

Children's Software Evaluation Instrument

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I. Ease of Use (Can a child use it with minimal help?)

- A S. E. N. N.A.
- 1 _____ Skills needed to operate the program are in range of the child
 - 2 _____ Children can use the program independently after the first use
 - 3 _____ Accessing key menus is straightforward
 - 4 _____ Reading ability is not prerequisite to using the program
 - 5 _____ Graphics make sense to the intended user
 - 6 _____ Printing routines are simple
 - 7 _____ It is easy to get in or out of any activity at any point
 - 8 _____ Getting to the first menu is quick and easy
 - 9 _____ Controls are responsive to the touch
 - 10 _____ Written materials are helpful
 - 11 _____ Instructions can be reviewed on the screen, if necessary
 - 12 _____ Children know if they make a mistake
 - 13 _____ Icons are large and easy to select with a moving cursor
 - 14 _____ Installation procedure is straightforward and easy to do

II. Childproof (Is it designed with "child-reality" in mind?)

- 1 _____ Survives the "pound on the keyboard" test
- 2 _____ Offers quick, clear, obvious response to a child's action
- 3 _____ The child has control over the rate of display
- 4 _____ The child has control over exiting at any time
- 5 _____ The child has control over the order of the display
- 6 _____ Title screen sequence is brief or can be bypassed
- 7 _____ When a child holds a key down, only one input is sent to the computer
- 8 _____ Files not intended for children are safe
- 9 _____ Children know when they've made a mistake
- 10 _____ This program would operate smoothly in a home or classroom setting

III. Educational (What can a child learn from this program?)

- 1 _____ Offers a good presentation of one or more content areas
- 2 _____ Graphics do not detract from the program's educational intentions
- 3 _____ Feedback employs meaningful graphic and sound capabilities
- 4 _____ Speech is used
- 5 _____ The presentation is novel with each use
- 6 _____ Good challenge range (this program will grow with the child)
- 7 _____ Feedback reinforces content (embedded reinforcements are used)
- 8 _____ Program elements match direct experiences
- 9 _____ Content is free from gender bias
- 10 _____ Content is free from ethnic bias
- 11 _____ A child's ideas can be incorporated into the program
- 12 _____ The program comes with strategies to extend the learning
- 13 _____ There is a sufficient amount of content

IV. Entertaining (Is this program fun to use?)

- 1 _____ The program is enjoyable to use
- 2 _____ Graphics are meaningful and enjoyed by children
- 3 _____ This program is appealing to a wide audience
- 4 _____ Children return to this program time after time
- 5 _____ Random generation techniques are employed in the design
- 6 _____ Speech and sounds are meaningful to children
- 7 _____ Challenge is fluid, or a child can select own level.
- 8 _____ The program is responsive to a child's actions
- 9 _____ The theme of the program is meaningful to children

V. Design Features (How "smart" is this program?)

- 1 _____ The program has speech capacity
- 2 _____ Has printing capacity
- 3 _____ Keeps records of child's work
- 4 _____ "Branches" automatically: challenge level is fluid
- 5 _____ A child's ideas can be incorporated into the program.
- 6 _____ Sound can be toggled or adjusted
- 7 _____ Feedback is customized in some way to the individual child
- 8 _____ Program keeps a history of the child's use over a period of time
- 9 _____ Teacher/parent options are easy to find and use

VI. Value (How much does it cost vs. what it does? Is it worth it?)

Considering the factors rated above, and the average retail price of software, rate this program's relative value considering the current software market. Consider also any extra hardware attachments required to get full potential of the programming, e.g., a sound card, CD-ROM, etc.

Poor

Good

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Don't forget that this form is generic! To use it properly, you have to look at a lot of similarly designed products, and that the "NA" field is particularly powerful in the overall score.