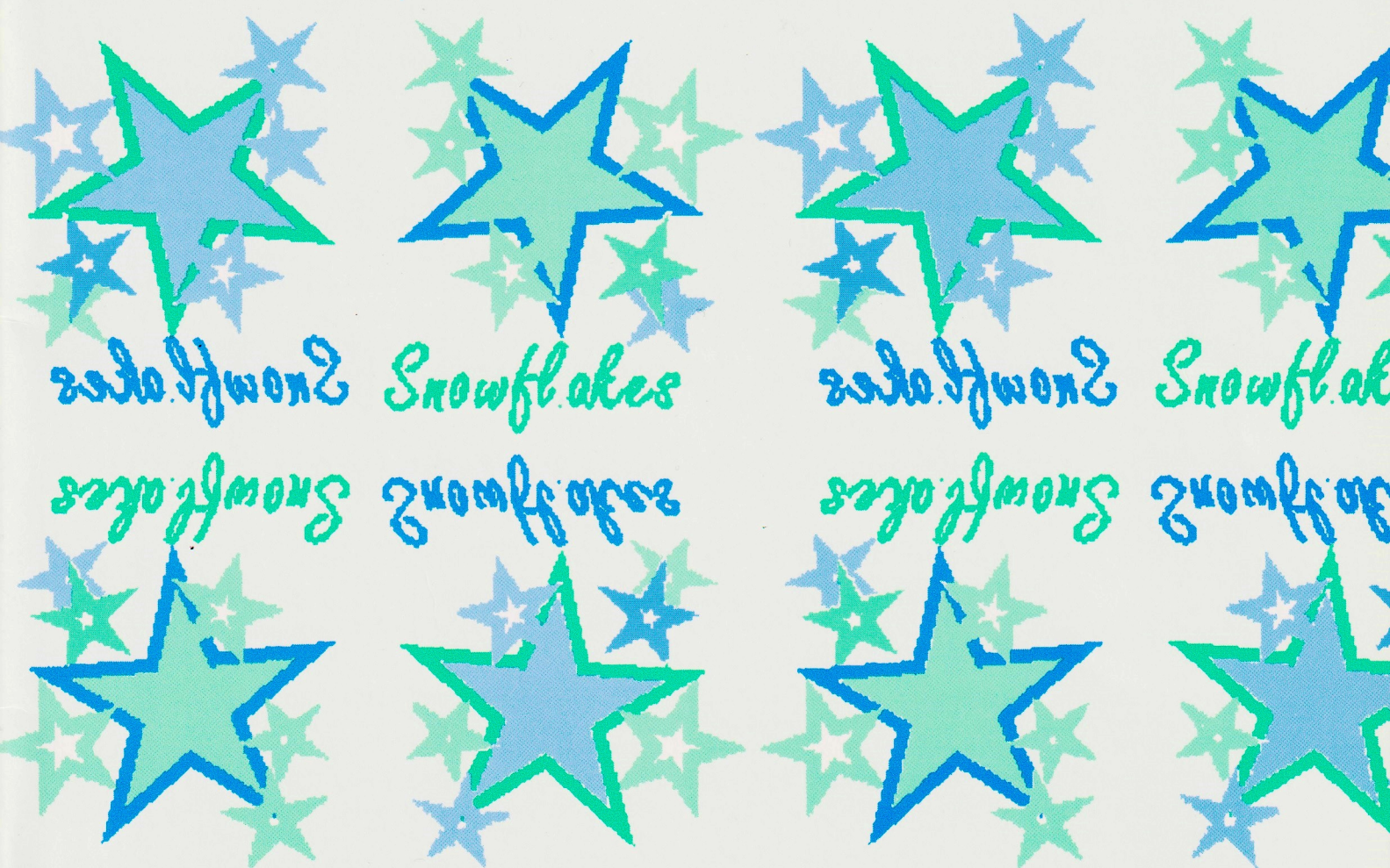


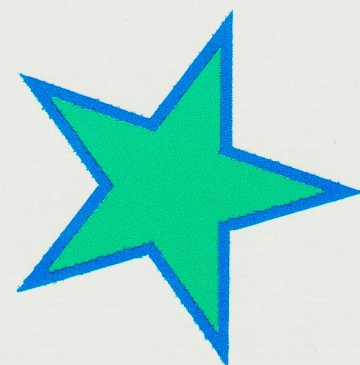
MICROSCOPE-

► Issue 48

► Autumn 1996



- 1996 NEMA Awards
- IT: home and school
- Teaching reading with talking story books
- IT activity sheets – Autumn term festivals
- Making good use of the school camera



NEWMAN COLLEGE with MAPE

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MICRO-SCOPE 48

MICRO-SCOPE matters

Rhona Dick
Editor

This issue of *MICRO-SCOPE* brings with it several changes. As you may be aware *MICRO-SCOPE* will now be published only twice a year, but these will be supplemented by more Specials, the first of which, an *Early Years Special*, should be with you in the not too distant future. A newsletter will take the place of *MICRO-SCOPE* in the Summer term.

Following discussion at a recent meeting of MAPE National Council it was decided that members' interests would be better served if regionally held events were open to all who might wish to attend. You will find details of some forthcoming events on page 31. If there is something that interests you why not try to come along?

The pull out section this term has some IT activities for Autumn and Winter Festivals. Plans for future issues include the Ancient Greeks, and Music, so if you have a really good IT activity for

one of these topics please send it in. If there are any themes you would like covered please let me know. Two contributors to this issue, Moira Monteith (IT: home and school) and Michelle Morris (NCET TV) have specifically asked for your comments; letters on these or any subject can be sent to me.

I didn't have the privilege of knowing or working with Chris Robson, but in the past few months I have come to realise in what very high esteem she was held, not only professionally, but on a personal level too. To reflect, in some way, the regard that her colleagues in MAPE had for Chris it was decided to institute an award in her memory, details of which can be found below.

So the mantle of editorship now lies on my shoulders. I hope I can live up to the very high standards set by previous editors.

Chris Robson Memorial Prize

Since the death of Chris Robson last September the executive committee and National Council have been considering the most appropriate way in which MAPE could commemorate Chris' life. Chris gave her time unstintingly to MAPE as both 'overseas' representative and *MICRO-SCOPE* editor. She was passionate about the use of IT in education and, as editor, meticulous in her attention to the detail of the written word. We feel it is, therefore, appropriate that we have decided to award an annual prize for the best *MICRO-SCOPE* article reflecting good classroom practice with IT.

The prize, of £250, will be awarded during the Autumn Term of each year and the winner will be selected from articles which have appeared in *MICRO-SCOPE* during the previous academic year. The first award will be made in the Autumn of 1996. A panel of judges will consider all articles that have appeared in *MICRO-SCOPE* during the academic year 1995-96. Authors are not required to 'enter' their work as all articles which have been published in *MICRO-SCOPE* will be considered eligible.

If this proves to be an incentive for more authors to submit articles to *MICRO-SCOPE* in addition to the main purpose of perpetuating the memory of Chris then I will be delighted, and I am sure that Chris would have been too.

Les Watson, MAPE chairman

NEMA '96 – The under 11 Winners

Barry Wake

Educational IT Consultant

The Awards Ceremony

The third National Educational Multimedia Awards (NEMA) ceremony was held in the Swan Theatre in Stratford, on a glorious summer's day in June, with lunch on the lawns beside the gently flowing Avon. The contrast with the morning's 'hi-tech' activities could not have been greater, except that the theatre stage itself, crowded with models of all sorts of animals, large and very large, and skeletons and other paraphernalia from the current production, seemed to provide the exact setting for the highly imaginative multimedia presentations from the pupils.

The prizes to the value of £30,000, donated by large and small names in the multimedia industry, were once again presented by Dominik Diamond, the computer games guru. An excellent and humorous host as always, Dominik admitted to being ever more astounded and amazed at the sheer inventiveness and imagination of the entries.

As one of the judges involved, I could not agree more. Multimedia presentations do admittedly entail a bit of new learning and can take some time to produce. The National Council for Educational Technology (NCET) who manage the competitions, produced a CD-ROM based on last year's winners full of tips and advice, and actual samples of the presentations. (See *MICRO-SCOPE* 47, 'NEMA 94-95-96')

Clearly, however, there are pupils who are now getting pretty accomplished themselves with the 'added-value' of multimedia and the extra dimensions it offers. They are becoming very skilful at the nuts and bolts: how to design screen layouts, the menus or hot links to other screens, where to place navigation buttons to move through the work, to balance image with text and sound where appropriate. Some even come with their own instructions and help routines. But above all, it is the amazing creativity and untrammelled imagination that these new skills seem to unleash in children of all ages.

The new trends

Irene Ordidge, the Programme Manager from NCET, noted a couple of significant trends

amongst this year's entries. On the technical side much more was made of animation, possibly because some of the newer versions of the software makes this option more easily accessible. However, the animated sequences were often very carefully and sensitively used to great effect. Also the quality of the sound was felt by the judges to be generally better, though there were still some problems with the background 'noises-off'.

Another tendency appeared to be a better awareness of the intended audience of the work. Many more entries this year involved the production of resources aimed at specific groups, sometimes stories for younger children, but also more topic-based information which others could make use of.

The entries

In terms of the actual entries the number was up again on last year. In fact the 'junior' or KS2 age range was split this time round, separating the 11 year-olds from the 8-10s. Almost two-thirds of all the entries came from primary schools, (79 out of the 132), with almost exactly half coming from the 8-11 age group. Even the under 7s provided nearly a tenth of the total entries too!

All three computer platforms were well represented, and the most used authoring packages were *Genesis* for the Archimedes, *Hyperstudio* for the Apple Mac and *Illuminatus* for IBM PCs. (Actually *Hyperstudio* is now available for all three systems, and you can get a free Preview Demo CD-ROM from TAG on 01474 357 350, which could get you started.)

In terms of subject matter, the scope was enormous: from creative stories to computer games to myths and legends to information resources for a whole range of topics. Looking at some of the winners should give a good flavour of the variety of content.

Some of the winners

Crab Wood, from Brookhouse County Primary, presented a wide range of information about a nature reserve. The menus were well designed

allowing the user to choose from a variety of interests, and there were some simple, effective animations too. The whole presentation had an attractive and creative approach which was informative and at the same time made you want to go and visit the reserve itself to find out more.

Another prize-winning entry, from the De Beauvoir Primary School, could not have been more different. Here, four girls had added a multimedia dimension to their history topic about three *Wartime Women*. Using a mixture of their own art work and text, along with war-time memorabilia such as ration books, you could click on an area of the map of Europe as it was in 1940 and contrast well-known biographies with the recorded interview of an actual evacuee who worked in their school. It was certainly one way of bringing history to life!

Music also made an appearance this time, and Hempshill Hall Primary offered you the chance to learn about and listen to some of the less well-known untuned percussion section that they had at school. It was a well-constructed presentation, with good clear navigation. Now at least we can find out what a cabassa is, and sounds like, in their *Guide to the Music Area*.

The *Brookhouse Bookshelf*, from Brookhouse County Primary, consisted of very engaging set of multimedia stories aimed at supporting the language development of some of the younger bilingual pupils in the school. The need and interests of the audience had been well considered, with the colourful eye-catching graphics and

simple but amusing animations.

The three winners in the under 10s category were also grounded more in the language area of the curriculum. Northgate Primary produced their *Awesome Alphabet*. Again a well-thought-through, well-balanced package offering various options within a consistent screen design. The colourful, talking alphabet (using initial letter sounds and whole words) was quite imaginatively presented.

Not to be left out, an entry in Welsh was another winner in the under tens. *Y Dywysoges yn y Twr* (The Princess in the Tower) was in effect an enjoyable, well constructed, beautifully illustrated multi media adventure game. The prince needs to solve a number of puzzles on his journey through the unfriendly forest before rescuing the princess. Apparently the judges, one of whom was a Welsh speaker, just had to 'test' the whole journey too!

Grove Junior retold *The Labours of Herakles*, with the helpful foresight of adding an option of children speaking the sometimes tongue-twisting names of the Greek characters, as well as some other imaginative uses of sound. The screen design looks deceptively simple but is really well thought out, well balanced and very effective. Again some delightful original art work accompanies the children's own text and graphics. It provided an excellent multimedia introduction (or reminder for some of the judges!) to some of the legends of the Ancient Greeks and will no doubt be thoroughly enjoyed by other children in years to come.

The two youngest winners were in many ways some of the most imaginative there, both

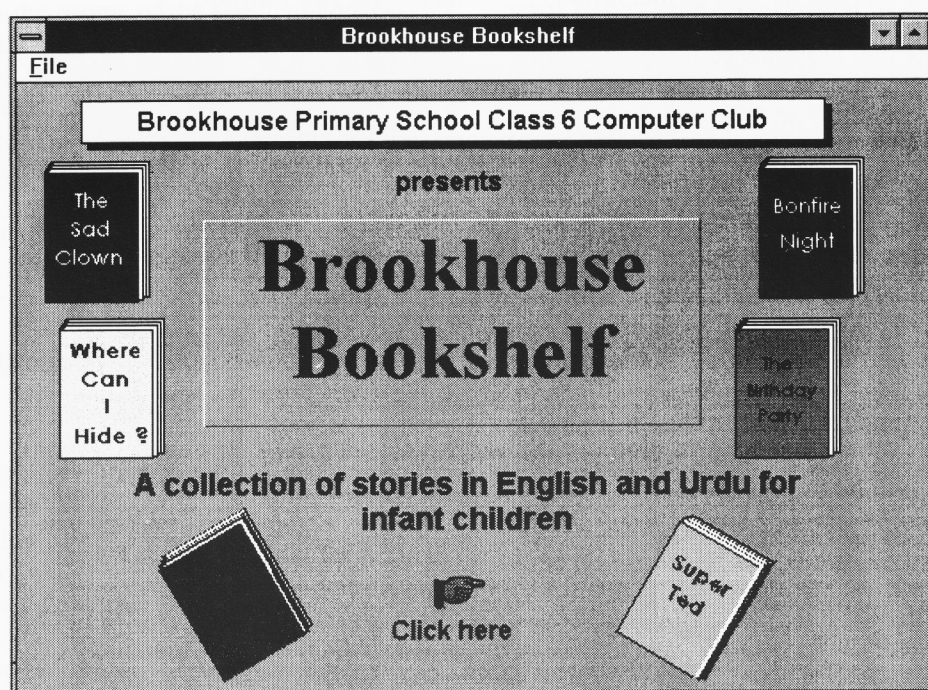


Fig. 1. Multimedia stories from Brookhouse County Primary School.

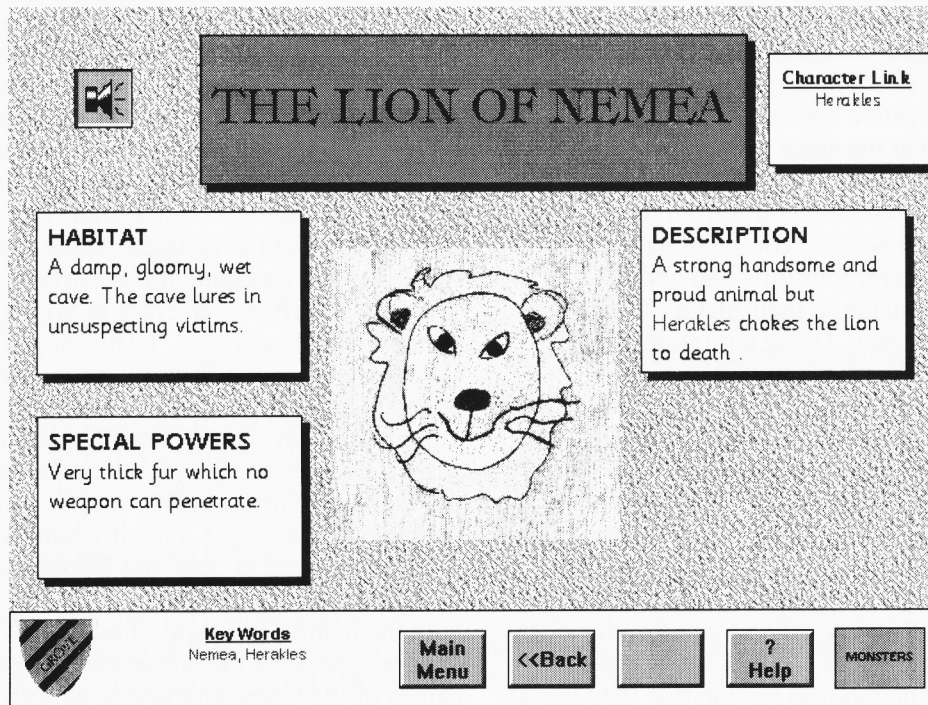


Fig. 2. A scene from 'The Labours of Herakles' by Grove Junior School.

concerning animals. *Going Wild with Animals*, from Queensbridge Infants, used an intriguing quiz format where you had to guess the animals from a few (but significant) clues. Rowtown Infants, on the other hand, told the highly inventive story of *The Grumpy Spider* who antagonised a whole range of characters including a postman, a policeman, a ballerina and a lobster!! They also had lovely touches of humour as well as marvellous

animations and art work. And of course the Grumpy Spider eventually got his just deserts.

Finally, if there were an overall winner at NEMA '96, the champion of champions belongs surely to Burley Middle School again where six girls produced a broad Yorkshire rap, describing the trials and tribulations of a young teenager who loses his key and gets stuck, trying to enter the house via *The Catflap*!

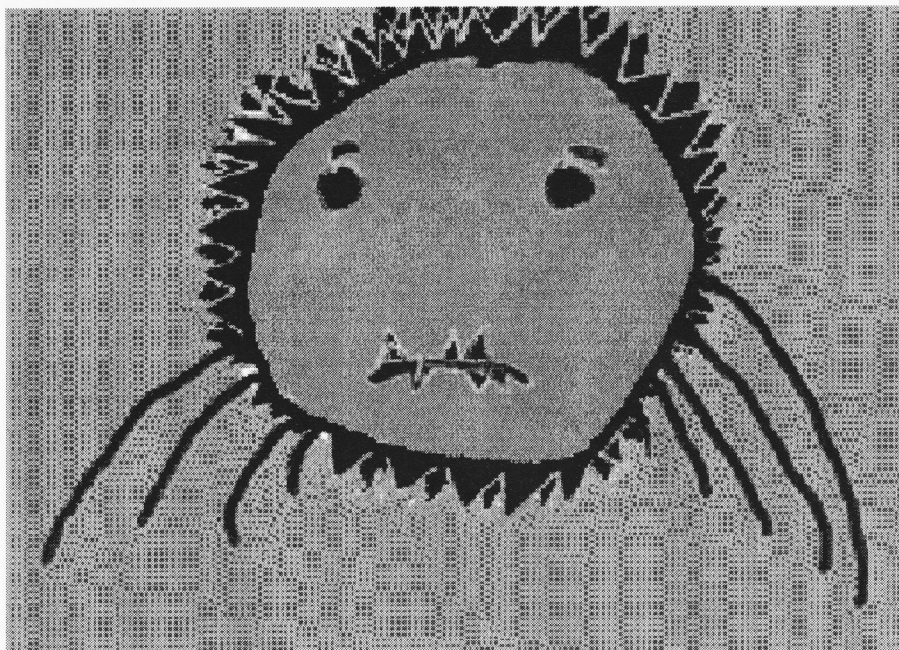


Fig. 3. A story about 'The Grumpy Spider' by Rowdown Infant School.

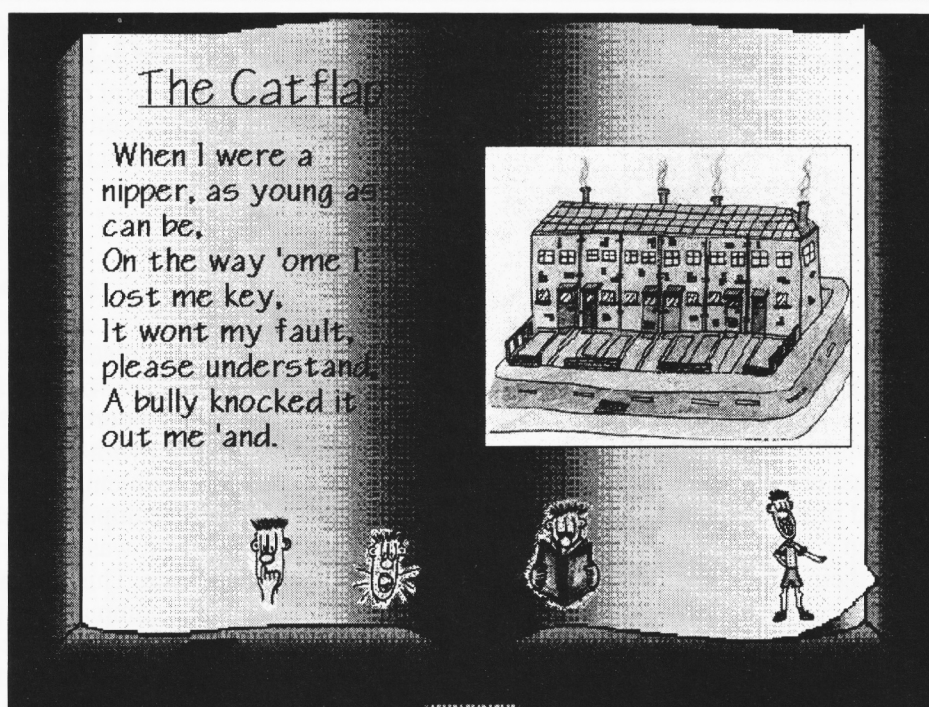


Fig. 4. A Yorkshire Rap entitled 'The Catflap' from Burley Middle School.

From a Nipper Productions presentation of *The Cat Flap*, during an attempt to enter the house through the catflap having dropped his key down a grate:

I couldn't get out, I couldn't get in,
An' so I med an awful din.
"Please 'elp!" I got myself to shout
"I'm stuck!" I 'ollered, "get me out!"

The attention to detail, the consistency of design and content, and above all the humour (and funny goings-on in the rooms of the terraced houses!) all recorded in this lovely rich, local dialect was an immediate hit with everyone who saw and heard it. There was even a section at the end where you could learn to say 'ee by gum' with the right accent yourself, as well as finding out what 'On Ikla moor bar tat' really means. Now, will NCET put that out on CD ROM?

The future of NEMA

As for NEMA '97, things don't look too bright at the moment of writing. No big sponsors have come forward as yet, but at least these last three years have not been wasted. NEMA '94, '95, and '96 have shown that children, and some very young ones at that, can not only manage but creatively exploit authoring software to present what Irene Ordidge has called 'a showcase of pupils' talent in the area of multimedia'.

Perhaps NEMA has done enough 'pump-priming'. The software is there, help and advice is there (especially from NCET) and we know the children's capability and interest is there, too. So now perhaps, after all that, it's over to you in the classroom. . . .

Links with Romanian Schools

Adriana Bendovschi, a teacher in Bucharest, has expressed an interest in setting up a link with a British school. Her school does not have access to e-mail, but she would like her pupils to exchange letters with children in this country. The education system in Romania means that teachers have the same pupils for the four years of their primary schooling (7–11), and this year Adriana will be teaching 7 year olds. Her school is in a very nice area of Central Bucharest, fairly close to the Triumphal Arch. If anyone is interested in corresponding with Adriana's pupils please send details to :

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Teaching reading with talking story books

Chris Taylor and Mary McMullen
University of Exeter, School of Education

Most primary classes contain at least one or two children who have difficulties with reading, and who find certain aspects of classroom work beyond their ability without a great deal of assistance. At the same time, most classrooms now have access to at least one computer. By bringing the two together and providing some suitable software the children concerned can be greatly aided to overcome their difficulties.

The *Naughty Stories* by Sherston Software were one of the first packages of software available in Britain which included text, digitised speech and animation in a package that would run on a single floppy drive computer. These stories take the format of a simple story book where the reader can choose either to read the story or to have the computer speak the words by clicking on buttons on the screen. The computer will either speak single words or whole sentences. There are pictures on the screen which can be animated or made to give sound effects by clicking on the right button. The packages also include picture books for the children to read away from the computer.

I have been investigating the use of these packages with children who have reading difficulties in a group of six schools in Devon. The main questions I wanted to answer were:

Are the talking books a valuable tool for teaching reading?

How are the talking books used in classrooms?
 Is there a market outside the school? (e.g. the home, adult literacy etc.)

What future developments could be considered?

My initial investigations suggested that there were substantial gains in their reading ability for the children concerned, due at least in part to the use of the programs. Evidence for this initial work was gathered on the basis of observations by the author and classroom teacher, interviews with the classroom assistant and children, and by sampling the children's work. Because of the low reading abilities of the children concerned and their lack of self confidence, it was not considered appropriate to use reading tests.

It was immediately apparent to me that the commercially-produced talking stories were very successful with the children. They were fun to read, with good graphics involving short

animations and sound effects, and the story content provided rich material for discussion. The user interface was simple and appropriate and it took a matter of seconds for the poorest reader to discover how to work the program with the mouse. Technically there were some problems. When using the stories on an A3000 the computer became confused about which floppy disc it was working from, and displayed the wrong fonts. This was partly due to the configuration of the computer system used in the school. In another school, the IT coordinator tried to copy the programs onto the computer's hard disc, not realising that they were write protected. This led to subsequent problems for the class teacher.

The children worked their way through these stories both with and without adult help, and the stories appeared to be an effective means of accessing literature. It was not necessary for an adult to be available whenever an unknown word was encountered. It was also significant that the children wanted to read the words. They tried to read the text first and then clicked on the icon to hear it spoken discovering if they had got it right. Picture books were also provided as part of the package, so when the computer was being used for other things the children could still read the story.

The children were greatly motivated to read the stories, finding this to be a new, fun medium. Over a period of a term their confidence greatly increased as did their fluency. One child, who was hyperactive, enjoyed the stories so much that by the end of the term he asked his teacher if he could take books home to read, something he had never done before. Another child, who was brain damaged, did not make such a leap but slowly developed his reading ability over the term. Following the success of this work, I encouraged children in the class to compose talking stories using a simple Multimedia package. These stories were then available for the children with special needs, who then created their own multimedia stories using the same package.

Having been greatly encouraged by this work, I employed a research assistant to visit a number of other schools using the software which had been supplied by the company producing the stories. In order not to prejudice her opinions I deliberately gave her very little information about my work

other than to let her see the software. Between us we drew up a list of issues to raise with the teachers and children involved. She visited each of the schools, talked with the teachers, observed children working and talked with those who had used the programs.

Children's Learning

All the teachers except one were enthusiastic in the children's use of the programs which were seen as being valuable tools for developing motivation to read, and provided autonomy for the children. They were particularly valuable for children who had failed to read using traditional methods. One teacher said,

"A child will come and use the computer whereas he will not necessarily pick up the book and read."

One child talked of the computer as if it were a person,

"Half the words in the book they're too hard for me because I hadn't ever heard the words what are in the book. But when they are on screen it's much easier for me because I've got someone in the room to help me with it."

There was comment from one teacher that these stories failed to provide a structured approach to reading; the teacher was under the misapprehension that the books were part of a reading scheme. She stated that she far preferred the Oxford Reading Tree stories which are produced in a similar format by the same software house. The *Naughty Stories*, she felt, were a bit too much like comics.

Classroom Issues

We found that teachers liked children to use these packages in a collaborative situation, groups of two or three were preferred, although one teacher used a story with the whole class in a story-telling situation. A classroom assistant or parent was often employed to supervise during the use of these stories. One teacher suggested a computer should be specifically dedicated for use with the stories in the library. Children who did not need to use the stories (i.e. they were not behind in reading) also wanted to read them and asked to be allowed to do so at break times. The stories, therefore, helped to remotivate some pupils who had reached a plateau in their reading progress.

One teacher had developed strategies to help the children cope with the technical aspects. To start the program working she said,

"You do quite rapid clicks don't you, click, click, click hard and fast and it should pop up."

To explain when the disc drive was working she said,

"Can you hear the noise it's making? (the computer) That tells you 'leave me alone, I'm busy!'"

To close down the program,

"Come up here and point to it. Give it a big kiss and kiss it goodbye."

Conclusions

Our conclusions are that these packages form a very useful additional tool in the armoury available to help the teaching of reading. The children are able to read them independently and do not spend their time just listening to the stories. More packages of a similar nature would be welcome, particularly ones which are suitable for use with older children, teenagers and adults. There might also be a market for similar packages for home use, although teachers doubted whether the pricing was right for the home market.

This was a relatively small-scale research project, but it has indicated a successful way of helping some children to read. We do not consider that these stories are a replacement for traditional teaching methods, but rather an effective additional tool. It would be worth repeating the exercise with a wider spread of schools and children, including a range of pupils with identified difficulties.

Since this study was started, activity packs have been produced to reinforce the work of these stories, and a range of other talking books has been produced. The company concerned is also working on a voice recognition version of these programs, whereby the computer listens to the child reading each word, and reads it back to them if they mispronounce it. Can this extension of the software contribute anything positive to children's learning? It is now possible to purchase speech recognition packages which convert speech into written text on the computer screen. Could these packages be used to aid children with writing difficulties?

Chris Taylor lectures in Education at the University of Exeter, School of Education, and is currently researching the use of the Internet in primary schools, and ways of providing effective staff development for teachers. *Mary McMullen* also works at the School of Education and is currently studying for a BPhil/MEd, for which she undertook this research.

For further information, e-mail C.A.Taylor@ex.ac.uk or telephone 01392 264989.

Miss Apprehension and Mrs Brill

Bob Fox

Bob Fox is in charge of Primary IT at Worcester College of Higher Education. He writes: 'I have met both these ladies, several times, in a

variety of guises. Use these pages as the basis for discussion at a staff meeting or staff development day.'

Miss Apprehension's Class

There does not seem to be much of a policy for IT in Miss Apprehension's school. There is a computer in every class, but some machines have taken about twelve years of classroom hurly-burly and really look as though they should be pensioned off.

Mr Hogg, the IT Co-ordinator, teaches the top class. He has just acquired a smart new multimedia computer, complete with CD-ROM and a scanner. He takes the view that it doesn't particularly matter what IT the children do in the other classes, because when they get into his class they will do all sorts of exciting things.

Miss Apprehension does not know what IT they do in other classes, but knowing would make very little difference, as she is stuck with the software she inherited when the machine was passed down to her. The computer is a bit close to the board, and sometimes it gets covered in chalk dust. Some of her discs no longer work.

Miss Apprehension is a very busy teacher, and cannot find time to play with a lot of computer games. Giles and William know all about computers, because they have got them at home, so she leaves most of the setting up to them.

For most of the lesson the computer is idle. Twenty minutes before playtime, Simon says, "I've finished my work – can I play on the computer?"

Simon is playing a game in which typing in the answers to randomly-generated sums allows him to zap alien spacecraft. Miss Apprehension knows that children like Simon are learning a lot about computers.

There is no particular system for deciding who gets the next turn on the computer. Simon often finishes his work first, and he is becoming good at zapping spacecraft. Sarah and Katy find doing their classwork a bit of a struggle, and they have not had a go on the computer since before Christmas, but they don't particularly want to, anyway.

She does have a word processing disc, but she does not like it much. She says, "We used it for a bit, to type in the stories they had written, but they were so slow at finding the right keys and typing it all in that they got frustrated. They don't really like having to write things out again, anyway, and I'm worried that their handwriting will suffer if they spend all their time typing things in. I used to use the printer sometimes, but the paper was always getting stuck, so I had to turn it all off."

Miss Apprehension attended a staff IT training day a couple of years ago, and watched Mr Hogg demonstrating all sorts of whizzy things he had on his computer. It seemed to be mostly a waste of time, as there were lots of things she didn't understand, but she felt that if she asked questions she would appear stupid, so she kept her mouth shut. So did most of her colleagues.

Miss Apprehension is a bit worried about IT in the National Curriculum. She has read that "Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, to develop their IT capability in their study of xyz . . .", but she finds the curriculum overcrowded already, and doesn't see how she can cram in IT as well. But then, what has knowing about computers got to do with history? Miss Apprehension shelters behind the words "*where appropriate*".

She is not particularly keen to obtain a newer machine, as this one seems to meet her present needs. "Besides which," she adds, "it will all be different again in another six months, so what's the point?"

Mrs Brill's class

With support from the Head, who is an IT enthusiast, Mrs Handy, the IT Co-ordinator, has ensured that there is a well co-ordinated school policy in place. This means that Mrs Brill's class has software and hardware appropriate for the age and ability of the children, with sufficient variety to allow the children's knowledge, understanding and skills to move forward in several different areas in the course of the year. When the children first arrived in her class Mrs Brill had a clear view of what their previous IT experience had been. Though her computer equipment is not completely up-to-date, Mrs Brill has discussed what her future hardware requirements will be, and she knows her needs will be met when finances permit.

Mrs Brill found the time to familiarise herself with a few pieces of software which her children use frequently, and this pays dividends now, as she always seems to know straight away what to do when children ask "how do we . . .?" questions – which they often do – or when problems are encountered. She has a coherent system for ensuring that all children have reasonable and appropriate access to the equipment. Children keep a record of their computer use, from which Mrs Brill can decide who needs extra time or support. Children also complete simple self-assessment sheets when they have completed a task, so they have a record of their own progress. She is experimenting with getting children to devise their own sheets.

The computer is well-sited in the classroom so that Mrs Brill can reach children to monitor their progress or give help without losing touch with the rest of class, but computer activity is not a distraction to other pupils.

IT forms a natural and integral part of the work of the class, and its use is incorporated into the planning of units of work, primarily as a means of enhancing children's learning within the curriculum area concerned, but also as a way of specifically developing children's IT skills.

The children are used to being able to organise themselves without assistance, switching on equipment, loading and running software, using the printer or other peripheral equipment. There are suitably-pitched help sheets (originally devised by Mrs Handy and Mrs Brill, but now supplemented by materials created by the children themselves) available for most common operations, and children are used to sharing their expertise with each other. Through frequent practice, children have developed impressive keyboard skills, can use a mouse quickly and effectively, and just seem to know what to do when faced with something new.

The computer is not in constant use, as there are times of the day when Mrs Brill needs the attention of the whole class, but most of the time there is a small group of children sitting at the machine.

Today three children are working together on a word processor. They have loaded the long story they wrote collaboratively last week, and they are changing it into a story book for use in the reception class. They are adding pictures (which they drew and modified themselves, using a painting program), discussing how and where to alter the language of the story to make it suitable for a younger audience. As they work, they are re-formatting the text, using a suitable font and text size. When they have finished, they will use a tape recorder to record the story, print out several copies, and bind one for the reception class and one for their own class library. Mrs Brill has just acquired a simple multi-media authoring package, and another group of children are about to start turning their story into a 'talking book'.

On staff development days, Mrs Brill and her colleagues from neighbouring classes get together and celebrate their successes, showing each other examples of IT activities that have worked, suggesting possible future developments, and discussing any problems and frustrations. Mrs Handy helps them with the bits they don't understand, and also introduces them to a few new ideas. When the head teacher and staff are engaged in whole-school curriculum planning, IT is one of the dimensions which is automatically included.

From MICRO-SCOPE Christmas Special 1986

"The micro is a tool with a great deal of potential. Most of this potential will remain unrealised unless the use of the micro becomes an integral part of other activities, not an end in itself."

"Once you start them thinking for themselves you never know where it will end."

'Can't we use the . . .'

From an article by Dave Clayton

One thing definitely leads to another as far as his (Dave Clayton's) class is concerned.

Computers, video cameras . . . video disks? . . . ???

IT: Home and School

Moira Monteith

School of Education, Sheffield Hallam University

*Our primary school has how many computers?
Where are they?*

How can schools and families collaborate together?

Are computers going to add to the social divisions in society so that the gap between haves and have-nots increases dramatically and significantly?

How do people go about choosing the right computer and software for their family?

What are other families and schools doing to safeguard their children against what might be considered harmful and unpleasant material?

Such a challenging topic breeds questions. I am sure that you can add your own queries to the list – and, subsequently of course, your own answers. *MICRO-SCOPE* will be interested to receive your own comments on this topic.

*Our primary school has how many computers?
Where are they?*

The majority will be at home with the children. IT is one of the more expensive items in a school budget after staff and some capital projects and parents frequently spend considerable time and energy raising funds for hardware and software. Schools where the home-school link as regards IT goes beyond this basic, fund-raising foundation find that the collaboration brings positive results, not merely in terms of the number of computers the school can call on.

How can schools and families collaborate together?

Schools are all involved in close co-operation with parents in a number of ways. Indeed, this requirement is specifically spelled out in the

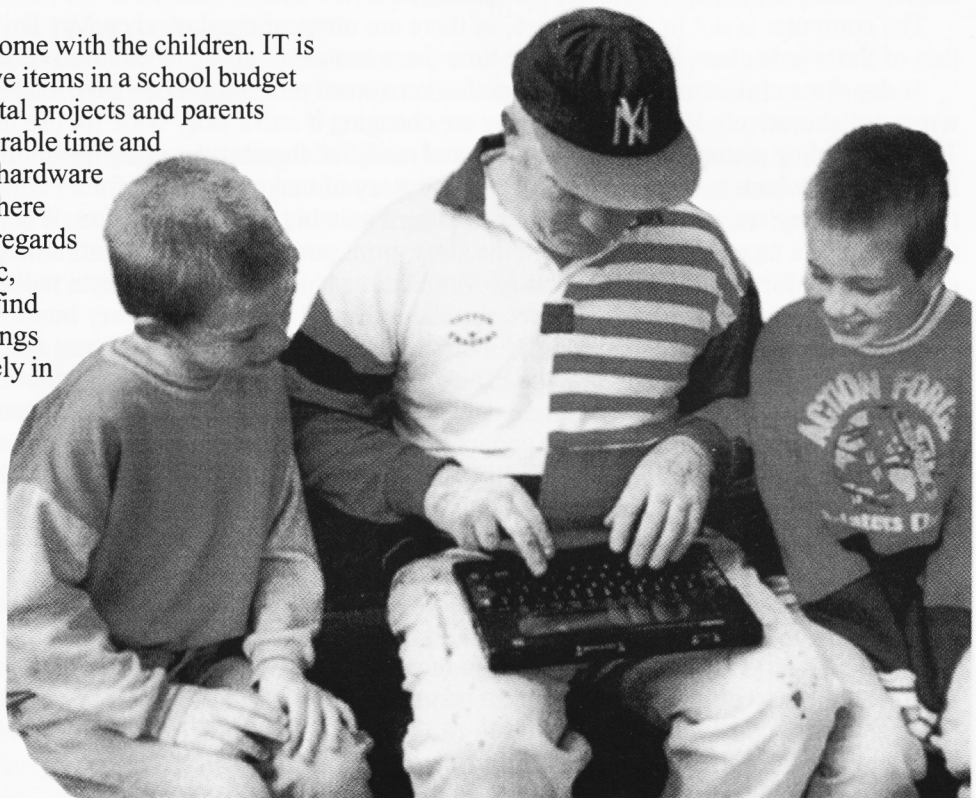
OFSTED Guidance on the Inspection of Nursery and Primary Schools as published in 1995, p. 96, Inspection Schedule 5.5: Partnership with parents and the community:

‘Inspectors must evaluate and report on how links with parents contribute to pupils’ learning and how the school’s work is enriched by links with the community. . . . Overall judgements need to establish whether:

- there are clear lines of communication
- the school’s approach to relations with parents is maintained consistently
- the school does all it can to gain the involvement of all parents

In relation to links with the community, judgements need to draw on the range of activities and their impact on pupils’ attainment, progress and personal development.’

Parents and other family members have long been encouraged to become involved in reading activities and the fun aspects associated with maths, such as



A parent and children from Firs Hill School working together with a portable computer.

number games. Clearly many parents play computer games with their children and several children in a family may compete against each other or collaborate in more complicated adventure games. Michelle Selinger¹ has the interesting idea that the reason her young son surprised his nursery school teachers with his knowledge and appreciation of high numbers (I don't suppose the noughts in hundreds and thousands meant much to us in our early years) is owing to the high scores he has to reach in trying to compete with his elder sister playing computer games. I must say that that is one of the best reasons I've come across for such activities!

Colleagues² and I, in our current research, have been listening to audio tapes of parents and children working together at home with portable computers. The families have been taping their conversations as the children word process stories, letters, diaries and more discursive narratives. There is often a great deal of laughter on the tapes, even when the families have trouble working with the rather primitive spellchecker or delete material they did not intend to. We found that the lap-top also becomes a messenger as parents write comments about the children's progress or the problems they may have had in getting down to work, owing to hospital appointments, visits by relatives, or illness in the families. The school, in turn, suggests topics to work on or ways of approaching learning. For instance, the teachers may have a policy on emergent writing or a particular approach to number work. Here is an example from one conversation recently transcribed:

Mother: *Do you like doing your computer better than actually sitting down with a book and writing or do you prefer to sit with a piece of paper and write?*

Emma: *Well, I'd rather do the computer.*

Mother: *You'd rather do the computer would you? Right. You'd rather write on the computer than get a book and write a story, would you?*

Emma: *Yes.*

Mother: *And do you enjoy doing work on the computer?*

Emma: *Yes, 'cause it's like if you're using a pen, but if you do it on paper then you do it wrong then you just make a mess of what you're writing.*

Some schools have initiated IT sessions for parents and governors and negotiated with WEA tutors (and other bodies) to accredit these learning sessions for specific qualifications. One of our project schools has a session when parents and children can work together on IT on one afternoon.

Are computers going to add to the social divisions in society so that the gap between haves and have-nots increases dramatically and significantly?

This has been a fear for some time. Clearly IT is an expensive resource and so we would expect there to be discrepancies between what one school can offer compared with another, and what one family may possess at home (often because one of the parents has a job heavily involved with computers in some way). This situation is extremely challenging and offers us all the opportunity to share and co-operate in ways not possible before. How can schools benefit from the computers at home? Some children who possess a range of useful CD-ROMs at home may well be able to bring in information that can help both general and specific projects in which other children are working. The skills they have learned at home, in for example building up multimedia presentations, can be passed on to their peers at school even when using other software. Electronic communication, which will be available to all schools during the next few years, will help redress some individual differences. For example, initiatives in the Shetlands education authority have encouraged isolated and small schools to benefit considerably from the skills and knowledge elsewhere in the community and further afield.³ A school's IT policy needs to take on board the discrepancies that do exist as regards IT and seek to benefit all their pupils.

How do people go about choosing the right computer and software for their family?

I am sure that all of us who work with computers have been asked for suggestions as to which computer to buy for the family. The difficulty is, of course, that there is no simple answer. However, some organisations and some schools themselves give advice. The National Council for Educational Technology (NCET)⁴ offers a considerable amount of information in a variety of ways, including an information pack, leaflets, video material which can be taped from your television and pages on the Internet. All such information quickly dates of course and the NCET is particularly good at updating its material. A new information pack for parents will be launched at the Home PC Show in October 1996 at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. You can purchase it from NCET after that date.

The second series of *NCET-TV: Teaching and Learning with IT*, also starts in October 1996. The series, made especially for teachers, is a practical look at how information technology (IT) can enhance learning in the classroom. The programmes are split into two topics, with a look at how IT can enhance the teaching of curriculum topics such as

art, music and history followed by IT in a wider context, including IT and special educational needs, IT issues for governors and tips on choosing and buying IT for Christmas. Part of BBC2's *The Learning Zone*, the programmes will be transmitted on BBC2 on the first Wednesday of each month at 4.00 am in the morning. Each programme will then be repeated at the same time and on the same day throughout each month.

I have found these programmes extremely useful for starting discussions both with students and teachers on specific topics, such as use of IT in particular subject areas or the practical difficulties of implementing an IT policy. Teachers and pupils from a wide range of schools feature prominently on the videos and so there is a wide range of expertise on view.

One of the organisations which has developed to service the area of home and school relationships over IT is the Parents Information Network (PIN). Currently they have eight people working to provide information for their 11,500-strong network of interested parents and teachers. They are bringing out a subscription service very shortly which will safeguard their income and allow them to be more independent of sponsorship. This is a weighty consideration as much of their information and advice concerns the use of specific software and they obviously want their reviews to be as independent as possible.

The subscription will cost £20 annually and for that subscribers will receive quarterly newsletters focusing on such topics as homework with the use of IT.⁵ They have conducted a survey of nearly 500 families from among their membership and among the information they have collected have found that most women felt a 'distinct lack of confidence in all aspects of buying computers, particularly that of dealing with sales staff. This was compounded by the use of jargon, not knowing where to buy and how to decide what was best for the family'. PIN also considers the importance of 'a big issue, [that] the home computer is increasingly likely to be of better quality than many of the school computers'.

What are other families and schools doing to safeguard their children against what might be considered harmful and unpleasant material?

There seem to be two schools of thought on this one. As material becomes easier and easier to copy then pornographic and racist items as well as unpleasant 'games' can be swapped either as files or on floppy discs. Some schools prefer the option of policing access to the internet by choosing a service provider such as BT's *Campus World* which screens out unsavoury material. Other schools rely on the fact that with a limited number of computers

teachers are well aware of what the children are doing at any one time. However, this is not really an option at home where it would be extremely difficult to monitor access at all times and even if this is possible in some homes it would not be so in all. Clearly the solution must come from wider discussion of the responsibilities of the individual, parent or child, concerning access to this kind of material and what is or is not an acceptable attitude. More open discussion of the *problem* must be beneficial to all of us. The PIN survey found that: 'Parents give a positive response to the potential benefits of the Internet, with 64% of them feeling that these outweigh the risks. Interestingly, women are slightly more positive than men. Considering the wave of sponsored connections to the Internet being offered to schools, this seems like good news.'

Conclusion

The home-school IT links will become increasingly important over the next decade so we should consider them in any plans we make regarding school policies on implementing good IT practice. There certainly seems to be a difference of opinion on the use of computers at school between the majority of pupils and the majority of staff, with pupils being far more positive than teachers.⁶ As teachers, we may well feel we are older and wiser and probably also feel worried about the effects of 'too much IT' and our own inadequacies in the area. The gap needs bridging however as otherwise we may find that there are two separate routes of access to learning, one at school and one in the home. Such a separation cannot be beneficial in the long run, unless we believe in a 'de-schooling' policy.

Notes

1. Michelle Selinger works at the Open University and is particularly interested in electronic communication between students teaching in schools corresponding with each other and with their tutors.
2. Guy Merchant, Moira Monteith and Jeff Wilkinson, at Sheffield Hallam University School of Education.
3. John Pedley, adviser in Shetlands education authority.
4. NCET, Milburn Hill Road, Science Park, Coventry CV4 7JJ. For those who missed the first series it is available for purchase on three videos from NCET Sales, tel. 01203 416669. It is free, of course, if you tape the series direct.
5. For further information, send an s.a.e. to PIN, PO Box 1577, London W7 3ZT.
6. MA Research projects at Sheffield Hallam University.

Festive days

Rhona Dick

MICRO-SCOPE Editor

On pages 14 and 19 you will find reproduced a calendar of dates associated with international festivals which fall in the last third of the year. Teachers may find this calendar of use with their classes, perhaps as a wall-chart showing the rich diversity of festivals that occur at this season. Many days, of course, are blank at present, but might quickly be filled with festivals associated with less well-known religions or international holidays, as well as more personal celebrations – birthdays, school anniversaries, parties . . .

Helpful addresses and contacts

Baha'i

National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is in the UK

27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD
Tel. 0171 584 2566

Buddhism

The Buddhist Society,
58 Eccleston Square,
London SW1V 1PH
Tel. 0171 834 5858
(Information on Northern and Southern tradition Buddhism)

Christian

Church of England Enquiry Centre,
Church House,
Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ
Tel. 0171 222 9011

Hindu

ISKCON Educational Services,
Bhaktivedanta Manor,
Letchmore Heath,
Watford WD2 8EP
Tel. 01923 859578

Inter Faith

The Inter-Faith Network,
5/7 Tavistock Place,
London WC1H 9SS
Tel. 0171 388 0008

Jainism

Atul K Shah,
199 Kenton Lane, Harrow,
Middlesex HA3 8TL
(Requests by letter only)

Jewish

Board of Deputies of British Jews,
Commonwealth House,
1–19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NF
Tel. 0171 543 5400

Muslim

Islamic Cultural Centre and London Central Mosque
Park Road, London NW8
Tel. 0171 724 3363/7

and

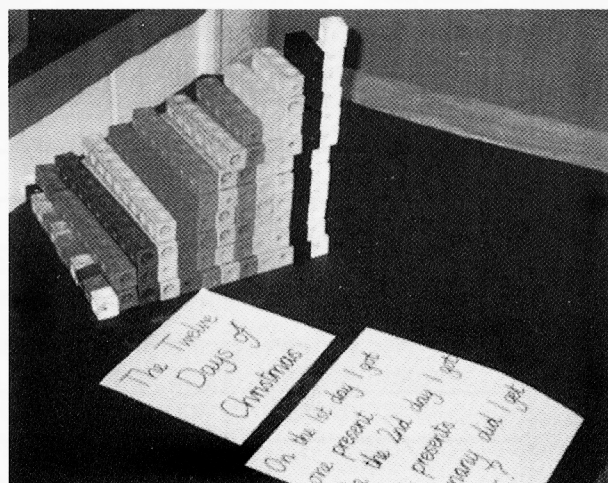
Minaret House,
9 Leslie Park Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6TN
Tel. 0181 681 2972

Sikh

The Sikh Missionary Society,
10 Featherstone Road, Southall,
Middlesex UB2 5AA
Tel. 0181 574 1902

Thanks to *Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education* for festival dates and for permission to reproduce this list of useful addresses. Copies of the SHAP calendar for 1996/1997 giving dates of festivals, and some background information, can be obtained from

The Shap Working Party
c/o The National Society's RE Centre,
36 Causton Street, London SW1P 4AU
Please enclose a cheque for £3.50 per copy made payable to 'Shap Working Party'.



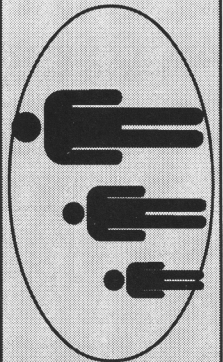
Multilink cubes used to display 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'.

Festival

Day	Date	SEPTEMBER	Date	OCTOBER
		Harvest Festival is celebrated this month (Christian)		Kathina Day is celebrated this month (Buddhism)
Sun	1st			
Mon	2nd			
Tue	3rd		1st	
Wed	4th		2nd	
Thu	5th	Janamashtami (Hindu)	3rd	
Fri	6th		4th	
Sat	7th		5th	
Sun	8th	Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian)	6th	Simkhat Torah (Jewish)
Mon	9th		7th	
Tue	10th		8th	
Wed	11th	Ethiopian New Year's Day (Rastafarian)	9th	
Thu	12th		10th	
Fri	13th		11th	
Sat	14th	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)	12th	
Sun	15th	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)	13th	Navaratri/Durga Puja/ Dusserah until 21st (Hindu)
Mon	16th	Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)	14th	
Tue	17th		15th	
Wed	18th		16th	
Thu	19th		17th	
Fri	20th		18th	
Sat	21st	Paryunshana Parva until 30th (Jain)	19th	
Sun	22nd		20th	Anniversary of the Birth of the Bab (Baha'i) Week of Prayer for World Peace
Mon	23rd	Yom Kippur (Jewish) Shubun No Hi (Japanese)	21st	
Tue	24th		22nd	
Wed	25th		23rd	
Thu	26th		24th	
Fri	27th		25th	
Sat	28th	Sukkot until 6th October (Jewish)	26th	
Sun	29th	Michaelmas (Christian)	27th	
Mon	30th		28th	
Tue			29th	
Wed			30th	
Thu			31st	

ART & IT

Experience level
 Beginner ✓
 Intermediate ✓
 Experienced ✓



Communicating and
 handling info. ✓
 Controlling,
 monitoring and
 modelling

IT Activity Sheet 1

Title: WRAP IT UP! (from an idea by Helen Constable)

Activity: Use a drawing or painting program to create your own festive wrapping paper.

Resources: Any drawing or painting program which has copy, flip and/or tile options.

What to do: This activity can be done on a very simple or quite sophisticated way, depending upon the children's experiences and the type of software you have. Draw a very simple shape which reminds you of winter/Christmas. You may have some shapes which have come with your computer program, or you may have some clipart which you could use. Use the program's copy facility to make several shapes. Alter the size and turn some of them around. Add some writing.



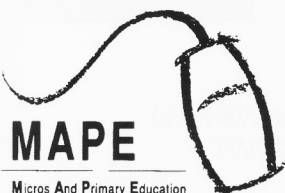
Experiment with different fonts on your computer.
 Then use COPY and FLIP to make a tile pattern of your whole design:



Print off your design, preferably on a colour printer.
 Take some small boxes and cylinders and cover them in wrapping paper.
 These boxes could be used for small gifts, or as classroom or tree decorations.

Possible extension activities: Older children can make nets to go round more complicated shapes and then transfer them to the back of the wrapping paper before cutting out. Symmetry. What is the biggest open box you could cover using this sheet of gift wrap? (See IT Activity Sheet 2 in MS 45.)

IT capability: Communicating information at KS1 and KS2 by using text and graphics. If words are combined with the picture this is a level 4 activity.



If you want further information about MAPE, please contact Yvonne Peers at Newman College Technology Centre, Genners Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT.

MATHS & IT (1)

Title: RANGOLI PATTERNS

Activity: Creating or copying Rangoli Patterns.

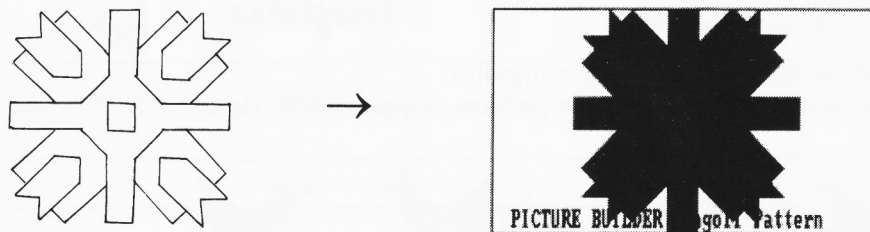
It is particularly important that this activity is undertaken in the context of Religious or Multi-Cultural Education.

Resources: Logo and/or *Picture Builder* and pictures of some Rangoli patterns. These patterns, which may be known by other names in different parts of India, are traditionally placed outside the door of a house at Diwali. Many of the designs resemble a stylised lotus flower.

What to do: The children will need some previous experience of using Logo and/or *Picture Builder*. The designs can be built up in Logo using procedures, some simple, some more complex. Some knowledge of the properties of shape is desirable.

Begin by explaining the significance of Rangoli patterns to people who celebrate Diwali.

The first design can be created with either program. Using *Picture Builder*, squares and triangles can be selected and then stretched and rotated as necessary, before being dragged into position. Note that the 'arrow' shape is made with a square and two triangles.

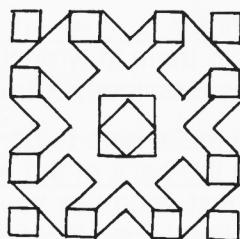


Using Logo, only three angles are used, 90° , 45° and 135° . The procedures used to replicate this pattern were

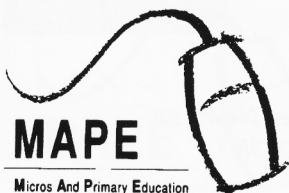
1. Box. This set the initial position of the turtle and drew a square.
2. Inner. This drew one quarter of the inner design, including a nested procedure for the 'arrow' shape and repeated it four times.
3. Outer.

Possible Extension Activities: There are many mathematical ideas which can be explored, including shapes and their properties, angles, symmetry, congruency and cartesian coordinates.

The second pattern, suitable for Logo, is slightly more complicated, but can still be drawn using a minimum number of procedures.



IT capability: Communicating and Handling Information: Controlling (a) create, test, modify and store sequences of instructions to control events.

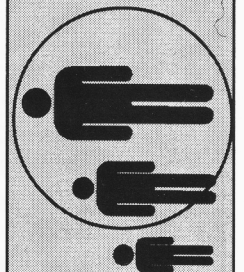


MAPE

Micros And Primary Education

If you want further information about MAPE, please contact Yvonne Peers at Newman College Technology Centre, Genners Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT.

Experience level
Beginner
Intermediate ✓
Experienced ✓



Communicating and handling info. ✓

Controlling, monitoring and modelling ✓

IT Activity Sheet 2

MATHS & IT (2)

Title: THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Activity: In the 1986 *MICRO-SCOPE Christmas Special*, Roger Keeling looked at some Maths investigations based on the traditional song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'. This activity picks up the same theme, but uses a spreadsheet.

Resources: Any spreadsheet package.

What to do: The children should have some experience of spreadsheets.

This activity can be undertaken at different levels.

It is possible to do this activity using the data, copy and function facilities only.

It is useful to look at the different types of graphs that can be produced.

Children love piegrams, but are they suitable here? Is a line graph appropriate? Which type of graph displays the information most clearly?

day	P	T.D.	F.H.	C.B.	G.R.	G.L.	S.S.	M.M.	L.D.	L.L.	P.P.	D.D.	
1	1												1
2	1	2											3
3	1	2	3										6
4	1	2	3	4									10
5	1	2	3	4	5								15
6	1	2	3	4	5	6							21
7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7						28
8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8					36
9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9				45
10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			55
11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		66
12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	78
totals	12	22	30	36	40	42	42	40	36	30	22	12	364
difference		10	8	6	4	2	0	-2	-4	-6	-8	-10	

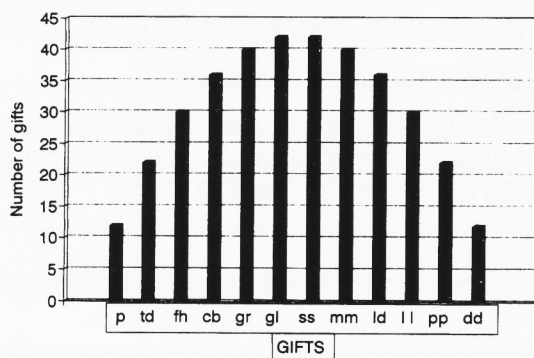
Possible Extension Activities:

Look for the numerical patterns that emerge.

The number of gifts received each day is a triangular number. Supposing this season of generosity lasted from 1st December until 31st December, how many gifts would be given?

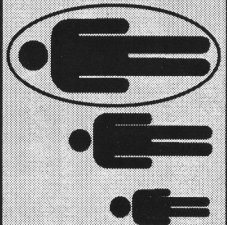
Supposing on the first day you were given one partridge, and on the second day you got two turtle doves, but on the third day you got four French hens. The possibilities for exploring number patterns are almost endless.

The 12 Days of Christmas
How many of each gift do you get?



IT capability: Modelling (3c and 3d of Programmes of Study for KS2).

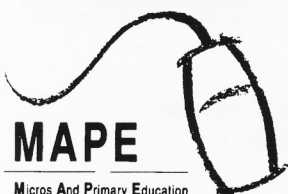
Experience level
Beginner
Intermediate
Experienced ✓



Communicating and
handling info.

Controlling,
monitoring and
modelling ✓

IT Activity Sheet 3



If you want further information about MAPE, please contact Yvonne Peers at Newman College Technology Centre, Genners Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT.

LANGUAGE & IT

Title: A (MULTIMEDIA) FESTIVAL BOOK

Activity: Younger pupils could use an overlay keyboard to write about e.g. Hanukkah. Older pupils could research and make a book about different religious festivals.

It is particularly important that this activity is undertaken in the context of Religious or Multi-Cultural Education.

Resources: This activity can be undertaken using many different word processing packages.

What to do: *MICRO-SCOPE 45* gave advice on setting up an editorial group to oversee production of a multimedia book. If you have access to a computer with multimedia production software the book can include music associated with the festival.

IT capability: Communicating and handling information at KS1 and KS2.

Title: FESTIVAL CLOZE (From an idea by Jackie Marsh.)

Activity: Devise a cloze activity based on the story of Hanukkah which children can complete.

Resources: A cloze procedure program e.g. *My World – Cloze Reading*, *The Cloze program* (AVP), *Developing Tray, Display*.

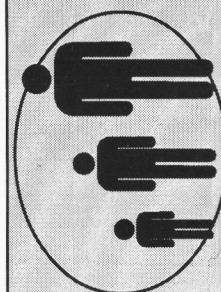
A suitable piece of text. *Let's Celebrate – Festival Poems*, ed. John Foster (OUP), has some useful poems. Other helpful books include *Festivals* by J. Gilbert (OUP, 1986), and *Hanukkah* by R. Schotter (Little, Brown & Co., 1990).

What to do: Set up the text. You may need several different ones to cater for the different ability levels in your class. Let the children work in pairs as the discussion generated is valuable.

IT capability: Communicating and handling information.

Possible extension activities: Children could devise cloze procedure texts for each other to work on. This is not as simple as it sounds if it is to be really successful, particularly if they are devising text for younger children, as thought must be given to sentence structure as well as vocabulary.

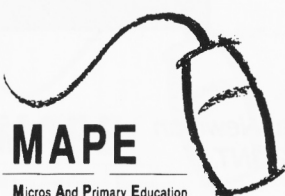
Experience level
Beginner ✓
Intermediate ✓
Experienced ✓



Communicating and
handling info. ✓

Controlling,
monitoring and
modelling

IT Activity Sheet 4



If you want further information about MAPE, please contact Yvonne Peers at Newman College Technology Centre, Genners Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT.

Calendar

Day	Date	NOVEMBER	Date	DECEMBER
Sun			1st	Advent Sunday (Christian)
Mon			2nd	
Tue			3rd	
Wed			4th	
Thu			5th	
Fri	1st	All Saints' Day (Christian)	6th	Hanukah until 13th (Jewish)
Sat	2nd	All Souls' Day (Christian) Anniversary of the Crowning of Haile Selassie I (Rastafarian)	7th	The Night Journey to Jerusalem and the Ascension (Lailat-ul-Isra) (Islam)
Sun	3rd		8th	Immaculate Conception (Christian) Bodhi Day (Buddhism)
Mon	4th		9th	
Tue	5th		10th	
Wed	6th		11th	
Thu	7th		12th	
Fri	8th		13th	
Sat	9th		14th	
Sun	10th	Remembrance Sunday Diwali until 14th (Hindu & Sikh)	15th	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Sikh)
Mon	11th	Armistice Day	16th	
Tue	12th	Anniversary of the Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)	17th	
Wed	13th		18th	
Thu	14th		19th	
Fri	15th	Shichi-Go-San (Japanese)	20th	
Sat	16th		21st	
Sun	17th		22nd	
Mon	18th		23rd	
Tue	19th		24th	Christmas Eve (Christian)
Wed	20th		25th	Christmas Day (Christian)
Thu	21st		26th	St. Stephen's Day (Christian)
Fri	22nd		27th	
Sat	23rd		28th	Holy Innocents' Day (Christian)
Sun	24th		29th	
Mon	25th	Birthday of Guru Nanak (Sikh)	30th	
Tue	26th		31st	New Year's Eve Omisoka (Japanese)
Wed	27th			
Thu	28th			
Fri	29th			
Sat	30th	St. Andrew's Day (Christian)		

Making good use of the school camera

Margaret Still

I wonder how many of us make full use of the school camera. The photos taken on school journeys and trips are probably displayed, and then mounted into albums and then . . . ? The use of Photo CD could change all that! No need necessarily for a digital camera. An ordinary household camera with a print or slide film, a CD-ROM drive and reasonably good inkjet printer connected to your computer is all that is necessary. Any reputable high street processing shop will process your film onto a Photo CD for around £16 per film. In return you get a CD containing your photos plus your prints or slide photos and negatives. Providing you do not scratch the surface of your CD you can return it to have further photos added; each CD takes 80–100 photos. Using the appropriate Photo CD software for your computer system, which is usually provided with your CD-ROM utilities software and is also on the CD, the photos are generated onto the screen from where they can be saved as digitised pictures. Children can then select photos to be used in their reports and presentations.

The same photos are accessible to everybody. Records of school activities, events and trips can be stored for future use. Schools can build up libraries of pictures that would be useful in different areas of the curriculum. Photos of the children can be taken at various stages in their school life, useful for classroom studies and also for school records. Using a graphics program, photos can form the basis for creative art.

I have recently been involved with a Year 6 class

in an primary school which is having a new school built on the present playing field. With the site being in such close proximity coupled with the co-operation of the site personnel, the children have had a superb opportunity to follow the entire procedure and keep detailed records. Using *HyperStudio* we are producing a systematic multimedia presentation of the building process alongside a record of the present school and pupils. The children go regularly onto the site to take photos. They can then choose the appropriate pictures to incorporate into their work. So that younger children can also be involved the older pupils have selected certain photos and saved them onto discs which they have given to Key Stage 1 classes so that they can use them to illustrate their own written work.

In this school the camera is used a great deal, in and around the school, at school functions, class trips and as part of many curriculum activities. Photos taken of some of the exhibits at the Science Museum in London have been used subsequently in a variety of individual projects.

Of course you could use a scanner to capture images of your prints, or using a digitised camera you would get instant results, but in both cases the quality is better with Photo CD and you get your prints as well avoiding the expense of a new camera or scanner. You will need to watch that the children do not become too "snap happy" and that they are careful to take a good photo – otherwise it could work out rather expensive!

MAPE Software Special

The following letter from Carol Soble, Deputy Head of Woodchester Endowed C. of E. (Aided) Primary School, was received following the recent MAPE Software Special mailing.

Dear Sir,

I thought I would write in order to give some feedback regarding your software special.

Switch-on is a super little program! As a fairly new IT co-ordinator I recently battled with a control box, a multitude of nameless leads and an ancient BBC in order to get some control technology up and running in my school! With *Switch-on* it will be much easier to give children initial practice in control – enjoyable too

if staff reaction is anything to go by!

Spare a thought though for those of us who are not technically minded. Mode 12 for graphics meant nothing to me and meant a lengthy search through the Arc manual before I cracked it! Finally I wrote a "Quick-Start" series of instructions to take staff through altering the screen mode to installing a background, setting up the drawing board and running a simple program. This made life a lot easier at point of use.

With tight budgets, such "freebies" make the subscription to your magazine very worthwhile. More of the same please – and more useful programs that meet real needs.

Keep up the good work!

NCET-TV: teaching and learning with IT

Primary Ideas

Michelle Morris

Senior Programme Officer NCET, Milburn Hill Road, Science Park, Coventry CV4 7JJ

'Computers won't be replacing teachers – not unless they get really much more advanced!' So says Diane Chaney, teacher at Welton Primary in Northamptonshire. She is a relatively new user of IT at this small, village school but recognises the potential contribution computers can make to the primary classroom, both to teaching and learning. Working with a couple of portable computers and a multimedia CD-ROM machine, Diane's pupils are developing skills for the 21st Century. Whilst visiting the school to film for the June NCET-TV programme, children there were working on a project on the Romans and the types of food they ate. A CD-ROM was used to search for information on their diet, and cooking methods, and the children interrogated the CD-ROM to identify related topics such as cooking implements. Notes were made and pictures were printed out, and these were used in conjunction with books on the same subject. The children were then able to collate all the facts they had collected and present them in a word-processed document produced on the portable. Using IT in this way encourages and facilitates children's research abilities and enables younger pupils to develop higher-order information skills, analysing and comparing data from different sources, deciding which facts are the important ones to include in their project and then re-presenting them in their own creative way.

Although Welton Primary is a small school with limited resources, the staff and head teacher acknowledge IT to be a driving force that enables pupils to develop the skills they will need for life in the 21st Century. It is this thinking and attitude which will prepare the pupils of Welton Primary to meet the challenges of the future. This raises the issue of the need to invest in staff training and development in the use of IT to ensure that teachers feel confident and competent when faced not only with a computer but also with a child who has no fear when it comes to technology.

Techniques for training teachers in schools to develop their IT skills was the focus of NCET-TV in May. One approach is to use portable computers which offer many advantages to teachers wanting to become more proficient in the use of IT. Access to a

portable computer means that teachers can practice and extend their own IT capabilities away from the classroom or even in the privacy of their own homes. Mistakes can be made without them being witnessed by others, whilst having time and space to become more familiar with the computer and its software results in an increase in the teachers' confidence. This in turn leads to more advanced IT skills and an innovative approach to teaching. Easy access to a portable computer means IT activities can be tested before 'going live' with groups of pupils which helps make lessons more focused, more fun and therefore a more effective learning experience all round.

It is widely acknowledged that it is very difficult for a school and its staff to move forward with their IT development without the support of the senior management team. This support can exist on a number of levels whether it be in the form of encouraging members of staff to explore interesting IT applications or through the head teacher taking a more active role in working closely with the IT co-ordinator. Evidence collected by NCET reinforces the message that the attitude of the head teacher is crucial in influencing the way staff and pupils regard computers and IT. If a head teacher is seen to be using and enthusing about IT then this will raise its profile within the school. The head and deputy head of Robin Hood Junior School, who appeared in the May NCET-TV programme, stand as a fine example of how taking the lead with IT, and adopting a positive attitude towards its use within the curriculum, can result in success for every child.

When implementing IT, the IT co-ordinator has a pivotal role to play. The first programme of the NCET-TV series relayed the 'story' of the IT co-ordinator at Northgate Primary School, in Hertfordshire, and how their strategy for implementing IT and charting pupils' IT progression was presented via a visual aid – a map of the school curriculum. This detailed each class, every machine available, all the strands of work to be accomplished, and the IT competency to be achieved. Appropriate software was suggested along with a brief annotation on an example activity. NCET's *Managing IT*

publication complements this approach as it contains a matrix for creating a profile of your school's current position in terms of IT development. Having a visual representation of where you are now and where you want to get to can help make the signposts clearer when embarking on the 'B-road' that leads you to the trunk-road which connects you to the information superhighway!

NCET-TV in January focused on the Internet, in particular the World Wide Web and the wealth of curriculum-related information available to schools. Potters Green Primary in Coventry has an Internet connection. They are using it to access information relevant for a range of subjects including science, art and history. The children have visited museums all over the world, explored the solar system, and tried contacting the White House via their e-mail link. The amount of information available on the Internet is vast and can appear rather daunting at first. However, teachers at Potters Green have climbed and conquered the steep learning curve and now regard this resource as an invaluable supplement to the children's information diet. The school has also introduced a system of peer-tutoring, where the year 6 pupils teach the year 5 pupils to search the World Wide Web and send e-mail messages. Learning to sift through large amounts of data, and pick out the meaningful points is a skill which children will need throughout their school lives and beyond. The Internet can literally put the whole world in your hands, enabling global information exchanges to be experienced within the confines of the classroom.

Ideas for using IT in the primary classroom were also featured in NCET-TV in January. Floor turtles were being used by Northgate Primary School in Hertfordshire, to develop children's control skills and spatial awareness. By connecting the turtle to an overlay keyboard the children saw how the instructions they gave the turtle, via the keyboard, caused it to move in a particular direction. Another activity involved designing mosaics. These were brought to life on the computer using software that enabled children to devise a pattern and decide which colours worked well together. The children developed their counting abilities by calculating how many tiles they would need in each colour to produce their individual design. The mosaic could be rearranged on the computer until the children were happy with their designs which they then printed out and used as a template. They then had to recreate their designs with the tiles and arrange them accordingly, following their computer-generated patterns.

Pupils in the early years unit of Ryders Green Primary School in Birmingham undertook a class survey of where they lived. The project began with the children drawing pictures of their houses. They were then photographed outside their house (Fig. 1), using a digital camera. Back in the classroom, the photographs were shown on the television screen (Fig. 2), and the children were able to compare these with their hand-drawn pictures to see if they looked alike. A bar chart was also compiled by the teacher to show how many children lived in each street. From this chart they counted which street



Fig. 1. Pupils from Ryders Green Primary gathering data on their houses.



Fig. 2. Ryders Green pupils looking at photos of their houses taken with a digital camera.

had the most or the fewest class members living on it, and could view all the photographs of the houses on each street on the television screen. This example demonstrates how collecting and interpreting data can begin at a very early age. The whole process of gathering information and presenting it in different formats helps children to become familiar with a range of data handling techniques. The teacher at Ryders Green used the street survey exercise to introduce children to new IT concepts, such as the floppy disc being a place where all the information collected about all the houses could be safely stored.

Basic skills can be enhanced using IT. An interesting approach to developing children's language abilities was shown in the April NCET-TV programme on 'Home-School Links'. Teachers at St. John's Primary work in partnership with parents. They run a scheme which makes a portable computer and a teddy bear available to parents to take home. The teddy provides the stimulus for telling a story which parent and child then work on together on the computer. This activity aids the child's language development, contributes towards establishing a foundation for future IT work and

strengthens the links between learning in the school and home environment.

During the first series of NCET-TV teachers at primary schools across the country have aired their views on and shared their experiences of using IT, a few of which have been highlighted above. The case of Welton Primary clearly demonstrates that no matter how small your school or how limited your resources, with a large push from the head teacher, it is possible to start the IT ball rolling.

If you missed any of the NCET-TV programmes, three compilation videos of the first series are now available priced £19.50 each. *Managing IT in Primary Schools* is priced £10.00. Contact the Sales Department on 01203 416669.

The new series of NCET-TV will begin in October 1996 on BBC2's *Learning Zone*. For more information and a schedule of the series call 01203 847101.

If these programmes have stimulated you to use IT in a new or exciting way in your class, please write and tell Michelle Morris.

Overheard . . .

History Professor to Teacher Trainer:

"The Internet is a great system but it needs to be regulated better. One student put our whole course on the Internet, I'm being exploited, I'm not being paid for this."

Comments?

NCET news update

Janice Staines

NCET, Milburn Hill Road, Science Park, Coventry

Managing IT in primary schools

Evidence shows that where IT is being managed and used effectively in schools there is strong commitment and guidance from the senior management team and a whole-school approach to resourcing, staff development and training.

With this in mind, NCET has developed the Managing IT in primary schools' pack. This pack provides headteachers and senior management teams with practical help in dealing with the issues raised by change and development involving IT. Development is viewed as a long-term process and managers are encouraged to match their strategies as closely as possible to the individual circumstances of their school.

A brief picture given of the current scene in schools is followed by a structure for change in the use and integration of IT. A matrix then enables you to profile your school's present stage of IT development, forming the basis for the adoption of suggested strategies which are outlined in an action planner. Five case studies of primary schools in various stages of IT development allow you to compare and contrast. The pack also contains a valuable resource list.

Price: £10.00.

Contact: Sales Department, NCET.

Working with the TTA

The Teacher Training Agency has a remit for both pre-service and in-service training and NCET is working with them to further develop a framework for teacher Competences with IT. As part of this work we shall be co-ordinating a survey of the current provision of IT use for trainee teachers and tutors. The survey will be used to establish a baseline of current provision for training courses based within universities, colleges and schools.

Needs Assessment Pilot

The Educators Team within NCET is setting up a pilot project to look at Needs Assessment for IT. We shall be developing and trialling materials which will provide a framework for teachers to enable

them to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses in IT use and to help them identify appropriate training routes. The materials will also enable senior managers to profile the training needs for the whole school in order to allow them to make informed decisions about the allocation of training budgets, resources etc.

EC Multimedia Awards

NCET is managing the UK entries for the European Commission's multimedia competition. This competition is being run to coincide with the European Year of Lifelong Learning. Entries must relate to subjects of common interest in Europe such as culture, civilisation, science, employment and citizenship and should show the benefits of multimedia as a means of learning and developing knowledge and practice.

The European Awards will be made at the closing conference of the European Year of Lifelong Learning to be held in Dublin in December 1996. Prizes will include multimedia hardware and software.

Support for Special Needs Coordinators

All schools in England and Wales are now required by law (the 1993 Education Act) to designate a SENCO with responsibilities for pupils with special needs and to implement a Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Although many schools have already been carrying out the kinds of practice prescribed in the Code, there is no doubt that its requirements are perceived as more demanding. The SENCO project has been funded by the Department for Education and Employment and NCET. The project offers an electronic service providing remote access to expert advice and, perhaps just as importantly, access to peer support via e-mail.

The Code of Practice makes extensive demands on SENCOs. To help meet these demands they need a wide range of up-to-date information, and they need to share their problems and ideas. Due to the wide range of special needs which SENCOs may be called upon to support, (visual and hearing impairment, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and many other less commonly encountered) it may be

many other less commonly encountered) it may be that there is no specialist support immediately available. Electronic mail, conferencing and the World Wide Web make a useful contribution, allowing SENCOs to communicate in ways that are flexible, immediate and both formal and informal.

The facilities offered allow SENCOs to provide peer support and information, enhance communication between schools and local education authority (LEA) services and to access a wide range of on-line information services through the Internet. Project participants are able to pose and answer questions and exchange information on a range of topics: the integration of Down's Syndrome pupils, school policy documents and 'pen portraits' of school life. In order to provide a wider network of support, NCET invited more schools and special needs services to join the project. Currently there are around 80 members of the project, consisting of SENCOs, LEA support services and others in over 30 LEAs.

For some, the link with colleagues both within and outside their LEAs forms a useful supplement to other sources of support; for others it seemed a prime resource. SENCOs wanted to be able to use e-mail to contact their local support services, and where this has occurred, it was found convenient and helpful. Currently there is a mailing list of over 150 attached to the project.

This year the NCET Special Needs team will be investigating ways in which IT can support learning and help to meet the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). This will build on and develop the issues outlined in a 1993 NCET publication on IT and pupils with EBD. We are particularly keen to consider the ways in which technological developments over the last two or three years will enable teachers to meet pupils' needs more effectively. We will be looking at work teachers have done in mainstream and special schools and where pupils are being 'educated otherwise'.

NCET-TV: Teaching and Learning with IT

The second series of *NCET-TV: Teaching and Learning with IT* begins in October 1996. The series, presented by Maggie Philbin, is broadcast on BBC2's "Learning Zone" and will run until June 1997.

Aimed at teachers in schools and colleges, the series takes a look at Information Technology and how it is being used to benefit both teaching and learning. Issues such as how IT can help differentiation and access to IT will be examined, along with ideas for using IT throughout the curriculum, in particular Art, Music, History, English and Modern Foreign Languages.

Early Years Education will be featured in the May broadcast and will particularly focus on the

importance of early years education for providing the foundation for future learning as well as looking at issues relating to planning for learning and the provision of appropriate resources.

Curriculum and IT Entitlement Documents

As part of the GEST-funded IT projects which have been managed by NCET a number of pupil entitlement documents have been produced which show how IT can be used to support the development of curriculum knowledge and understanding. To date there are primary leaflets to cover History, Geography and Music. The Mathematics leaflet is currently in preparation, but this extract will give you a flavour of what to expect.

Observing patterns

Software is available which allows the children to draw grids of numbers and shade particular multiples quickly and easily. Two Year 6 children were using number grids software.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64

Teacher: Which times tables make columns on this grid?

Children: The 4 times table gives 2 columns.

Teacher: Why's that?

Children: It's because 8 is the end number and 4 is half of 8.

The responses were not wrong but the children had not seen the whole picture. The teacher went on to ask about other multiples which produce columns on the 8-grid and then on other grids. Later, the

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

emphasis was on diagonal patterns.

Children: *7 works on the 6-grid.*

Teacher: *Can you tell me how to make diagonal patterns on different grids?*

Children: *Yes, it's always 1 more than the number of columns.*

Being able to draw many grids and shade the multiples quickly helped the children to see the patterns and understand why they worked.

If you would like to receive any, or all of these leaflets, please contact the Enquiries Desk, NCET. If you have access to the Internet you can find further details of GEST projects on:

<http://lupin.csv.warwick.ac.uk:80/WWW/projects/cits/>

Early Years Liaison Group

NCET has set up this group to provide different organisations interested in *Early Years' Education* and *IT – a forum for discussion* and to share common concerns. To date, the group consists of representatives from MAPE, the National Association for Advisers in Computer Education (NAACE), The Early Years Forum, The Early Years Network, The National Primary Centre and Jigsaw Nurseries PLC.

As a result of the first meeting of the group NCET has prepared a Pre-school Education Information Sheet. If you would like a copy of this sheet, please contact: Teresa Farthing, NCET Information Office.

Conference '96 report

Betty Lumley
Vice Chair

The Conference seemed to be enjoyed by all the delegates, this was entirely due to the efforts of the Berkshire team who gave freely of their spare time to attend meetings and make all the necessary arrangements. The Conference was dedicated to Chris Robson whose idea it had been to hold the event at Reading. She would have been delighted with the outcome, but not surprised because she had worked with the team many times.

Here are some of the comments made to me by delegates.

- Steve Heppel's opening address got the Conference off to a good start.
- Workshops were great and well attended we liked the personalised programme on arrival.
- The string quartet during meals was very relaxing.
- Gervais Phinn, the after dinner speaker, was, as usual, superb and had everyone's ribs aching from laughter.
- The food was good and the Halls grouped around the activities.
- The bar entertainment was appreciated by those who participated (about 25%). Others said it was too loud, but that is 'par' for a MAPE Conference.
- A parallel Music course proved an enjoyable refuge after the bar closed and some delegates drummed away until the early hours of Sunday

morning. Their fingers will never be the same again! – The closing session by Mike Fisher of RM was really good and sent the delegates home with lots of ideas to ponder.

If you came to Reading I hope these comments bring back some happy memories. If you didn't why not attend Conference '97 in Dundee and see what you were missing? Early indications are that it will be just as informative and enjoyable.



Our multi-talented Chairman, Les Watson.

Treasurer's Report for 1995

In 1985 the subscription was £10, whereas in 1996 it remains for the sixth year at £15. Despite a small drop in membership, the income from subscriptions remains healthy. A drop in sales income was to be expected after last year's sponsorships and bulk sales. Interest rates generally are very low but our substantial investments at the Halifax Building Society had bonus interest added. The large apparent loss on the conference is partly due to payments in advance for Reading and for the Bath conference. The WCCE conference was also held in Birmingham at a cost of about £2000. However, at the time of auditing, the Bath account had not been closed but would have reduced this conference deficit figure by about £4000, being the first conference for some time to have made a profit.

Publications account for more than one third of our costs but they do not include the expenses for meetings in order to discuss, compile and edit them. Council and Regional expenses include all sub-committees. One of the initiatives of the Projects and Innovations Group included the purchase of £2500 worth of CD-ROMs for assessment. As this raised £2000 in sales the expenses become comparable with last year. The advertising expenses include the cost of the new logo and stationery.

A small loss in 1994 has been replaced by a small surplus in 1995.

About one third of our subscriptions are now collected by direct debit with only a few remaining on the old standing order system. At the end of the year negotiations were started with NatWest Streamline so that telephone orders with credit cards could be taken. It should now be available for members through Val Siviter at the MAPE office. Pick up the phone and subs can be paid or orders taken!

K.A. Whiting
Treasurer

Report of the Executive for the Year ended 31 December 1995

The executive present their annual report with the financial accounts for the charity for the year ended 31 December 1995.

Details of charitable status and constitution

The charity is registered with the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, Registration No. 292898. It was established under a constitution of 3 April 1982 which was subsequently amended on various dates, the latest being 26 March 1994. The aim of the charity is to advance education by promoting and developing the awareness and effective use of micro-electronics as an integral part of the philosophy and practice of Primary Education.

Review of the financial performance of the charity

A summary of the surplus income over expenditure is given on page 3 of the accounts. The executive consider the state of affairs to be satisfactory. During the year the charity has benefited from the considerable efforts of previous years in building up its range of publications and knowledge. It is hoped that this will continue in the future.

Executive

The following were members of the executive during the year:

Chairman:	L. Watson
Vice-chairman:	W. Urwin
Treasurer:	K. Whiting
Business Manager:	R. Keeling
Publicity Manager:	H. Govier
Regional Co-ordinator:	B. Lumley
Co-opted Member:	B. Wake

They are appointed from the council, who in turn are elected from the members of each of the charity's regions.

Signed on behalf of the executive on 30 March 1996.

L. Watson

K.A. Whiting

Report of the Auditors to the members of Micros and Primary Education

We have audited the financial accounts on pages 3 to 5 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Respective responsibilities of Executive and Auditors

The charity's executive is responsible for the preparation of the financial accounts. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our audit, on those accounts and to report our opinion to you.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the executive in the preparation of the financial accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reason-

able assurance that the financial accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial accounts.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial accounts give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 1995 and of its surplus of income over expenditure for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with Statement of Recommended Accounting Practice No. 2 related to charities and the requirements of the constitution of the charity dated 1 April 1985 and subsequent amendments thereto up to 20 April 1993.

Harrison Beale

Registered Auditors
Chartered Accountants,
15 Queens Road,
Coventry CV1 3DE

30 March 1996

**Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 31 December 1995**

	1995		1994	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Subscriptions		51,910		51,269
Sales of licences, tapes and magazines		4,727		15,293
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		56,637		66,562
Bank interest received		6,416		5,681
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		63,053		72,243
Deficiency on conference		(5,892)		(1,596)
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		57,161		70,647
LESS EXPENDITURE				
Publications	23,388		44,194	
Regional expenses	4,241		1,881	
Council expenses	9,846		10,640	
Administrative expenses	10,135		10,310	
Advertising	4,749		1,057	
Bank charges	1,134		1,106	
Direct debit charges	730		662	
Miscellaneous	—		235	
Depreciation of office equipment	1,089		1,338	
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		(55,312)		(71,423)
(Deficit)/Surplus of income over expenditure for the year		<hr/>		<hr/>
		£ 1,849		£ (776)
		<hr/>		<hr/>

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1995

	Notes	1995	1994
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Office equipment	1	3,265	4,013
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors		2,141	5,577
Bank current account		13,291	13,576
Bank deposit account		8,213	7,852
Premium extra account		90,547	84,976
Instant extra plus account		10,642	10,158
Cash in hand		151	186
		<u>124,985</u>	<u>122,325</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors and accruals		(808)	(745)
		<u>124,177</u>	<u>121,580</u>
		<u>127,442</u>	<u>125,593</u>
REPRESENTED BY			
Accumulated fund at 1 January 1995		125,593	126,369
(Deficit)/surplus of income over expenditure for the year		<u>1,849</u>	<u>(776)</u>
Accumulated fund at 31 December 1995		<u>127,442</u>	<u>125,593</u>

Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1995

1. FIXED ASSETS	Office Equipment
COST	£
At 1 January 1995	11,378
Additions in year	341
At 31 December 1995	<u>11,719</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 January 1995	7,365
Charge for year	1,089
At 31 December 1995	<u>8,454</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 December 1995	<u>3,265</u>
At 31 December 1994	<u>4,013</u>

2. DEPRECIATION

Depreciation is charged on a reducing balance basis at the following rates:

Office equipment 25%

Regional news

At a recent meeting of the MAPE Council it was felt that members' interests would be better served if they were not tied to one particular region, but were free to attend any MAPE event of interest to them.

Chiltern region

Our session on 15 June, '*MAPE Software for the Archimedes*' was very successful. John Kenney had put in hours of work on the MAPE/Longman's Photo base CD-Rom to give us a superb guided tour and a copy of his 'easy to follow' notes. *Switch On*, *Sortgame* and *Picture Builder* were also demonstrated. As usual everyone went home with some useful information either from the demos or the informal discussions.

Our termly events are friendly and informal, we hold them at *The Advisory Unit for Computers in Education*, 126, Great North Road, Hatfield.

Why not make a note of these dates and join us?
5 October 1996 *Talking Word Processors* with Trevor Millum of RESOURCE

8 February 1997 John Kenney's program *Alban Wood Logo* – John will introduce this version of Logo which conforms to the philosophy of Logo whilst being easy to handle by teachers. He has also written the notes.

For further information on these events, or if you have a request for a specific topic to be covered at one of our termly meetings please ring me, Betty Lumley on 01923 823411.

West Midlands region

Two successful events were held last term.

Models, Movement and Micros

On 13 May a group of teachers spent an enjoyable day exploring the possibilities of control technology. Most admitted to little or no previous experience, but by the end of the day everyone left with a model and the ability to control it using a microcomputer.

After a brief introduction by Roger Keeling some time was spent at the computer getting to grips with the software. Roger had thoughtfully provided a set



of instructions and it was not long before the room was filled with the sound of buzzers and the sight of clowns' faces with flashing eyes and spinning bow ties.

The second part of the morning and most of the afternoon was devoted to constructing models which could be controlled. Here was the opportunity to let your imagination go! As in all good classrooms there were plenty of ideas to help those, like me, who are short on creative thinking. One lovely variation on the theme of the clown's face, devised by Pamela Joyce of Alcott Hall Primary School, was a striking pink pig with a wonderful curly tail which span round and round. Other creations included a meticulously crafted set of traffic lights, a roundabout which gave an audible warning when the ride was about to begin, and a large dragon who appeared to breathe fire.

New skills were acquired; many of us had never used a soldering iron before, but Mike Compson was on hand to help. New concepts were learnt by some as we were shown how to use sensing devices to control our models. The really good news is that you do not need a



state-of-the-art computer to do control technology; put your old Beebs or 186s to good use (if they are not already fully utilised).

Thanks are due to Mike and Roger not only for giving us such an enjoyable day, but also for the first class lunch.

Integrating IT into Theme Work

Have you ever said 'How can I use IT in my topic?' The West Midlands branch of MAPE tried to provide a few answers to this question on 18 June. Mick Harwood welcomed everyone and gave a brief outline of the sessions that were on offer. Anne Farr and Christine Spencer chose the theme 'Teddy bears' and looked at planning, management, organisation and assessment issues when integrating IT into this theme for KS1. Mick Harwood enabled teachers to go away with more than ideas when he showed them how to produce and transfer pictures connected with a history

topic onto T-shirts. There were sessions on using Multimedia at both KS1 and KS2, and Geoff Turrell demonstrated the benefits of using the Internet to support themes. Finally members had the opportunity to ask for help on integrating IT into their topics, which included 'Ourselves' and 'Victorians'.

Future events planned are:

30 November 1996	<i>CD Roms</i>
25 January 1997	<i>The Internet in Schools</i>
8 March 1997	<i>Let's do Maths!</i>
17 May 1997	<i>Models, Movement & Micros</i> and <i>Making Multimedia</i> (9.30 am–3.30 pm)
21 June 1997	<i>IT for Science</i>

If you would like further information about any of these events please contact Mrs Yvonne Peers at Newman College Technology Centre, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3NT.

MAPE at BETT

Micro Electronics and Primary Education are delighted to announce details of their seminar at next year's **BETT** Show – Europe's leading IT exhibition dedicated to education. The exhibition is set to take centre stage at Olympia, London on the 8th–11th January 1997 and teachers are already rescheduling their diaries to accommodate a visit to this important event.

The MAPE seminar will take place on Friday 10th January at 4.00pm in Seminar Theatre C and will be presented by Ron Allen. The session, entitled "Computer Control – A cross curricular approach to teaching", will look at Control in the classroom from early years, using robotic toys, to control programs for year 8 children. Demonstrations will include "CoCo the Talking Clown" and "The crane that knows what it's got". The focus will be on children's learning and the part played by IT in that process.

To complement the seminar, the supporting exhibition will play host to the largest gathering of educational IT suppliers ever assembled at such an event. With IT playing an integral role within education today primary and secondary teachers need to arm themselves with as much information as possible to deliver the curriculum requirements successfully. For both IT wary and IT literate teachers, the BETT Show will be the ideal opportunity to discover the very latest IT solutions for the classroom and how these technologies can be integrated into the teaching process at both primary and secondary levels.

The exhibition will allow you to try out the latest technologies and help you find the products best suited to your own individual requirements. A visit will enable you to form a coherent and practical approach towards IT, help you learn how technology can enhance the overall quality of teaching/learning and how this can promote the best educational practice in the classroom.

The BETT Show is relevant to everybody working in the field of education and a visit would make a valuable contribution to a teacher's INSET programme. For FREE tickets and further information, call the Ticket Hotline number on 0181 984 7711. For details on the whole BETT Seminar Programme including the many Primary level seminars, dial the Seminar Fax Line on 0336 423440*.

*Calls will be charged at 39p (per minute) cheap rate and 49p at all other times.

Guidelines for submitting articles to *MICRO-SCOPE*

1. There is no specific rule about the length of articles. Two or three thousand words is especially suitable although longer articles will be considered. Shorter items are always welcome.
2. Typewritten or word-processed articles are preferred although handwritten articles will be considered. Articles should be printed out, with double line spacing, on one side of the paper only. If an article is written on Nimbus, Mac or Archimedes, a disc copy would be appreciated.
3. Photographs add greatly to the overall appearance of the page. Photographs, which will be printed in black and white, are welcome (and will be returned).
4. Original illustrations of children's work should be sent (and will be returned on request). Please do not send photocopies as they do not reproduce well enough. Pencil and crayon drawings and/or writing are also unsatisfactory. Please go over pencil work with a fine black felt tip.
5. If the illustration is a print-out, please print it out with a very black ribbon.
6. If the article is accompanied by illustrations please number the illustrations and indicate in the text where each illustration should be placed.
7. If the article makes reference to a piece of software or hardware please include the following details in a footnote: who makes/publishes it, their full address, the cost, for which micro it is suitable.
8. If the article makes reference to a book or article please include the page number, the author, the publisher's name and address, the year of publication.
9. If your article includes a program listing please send a disc with the program on, and indicate the file name.
10. Please include the author's name, some indication of their current post, and details about where they work. From an editorial point of view the editor also needs a full postal address and a phone number (not for publication), so that s/he can contact them.
11. If the item is a mass of material rather than one article, please do not send it with a note to the effect that 'there's an article here'; please sort out the material into a coherent whole and then send it.
12. Please do not submit the article to another publication at the same time as it is submitted to *MICRO-SCOPE*, although we do not pay for contributions, we still like to have exclusive rights! If you have submitted it elsewhere please tell us.
13. Any and all of these conditions can always be ignored and the article will still be considered. It just involves more hassle for the editor(s) and the author.

Reviewers needed

Are you interested in writing software reviews for *MICRO-SCOPE*? We are intending to expand the reviews section and make it a regular feature, and we would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in reviewing software on an occasional basis. Ideally, reviewers will be classroom-based, and in a position to incorporate the software into their normal classroom activities. Reviews will appear in *MICRO-SCOPE* or a Special, and/or on the MAPE web site. For further information, contact Bob Fox at Worcester College of Higher Education, Henwick Grove, Worcester WR2 6AJ (e-mail b.fox@worc.ac.uk).

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