. In essence, many text and word processors are available and the children are able to choose whichever is best suited to the task in hand.

Future computer provision was an issue to be addressed. Results of previous research had shown an optimum number of computers for a typical primary class to be about six. To aim for six Archimedes in each room was unrealistic on many counts: cost, footprint (the physical space required for each) and electrical provision. Although conveniently portable, the laptop computers still required an electric socket for use. Could low-cost battery-powered word processors be a possible solution? However, the machines would have to be usable for a full working day, rather than just a couple of hours.

Various models were considered. The Z88 had *PipeDream* in-built, and one had already been trialled within the school. It had been linked to BBC, Archimedes and PC machines successfully for file transfer. The small screen size was not a problem when used by one or two children and rechargeable batteries provided sufficient power to last the all day without any trouble.

The final decision to purchase Amstrad Notepads was made after considering ease of use, not for the children who seem to be able to cope with anything given to them, but for the teachers. The promise of being able to use one within five minutes seemed too good to be true.







# The Challenge of Niruba Island

**S.J. Gall**

*St. Luke's College, Exeter*

*This article has been edited from an account of 'Working with Logo', and details a lesson in which Logo was used within a project on 'Exploration'.*

There are many benefits to using Logo in the classroom. It is good for individual morale as there is no sense of failure; pupils can delete or change their work until they finally attain their targets.

The lesson described comes under the heading 'Maths', but connects with several other areas of the curriculum. The first of these is English. The whole class first listened to a tape recording of sea sounds and then the children each wrote lists of words to describe the sounds they had just heard. We then played the second part of the tape, during which there was the sound of a shipwreck. This was followed by a class discussion about shipwrecks and how they would feel if they themselves were wrecked at sea. Each child then wrote a story imagining their feelings during the wrecking of the ship. This led directly to The Challenge of Niruba Island. Other lessons linked to it included one on diet and nutrition (ie. what type of food they would find on their island and how it would differ from our diet today). This could lead to a whole series of lessons related to diet and nutrition.

The children had all done some work on coordinates, compass bearings and directions. They had also had several opportunities to work with Logo both with and without floor turtles.

The children started to work through the worksheets in order and soon grasped the concepts required. Although they were keen to start on the challenge straight away, it was realised that they would need to plan their route around the island in order to complete the task in less than 40 moves.

In discussion afterwards they were able to relate this route plan to the way they would program the floor turtle or the computer. We also discussed the variety of ways in which we can prepare and present instructions. The children decided that there were many ways in which they could have planned their route: eg. written instructions, diagrams or simple maps. They managed to devise a series of moves that would get them around the island in less than 40 moves which also enabled them to collect all the necessary items on the way. In practice, however, it took them well over 40 moves. Initially they overestimated how far the turtle would go and so had to backtrack and then their tendency was to underestimate and they had to repeat moves FD.

From this experience it was concluded that all of the children were learning to tackle problems logically by first breaking them down into smaller sections, and then tackling these one after the other. They also learned about estimation and application of number. They were gaining experience, too, in thinking mathematically – a useful skill on which to draw later.

This experience also taught the importance of imagination in investigative work. If the shipwreck story did not surround this task it would not have held their interest for so long.

As an extension for more advanced pupils, the children could write a procedure for completing the worksheet in the smallest number of moves, and then see how accurate they could be when executing their manoeuvres. Follow-up work could include challenges such as pupils designing their own treasure islands and worksheets on the computer, and then swapping with partners and completing their worksheets.



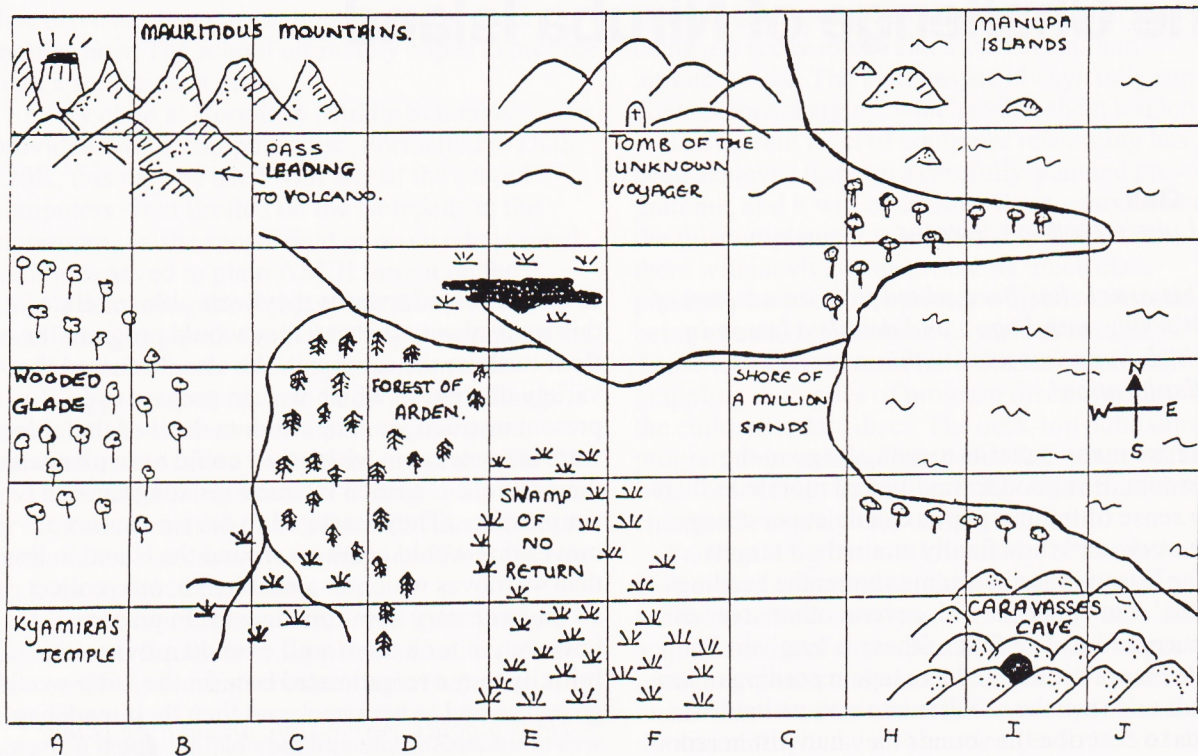


Figure 1 Map of Niruba Island.

### The Challenge of Niruba Island

You have been shipwrecked on the Island of Niruba and have just spent the night beside the pool of water in square E4.

It is now early morning and you are keen to get off the island as quickly as possible. However, before you leave you decide to explore the island for food, wood, a boat and any treasure you might find.

#### CHALLENGE:

You have to collect all of these things before you can leave the island:

- Fruit and food [A3]
- Crown of Kyamira [A1]
- Sword of Captain CJ [F6]
- Diamonds in the volcano [A6]
- Wood [A3]
- Treasure chest [I1]
- Boat from the Shore of a Million Sands [G3]

#### Remember:

1. You only have 40 moves or less in which to do this before the natives of Manupa Island come after you.
2. You can't cross the river without a boat.
3. If you hit the swamp, you get stuck: add 2 moves.
4. You may get lost in the woods: add 2 moves.

### WORKSHEET for Niruba Island map

1. The Forest of Arden is located in square \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In square I6, you will find \_\_\_\_\_.
3. You are in square A1 which is the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The volcano is located in square \_\_\_\_\_. To travel from the volcano to square D3 which is the \_\_\_\_\_ you have to travel a distance of \_\_\_\_\_ at an angle of \_\_\_\_\_. In which direction are you travelling? \_\_\_\_\_.
5. You are in square I1 facing NORTH. If you travel a distance of 350 in a N.W. direction, where do you end up? \_\_\_\_\_.
6. You are standing in square E2 facing SOUTH. You are in the \_\_\_\_\_. How far must you travel, and in which direction must you go to get to square A6? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. Where are you? \_\_\_\_\_.



## Software reviews

Title: *Profile*

Publisher: Sue Barnard and Ian Hutchinson,  
21 Dickens Place, Shrewsbury SY3 8ZB.  
Tel. 0743 364378

Micro: PC 286 or above, running Microsoft  
*Word 5.0* or *Word 5.5*

Price: £50.00

There have been many attempts at producing a system that aids hard-pressed primary school teachers in the task of compiling reports on the progress of their children. Two primary teachers in Shropshire, Sue Barnard and Ian Hutchinson, have got together to crack the task, and I think they have produced a first-class product which they call *Profile*. It produces professional and positive reports to parents, which may be created on a computer and printed direct or as the basis of a handwritten report. *Profile* has proved immensely popular with teachers throughout Shropshire, especially since it produces error-free reports at very high speed.

Sue and Ian have designed blank report forms on computer disc along with hundreds of commonly used phrases which can be 'pasted' onto the forms to produce detailed reports extremely rapidly. The core of *Profile* is the phrases. The phrases have been very carefully written, graded and closely linked for each of the National Curriculum subjects. The Core subjects have sub-sections for Profile Components. For example, English has four lists: English speaking and listening, English reading, English writing, and English basic spelling and handwriting. Maths has two lists: Maths using and applying, and Maths number and knowledge.

There are two sets of these phrases, both identical in content but with all the genders changed to girl/she boy/he etc.

Each subject has three sections, roughly: below average, average and above average, with ten progressively-graded comments in each. The comments can be used as they are, or extended, changed or adapted in any way the user wishes. The list of phrases can be extended or replaced by the users, or personalised to the particular school or class.

An example of the quality of the phrases may be drawn from this sample from the 'Maths number and knowledge' section:

*He collects and records data carefully and his interpretations show a depth of understanding.*  
(From the middle of the above average section.)

*He has a fair understanding of the simple concepts of shape and space.*  
(From the middle of the average section.)

*He finds it hard to sort shapes according to given criteria and he needs to make better use of structural apparatus.*  
(From the middle of the below-average section.)

*Profile* also contains sections under the heading of Overview. This section contains similar graded statements in the areas of Attitude, Aptitude, Attributes, Achievements, Caring, Conduct, Character, Contribution and Summary. A sample of the phrases from the Conduct section illustrates some of the range. I will leave the attribution of position in the range to the reader.

*He is a polite, responsible and mature young man, who can be relied on absolutely.*

*He has an attitude problem which is seriously affecting his relationships with both children and adults.*

The way *Profile* functions is by use of the Glossary feature of *Word for DOS*. Each phrase is given a two- or three-character code which, when entered at the keyboard, inserts that phrase into the text at the cursor position. All you need is the documentation with the phrases and the code and it is simplicity itself to produce a well-structured report in about five minutes or so, after a little practice.

The Glossary feature is one of the many under-used features of advanced word processors, but with a little initial time and effort much time can be saved in the future. You can save almost anything as a glossary item, by simply highlighting and 'copying' it to a reference number of your own choosing. You can then call it back onto the screen any time at the touch of a button. You can save difficult technical words or common phrases, standard sentences or paragraphs, whole pages or complete documents. You can even save letter headings, borders and imported graphics as glossary entries.

So far, Sue and Ian have only used *Profile* for primary school reports and records. But the technique could easily be extended to a whole range of applications eg. all sorts of forms, rules and regulations, quotations, lists, commonly-used phrases and paragraphs – in a wide variety of specific situations such as medical, legal and commercial.

Clearly, *Profile* is a simple idea with much potential.



Currently, *Profile* runs on a PC computer under *Word for DOS* version 5.0 or 5.5, but Sue and Ian are actively pursuing the transference of *Profile* onto *Word for Windows*. The program is accompanied by very comprehensive documentation and a help line number, if you should need it. Even if you don't run the program on your computer it is worth the money just for the 800 or so phrases which are all reprinted in the documentation.

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are personal and in no way reflect the views or opinions of Westhill College.*

Chris Hurrell  
Westhill College

Title: **Pictogram/Word Library**

Publisher: Kudlian Soft

Supplier: Warwickshire Educational Computer  
Centre, Manor Hall, Sandy Lane, Leamington  
Spa, Warwickshire CV32 6RD.

Micro: Archimedes

Price: £20.00 (Site licence)

### *Pictogram*

*Pictogram* is a low-cost, versatile, data-handling package, which can be used by children of different ages for several purposes. It has a lot of potential for demonstrating to children how to use data to make graphs and display them vertically or horizontally. This disc will deal with data collection very quickly so that your children can spend time looking at the results, instead of using time to make and colour in the graph. Of course, I am not saying that you should only use this method! All children need to be able to construct their own graphs, but this way you can easily create a colourful visual aid, which your children will understand.

Once a work disc is prepared, just think why you want the data before you begin the collection task on a sheet or directly onto the screen. Once the graph is completed as a pictogram, it can be shown as a block or bar chart. It's all menu-driven, so it is fast.

It is fun to show Reception children how to count by showing them the Picture sets of pictograms. The pictures provided are books, cloud cover, direction, eye colour, family, materials, pets, television programmes, school and traffic, but you can use your own titles for the columns instead if you wish.

You can show Year 1 how to use the mouse to drag pictures into the columns, and they soon manage the task on their own. You can give more demanding tasks with blank block charts to Year 2 pupils and upwards. In brief, decide why a graph would be useful, then collect the data, display the data as a graph, and then let the children find the answers to your 'Why?'

A pupil named Peter commented, 'It's easy to represent things.' Robert very quickly said, 'It's realistic.' These efforts (Figures 1 and 2) were done by Year 4 pupils showing Year 1 children how to use the program, first just dragging pictures, and then converting the information into a block chart.

### EYES

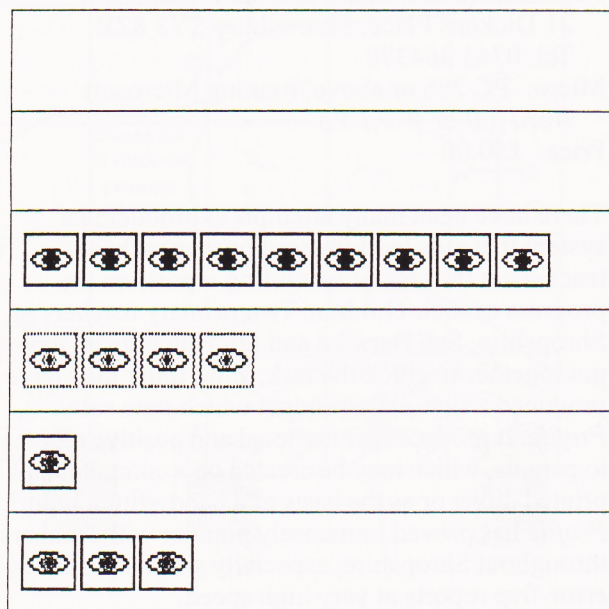


Fig. 1

### *Word Library*

*Word Library* can be used for dictionary practice, learning alphabetical order, creating word libraries, using the library applications on the disc or simply for scanning words. There are many curriculum uses for language development or for special needs.

On the disc there are four word libraries plus 12 French, seven German and one Spanish. This part of the package can therefore be used with Year 7 upwards if appropriate.

Years 1 and 2 could benefit from the fun of *First 100* and *First 300* which are lists of the first 100 or 300 words they would use in story writing. Our Year 3 children compiled the WATER Library opposite (Figure 3).

It is also possible to use this program with a Concept Keyboard if you have a User Port fitted to your machine. This disc will run on any RISC-OS 2 or RISC-OS 3 Archimedes machine with 1 Mb or more of memory. However, it is crucial that you read the booklet before starting to use this 'flexible friend'.

In the words of Luke, 'It's excellent for children.'

Kathryn Quinnell  
Shipham First School, Somerset



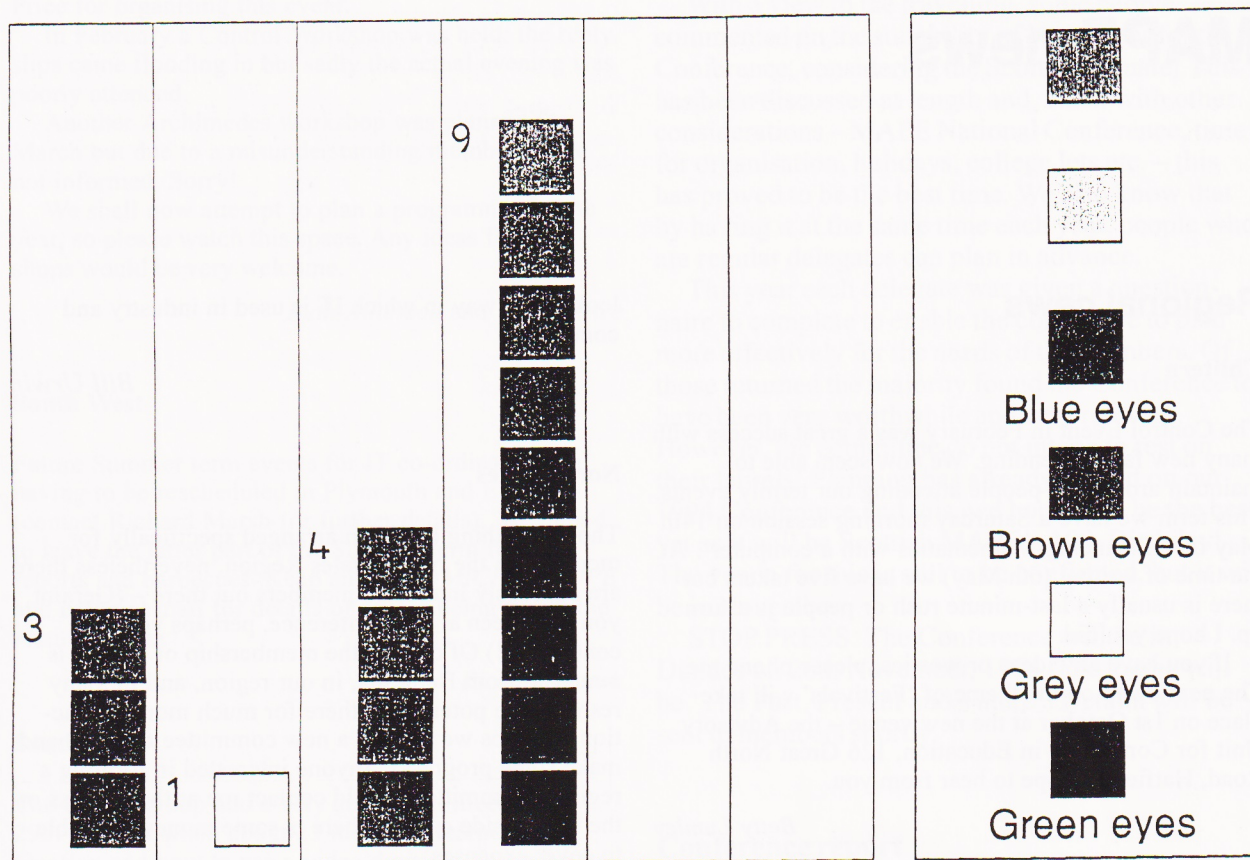


Fig. 2 Block chart of eyes.

aqua	bath	condensation	drink	estuary	evaporation
float	fountain	gutter	hosepipe	ice	iceberg
jelly	lake	ocean	pond	pool	plants
puddle	reservoir	river	sea	sink	spring
stream	tap	toilet	underwater	vapour	waterfall
Waterworks					

Fig. 3 The Water library.



# MAPE news

## Regional news

### Chiltern

The Control Event in February was a great success with many new faces attending. We now seem able to maintain around 25 people attending our termly events. This term we have a Saturday morning session on 14th May on 'Enhancing Mathematics with a computer'. At the time of writing (6th May) we have five takers but there is usually a last-minute rush or people just turn up. I hope you did.

If you have any ideas or worries, please phone me. The next event on the theme of 'Festivals' will take place on 1st October at the new venue – the Advisory Unit for Computers in Education, 126 Great North Road, Hatfield. I hope to hear from you.

*Betty Lumley*

### East Midlands

Up until Easter we have been very busy organising Conference '94 at Nottingham University. We hope you had a good time and enjoyed the event. At the moment we are planning future activities for 94/95. If anyone has any ideas or would like to be involved please feel free to contact me on 0602 520235. (Be prepared for the answering machine!)

*Barbara Moore*

### Eire

There is very little activity during May and June. Watch out for computer courses at your local Teacher Centre in early July. East Cork Teachers' Computer Group begins its new programme in mid-September. Meetings are held every second Wednesday night. New members are welcome.

*Luke McAuliffe*

### Great Western

The main focus for our region for the next six months will be the organisation of the MAPE Conference at Bath College of Higher Education, Newton Park Campus, on 7-9 April 1995. As well as the usual fare – workshops, presentations etc. – we hope to include a

look at the way in which IT is used in industry and commerce.

*Bill Urwin*

### North Wales

Though nothing has been arranged specifically for members in the North Wales Region, nevertheless there are obviously interested members out there – (Geraint, you were seen at the Conference, perhaps you can contact me!) Of course, the membership of MAPE is managed from Bethesda, in our region, and in many respects the potential is there for much more interaction. Perhaps we can get a new committee together and make some progress? Anyone interested in forming a regional committee should contact me at the address on the back inside cover – there is some money available to cover expenses.

By the way, if you know of a school or a person who might be keen to join MAPE, now is the time to do so because they would get the latest Software Special, and MICRO-SCOPE, free as new members.

*Dave Siviter*

### Northern

At the time of writing, the Northern Region is organising a one-day course/conference for 21st May. However this may have to be cancelled due to the low numbers of applications to date. This looks like being the second poorly supported day course/conference. The committee would like to hear from the membership what they would like by way of Regional activities; and also the location of a venue for any activities.

Future events are in the pipeline with the first about to be planned for the Autumn term, hence our need for the membership to let us have their suggestions so that it can be a really constructive day. Please don't be shy; if you don't let us know what your needs are we cannot be of any support.

Those who attended our last course/conference, though few in number, found it a worthwhile and enjoyable day.

*Elizabeth Freeman*

### South East

This is rather a historical report. A very successful afternoon was spent in November exploring Christmas Clip Art with the Archimedes. Many thanks to Chris



Price for organising this event.

In February a Control Workshop was held; the reply slips came flooding in but sadly the actual evening was poorly attended.

Another Archimedes workshop was planned for March but due to a misunderstanding members were not informed. Sorry!

We shall now attempt to plan a programme for the year, so please watch this space. Any ideas for workshops would be very welcome.

*Ruth Allanach and Chris Price*

### South West

Future Summer term events for IT co-ordinators are having to be rescheduled in Plymouth and Exeter (contact Richard Marsh for further details). We intend to leave the latter part of the Summer term free for reports and barbecues. Keep an eye on *MICRO-SCOPE* and external mail for details of events being run in the Autumn term.

*Richard Marsh*

### Southern

The Dorset group had a very successful meeting on 29th January when about 25 members learned about *Ovation* and how to use a video digitiser. A session on graphics, art packages and related materials is to be held on June 18th at Malmesbury Park First School, Bournemouth, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At the January meeting a 'free' clip art disc was given out. Another disc will probably be available at the June meeting.

*John Bennett*

## Scottish Conference 1993

*University of Paisley, Craigie Campus, Ayr*

Craigie Campus in Ayr proved to be an attractive setting for the 1993 Conference. The committee appreciate that the travelling was quite considerable for some members. We try to target different areas of Scotland each year to counteract this.

With a view to the travelling, some people commented on the suitability of November for the Conference, considering the Scottish climate! This has been discussed at length and, taken with other considerations – MAPE National Conference, time for organisation, holidays, college lets etc. – this has proved to be the best time. We also know that by having it at the same time each year, people who are regular delegates can plan in advance.

This year each delegate was given a questionnaire to complete to enable the committee to plan more effectively for the needs of the members. Of those returned the majority found the Conference to have been very worthwhile and very relevant. However, the committee do not intend to rest on their laurels! Planning has already started on our 1994 Conference and this, we hope, will be the best yet as it will be Scottish MAPE's 10th Birthday! The venue for this is still to be confirmed, but it will be in November.

**STOP PRESS:** The Conference will be in Dundee on 26th November, 1994. The theme will be 'The Past, Present and Future'. Details will be sent to members shortly.

### Conference report

During the 1993 session the Scottish Steering Committee posed a series of questions relating to Scottish MAPE Conferences. These included:

- Do we need to adjust our plans, methods, organisations etc. to meet the needs of members?
- Are the 'conference' processes and the outcomes worthwhile?

A questionnaire was given to all delegates during the conference. The questions were designed to gather information to help the Steering Committee plan effectively for 1994. It was aimed that the analysis would help answer the above questions and provide the basis for making future recommendations and decisions.

Out of the total evaluation forms issued, 59 were returned. This sample is taken to be fairly repre-

Conference '93 evaluation	Rating				Totals
	1 (High)	2	3	4 (Low)	
Worth	29	26	4	0	59
Relevance	45	13	1	0	59
Presentation	41	18	0	0	59
Ease of understanding	43	11	5	0	59
Meeting needs	32	25	2	0	59
Totals	190	93	12	0	

**Fig. 1** Conference 1993 evaluation.



sentative of the views of members who attended the conference and is therefore considered valid data to usefully contribute to future planning.

The spreadsheet (Figure 1) and the graph (Figure 2) indicate:

1. Most people found the conference *very worthwhile* with only four finding it *partially worthwhile*.
2. The majority found it *very relevant* with only one finding it somewhat lacking in relevance.
3. Equally, presentation, ease of understanding and meeting needs received high ratings.
4. Areas where development could occur were in the *worth* and *meeting needs* categories

Questions 3–6 on the evaluation form were 'open-ended'. A representative sample of responses are included below.

**Question 3:** Identify the most positive aspects of the Conference.

*provided inspiration for the wider use of the computer*

*organisation*

*relevance*

*introduction to new software and hardware*

*variety of workshops*

*getting time and help on machines*

*talking to colleagues/changing ideas*

*contacts/new ideas*

*opportunity to become familiar with new materials*

*getting a national perspective*

*awareness of what is going on*

*up-to-date materials and comments on appropriateness*

*identifying classroom problems and providing 'positives'*

*inspiration*

*new knowledge – time to experiment*

*college facilities*

*enthusiasm of presenters*

**Question 4:** Aspects of the Conference which might be improved.

*more infant options*

*more hands-on/less talk*

*more relevant keynote address*

*not in November*

*getting software from workshops*

*more displays and time to view*

*exhibition*

*time a bit tight*

*matching 5–14*

*having to work in pairs*

*organisation (signs/maps)*

*catering for the less able*

*better 'programmed learning'*

*AGM at end*

*availability of computers at lunch time*

**Question 5:** More time/information would have been desirable on:

*'step-by-step' guide to take away*

*hardware/software*

*contact addresses*

*only two workshops to give more time to investigate*

*new developments*

*advanced notice of workshops*

**Question 6:** Less time/information would have been desirable on:

*coffee*

*lectures*

**General comments**

*best yet MAPE Conference*

*One of the most useful training days*

Finally, the delegates were required to indicate if they would prefer a conference or support materials next session. The responses were as follows:

Conference	35
Support materials	18
Both (one specified alternate years)	6

As a result of this survey the new 1994 Steering Committee has decided to begin preparations for a November Conference and at the same time start working on the 'Support Material' project for 1995.

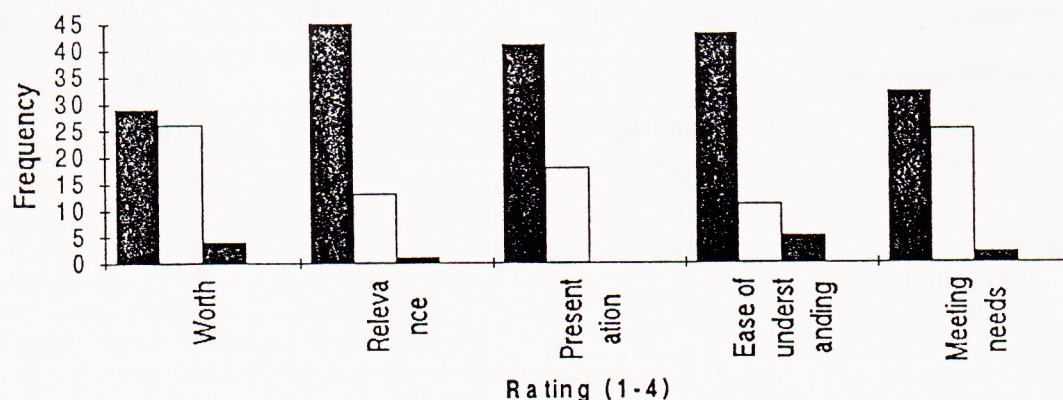


Fig. 2. Analysis of MAPE Conference 1993 Evaluation Questionnaire.



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South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire

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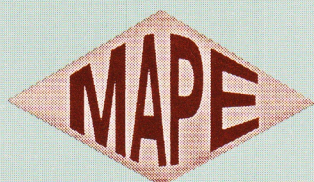
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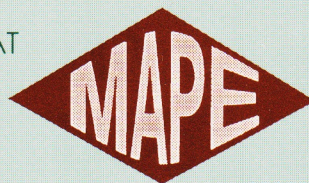
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