An evaluation of a children’s ‘classic’ on CD-ROM

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AN EVALUATION OF A CHILDREN’S ‘CLASSIC’ ON CD-ROM

BY

MELANIE KEADY

A MASTER’S DISSERTATION, SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE OF THE Loughborough UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY.

SEPTEMBER 1995

SUPERVISOR: CLIFF MCKNIGHT  B TECH, PHD, C. PSYCHOL., AFBPS
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND LIBRARY STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

The market for children's electronic books in CD-ROM format is fast developing. Europress Software released in May 1995 the first of what they hope will be a series of children's classics. This study examines the way in which this classic is presented, how it is received by end users, both children and adults, and what the potential is for such products. The use of such a format for delivering children's classics is also examined in terms of its advantages and disadvantages. A list of suggestions for future products, both in terms of content and suitable titles, is also included.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Mr. Derek Meakin of Europress Software for financing the testing of the product and providing the software, illustrations and company information; Dr. Cliff McKnight my supervisor without whom this project would not have been developed and seen the light of day, Mrs. S. A. Hulland and Mrs. M. Modhwadia for assisting with the booking of the room for the tests, the AVA dept of DILS for the loan of equipment and finally all the parents and children who participated in the testing of the product.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my father, Edward George Keady, who died on Christmas Day 1994, he always valued education and was pleased by the prospect of my further education.
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 1</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0. Introduction</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Electronic Books</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. The CD-ROM electronic book</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Types of Electronic Books</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. Children’s CD-ROMs</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5. What is a classic?</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6. Children and classics</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7. Children’s classics</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8. Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9. The Market</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 2</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.0. Europress Software</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Living Classics: Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 3</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.0. The Investigation</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Method</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 i. Europress Software.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1ii. Questionnaire Design</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1iii. The pilot</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1iv. The refined questionnaire</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1v. The subjects</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1vi. The Test</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1vii. Procedure</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4

4.0 THE RESULTS

4.1 The Focus Group

4.2 The Pilot Group

4.3. The Research Group Families

4.4 The Research Group Pre Experience Questionnaire

4.4i. Computer and CD-ROM Experience
4.4ii. Classic Stories The Children Have Read
4.4iii. Classic Stories The Children Have Seen On Television
4.4iv. Classic Stories The Children Have Seen On Video
4.4v. Classic Stories The Children Have Seen At The Cinema
4.4vi. Expectations Of A CD-ROM Book
4.4vii. Suggestions For Other Titles
4.4viii. Experience of CD-ROM Books

4.5 The Research Group Post Experience Questionnaire

4.5i. The Narration
4.5ii. The Text
4.5iii. The Illustrations
4.5iv. The Animations
4.5v. The Activities
4.5 vi. The Game
4.5vii. The Packaging
4.5 viii. Original Illustrations
4.5ix. Price of The Product
4.5x. Benefits of a CD-ROM Book
4.5xi. Disadvantages of A CD-ROM Book
4.5xii. Availability of CD ROM Books In A Library
4.5xiii. Suggested Price of Library Service
4.5xiv. Suggestions for Other Titles

4.6 Further comments made by Participants

4.7 Comments from the Videos

CHAPTER 5

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 What the results show:

5.1i. The questionnaire.
5.1 ii. The test:
5.1 iii. The families

5
Research Group Questionnaires

APPENDIX E

Europress press releases and promotional materials.

REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF FIGURES/ILLUSTRATIONS</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fig. 2i The Map of Wonderland</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fig 2ii First page of Down the Rabbit hole showing the icons</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fig 2iii First page of Down the rabbit hole</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fig 2vi The Long Passage</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fig 2v Falling Down the Rabbit Hole</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fig 2vi The Worms in the Rabbit Hole</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fig 2vii Instruction for Alice’s Game</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fig 2viii Alice’s Game</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Fig 2ix Instructions for the Caterpillars Game</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Fig 2x The Caterpillar’s Game</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Fig 2xi The instruction screen for the Cheshire Cat’s Game</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Fig 2xii Conclusion of the Cheshire Cat’s Game</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Fig 2xiii Instruction Screen for the Duchess’s Game</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Fig 2xiv The Duchess’s Game</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Fig.4i The Focus Group Participants</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Fig 4ii Focus Group Reaction to the Duchesses Game.</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Fig.4iii The Age and Gender of the Research Group Children</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Fig. 4iv Classic Stories That the Research Group Children Have Read</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Fig.4v The most read classic books by the Research Group Children</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Fig. 4vi Modern Stories Read by the Children</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Fig. 4vii Classic Stories the Research Group Children Have Seen on Television</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Fig. 4viii The most popular classic stories seen by the research group children on television</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Fig. 4ix Classic Stories the Children Have Seen on Video</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Fig. 4x Other Stories Seen by the Children on Video</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Fig. 4xi Classic Stories Seen by the Children at the Cinema</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Fig.4 xii Scores for the Quality of the Narration</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
27. Fig. 4xiii Scores for the Quality of the Text 83
28. Fig. 4xiv Scores for the Quality of the Illustrations 86
29. Fig. 4xv Scores for the Quality of the Animations 88
30. Fig. 4xvi Scores for the Quality of the Activities 90
31. Fig. 4xvii Scores for the Quality of the Duchess's Game 92
32. Fig. 4xviii Scores for the Quality of the Packaging 95
33. Fig. 4xix Research Groups Response to Keeping the Original Illustrations 97
34. Fig. 4xx Suggestions for Classic stories on CD-ROM 101
35. Fig. 4xxi Modern Stories to put onto CD-ROM. 102
36. Fig. 4xxii Stories from films to put onto CD-ROM 103
37. Fig. 4xxiii Suggestions for Fairy stories to be put on CD-ROM. 103
## LIST OF TABLES

1. Table 4i Computers owned by Focus Group participants  
2. Table 4ii Classic Stories Read by the Focus Group  
3. Table 4iii Books the Focus Group Would Like to Read on Computer  
4. Table 4iv The Pilot Family and Classic Stories  
5. Table 4v Pilot Family Expectations of a CD-ROM Book  
6. Table 4vi Pilot Family Quality Ratings For 'Alice'  
7. Table 4vii Pilot Family Benefits and Disadvantages of a CD-ROM Book  
8. Table 4viii Pilot Family Suggested Titles for a CD-ROM Book  
9. Table 4ix Computers Owned by the Research Group  
10. Table 4x Research Group Experience of CD-ROM  
11. Table 4xi CD-ROMs Owned by the Research Group  
12. Table 4xii Fairy Stories Included by the Research Group Children as Classics  
13. Table 4xiii Research Group Expectations of a CD-ROM Book  
14. Table 4xiv Research Group Suggestions for Other Titles for a CD-ROM Book - Pre-Experience  
15. Table 4xv Suggested Fair Price for a CD-ROM Book  
16. Table 4xvi Benefits of a CD-ROM Book - Research Group  
17. Table 4xvii Disadvantages of a CD-ROM Book - Research Group
18. Table 4xviii Suggested Price for a Library Service - Research Group Parents 101

19. Table 4xix Compilation List of Children's Books 105

20. Table 4xx Aspects noted from the video 110

21. Table 4xxi Features providing fun 110

22. Table 5i Suggestions for future titles. 121
CHAPTER 1
CHAPTER 1

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Today a great many books (hard copy version) in a variety of genres are produced for children. Their relative merits have been the root of many a debate beyond the parameters of this study, but within this debate concern for the lack of knowledge of the ‘great classics’ of children’s literature by today’s children has been raised (James, 1993). Perhaps one way in which to renew interest in the classics is by producing them in CD-ROM format.

Europress Software is a software manufacturing company based in Macclesfield, Cheshire. It already has some success in producing children’s educational software and has also developed and marketed an instant games creator, Klik & Play. Although this is marketed as an instant games creator, it is also a powerful tool for the design and development of presentations and has played a major part in the development of the CD-ROM being examined. Europress Software are seeking to develop its range of CD-ROM software for children and has decided to produce a series entitled ‘Living Classics’. As a pilot, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll has been chosen.

This dissertation centres on an evaluation of this product from the perspectives of two main groups of people: the adults who will purchase the product and the children who will be the main users.

The present chapter is a review of the literature concerned with electronic books and children’s literature, with particular reference to classics and Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland.

1.1 Electronic Books

The term ‘electronic book’ conjures up a picture of a traditional book which in some way is involved with electronics. The only link between hard copy paper books and electronic books is that they both have a front page and a back page, with pages in
between. These are the two dimensions of the hard copy but the electronic book has a third dimension in that it can also include other media on its pages, i.e. a depth which does not exist in the two dimensional book.

A variety of platforms for the presentation of these electronic books has developed (Feldman, 1993). These include portable systems where the books are stored on chips which are housed permanently in palmtops such as Franklin's Digital Book System which looks very much like a hand held calculator. Depending upon the database which the user requires there are also plug in cards which can be used on the system.

Another portable system is the Sony Data Discman which is a palmtop compact disc system which is able to play 8cm CD-ROM. (For further information see Feldman, 1993). The data here is stored on the CD-ROM which has become the most popular medium for electronic books. They can be used on PCs as well as the portable systems making them accessible in a variety of situations. The only barrier to their use is that most are not interchangeable i.e. most CD-ROMs designed for use on, say, an Apple Mac cannot be used on a PC DOS windows system.

One form of electronic book is that available on the Internet e.g. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, URL address: http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.web/people/rgs/alice-table.html, and another type is that on magnetic tape such as Alice in Wonderland published by Ladybird.

1.2. The CD-ROM electronic book

The CD-ROM is the delivery method that is being exploited at the moment. Hardware manufacturers are looking at ways of making systems more portable which means that electronic books are able to be used anywhere. The diverse range of hardware means that software manufacturers have to overcome the problems of making their product as accessible as possible.

Benefits of the CD-ROM include its portability and the amount of storage space available; “100,000 pages of text, 32,000 graphic images and over 5 hours of digital audio” (Eidinow, 1994) has been suggested but, Barker, (1992) suggests “650 Mb of information ... 200,000 pages of A4 text; or 20,000 low quality (PCX) image files;
or 2000 TV quality still images; or 30 seconds of video; or 18 hours of low quality sound. The way in which the available storage is used within a given electronic book production will depend critically on the ‘media mix’ needed by the particular publication concerned.” (p139)

1.3 Types of Electronic Books

During the process of his work on developing guidelines for electronic book production Barker has identified ten categories of electronic book. They are:

1. text books
2. static picture books
3. moving picture books
4. talking books
5. multimedia books
6. polymedia books
7. hypermedia books
8. intelligent electronic books
9. telemedia books
10. cyberspace books (p. 140)

In designing electronic books certain aspects need to be considered. Barker has formulated a range of design guidelines:

- knowledge engineering
- page design
- interaction styles
- end-user tools and services
- use of multimedia
use of hypermedia (pp.143-4)

Each of these criteria need to be considered by the production team to ensure a successful product.

As can be seen from the list a specialised vocabulary is evolving which needs interpretation. This is given in appendix A page 129. The product under consideration falls into the category of multimedia books as it consists of text, animation, narration and graphics.

1.4. Children's CD-ROMs

For a successful electronic book to be produced for children Bennett, (1994) has suggested that attention should be paid to the following traits in their design and production:

"animation and activity

custom features

supporting material and willingness to use original stories

activities and high production quality

an understanding of when to use technique" (p 84-94)

Kafai and Solway (1994) have also made suggestions for the designing of children's CD-ROMs:

1. Think about the computer as a place for social activities. Placing a computer game on software can also be a social activity shared by several children. Provide options for multiplayer interactions such as taking turns.

2. Allow settings for players of different abilities. The assumption that all users and players are the same has dominated human-computer interaction research and literature for the last 10 years. Although children's software is often targeted at different age groups, it still tends to assume that children of the same age are of the same abilities and learning styles.
3. Provide room for reuse, change, and growth. Allow children to save their work and games in progress. Allow for the reuse or otherwise of created pieces of work. Most important, allow children to experience or make something three months down the road that they couldn’t do in the beginning. Provide several layers of complexity.

4. Eschew the minimalist design mentality for children’s software. Fewer features is not necessarily the right design strategy. Kids love to explore nooks and crannies.

5. Do not assume that learning is easy. Reading the instruction and promotional materials of software packages could lead one to the conclusion that edutainment has found the magic formula for scholastic success: learning combined with entertainment features will draw children into getting knowledge needed to succeed in school and later life. This magic has yet to be developed and it is questionable whether there is one.

Young children display a wonderment and excitement about computers that is reminiscent of that exhibited by programmers. Thus, the last design prescription ... should be: play to a child’s imagination and engage the child’s sense of wonder.(pp 19-22)

In a review of children’s computer products, Kafai and Solway are of the opinion that “the current genre of electronic books hasn’t figured out how to exploit the computational medium ... narration may not be in sync. with the text highlighting, ... ‘paging’ through a book on CD-ROM is painfully slow”

All of these comments can be adapted and used as pointers in evaluating children’s CD-ROMs. These criteria can be seen in appendix B and will be used in evaluating how successful Europress Software has been in producing the CD-ROM, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland to be used in a Windows environment.

1.5. What is a classic?

One definition of the word classic when applied to literature has been given by E. Winfield: (1986)
"it is literary work that has "holding power" or has endured over time, has universal meaning and explores the human condition. A classic also addresses the psychological needs of the individual reader. ... A classic may be part of a reader's cultural heritage."

(p26)

To this can be added the comments of Keaney, (1993). In his definition he begins by quoting Mark Twain:

"Mark Twain called a classic "a book which people praise and don't read" ... The classics are often talked about as if they were something you should take for the sake of your health ... parents think they are essential and lots of people genuinely love them."

(p16)

He continues:

"We use the word classic to describe a book that has stood the test of time. This means that more than one age has read it and decided that it has something really important to say. ... major authors ... are trying to give the reader an insight into other people's lives. ... A book can be a classic without being written by a distinguished writer"(p17)

Another definition (one, that years of experience as a teacher has shown me,) is that given by children, of classic stories being ones which are long, with few pictures, in strange language and boring covers, something that adults think that they ought to read but seldom read by choice. It will be interesting to see what the children in the evaluation think. Perhaps by using the CD-ROM format this view can be changed.

1.6. Children and classics

Waterland, (1989) comments upon the school of thought that believes that the children's classics have no relevance to today's children, that they are 'middle -class and twee' and that stories for children should be 'within their experience'. She then goes on to show how with six year olds she was able to pass on to them her love of some of the classic stories of her own childhood. James, (1993) suggests that one of
the reasons for 'all not being well with the teaching of English' is 'the lack of knowledge of the literary heritage of this country and also the attention span of young people which has been dictated by television'. (p13)

Winfield states that 'good literature stimulates thinking, evokes ideas, creates mental images and engages the emotions. Good books also encourage children to read more deeply and often. The classics provide this for readers of all ages.' (p26-27). If children do not like what they see in hard copy how will this be achieved?

Schwartz, (1992) says that in 1991 the New York publishing house Alfred Knopf relaunched the Everyman's Library first issued in 1905. As a follow up to this they decided to produce the Everyman's Library Children's Classics in 1992 publishing 10 titles each year to 1996. To make their versions distinguishable from others they have determined to use the original illustrations as they consider these to be an important feature. Carl Lennertz, vice president of marketing at Kopf, concluded his interview with Schwartz by saying

"Our goal is to make the Everyman Library a household word so that young readers who enjoy these books will then “graduate” to the “adult” classics, and, more important, so that children read." (pp. 26-7)

The term ‘classic’ is often applied to recently published books which is incorrect. To overcome this, the term ‘modern classics’ has been introduced. This has been described by Keaney, (1993) as a “paradox, a contradictory phrase like bitter sweet or hopelessly hopeful.” He continues, “There are certainly books written quite recently that seem good enough to outlive their authors and go on to become classics.” Bradman, (1995) in discussing children’s classic books on the market talks about the Puffin Modern Classics series and says. “Criteria for inclusion in this prestigious list are simple: titles must have been consistently recommended in print for at least 15 years and sold more than a million copies each”. A copy of the books listed can be seen in Appendix C page137.
1.7. Children’s classics

Many books have been written about children’s classics. These include those by Darton, (1982) and Carpenter, (1985). These look at the way in which the books which we consider classics today evolved from the moral stories and fairy/folk tales. Inglis, (1981) considers the question ‘what is good literature?’ for children and goes on to justify his selection of classics. Most were written for adults and not children although it was children that took these stories on board and ensured their future. The ‘Golden Age’ of children’s literature was last century and began with Edward Lear’s Book of Nonsense. Each book which is now considered a classic introduced a new idea or genre. One of the ideas that are explored is ‘the search for a mysterious, elusive good place.’ Gradually ‘two streams of children’s literature (fantasy and real fiction)’ evolved. Appendix C page 132 includes a list of titles suggested by these authors. Both Alice stories by Lewis Caroll are included.

Classics did not end in the Edwardian era as the list shows occasionally a ‘Modern Classic’ appears but as endurance over a period of time is one of the criteria for a classic it is difficult to add popular books of today to the list. It is possible that recent authors’ works like Roald Dahl’s Charlie and the Chocolate Factory could be a classic in the future.

It will be interesting to see how this list relates to suggestions by the participants in the evaluation.

1.8. Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland was written by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll in the 1860’s. He was a mathematician and logician lecturing at Oxford university. He was also an amateur photographer and enjoyed writing. The novels Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass began life as a series of stories told to children including Alice Liddell the daughter of H.G. Liddell, dean of Christ Church, Oxford. (The Concise Columbus Encyclopaedia 1991). At first these stories were illustrated with sketches executed by Charles Dodgson. As Dodgson gathered these stories together and worked them into a manuscript for a book Sir John Tenniel worked on illustrations for the book,
sometimes using Dodgson’s sketches and developing them. The first publication of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland was in 1865 and then in 1866 Macmillan and Co. produced their first publication of the book. Originally the illustrations appeared as ‘black and white’ pictures. In 1911 these illustrations were coloured by Harry G. Theaker and it is assumed that it was done with the approval of Sir John Tenniel as he did not die until 1914. (Publisher’s note on the new children’s edition, Macmillan’s Children’s Books 1990). Through the years different publications of the book have appeared, some, whilst keeping the original illustrations, have added others to them (The Astor Prose series, circa 1919) and in other instances replacing them altogether with completely new pictures (Ladybird, 1994). Two copies of the book are available on the Internet: Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. http://WWW.CS.cmu.edu/afs/cs.web/people/rgs/alice-table.html and: http://www.germany.eu.net/books/carroll/alice.html. It is also available on CD ROM (The Oxford English Reference Library, 1992). All three consist of the text but the internet versions include Tenniel’s illustrations as gif files.

Because of the popularity of Alice over the ages an image has been created in people’s minds of Alice being a very blond haired child in a blue dress and white apron. If one of the coloured illustrations is looked at it will be seen that Alice does not have blond hair and in fact if Tenniel’s illustrations and Dodgson’s sketches are looked at, the impression is that she has rather nondescript looking hair tending towards a dark colour. The illustrations are quite an important aspect of the book and especially for more recent developments in the treatment of the story.

Other important aspects of the story lie within the text itself. These include Dodgson’s parodying of verses with a specifically Christian message as suggested by Humphrey Carpenter

"The first to appear in the story,

How doth the little crocodile

Improve his shining tail,

And pour the waters of the Nile"
On every golden scale!

parodies Isaac Watt's poem 'Against Idleness and Mischief', one of the best known pieces in his *Divine Songs* (1715):

How doth the little busy bee

Improve each shining hour,

And gather honey all the day

From every opening flower!

In works of labour or of skill,

I would be busy too;

For Satan finds some mischief still

For idle hands to do. (Carpenter 1985 p63)

Children's rhymes of the time are also parodied for example:

"Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!

How I wonder what you're at!

Up above the world you fly,

Like a tea-tray in the sky.

Twinkle, twinkle --" (Macmillan's 1990 p95)

Logic and mathematics also play a role in the story which add to the humour for example:

"And how many hours a day did you do lessons?" said Alice, in a hurry to change the subject.

"Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle: "nine the next, and so on."
“That’s the reason they’re called lessons,” the Gryphon remarked: “because they lessen from day to day.”

This was quite a new idea to Alice, and she thought it over a little before she made her next remark. “Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday?”

“Of course it was,” said the Mock Turtle.

“And how did you manage on the twelfth?” Alice went on eagerly.

“That’s enough about lessons,” the Gryphon interrupted in a very decided tone. “Tell her something about the games now.” (Macmillan’s 1990 p.133)

Unfortunately the only example mentioned above that has been retained in the Europress product is the parody of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.

Carroll also keeps his characters as simple as possible, no complicated names, for example, the Duchess is just The Duchess, no grand title or over characterisation.

Humour within the text, the characters created by the author, and the illustrations are all aspects which need to be considered when attempting to present Alice in a new format.

1.9. The Market

The range of models of computers on the market is vast, just look at any computer magazine and the choice is immense. Those being promoted for today’s market are mainly 486 PCs and Pentium PCs. There is also a large market for Apple Macintosh computers. The cost of systems is in line with individual requirements but for a multimedia the range of prices starts at about £1000. This gives an indication of what people may own in the very near future either as new entrants to the market or consumers who are looking to upgrade their systems. According to the Library Information Statistics Unit (LISU) “the consensus seems to be that the UK had approximately 65,000 MPCs (multimedia personal computer) at the end of 1993. This figure is expected to be comfortably over 200,000 by the end of 1995. It is more difficult to be sure of the proportion of those that are in the home.”
For many home PC owners the need for a CD-ROM drive, to use multimedia CD-ROMs, means the purchasing of an additional piece of hardware. For new entrants to the PC market it is more likely that they will purchase a system that includes a CD-ROM drive. To quote LISU, “Dell Computer Corporation expect all home-use PCs to be fitted with CD-ROM drives within 12 months ... Apple are less inclined to be specific ... for the Macintosh.” Many owners acquire their first multimedia CD-ROMs when they purchase either a new system or CD-ROM drive. This practice is known as bundling and is seen as a way to motivate hardware purchase but provides little recompense for the software publisher. CD-ROMs may also be purchased from specialist electronic shops such as PC World and Curry/Dixons or by mail order. Whichever method is chosen it is difficult for the consumer to see the contents of a program before purchase. They need to rely upon magazine reviews and/or personnel recommendations for knowledge of the program before deciding whether to buy as the CD-ROMs can be very expensive. Stephens, (1995) says:

Some CD-ROMs are a lasting source of frustration, but the majority have a more transient appeal, nearer to that of a feature film which you might watch once or twice then dispatch to viewing history.” (p.51)

This would suggest that there should be a system in place whereby CD-ROMs could be previewed, by borrowing or hiring for a period of time, like videos, so consumers can experience them before deciding to purchase or not. The reason for the lack of such a system can be found in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988. The video rentals market had already established itself before 1988 whilst the CD-ROM market has developed since then. Marett, (1991) explains 18(2) of the Copyright Act.

“... provides that only the copyright owner may hire out copies to the public for money or money’s worth. In the case of a public library this applies even if no charge is made. So the copyright owner’s licence is necessary before a program can be loaned by a public library or rented out by anyone else.” (p 151)
Not many people realise it, but when a program is purchased it is really the licence for use that is being purchased. Software producers are therefore the ones preventing the growth of a rental market. They wish to protect their products from a pirate market which would undercut their prices. However for the home market multimedia CD-ROMs “hold too much data to fit on most people’s hard disks and are thus uncopiable, unless you’ve got a £1,500 CD writing machine” (Stephens, 1995). The CD-ROM publishers should look at the video market where it is possible for home users to be able to afford an extra machine, thus making the copying of rented videos feasible. Instead of the market drying up it has flourished and continues to be successful. As Stephens concludes:

“If today’s multimedia CD-ROMs are really as good as their publishers claim, then everything would be rosy in the rental market, since people would realise that a few days simply wasn’t long enough to fully appreciate the disc’s qualities, and either re-rent them or buy them right out.

If on the other hand, the lasting appeal of an average CD-ROM turns out to be roughly equivalent to a three day rental period, then the publishers could be in for a hard time and the average customer would save a lot of money.” (p 51)

LISU predict that the multimedia market will expand very rapidly in the next five years. ‘At the end of 1993 there were approximately 1,400 consumer multimedia titles available ... this will double by the end of 1995.’ An easier form of access should be created for consumers. LISU suggest that retail booksellers would provide an ideal outlet for consumers to be exposed to titles. In fact W.H.Smith do carry a limited selection of more popular multimedia CD-ROMs. It will be interesting to see what exposure the research group have had to multimedia CD-ROMs and if they are aware of Europress Software’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland.
CHAPTER 2
CHAPTER 2

2.0. Europress Software

Europress Software is based in Macclesfield, Cheshire. Its first product Micro Olympics was released in 1984 and since then they have continued to grow, developing products so that it has become, as the company claims, a major software manufacturer. Their products cover the following areas: Education, Utilities, Productivity, Entertainment and lifestyle. One of their major breakthroughs has been the development of Klik & Play®, a games creator which enables users to create games without the need to program. It can also be used to create presentations and has been an important tool in the development of the Living Classics series. Although Europress is a UK company it also markets its products in the USA and Europe and has entered into partnerships with overseas companies. Because of their local knowledge and experience Europress are able to redesign and repackage these overseas products to better meet the needs of the UK market. This is especially important in ensuring that educational programs comply with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

In line with the company’s commitment to providing quality for customers they have involved professionals in the making of the Living Classics. For Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland Shakespearean actors have been used for the narration and a TV director was involved in directing the production.

2.1. Living Classics: Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland.

In producing this CD-ROM the original story has been abridged so that instead of the original twelve chapters there are now only eight. As a consequence of this, for some people some of their favourite sections may be missing, for example the lobster quadrille and the Mock Turtle’s story. Sir John Tenniel’s illustrations have been used and in the case of characters, animated. Other illustrations have been added such as the rabbit hole and the corridor. Unlike the pages of the book version every ‘page’ of the CD-ROM is illustrated. The text is the original text but cuts have been made in
parts. To enhance the text, it is highlighted as it is narrated. The narration is also capable of being played on a CD player so that it becomes a speaking book. Once the text has been read the reader is then able to seek out hotspots on the screen, click on them and watch or listen to the action. At the end of the chapter the user is returned to the map of Wonderland which is the opening page, and chooses which chapter to go to next. The user may prefer to play one of the games which are included. These are a new addition to the story. Their link with the story is based on the use of characters and scenarios within the story. The games are only capable of being played by a solo player and there is no way in which to save scores. It will be interesting to see if they merit inclusion on the CD-ROM.

The opening map of Wonderland (fig 2i) also has a pull down option which offers further information about the product, Lewis Carroll and Sir John Tenniel. In keeping with the aim of this being a book each screen is designed as a page in a book. The top right hand corner contains options, to go back, read the page again or go to the map. The bottom right hand corner is where the user clicks to advance to the next page.(fig 2ii)

For the First Chapter (the one being used in the research), Down the Rabbit Hole, three illustrations, or frames (in Klik and Play parlance) are used. The first (fig 2iii) and third (fig 2iv) being based on Tenniel illustrations and the second (fig2v) newly designed but in keeping with the style of Tenniel. The amount of text on a page varies. See the screen pictures. Occasionally the reader comes across unusual spellings for words in the original e.g. toffy (fig2 iv). The lack of hypertext links here means that it is not possible to find out why, also if the reader wants to know the meaning of a word it is not possible to have that explained. The number of hotspots on a page varies and often they are in the same place and sometimes exactly the same as on a previous page. For example, on the first three pages the owl is always in the knot on the tree, the same birds always appear in the same part of the sky, Alice’s sister only moves her head in the same way.
Fig. 2i The Map of Wonderland

Europress Software®
Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank and having nothing to do. Once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it.
Down the rabbit hole

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank and having nothing to do. Once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it.
It was all very well to say 'Drink me,' but the wise little Alice was not going to do that in a hurry.

'No, I'll look first,' she said, 'and see whether it's marked 'poison' or not.'

She had never forgotten that, if you drink much from a bottle marked 'poison,' it is likely to disagree with you.

However this bottle was not marked 'poison,' so Alice ventured to taste it. She found it very nice.

The drink had a sort of mixed flavour of cherry-cord, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffee and hot buttered toast. She very soon finished it off.

'What a curious feeling!' said Alice. 'I must be shutting up like a telescope!' And so it was indeed. She was now only ten inches high. Her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going through the little door into that lovely garden.
The rabbit-hole dipped suddenly down. So suddenly that Alice hadn't a moment to think about stopping herself before she found she was falling down what seemed to be a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her, and to wonder what was going to happen next.

First she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything. Then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves.

Here and there she saw maps and pictures hung on pegs. Down, down, down. 

Would the fall never end?

'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth.

'Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think...'

You see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the school. Although this was not a very good opportunity for showing off her knowledge as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over and over again.

Presently she began again:

'How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards!'
An attempt at variety has been made by changing the sound effects on similar hotspots, for example when in the corridor towards the end of the chapter clicking on the doors produces a variety of sound effects on different pages, the green door near the table, producing noises ranging from voices to the sound of a toilet being flushed (fig2iv). Worms have been added to the page of Alice falling down the hole which when clicked will split into smaller worms.(fig 2vi)

There are four games included. Alice’s Game, a platform style game, (figs 2vii and 2viii) The Caterpillar’s Game, loosely based on Simon Says, (figs 2ix and 2x) The Cheshire Cat’s Game, a matching game (figs 2xi and 2xii) and The Duchess’s Game, which is a ‘Smash and grab’ arcade style game (figs 2xiii and 2xiv). Only one will be used in the evaluation, the Duchess’s Game. This requires familiarity with using the arrow and shift keys for control, and an ability to move and think quickly.
The rabbit-hole dipped suddenly down. So suddenly that Alice hadn't a moment to think about stopping herself before she found she was falling down what seemed to be a very deep well.

Either it was very deep, or she fell very slowly. For she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her, and to wonder what was going to happen next.

First she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything. Then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves.

Here and there she saw maps and pictures hung on pegs. Down, down, down. Would the fall never end?

'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth.

'Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think...'

You see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the school-room.

Although this was not a very good opportunity for showing off her knowledge as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over and over again.

Presently she began again.

'I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth!' 'How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards!'
Alice is trapped in the hall at the bottom of the Rabbit hole. Help her escape by collecting golden keys.

Use the arrow keys to make her run right and left. The up arrow lets her open a door, and the Shift key makes her jump.

Drinking makes her shrink.
Eating cake makes her grow.
Keep her away from the White Rabbit and the hedgehogs or she might get hurt!
Fig 2viii Alice's Game

Europress Software®
Take advice from the Caterpillar.
Repeat what the inhabitants of Wonderland are saying to you by clicking on them in the right order.
See how long you can keep up with them before you make a mistake.

Fig. 2ix Instruction Screen for the Caterpillar's Game

Europress Software
Fig. 2x The Caterpillar's Game

Europress Software®
The Queen has been cutting off heads again. And bodies. And legs. Use your mouse to put them back together. Do it before the Queen reaches Alice, or she'll want to cut her head off too! And look out for the Cheshire Cat. He's usually more a hindrance than a help!

Play easy level — Play medium level — Play hard level — Play really hard level

Fig. 2xi Instruction Screen for the Cheshire Cat's Screen

Europress Software©
Fig. 2xii Conclusion of the Cheshire Cat’s Game

Europress Software®
It's mayhem in the Duchess's kitchen. All the cups and saucers have broken loose and are chasing Alice.

Help her avoid them by using the arrow keys and throw food at them by pressing the Shift key.

But WATCH OUT for the Pig and the Cook.
Fig. 2xiv The Duchess's Game

Europress Software®
In applying the criteria for a successful children's CD discussed in chapter 1 an initial evaluation of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland can be made. It can be seen that it fulfils the following:

**Animation:** The characters move realistically and add interest to the story

**Custom features:** Each page has drop down icons which enable the user to go to other areas of the program. The addition of page numbers would have been useful so if the user does have to leave the book in the middle of a chapter they would know where to return to instead of having to go through the whole chapter again.

**Supporting material:** The packaging is designed to look like a hard copy book although it does contain a rather large piece of polystyrene which serves no purpose except to keep the box firm. The information provided on the box is easy to understand and follow so there are no problems in loading the program.

**Willingness to use original stories:** The story used is the original although it has been shortened. The inclusion of a transcript of the text would enable children to read the story as a book and read in a more comfortable position.

**Activities:** As well as the story four games are included and also information about Lewis Carroll, Sir John Tenniel and the production team. The repetition of hotspots on some pages may be acceptable to some one new to the format but for more experienced users leads to boredom.

**High production quality:** By using Shakespearean actors for the narration a clear and well characterised narration accompanies the text. The colour of Alice's hair comes as a surprise when one is used to the image of Alice being blonde. Her skin tone is also rather dark. The colour of the other characters is close to those in print although brighter. The use of music for the games and the map adds interest although it can irritate others if playing a game for a long time as it replays continuously.

**An understanding of when to use technique:** Technique has been used sensibly although the option to be able to click onto words would have been useful. As an adult using this version the introduction of worms to the page of Alice falling down
the hole was distracting so it will be interesting to discover the childrens' response to this.

A social activity: Only in a passive way by watching another user.

Provide options for multiplayer interactions: No facilities for this are included in the games

Allow settings for players of different abilities: Only on the games where it is possible to choose the level of play. As an adult playing the game there doesn’t really appear to be much purpose to the game. It should perhaps start more slowly to enable the player to become more familiar with it in order to gain a feeling of enjoyment rather than frustration. The highlighting of the text helps slower readers to find their place. The narration also enables the reader to watch the Animations whilst hearing the story so it can be used by younger readers.

Provide room for reuse, change, and growth: There is no facility for saving any game scores or saving a game in progress. The lack of hypertext links for the text means that the reader is unable to find out the meaning of any words or question the unusual spelling of some of them.

Provide several layers of complexity: The games have different levels of difficulty the player needing to complete a level before progressing in some and having a choice of levels in others. As an adult playing the game there doesn’t really appear to be much purpose to the game and it should perhaps start more slowly to enable the player to become more familiar with it in order to gain a feeling of enjoyment rather than frustration. It will be interesting to discover how the children react to the game.

Allow children to explore nooks and crannies: The hotspots on each screen of text enable the reader to explore the pictures.

Learning combined with entertainment features: There are many entertaining parts to the program. It is enjoyable and helps with reading and also familiarises children with a classic book

Play to a child’s imagination and engage the child’s sense of wonder: For children who are familiar with the story in hard copy format it does engage their
sense of wonder when the characters are seen to move and speak. The user can feel as though they are on a journey into Wonderland.

It would be interesting to compare the reactions of the research group to the introduction of the worms and the Duchess's Game. A comparison of these initial impressions will be made with the results of the evaluation.
CHAPTER 3
CHAPTER 3

3.0. The Investigation

The aim of this study is to evaluate Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, a children's classic on CD-ROM. In carrying out the study the answers to the following questions will be sought:

- Where would a product such as this be likely to be used?
- What is the children's understanding of and exposure to classic stories?
- What are the parental and child's expectations of a book in CD-ROM format?
- What books would parents and children like to have available in this format?
- Does this CD-ROM book match the suggested recommended traits for a successful product?
- What is considered to be a reasonable price for such a product?
- What are the user's opinions of the packaging of this product?
- Would there be a demand for such books to be available in libraries, and if so what would users be prepared to pay for such a service?

3.1. Method

3.1 i. Europress Software.

During the development of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Europress carried out an evaluation of the product with a group of families. This was called the Focus group and they were asked to try out each of the features of the CD-ROM and complete a questionnaire. (Samples of the questionnaires may be seen in the Appendix D page 138). As can be seen from the sample questionnaire it very much focused on the product and in particular the games. It did however act as a starting point for the development of a questionnaire for this project.
3.1ii. Questionnaire Design

Sample questionnaires are given in Appendix D page 138. The parents would be asked to complete theirs as the children were interviewed. The child's questionnaire was used as a guide for the interview. The two questionnaires are similar. The pre experience questionnaire would be to furnish some background information and the post experience questionnaire would be concerned mainly with evaluating the product in which the various aspects of the CD-ROM would be given a rating from 1 - 5 with 1 being poor and 5 excellent.

The decision was made to keep the question from the focus group about the type of computer that was owned as the company has to produce a product to meet a variety of computers needs. As this product is aimed at the CD-ROM market question 2 was included to determine if there was a CD-ROM player in the home. Question 3 would show what type of CD-ROM the children had experience of. To find out what influenced the children's knowledge of 'classical' story and also if they could distinguish a classic from other stories, question 4 was included. Question 5 would help in the development of a list of suggestions for future books. The post experience questionnaire is very much concerned with assessing the quality of what are considered to be the major components of a children's book on CD-ROM. It also seeks to find the answers to the questions raised in the aims.

3.1iii. The pilot

This was carried out on a family known to the researcher but who had no previous knowledge of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland on CD-ROM. The daughter is nine years old, in Y4 at school, and the father is a primary school teacher. Up until August 1994 they had lived in Hong Kong which is where she was born. Consequently she is a sophisticated user of computers and CD-ROMs, having always had access to a PC at home. They own a 486 and a 386 which are based in the office at home, but are available for her to use. She has a wide experience of books on CD-ROM, not only those designed for children, but also Encyclopaediae and dictionaries etc. The purpose of the pilot was to discover if there were any problems with the
questionnaires and also to give some indication of the length of time that would be required to carry out the test.

3.1iv. The refined questionnaire

At first consideration was given to dropping questions 1 and 2 as the people being contacted for the testing were from the company mailing list. However after speaking with them on the telephone the questions were kept. Question 15 was dropped from the child's questionnaire as it is difficult for younger children to have a reasonable concept of the value of money.

3.1v. The subjects

When people purchase Europress products they are asked to complete a registration card. This is returned to the company and the information provided by the purchaser stored in a database. This provided a mailing list of people who lived in close proximity to Loughborough University. It did not list the type of computers owned or whether the people owned CD-ROM players. From this list 16 people were contacted and invited to participate in the testing of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Eight replies were received of which six were interested in participating. To receive reasonable feedback it was decided that the testing group should consist of at least ten families so other families within the university were approached.

3.1vi. The Test

Before deciding what to use in the test the whole product was read and played several times. Each chapter was looked at carefully for the different aspects of its content: illustrations, animation, activities and use of text and narration. The four games were also examined.

After this evaluation, Chapter 1, Down the Rabbit hole was chosen as it had a variety of amount of text on the pages, used three Tenniel illustrations, a variety of animated characters and an assortment of click on hotspots for sound and action.
It was more difficult to decide upon the game as all four are different. As time for carrying out each test was not infinite the Duchess’s game was chosen as it combined fast moving action with animation.

Only a section of the CD-ROM book could be used because of the amount of time that it would take to carry out the use of the CD-ROM and to complete the questionnaires. It was not possible to give an exact time for each test as it would depend upon the children’s use of the program, but at least two hours was allowed for each session.

To participate in the testing it was decided to invite the families into the Department of Information and Library Studies at Loughborough University where a room was available which would provide a quieter and more controlled environment than may have been encountered if the testing had occurred in the families’ homes. The equipment available would also have made this a very difficult task to carry out.

For the test the CD-ROM was played on a 486 PC with SoundBlasterPro CD-ROM drive and SVGA monitor.

3.1vii. Procedure

Two questionnaires were used in the testing session, a pre experience questionnaire and a post experience questionnaire. Before starting the test the purpose for the testing was explained to the family. The first questionnaire was then completed. So that impressions would not be confused the children then used the computer to experience the first chapter and on completion began the second questionnaire as far as the question about the game. They then returned to the computer and tried the game. When they had had enough of this they returned to answering questions. At the end of the test, time was allowed for them to return to the computer if they so wished and continue to explore Alice if the parent(s) agreed. Whilst the children used the program the parents sat behind at a short distance so that they would be able to watch the computer but not interfere with the children using the mouse. As the amount of computer experience of the children was unknown at the outset the opening page, the map of Wonderland was used to ensure that the children were familiar with using a mouse. It also enabled them to become more comfortable at the
computer and settle themselves before beginning. Once the chapter started the children were allowed to use the program unaided. It was intended that there would be no prompting but as some children had had no experience of CD-ROMs and electronic books suggestions were made to them about the things they might like to try on the page. No instructions were given to the children about how to share. The same was true for when the children used the game.

As the children were being recorded on video it was possible to capture facial reactions, interaction both with the screen and each other (when there were two children) and conversation. This would provide evidence to answer some of the questions in section 3.0. As the children were being recorded in their interviews this tape would also pick up any comments made by the parents but not recorded on their questionnaires.

Once completed the videos were analysed using the suggested traits as criteria for evaluation. The tapes were listened to and any extra remarks added to the response sheets. Parental comments were also noted. The response to each question was then tabulated.
CHAPTER 4
CHAPTER 4

4.0 THE RESULTS

4.1 The Focus Group

The following is a selection of the results of a session carried out by Eu科普ess Software in March 1995 when they were developing the product. Only those that cover similar points as the study are used. It is useful to compare with some of the results in this study. Fig.4i shows the ages of the respondents.

![Focus Group](image)

**Fig.4i The Focus Group Participants**

As with the research group most children were in the 8 - 11 age bracket, the age group that this product is targeted at although no mention of age range is given on the
packaging. In this sample group however there were far more boys than girls participating and only one adult.

Quite a variety of computers are owned as can be seen from Table 4i. Most people owned PC compatibles with 486 processors. This can be compared with the research group details in Table 4ix.

Table 4i Computers owned by Focus Group participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of computer owned</th>
<th>Number of owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>486 SX 4MB</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megadrive</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486DX2 66MHZ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atari ST520</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM 286</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compaq Ressario 486</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amstrad</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calibra Swift 486SX 25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the question on ownership of a CD-ROM drive 10 people (only eight families) said no and 5 people said yes (only three families). There were also three families in the research group who had CD-ROM drives at home.(See Table 4x page68)

Four out of the twelve had not read Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland before. The following table is of Classic stories that they had read.
Table 4ii Classic Stories Read by the Focus Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classic Stories Read by Focus Group Participants</th>
<th>Number of people who have read it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narnia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asterix</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roald Dahl Collection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Island</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle Book</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walt Disney 101 Dalmatians</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Twist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1588 and All This</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Pan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from this list it would appear that there is a misconception of what a 'classic' really is as it also includes fairy stories and modern books. It also suggests that The Chronicles of Narnia is especially popular followed by fairy stories. This can be compared with the research group response in Fig. 4iv page 70.

In response to the question 'Which of them would you like to 'read' on your computer the following were quoted:
Table 4iii Books the Focus Group Would Like to Read on Computer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the Book</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asterix</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George’s Marvellous Medicine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narnia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle Book</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Island</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice in Wonderland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The B.F.G.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Curse of the Egyptian Mummy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Twist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson Crusoe</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again it can be seen that there is quite a variety of titles given. This can also be compared with the Research Group, (Table 4xiv, Figs. 4xx,4xxi 4xxii and 4xxiii pages 72, 101-103).

The Focus group was asked several questions about the games whereas the study concentrated on the Duchess’s Game. Seven members of the Focus group liked the Duchess’s game the most and two the least. When questioned on the difficulty of this game the following results in fig 4.ii occurred with the majority finding the game OK. A comparison can be made with the comments of the Research Group (section 4.5 vi page92)

![Difficulty level of playing the Duchess's Game](image)

Fig 4ii Focus Group Reaction to the Duchess’s Game.

57
4.2 The Pilot Group

Having come from Hong Kong they have quite a library of CD-ROMs. Five came as a bundle with the Sound Blaster. They have three of the Broderbund stories on one CD. This family had more experience of CD-ROMs than any of the families in the Research Group. The girl found it hard to think of ‘classic’ stories and in fact did not mention having read any. She had seen several on video. The father when responding to questions about the children’s experience of ‘classic’ story was considering both of his children. The result of these questions can be seen in Table 4iv.

When asked for suggestions of stories for CD-ROM format the girl was particularly forthcoming, even offering reasons for what would in her opinion be good for such a format. The particular question and response is quoted here:

"Which stories would you like to have in CD-ROM format?

The Lion King

The Railway Children, the train blowing up at the birthday party, the landslide would be good on the computer.

The Secret Garden - the beginning in India would be good with the fire and the different times in the garden and when she opens the door for the first time could be magical."

The father responded to this question by suggesting the following titles:

Robinson Crusoe

Treasure Island

The Railway Children

Toad of Toad Hall - The Wind in the Willows
Table 4iv The Pilot Family and Classic Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What classic stories have you/your children read?</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robinson Crusoe</td>
<td>Willard Price, African Adventure, The Fib and Other Stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What classic stories have you/your children seen on TV?</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Secret Garden, Black Beauty</td>
<td>Pirates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What classic stories have you/your children seen on video?</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What classic stories have you/your children seen at the cinema?</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Lion King</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question about expectations of a what a CD-ROM story would include elicited the response shown in Table 4v.

Table 4v Pilot Family Expectations of a CD-ROM Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations of a CD-ROM story</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactive elements</td>
<td>Games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprises</td>
<td>Colour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Not too much</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain close to the original</td>
<td>Highlighted text</td>
<td>Things to click onto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No pauses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be seen that these expectations are similar to those of the research group. (See Table 4xiii)

The Pilot family were the only ones in the study to respond to the question on how they used CD-ROM books. The daughter said that she did not use the books often (partly because according to her mother she has lost interest in using the computer), but when
she did she would go all the way through each time and wished that there were more. The father uses them in school with groups of children as a reading aid and also to stimulate imagination.

After using the CD-ROM they came up with the following ratings shown in Table 4vi. The scale used was 1 to 5 with 1 standing for poor and 5 for excellent.

Table 4vi Pilot Family Quality Ratings For ‘Alice’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate the quality of:</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Narration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Text</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Illustrations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Animations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Activities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Game</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This would suggest that the activities were the least satisfactory aspect of the CD-ROM book. Overall they were well satisfied by the chapter that they used. In fact once the trial was over the daughter returned to the program and stayed with it until she had read it all and played all of the games.

Neither of them thought that it was necessary to keep the original illustrations. Their responses were:

Father: No not necessarily- the illustrations at the time were from that illustrator

They should not go over board and introduce Scifi

They should keep to the period that the story is set in

Daughter: No, I would expect more life like pictures

Table 4vii shows their response to the questions about the benefits and disadvantages of a CD-ROM book.
Table 4vii Pilot Family Benefits and Disadvantages of a CD-ROM Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of a CD-ROM book</th>
<th>Pilot parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspire children to read the classics</td>
<td>Able to do more with one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase children's interest in reading</td>
<td>videos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantages of a CD-ROM book</th>
<th>Children may only listen and not read</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need an option to switch the narration off but keep sound effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The father's comments deal with the educational value of the CD-ROM book whilst the child's with the content. This should be compared with the responses of the research group which can be seen in Tables 4xvi and 4xvii pages 90 and 92.

After experiencing the CD-ROM the list of suggested titles for other books was extended by the father whilst the daughter added no new ones.

Table 4viii Pilot Family suggested titles for other CD-ROM Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested titles for other CD-ROM books</th>
<th>Pilot Parent</th>
<th>Pilot Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toad of Toad Hall/The Wind in the Willows</td>
<td>The Secret Garden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson Crusoe</td>
<td>The Lion King</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Island</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapped</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Railway Children</td>
<td>The Railway Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Beauty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Carol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Twist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The father considered £20 to be a fair price for a CD-ROM book, commenting that they were much cheaper in Hong Kong because they were tax free over there. He also
thought that the packaging was too big for such a product, adding that he objected to so much padding, giving a score of 2 for the quality. The daughter however gave it a score of 5 as she thought, “It’s good because it looks like a real book and the inside looks like the screen.” This is a similar comment to that made by eleven children in the research group.

Both would like to be able to borrow CD-ROM books from the library the father being prepared to pay £1 a week for this service.

The father made the following further comments:

CD-ROM books would be useful for schools - should really target that market as they would be invaluable

It is an excellent idea - books on CD-ROM are great for kids

There should be an inclusion of a transcript of the text as some children would probably like to read it as a book after using the CD.

4.3i. The Research Group Families

The following information was gleaned from conversations with the parent/s before and after the experience with the CD-ROM. The only information asked for on the questionnaire was the ages of the children.

♦ Family 1

This was a family of four, the two parents, a girl aged 11 and a boy aged 8. Father used to work outdoors laying Astro turf, in fact he laid the Astro turf at Loughborough University. He was made redundant and after 8 months unemployment now has a job pasting boxes in-doors at a factory. He admitted that he has no knowledge of computers, is a passive watcher when the children use their computers but is very keen on their use and appreciates the educational value of the children having experience of computers. He is not happy with the abundance of games of a violent nature that are at present on the
market. Mother assists at her children's primary school. She is quite knowledgeable regarding computers and this is where her assistance is used in school.

Father was not confident in completing the questionnaire and relied upon his wife for help in completing the questions, even asking for explanation of some of the terms used e.g. 'text'.

The girl was very confident from the beginning and is an experienced user of computers. Her brother was rather quiet at the beginning but soon became more at ease with the situation. The girl is an avid reader but the boy does not have much interest in books and reading and according to his mother is slower at reading.

♦ Family 2

Two members of this family participated in the test, the father and a son aged 7. The son is a bright and quiet boy. He has just finished in year 2 at school and has a reading age of 11+ being level 3-4 of the National Curriculum. As he was on his own using the CD-ROM he was not keen to investigate for hotspots and needed prompting or to be told of areas to try so that he would not miss out on that aspect. He was very keen on listening to and reading the story so it was difficult to decide how much prompting to give. When he had come to the end of the first page he clicked on the 'map' icon rather on the 'click' icon so the chapter had to be restarted. At the end of the session he returned to the computer and chose to continue with the story rather than try any of the other games. His father decided to go to town to buy a copy for home use.

♦ Family 3

Three members of this family attended the test, mother and the two children, a girl aged 10 and a boy aged 6. The daughter was a quiet and quite confident girl who is quite a good reader. Her brother was very hyperactive with a short attention span. He was only concerned about getting onto a computer to play games. His reading age is that of a four year old. They only have a very old computer, a Spectrum, at home that plays tapes. Mother thought that with the daughter going into secondary school the time will come
when they will need to upgrade their computer but are holding back whilst all that the son sees the computer as, is as being a games machine. He is in the same school year as the previous boy. Both children have limited experience of using a mouse.

♦ Family 4

Again this consisted of mother and the two children, a girl aged 9 and a boy, aged 8. Both children looked quite tired when they arrived as they had had a very busy day at school. The boy was very confident and talkative. There was a lot of competition between the children and at home they are always going on at each other. Both are at private schools and are readers.

♦ Family 5

Mother attended the session accompanied by her two sons, one aged 11 and the other aged 9. Mother is a school librarian in a 10 to 14 years school. She spends part of her time working in the library with children who are poor readers. The older boy prefers to read non-fiction books but the younger is a keen reader of both fiction and non fiction. Both were keen to participate in the test.

♦ Family 6

Again this family consisted of mother and the two children, a girl aged 8 and a boy aged 11. Both children are avid readers. The girl although quite young is a free reader at school. The boy has just finished in Primary school and the girl is in Y3 going into Y4 in September.

♦ Family 7

This family consisted of one girl aged 11 and her mother. The girl has just finished in Primary school she is a keen reader. She was very quiet and needed encouragement to answer questions or offer comments.
• Family 8
The oldest child to take part in the test was a member of this family. He was aged 13 and was accompanied by his mother and brother aged 10. The mother is a librarian in the University library. The older boy is going into Y9 and an avid reader, the younger boy is a capable but reluctant reader. He is going into Y6 in September.

• Family 9
Although there are two children in this family only one daughter, aged 10 attended the test with her mother. The daughter was quite quiet at the beginning but soon relaxed. She is an able reader and has experience of using computers. She has an older sister who did not take part in the experiment. She is going into Y6 in September

• Family 10
This family consisted of father and his daughter aged 8 and a friend of the daughter who was going to be 8 on July 30th. Neither girl was familiar with the use of the mouse. Father reported that his daughter was not keen on using the computer at all but her brother who is six is much more familiar with the use of a computer. His daughter’s reading age is on a par with her chronological age. He said that his daughter’s friend had even less experience of a computer than his daughter.
Fig. 4iii The Age and Gender of the Research Group Children

Fig. 4iii shows the distribution of ages and gender of the children who participated. As can be seen most fell within the 8 - 11 age bracket which is similar to the focus group. Nine boys and eight girls took part in the activities, a more balanced gender grouping than in the focus group. The question of age range was frequently mentioned by parents in the research group.

4.4 The Research Group Pre Experience Questionnaire

4.4i. Computer and CD-ROM Experience

It can be seen from the Table 4ix that, as with the focus group, a variety of computers is owned. Again most are PC compatibles with 486 processors. The owner of the Spectrum said that she was not keen to upgrade as her son, aged 7, was “mad on” Nintendo games. She did not want to encourage the use of the computer for games especially as they tend to be violent. She realised that the time would come when an upgrade would be necessary as it became more and more difficult to acquire programs. Others admitted that they were looking to upgrade by either buying a more powerful computer or adding a CD-ROM drive but that it was difficult to know what to buy as there was always something new coming onto the market. When to buy was also a problem as there were
so many different offers and also with new items coming onto the market that were expensive, was it better to wait for the price to fall?

Table 4ix Computers Owned by the Research Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Computer Owned</th>
<th>Number of Owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amiga 1200</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megadrive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486 DX11/66</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST 6075p</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amstrad PC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dell PC 486</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable 486 SX25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4x shows the results of the response to the questions about ownership and use of CD-ROM drives. It can be seen from this that only three families own a CD-ROM drive. Nine of the children have experience of a CD-ROM drive at school but as yet this is a piece of equipment that has not yet reached all schools. In some schools it has restricted access, being either in the library or in use by only certain classes within the school. As the daughter in family three said, "We have a CD-ROM at school but I don’t think my brother has had a go yet." Her brother was at that point still in the infants school. Most of the children who had used the CD-ROM had used it in conjunction with project work, either using an encyclopaedia, Encarta being the most popular, or a program dedicated to a particular subject such as Bodyworks. (See table 4xi)
Table 4x Research Group Experience of CD-ROM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CD-ROM Experience</th>
<th>Research Group</th>
<th>Research Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous use of CD-ROM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No:</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of CD-ROM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No:</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4xi CD-ROMs Owned by the Research Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CD-ROMs owned</th>
<th>Research Group</th>
<th>Research Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur's Teacher Trouble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encarta</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Atlas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samplers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinemania</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST Works</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Artist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Soft Golf</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD-ROMs used by children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur's Teacher Trouble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandma and Me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tortoise and the Hare</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encarta</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Atlas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim City</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodyworks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Body</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Artist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Soft Golf</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D Dinosaurs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous Creatures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIFA Soccer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grolier Encyclopaedia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic Bus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stowaway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4ii. Classic Stories The Children Have Read

By asking this question of both parents and children it was anticipated that the parents would recall titles that the children could not remember. In fact whilst asking this question of the children, the parents contributed to the answers so there was some discussion between them. It was also hoped to show the child’s understanding of the word classic and whether they could identify them. Only the youngest children needed an explanation of this term with several of the other children giving an explanation when asked if they knew what it meant. All children took their time in answering the question as they wanted to be certain that they were thinking of correct titles. However it still became a mixture of suggestions as it was difficult to decide if fairy stories were classics or not, after all they are stories which were written a long time ago.
Fig. 4iv Classic Stories That the Research Group Children Have Read

70
Fig 4iv shows the books that the children gave in response to this question. It was even suggested that Roald Dahl stories should become classics. Enid Blyton was given with the qualification that they were not really classic stories.

The information provided can be looked at in more detail. Fig 4v gives the details of the most read classics. On this chart individually mentioned books from the Narnia series, The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe and Prince Caspian have been included as part of that series. As can be seen there are eight that are more popular than others with Winnie the Pooh being the most read book. Alice in Wonderland was more popular with the girls. One parent even commented “I would not buy Alice in Wonderland for my boys.” Winnie the Pooh and Treasure Island were more popular with the boys. In some cases this book had been read to the children when they were younger and non readers.

![The Most Read Classic Stories](image)

Fig.4v The most read classic books by the Research Group Children
Fig. 4vi Modern Stories Read by the Children

Of the modern books cited it can be seen that Roald Dahl is an extremely popular author. Time will tell if he becomes considered as a classic author. For Fig. 4vi the individual Enid Blyton and Roald Dahl titles mentioned have been included under the name of the authors. When the results of this chart are considered alongside the titles mentioned as having been seen on either television, video or at the cinema the influence of Walt Disney productions upon children’s knowledge of classics is raised. It would also be interesting to know whether the children read the stories before viewing or as a result of having seen the story.

If these results are compared with the Focus group Table 4ii it will be seen that the Narnia stories, treasure Island, Jungle Book, Cinderella and Snow White are common to both groups.

The following table 4xii shows the fairy stories that were mentioned by the children as classic stories that they had read.
Table 4xii Fairy Stories Included by the Research Group Children as Classics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairy stories the children have read</th>
<th>Research Group Parents</th>
<th>Research Group Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping Beauty</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack and the Beanstalk</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty and the Beast</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.iii. Classic Stories The Children Have Seen On Television

The response to the question about which stories had been seen on television very much reflected the age of the children and the amount of viewing of television that they did. On the whole the younger the children were, the fewer dramatisations had been seen. Most had seen the most recent productions. Fig. 4viii lists all the titles given as classic stories seen on television. It will be noted that it includes two modern titles. The Witches and The Snowman. The Return of the Psammead is also of some interest.

---

1 E. Nesbit wrote serialised stories for The Strand, an illustrated monthly magazine c. 1890's - 1910's. In 1902 she was asked to produce a new serial which was The Psammead. This later became called Five Children and It when she developed the serial into a book. The present series on television Return of the Psammead is a follow up to the dramatisation of Five Children and It.
Fig. 4viii Classic Stories the Research Group Children Have Seen on Television
Fig. 4viii The most popular classic stories seen by the research group children on television

This chart shows the most watched children's classics on television. The age of the children is not shown and the results are inconclusive as it was a small sample and the age of the children would reflect whether they were old enough to have seen some of the programmes. It would also depend upon their memories as well.

4.4iv. Classic Stories The Children Have Seen On Video

The response given to the question 'What classic stories have you seen on video' can be seen in figs. 4ix and 4x. They are shown in this way as they fall into two groups. Looking at figs. 4ix and 4x it could be assumed that the girls have seen more videos than the boys but in fact it could mean that the boys were clearer in their understanding of the term 'classic'. They may well have watched these videos as well but did not mention them as the question asked for classic stories. The two stories mentioned by the boys could be considered by some as classics and in fact Pinnocchio is included in Appendix C, the list of classics. Hook and Jungle Book were particularly popular with the boys and Beauty and the Beast popular with the girls. It
must be remembered that this is only a sample group and the results can only be used as a suggestion. Video was a far more popular medium in which to view stories.

![Classic Stories seen on Video](image)

Fig. 4ix Classic Stories the Children Have Seen on Video
Fig. 4x Other Stories Seen by the Children on Video

4.4v. Classic Stories The Children Have Seen At The Cinema

Fig. 4xii identifies the films seen by the children at the cinema. Again the age of the children affects the list as they may have been too young to have seen some of them when they were on release.
Fig. 4xi Classic Stories Seen by the Children at the Cinema

It can be seen from the chart above that more children have seen the Secret Garden than any other film mentioned by the group. It would also suggest that girls have seen more films than boys. There are many factors that affect these results. These include the age of the children; they may be too young to have seen them when they were on release, the cinema going habits of the families; some children only go occasionally for a treat, others attend Saturday Cinema clubs on a regular basis, the cost of trips to the cinema and the proximity of cinemas to the family home.

4.4vi. Expectations of a CD-ROM Book

The response to this question very much depended on the person’s experience of CD-ROMs and computer programs. Three parents did not respond and two children had no real comments to make without any suggestions first being made to them.
It can be seen from Table 4xiii that ten people expected to find the story there; 7 children and 3 adults; twelve people expected graphics/pictures; 7 adults and 5 children and more children expected to find games there than adults, 3 children and 1 parent. If compared with the list of characteristics mentioned in Appendix B page 131 it will be seen that they are quite similar.

4.4vii. Suggestions For Other Titles

As the research group was a small sample group the response to this question is inconclusive. (Table 4xiv) Several people when asked this question after viewing the CD-ROM gave an answer or added more titles, so this will be looked at in more detail later on. Several gave titles of books they had read and enjoyed recently. The results shown on Table 4xiv can be compared with the Focus group Table 4iii page 57. Again it can be seen that the Narnia stories are common to both groups as is Jungle Book, Treasure Island and Winnie the Pooh.
Table 4xiv Research Group Suggestions for Other Titles for a CD-ROM Book - Pre-Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions for other titles pre-experience</th>
<th>Research Group Parents</th>
<th>Research Group Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aladdin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle Book</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Island</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey to the Centre of the Earth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Famous Five Stories</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty and the Beast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chronicles of Narnia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion King</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only You Can Save Mankind</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting Fantasy</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Owl Who was Afraid of the Dark</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Otter Who Wanted to Know</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roald Dahl Stories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Adrian Mole Books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goonies Eyes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 101 Dalmatians</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Pan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping Beauty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just So Stories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Beauty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of the Worlds</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4viii. Experience of CD-ROM Books

Only one parent and child, Family 2, had had any real previous experience of a CD-ROM book (Living Books). Family 9 had had a demonstration of one previously, (Cinderella). This has implications for the marketing of the product.

4.5 The Research Group Post Experience Questionnaire

4.5i. The Narration

![Quality of the Narration](image)

Fig.4 xii Scores for the Quality of the Narration

The people who took part in this study were more than satisfied with the quality of the narration with no low scores being given. A total of thirteen people gave maximum points to this aspect. It is obviously a successful feature of the CD-ROM. Parents made the following positive remarks:

Mother family 1: The narration was very good and could be good for younger children

Father family 2: Captures the story of Alice very well indeed

Mother family 3: Good voices, made it interesting
Mother family 4: nice to hear English voices

Mother family 5: Clearly spoken in English not American

Mother family 8: very clear developed characters

From this it can be seen that the decision to use professional English actors for the narration was a wise one.

Positive comments from the children include:

age 11: clearly read out so you could watch the pictures, you didn’t have to read it for yourself

age 7: the way he changed voices was particularly good

age 10: I think it was good it sounds like it gets you into the mood of the story

age 8: I thought it really good, not like normal speaking, it sounded different

age 13: clear not fast

age 10: If you are 6 or 7 years old you can sit and listen and it will help you read

age 7: I liked the way Alice talked

age 8: I thought it put quite a bit of expression in it, I liked the way Alice talked as well, very clear

Two children said it was good

Two of the children liked the fact that you could sit and listen to the story at the same time as following the words. The children also commented favourably on the expression of the narrators.
Critical comments include:

Mother family 4: Alice does not sound like a child.

Mother family 6: slow moving for older children

and from a child:

age 9: I don't like having the narration

The comment from the mother about the slowness of the narration is contrary to the comment of the thirteen year old who commented favourably on the slowness. Two of the children liked the way in which Alice is spoke. It was also pointed out that it was possible to switch the narration off by turning down the volume of the CD-ROM speakers. However if one did this then the sound effects would not be heard.

4.5ii. The Text

![Quality of the Text](image)

Fig.4xiii Scores for the Quality of the Text

This was another successful aspect of the CD-ROM. Eighteen people gave a score of 4. The score of 2 was given by a mother who thought that there was too much text on a screen. There was actually some discussion of this aspect as well as the benefits of the highlighting.
Parental comments included:

Father family 2: Perhaps too much text on a page

Mother family 3: Often too long, yellow highlighting good for poor readers

Mother family 4: Could be a bit bigger, is it abridged?

Mother family 5: Easy to follow because of the highlighting

Mother family 6: In keeping with the original and a reasonable size of text for junior readers. Good idea to have a marker for the text.

Mother family 8: Easy to read, liked the highlighting of text being read. Sometimes a little too much text

Mother family 9: Maybe easier to read (for younger children) if you used helvetica type text

The following comments about the highlighting were made by the children:

age 6: it had the colour so you could soon find your place again

age 9: without yellow part you wouldn’t know your place

age 11: easy to understand with yellow highlight

age 11: liked the highlighting, easier to read and follow

yellow a good idea if you get lost or distracted by something

you’ll know where you are because of the yellow

age 8: yellow quite good because it showed you what they were talking about

age 7: The yellow was quite good because if you got lost.

age 8: yellow good so if you got a bit lost would find your place

Highlighting was a popular feature with the children.
When talking about the amount of text on a screen some of the comments from the children were:

age 7: about the right amount on a page

age 10: sometimes a little boring, should be in shorter pieces, fewer sentences together the text should be shorter, too much on a page

age 8: there was too much writing like falling down the well.

age 9: very good, about the right amount of words on a screen,

age 11: amount of text OK

age 10: quite a lot on some pages, too much on falling down the tunnel

age 8: The amount was quite good but there was a bit too much on the page falling through the tunnel, they should shorten it. Other pages were quite good.

Even the children had mixed views about the amount of text, however it was the younger children who thought there was too much on some of the pages.

The children also commented on the words, either their difficulty or the style in which they were written, a feature commented upon by one of the parents.

age 8: some words hard to read

age 11: sometimes hard to read - some of the letters were I don’t know, were funny, a little difficult

age 9: size of writing about right

age 7: quite easy to read,

age 6: I’m not very good at reading but I tried

age 11: bit small for little ones - little ones would probably rather listen than read
age 13: clear, a good style, highlighted

age 10: Really good I could read it clearly liked highlighting

age 7: It was quite clear to see

age 8: biggish, easy to see.

One child even said that you should be able to click upon a word to find out more about it.

4.5iii. The Illustrations

![Quality of the Illustrations chart]

Fig. 4xiv Scores for the Quality of the Illustrations

This chart shows that this was also a successful aspect of the CD-ROM. The majority of people were more than satisfied with the quality of the illustrations. The score of 2 was given by the mother who thought that they could be more colourful.

Parental comments included:

- Father family 2: Classic illustrations, in keeping with the originals
- Mother family 3: some of them rather dark Could be more colourful
Mother family 4: liked the colouring but could have had more different pictures with the text

Mother family 5: could have more detail

Mother family 6: quite good at maintaining interest

Mother family 9: Illustrations were not over animated and stayed with the story as you imagined it to be ‘old pictures’

These comments do give an indication of features of illustrations to be looked at when producing future books.

The children’s comments included the following:

age 8: I liked the way they spoke and the mouse went, that’s my favourite

age 11: I loved the way they were drawn - the way everything moved, they were really realistic

age 10: they look very real

age 6: they looked good, boring having two or three pages looking the same

age 9: some things blurred

age 11: writing should be smaller so they could be larger weren’t very colourful

age 9: should be more colourful

age 8: not naff but really - pretty - could have added more pictures as not too many to the chapter like the one with just 4 doors and a table that’s all

age 13: some pictures were a bit fuzzy especially the backgrounds in particular

age 7: They were bright, I liked that, very good,
age 8: They were a bit blurry, they were quite big

These comments reflect those of the parents, quite an assortment referring to colour, clarity and variety. There are a variety of reasons to explain the blurring and fuzziness. These include the quality and cleanliness of the monitor screen, a person’s eyesight and their proximity to the screen. It could also be due to the quality of the reproduction of the illustrations within the program design.

4.5iv. The Animations

![Quality of the Animation](image)

Fig. 4xv Scores for the Quality of the Animations.

Yet another successful feature of the CD-ROM with 23 people giving a score of 5. The score of two was given by the boy in the second family who thought that they “move slowly, they should make it go a little quicker”. He was the boy who was more interested in reading the story than investigating further on the screen. The parents had favourable and critical comments to make:

Mother family 1: This was very good and kept the interest going

Father family 2: could be rather repetitive

Mother family 4: not enough to do, Alice should have cried when she was “clicked”

Mother family 5: The animation was a little wooden
Mother family 6: a little wooden for some of the characters I find the worm "reproducing" good.

Mother family 8: very good and amusing

Mother family 9: Animations and the screens were excellent quality

Quite a variety of comments covering several aspects, such as repetition, novelty items and fun factor. This gives an indication of items to be considered in designing a CD-ROM book.

The children's comments were similar:

age 11: real - realistic - moved they way they would move, realistic, moving how a mouse would move. That’s the thing about it, it is wonderland Alice in Wonderland

age 7: they move slowly, make it go a little quicker,

age 6: I didn’t like the moving

age 8: I liked it

age 9: looked like walking on heels

age 11: quite a lot of movement, more movement, more variety picture didn’t change too often so there should have been more

age 9: should have moved more, background stayed still only Alice moved

age 11: I didn’t like the scrolling (referring to Alice’s fall) would have been better to change each time

age 8: it was quite good when they fell down, looked as though falling

age 11: enjoyed that just the way they moved

age 13: It didn’t slow down, lots of moving

age 10: when she is small you can’t see her moving she’s so small. It’s good because you see the legs moving really well
age 8: looked like Alice was really moving

age 7: I liked the noises. Alice did what they said in the story, noises
sometimes funny when people came out and you saw their heads

Five of the children said that it was good.

4.5v. The Activities

![Quality of the Activities](image)

Fig.4xvi Scores for the Quality of the Activities

This is one of the less successful aspects of the CD-ROM although it can be
considered to be satisfactory as most of the scores were 3 or 4. A lot of constructive
criticism was offered. Particularly successful was the use of animals as extras to the
original story. The sounds were also considered to be amusing.

Parental comments:

Mother family 1: The activities on the doors could have changed as the
story page changed

Father family 2: could be repetitive because of the identical illustrations,
although the sounds were different

Mother family 3: good to start with but became boring towards the end

90
Mother family 4: not sufficiently interesting, they would do it only once, if they went back to the story they wouldn’t click on.

Mother family 5: There could be more to do on the screen

Mother family 6: Lacked interest for older children

Mother family 8: again good and amusing perhaps a little repetitive

Mother family 9: Could be a little more inventive with the doors

Father family 10 once the children have done the activities once they probably wouldn’t bother with them again The fun for the children was finding them. They are OK for added fun

Most thought that the activities were lacking in variety, were repetitive and lacked interest towards the end of the chapter. Some of the children agreed with these comments.

Children agreeing with parents:

age 10 Every time you turn a page it gets a bit boring you turn a page and you have the same page three or four times and click on some things and they are the same things

age 8: takes quite long to get onto actual thing

age 9: not all things had clicking

age 11: should have been a lot more because other CDs have a lot more quite poor

age 9: could have been better weren’t that many things to click on more things to click

age 11: not enough should have made them more exciting, more sound

age 8: could be more things as there weren’t many
Other comments from the children included the following:

age 8: I liked the way they kind of popped out it made it funny

age 11: I liked the way they were hidden so you didn’t know where to press so you had to keep on guessing

age 6: Annoying, didn’t like having the noises

age 10: hard to find, liked it, funny like when you click on the worm

age 13: They were good, quite funny had to look around for them

age 10: there was enough variety, easy to find, really good because you could click and get noises and animals

age 8: They were very good I liked the noises, very good noises sounded kind of real

age 7: noises were sometimes funny, and when people came out you sometimes saw their head.

4.5 vi. The Game

![Quality of the Duchess's Game](image)

Fig. 4xvii Scores for the Quality of the Duchess’s Game.
These results would tend to suggest that the inclusion of games as an addition to the story is a successful idea. It was an expected aspect of the CD-ROM by four people. The range of points allocated is wide and is the only feature to receive a score of 1, which was given by three people. Attitudes to the game were varied depending on the age of the children and the amount of computer experience that they had had.

Children’s comments:

age 6: good it was a bit hard

age 7: not very good - too many things trying to get you and quite hard to dodge them be better not putting lots of things in one place

age 7: when they came out to get you good

age 8: very good hard to get

age 8: really need to know how to use the buttons and you have to get used to moving fast need to get used to being busy It’s OK

age 8 : hard to - the buttons - looking at the screen

age 8: It was quite good for young children as it is challenging it would be nice if you could have gone under the table

age 9: too many cups and saucers come out at the same time the pig tables blocking

age 9: your opponents came out in to big bunches the idea of the pig is a bit awful

age 10: quite good and funny, the dishes and pig, quite hard so many dishes and you got trapped all the time

age 10: enjoyed it. graphics very good, if you pressed a button really quickly will change, easy to play

age 10: I thought that was quite hard. Too hard because food - don’t get enough and bounces off every where and you have to get it.
again. too many plates and saucers I don’t think there should be a pig as it moves too fast

age 11: liked to move fast and watch where going I think it was a really exciting game. fast moving

age 11: graphics were sad, move to fast too should be able to use a mouse

age 11: like the idea - could be more exciting with better graphics it’s a bit plain 2 player game would be nice

age 11: liked the story better difficult to shoot as didn’t know the direction

age 13: It was good it would make older people like teenagers want to use it more good laugh, be better with a joystick

It can be seen from these comments that the concept of the game was thought to be good but was hard to play because of the speed required, the number of cups and saucers being too many and also it was difficult to fire the fruit in the correct direction. There were mixed feelings about the graphics.

The parents made the following comments:

Mother family 3: good interesting animation, unusual idea

Mother family 4: music would become annoying after a while

Mother family 5: Difficult to control the action I didn’t really understand the object of the game

Mother family 6: quite difficult The use of different levels to progress through

Mother family 7: not very clear

Mother family 8: children seemed to really enjoy it

Mother family 9: Good to break the chapters up with a game

These comments are inconclusive as there are so few and are different in their content. The majority of the Focus group found this game OK with two finding it
easy to play and two finding it hard. The comments by the research group would suggest that more of them found it difficult to play.

4.5vii. The Packaging

![Quality of the Packaging](image)

**Fig. 4xviii Scores for the Quality of the Packaging**

The children were more favourable towards the packaging than the parents, being more critical because it is they who pay for the product. In general the design has been successful, low marks being awarded for the choice of materials used.

Praiseworthy comments were:

Mother family 1: makes it look interesting

Father family 2: Maintains the classic feel of the story

Mother family 3: good idea to make it look like a book

age 11: formed like a book and open is like the introduction to the book

the back is all about it
age 8: Picture on the front is good and the side is good because it looks like a book

age 7: the cover makes it look like a book

age 10: it's good supposed to be a story and like a bookcase the only thing that spoils it, looks quite old but has CD thingy (the logo) up there

age 9: Looks like a book

age 8: it's got the page things on the side to make it look like a book

age 9: Trying to make it like a book, looks like a book

age 8: looks like a book open it up and you get the map of all the things

age 11: like a book a good idea

age 13: good let's you know it is a book

age 10: I like the lines on the side are like a book

age 10: it's got lots of protection, inside page about the CD, tells you information that is good

age 7: liked the lines to make it look like a book

age 8: looks a bit like a book which is what it is meant to be

Adverse comments included:

Mother family 4: mixture of Tenniel and computer image is odd to me

Mother family 5: Too large. it doesn’t need to look like a book

Mother family 8: picture on the front is a bit “Disneyish”

Mother family 9: The box is OK. I do not like polystyrene - especially with children Could cardboard not be used
age 11: too bulky adds to the cost, should have just a plastic cover if it was to go through the post it would cost more a plastic cover would last longer than a box

age 11: a proper solid plastic container like audio CD-ROMs better protection

It would appear that the decision to design the packaging to look like a book was a good idea. Concern was raised by both adults and children about the materials used for the packaging and the subject of cost was raised, not only by this group but also by the Pilot parent.

4.5 viii. Original Illustrations

Fig 4xix Research Groups Response to Keeping the Original Illustrations

The majority of people thought that it was a good idea to keep the original illustrations.

Comments included:

    age 11 good idea because already know the story they should make more like this
age 11: It depends on the age group might be boring for young ones for older it would be nice to have the original

age 11: keep some of the old and have some new if you’ve already read the book you know what they are like

Mother family 8: not necessarily, good to bring classics up to date to appeal to new generations of children

age 13: new ones if you have already read the book want to see new ones to see how different people draw them

Age 7: expect to have new pictures because it is a new version of the book

age 8: may change a little to make more interesting

age 8: have the original and few extras

Opinions are mixed on the question of whether to update the illustrations.

4.5ix. Price Of The Product

This question was only asked of the parents as they are the users who in general do the purchasing.

Table 4xv Suggested Fair Price for a CD-ROM Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Amount</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10 - £15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£15 - £20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£20 - £25</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The size of the sample means that the results of this question can only be indicative with some parents being prepared to pay £25 and others only £10. It very much
depends on the income of the family and would need further investigation. £15 would appear to possibly be the more acceptable price.

4.5x. Benefits of a CD-ROM Book

Table 4xvi Benefits of a CD-ROM Book - Research Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of a CD-ROM Book</th>
<th>Research Parents</th>
<th>Research Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourages the child to read</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased entertainment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can listen and follow the text</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking book</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuade children to read the (hard copy) book</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children absorb the story better</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps children’s attention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can tackle more difficult books on their own</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children learn the classics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarises children in the use of a computer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn from it</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use mouse to follow the words</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children enjoy using computers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The parents' comments were very much concerned with the educational benefits of a CD-ROM book as can be seen from Table 4xix. The children also said that they could learn from using them. Other comments made by the children match some of the criteria listed in Appendix B, animation and fun being considered important aspects.
4.5xi. Disadvantages Of A CD-ROM Book

Table 4xvii Disadvantages of a CD-ROM Book - Research Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantages of a CD-ROM Book</th>
<th>Research Parents</th>
<th>Research Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of CD-ROM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not easy to take to bath/bed to read</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need a CD-ROM drive</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need a computer capable of running one</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s good to read books (hard copy)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to achieve interest for wide age range</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations not as good as a real book</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow moving</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children may not read the text</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauses when turning the pages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to move backwards and forwards</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t carry it around with you</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t turn the pages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the disadvantages identified are related to the equipment required to play a CD-ROM Book, seven people commented upon the need for a CD-ROM drive. Eight comments were made about the content of the CD-ROM itself. Other comments were related to the physical handling of the product, e.g. an 8 year old said ‘can’t read in bed, can’t take a computer on holiday’.

4.5xii. Availability Of CD-ROM Books In A Library

Everybody in this study who was asked this question responded in the affirmative with the exception of one boy who suggested that there should be “a separate place - a CD store to replace the library like a video shop with computers to play them or can rent them to play at home if you have a CD-ROM player”.

100
4.5xiii. Suggested Price Of Library Service

Table 4xviii Suggested Price for a Library Service - Research Group Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested cost of loan</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£1 per week</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1 - £2 per loan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3 per time for a week</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1 daily rate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upto £2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1 per loan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample group was too small for any recommendations to be made as to how much to charge for the service. As Table 4xx1 shows, a variety of suggestions have been made.

4.5xiv. Suggestions For Other Titles

As can be seen from Figs 4xxiii, 4xxiv, 4xv and 4xvi the list of suggestions is large. It can be broken into categories, Classics, Modern Stories, Stories from films, and Fairy stories. The results of this can be seen on these charts.

![Classic Stories to put on CD ROM](image)

Fig:4xx Suggestions for Classic stories on CD-ROM
The Chronicles of Narnia on Table 4xviii includes separate mentions made of The lion the Witch and the Wardrobe. If the results are compared with Table 4xiv it can be seen that the common titles are again Narnia stories, Treasure Island, Jungle Book and Winnie the Pooh.

![Modern Stories to Put onto CD-ROM](image)

Fig. 4xxi Modern Stories to put onto CD-ROM.

The Roald Dahl books include separate mentions made of The Twits, The Witches and James and the Giant Peach.
Fig 4xxii Stories from films to put onto CD-ROM

Fig. 4xxiii Suggestions for Fairy stories to be put on CD-ROM.
These charts can only act as a guide of suggestions as the sample is too small. When all the information about children and stories is put together with the suggestions and also the information from the Young Telegraph 100 popular titles, Appendix C page 134, the results on Table 4xxii occur. From this it can be seen that the following are popular stories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Stories the children have read</th>
<th>Stories the children have seen on TV.</th>
<th>Stories the children have seen on video</th>
<th>Stories the children have seen at the cinema</th>
<th>Pre-experience suggestions</th>
<th>Post-experience suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alice in Wonderland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through the Looking Glass</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle Book</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Twist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Carol</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narnia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Caspian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Island</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secret Garden</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Borrowers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Beauty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just So Stories</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wind in the Willows</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey to the Centre of the Earth</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Railway Children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Family Robinson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Children and It</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Return of the Psammead</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Pan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heidi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Around the World in Eighty Days</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of the Worlds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrix Potter books</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>

**Titles Mentioned in the Young Telegraph**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stories the children have read</th>
<th>Stories the children have seen on TV</th>
<th>Stories the children have seen on video</th>
<th>Stories the children have seen at the cinema</th>
<th>Pre-experience suggestions</th>
<th>Post-experience suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinnocchio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The BFG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roald Dahl Collection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matilda</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James and the Giant Peach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Witches</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George’s Marvellous Medicine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Hobbit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only You Can Save Mankind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting Fantasy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Otter Who Wanted to Know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watership Down</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Fang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Famous Five</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Secret Seven</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enid Blyton Books</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 101 Dalmatians</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Incredible Journey</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion King</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Snowman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Aristocats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey Mouse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The War</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freddy Books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Willy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping Beauty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack and the Beanstalk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty and the Beast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aladdin</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hook</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Mermaid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Velveteen Rabbit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Titles mentioned in the Young Telegraph list.
4.6 Further comments made by Participants

These fall into five categories.

- Further comments about Alice

  age 10: I don’t think it was suitable for children under 7 or 8 'cos some things too hard even on the easy levels. I liked it.

  age 8: the screen makes it look like a book it’s set out excellently

  age 11: I liked the layout

  age 8: I liked when she fell down the hole that was quite good, signposts on the map should be better the right way up as they are difficult to read on the package.

  age 9: going down the hole dragged on

  Mother family 4: I wish they had more pictures in it. It would be great to have a library of these things. It’s nice to have English voices instead of American

  age 11: 3 out of 5 overall more animation pictures should have been bigger and changed more often

  age 9: four out of five could have been brighter, it was good

  age 11: could have more than one book on a CD-ROM

  age 11: good I liked it quite funny, 4 overall

  age 8: nice names - the sign posts like the map overall 3 ½

  age 11 enjoyed it enough to want one!

  age 13: It’s good enjoyable if get fed up of reading can go back to the map instead of having to change the disc to get to a game older classics should be put on can just sit and listen with your eyes closed and tap the mouse occasionally if you want to, rather than read it.
• The educational merits of a CD-ROM were also commented upon:

Mother Family 1: These books could be of value education wise especially for children starting school. Stories of Red Riding Hood and other fairy tales could be adapted to include some words and numbers.

The mother who is a school librarian: at the moment I only have one CD-ROM and that is used mainly for research. I don’t know how many have CD-ROM at home. It is a middle school we cover years 6 - 9 then they move on to the college. ... I don’t know how many schools would have the facilities for CD-ROM books, I think cost has a lot to do with it.

Mother family 7: added, when they got the computer it was for learning as well as games but the father had had a difficult job trying to find educational programs. My daughter was disillusioned with Fun School 4, one of the problems with discs is that you have to stop in the middle of a program to change discs. Wasn’t long after she had been at school that she had been through the scheme and able to choose her own books. It would be nice if they put these in at school for the children. She also said that it would be nice if children had use of these CD’s in school.

Mother family 8: excellent way to introduce children to the classics which they might not otherwise read in paper format

• Age and gender were also discussed:

Mother family 3: Alice in Wonderland more suitable for girls than boys. Older boys age 8-11 wouldn’t be interested in this, too much competition with Nintendo etc. Would it be a good idea to put an age guide on the packaging? I can’t see boys who are my
daughter’s age, (10) being interested in this story. Maybe younger boys

Mother family 5: I would not buy Alice in Wonderland for my boys.

Mother family 6: What is the age range? It is difficult to achieve and maintain interest for differing age groups

- Comments about CD-ROM books in general:

  Mother family 5: I know my children do not enjoy the classics I wouldn’t necessarily buy a CD-ROM as they do not like the book they would not necessarily read the CD-ROM

  Mother family 8: I can’t imagine adult stories on CD-ROM I can’t see what the value added would be for adults

  Mother family 9: I think it is very important that the stories are kept as much in line with the original classic as is possible, both in terms of content and graphics

Once the test of Alice was over the children returned to explore the CD-ROM further. Whilst they did this the parents talked about the program, its availability and also it was mentioned that it could be used on a hi fi system as a talking book. Some parents thought this a good idea but said that you would only be able to use it in a car if you had a CD player in the car, a facility that not many cars had. Children thought this was a good idea, especially the ones who had CD players in their bedrooms as they could listen to the story in bed. Nobody had seen any advertisements for the product. Those who had purchased computer magazines only did so occasionally. Nobody had seen it on sale in any shops and certainly when a visit was made to all the shops in Loughborough that sell computer programs it was not visibly available.

4.7 Comments from the Videos

By viewing the videos afterwards evidence could be seen of the CD-ROM providing fun, its use as a social activity and of it playing to a child’s imagination and sense of wonder. It is quite difficult to be objective about such subjective activities. Also some
of the children were very passive in their viewing and provided no facial reaction. This is not to say they were not reacting to the aspects of the story internally.

Table 4xx Aspects noted from the video

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Frequency of aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The story:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Activity</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Wonder</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Game:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Activity</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Wonder</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4xxi Features providing fun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature providing fun</th>
<th>Frequency of smiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The owl</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mouse</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The worms</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The text</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sounds</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rabbit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mole</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The spider</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ball through the window</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The falling picture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The twigs and branches</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from these tables, 4xx and 4xxi, that it is surprise items that add to the sense of fun. The most successful surprise items were the owl, the mouse and the worms. The text was also a source of fun, as originally intended by Lewis Carroll. Examples of this include:

Children family 1: smiles when the mouse appears and enjoy its saying

"It tickles."
Daughter family 1: reacts with a smile to the narration "...cruitey ing while falling"

Boy family 5: smiles when the worm is clicked on and splits.

Children family 6: smiles at the White Rabbit speaking. Both say “Ahh!” at the sight of the mole

Girl family 6: laughs at the narrator/text, “How funny to come out amongst people who walk downwards.”

Children family 6: giggles and smiles at the falling objects hotspots. The boy shakes his head and smiles at the worms splitting. He calls them ‘bookworms’. He also smiles at the mention of Dinah in the text. The girl points to the screen and laughs at “... bats eat cats...”

Girl family 7: smiled and looked around at the Jew’s harp sound but this could have been a reaction to the ball going through the window.

Evidence of social activity was seen by the children either talking together about what was on the screen or by pointing to items on the screen for the controller of the computer mouse to click onto. Where there was only one child using the computer, evidence of social activity was seen by them turning to look at or talk to their parent about what was on the screen.

Examples of this include:

Family 1: The daughter points to the screen for different areas and both children take it in turns to move the mouse around the screen.

Girl family 3: Points to the screen. She looks around at her mother and smiles. She also talks quietly with her brother.

Children family 4: Mutually agreed to have control of the mouse for one page each. The boy uses the mouse to follow the words as they are being read and highlighted. His sister points to areas of the screen for him to click onto.

111
Evidence for imagination and sense of wonder were more difficult to recognise but were based on vocal reactions. Again where the child was a passive user this was impossible to assess.

Examples include:

Girl family 1: “Brilliant”, reaction to Alice falling down the hole.

Girl family 1: referring to the low door, “I thought that was a radiator”, and “I like the way they do that” referring to the bubble showing the garden.

Boy family 1: imitates playing a guitar to the Jew’s harp sound.

Children family 1: “Oh look, look at the little mouse” “Click again” “You’ll scare it away.”

Children family 10: The younger girl says, “Try the radiator” (the curtain over the small door.)

The evidence from the game was collected in a similar way. Some of the children tried at first to play the game together by one person being in control of the direction keys and the other in control of the shift key but soon realised that this would not work very well.

Chapter 5 will consider the points raised by these results.
CHAPTER 5
CHAPTER 5

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 What the results show:

5.1i The questionnaire.

It would have been useful to have included questions on the adults’ employment and income to give an indication of the social category that the families belong to. Several parents did not add any further comments to support the score that they gave to aspects of the CD-ROM. Perhaps by interviewing the parents, as was done with the children, a better response would have been given. When asking about classic stories that the children had read it would in hindsight perhaps have been better to have given a list of titles and asked the respondents to tick the ones they had read. To try to find out the child’s understanding of the term ‘classic’ they could have been asked to give their meaning for the word. A question should also have been asked about the children’s reading age as this information is given to parents by the schools these days.

5.1ii. The test:

When viewing the video it was very difficult to know precisely what the children were clicking onto the screen. This could have been rectified by using two cameras, one focused on the computer screen and one on the children.

5.1iii. The families

All the families were white and an assumption can be made from the brief descriptions that the majority are middle class. This raises several points that warrant further investigation. Do families from different ethnic groups own computers? If so, is there a market for ethnic stories to be put onto CD-ROMs? Are ethnic families and working class families disadvantaged by their lack of access to CD-ROMs?

The age range for the product was a frequently asked question. If the boys in family 2 and family 3 are compared it will be seen that although there is nearly a years
difference in age they are actually in the same year group at school. The boy in family 2 also had an extremely high reading age for a child of 7 whilst the 7 year old girl in family 10 had a reading age to match her chronological age and was in a higher year at school. The boy in family 3 had a reading age of 4. If an age range is given on the box it should be presented in a cautious way. It is probably best not to put one on, parents should be able to judge the appropriateness of a book for their child, after all they do this with hard copy books. If they purchase the CD-ROM and find it is a little old for the child they will grow into it. It is assumed that the parents would know if the story was too young for their child.

Gender is another issue needing further investigation. For this study it was almost a 50:50 ratio of boys and girls that took part, more by good luck than design. A couple of parents commented that it was their boys who spent more time on the computer at home and tended to play more games on the computer. Of the children who took part it was the boys who had fewer difficulties in using the mouse and were more familiar with the keys to use for playing the game. Where the girl was the only child in the family then her computer skills were better than those of the girls who had brothers. This is another area that needs further investigation. Are girls being disadvantaged? Should programs be designed specifically for girls to develop use of the computer. Should computer programs be designed to encourage boys to see computers as something more than an expensive games machine?

5.1iv Ownership of computers and CD-ROM drives:

The majority of families owned 486 processor PC compatible computers, however very few owned CD-ROM drives. This was only a sample group so a larger group would be needed to be surveyed to determine whether this reflects the general situation of families. If few families own CD-ROM drives at the moment then sales of CD-ROM books for children to use at home, will be small. Several parents commented that they were looking to upgrade their systems or were considering the purchase of a CD-ROM drive. This is in line with comments made in 1.9. Many children had experience of CD-ROMs in school so perhaps this is the market that should be targeted.
5.1v Children and classics:

Several points were raised in Chapter 1 about children and classics.

- Children’s definition of classics:

The response to this was that most children could identify a classic as a book written a long time ago. Casual remarks made by a few of the children indicated that they thought they were long stories and they preferred to read abridged versions. Also that there were not many pictures in a classic and that the words were sometimes hard. Their response to this CD-ROM classic was more favourable in that there were pictures on every page but there could have been more variety and that it was a good idea to be able to hear the narration as an aid to reading. One child requested that an added benefit would have been a facility to click on to words within the text to either hear them again so they could learn them or to find out what they mean. This is an area that needs to be considered as a design feature for future products.

- Relevance:

A point was made in 1.6 that ‘stories should be in their (the children’s) experience... they are middle class and twee’. Looking at the sample of children in this study then classic stories are relevant as the children were middle class. As it is not known how many ethnic and working class children have access to, and experience of, CD-ROM books then it can not be said that classic books on CD-ROM are relevant to all children. This is another area for future research. Also in 1.6 the question ‘if children do not like what they see in hard copy how will this be achieved?’ was raised when discussing the benefits of classic for children. The response of the children to the part of ‘Alice’ that they saw would suggest that CD-ROM books are a way in which children can be encouraged to read classics often so they are exposed to ‘good literature that stimulates thinking, evokes ideas, creates mental images and engages the emotions’. Care must be taken by CD-ROM producers that they remain true to the original, handle abridgements with care and any additions that they make are in keeping with the original concept.
Children's experience of classic stories

In 1.7 a list was produced of recognised children's classics. The titles given by the children were mixed but fell into three main categories: classics, modern and fairy stories. Classic stories cited by the children only represented a small section of those on the 'experts' list. However fourteen classics appear on the Young Telegraph list, the most popular being The Secret Garden in fourteenth position. An interesting question which needs answering is do children read the story first and then see the movie or video, or vice versa? If their knowledge of classics is built purely on seeing the story in the media then they only have knowledge of the content of the story which is often adapted to suit the political climate of the time (e.g. the recent production of Little Women which has been made politically correct and strayed from the original concept). It also means that children grow up thinking that Walt Disney created many of the stories. They do not have experience of the style of writing or language used in the original book and are unable to develop the characters, as first created, in their own imaginations.

Aspects of a CD-ROM book:

In 1.8 the aspects of humour, illustrations and characters was raised as aspects that needed to be considered for maintaining in the story when it was developed for CD-ROM. The video showed that the humour of the original text had been maintained. There was a mixed reaction to the illustrations. The retention of the original illustrations was successful but the colours used were a subject of discussion, also the need for more variety was raised as each page of the CD-ROM was illustrated unlike the original book, this is perhaps an area where consideration needs to be given to developing the original illustrations to add more variety. Some people thought the colours dull but again this is a difficult area to tackle if the producer is to remain true to the original. Perhaps if the participants had seen other chapters their perceptions may have been different.

The addition of other characters only occurred as elements of the hotspots. They were in keeping with the original story as they were aspects of the scene, e.g. the owl, the mouse and the mole. However, when sounds were introduced to the
corridor doors they were not relevant to the scene or the text, yet they were not perceived as an intrusion on the story but as an element of fun because their inclusion came once the reader had entered Wonderland and as one child said, 'this is Wonderland'.

• People's expectations of a CD-ROM book:

If the design guidelines of Barker, mentioned in 1.3 are combined with suggestions in 1.4 of Bennett, and Kafai and Solway, these can be compared with the expectations of the parents. The parents' experience of multimedia CD-ROMs was more limited than the children's which is reflected in their response to this question. Most of their expectations were related to their knowledge of books, expecting to find pictures/graphics with some sound and animation. The children were far more aware of what to find on a CD-ROM book. As consumers become more exposed to multimedia CD-ROM book publishers of software will need to consider the design guidelines and suggestions to ensure that they are producing a high quality multimedia product that includes plenty of interaction and good animation.

5.2 Features of the CD-ROM:

5.2.1 The Narration:

This is a beneficial addition to the original story. It is perceived to be a useful aid for learning to read as well as being an aid to enjoyment. The addition of a mechanism to be able to switch off the narration whilst keeping the sound effects needs to be considered in future products.

5.2.2 The Text:

The inclusion of highlighting was considered a good idea and again is an aid to learning to read. Thought should be given to including in future products the ability to click onto words in the text so that they may be heard several times and also an explanation given. The amount of text on a page should be considered as for younger or less able readers a screen that is almost all text, page 4 of the first chapter.
2vi), can be overpowering. The sample was too small to come to any conclusion about the size and type of font used but as it was mentioned by some of the parents.

5.2iii The Illustrations:
Illustrations used should be colourful, interesting and varied. Using the same illustration for several screens will work if the hotspots on each are in different places and/or produce different effects. Any additional material should be a development of the original illustrations used and in keeping with the era.

5. 2iv The Animations:
A good addition which provides the ‘fun’ element and prevents classics from being boring books. Care should be taken by the designers that the movements are life like, and meaningful additions to the illustrations, not a gimmick, and that there is plenty of variety.

5.2v The Activities:
The comments from the research group would suggest that there is room for improvement in the activities. The most successful were those that came naturally from the background, e.g. the owl, the mole and the mouse. Although the worms might have been perceived as a distraction the children did not find this so, in fact they were another successful fun factor. More could have been made of the items in the tunnel as these pages were quite full of text. The sounds also produced mixed comments and would suggest that as much care should be given to the inclusion of these as to the development of further illustrations.

5.2vi The Game:
This is an enjoyable feature for home use but if CD-ROMs were developed aimed specifically at the school market then they might prove to be a distraction, especially the music. Again perhaps a facility to disengage the music whilst keeping the sound effects could be included. Levels of skill for playing the games needs to be given consideration. The Duchess’s game was too fast and involved too many items early on for players to familiarise themselves with it. More research would need to be
carried out to determine the response to the other games as some of these do have different levels of play.

5.2vii The Packaging:
The design of the packaging was well received by the children who thought that it was a good idea to have made it to look like a book. Questions raised about it were to do with the use of polystyrene as packing inside the box, the necessity for the container to be so large and the type of container used for the actual disc. However, the sample was too small for any real suggestions to develop from these comments but they should be given consideration in future products. There was also discussion about the need for a guide to age range for the product being placed on the packaging.

5.2viii Benefits of a CD-ROM book:
The parents could clearly identify the educational value of CD-ROM books. This again raises the question of whether these books should be developed to be aimed at the educational market. The children also recognised that they could learn from them but appreciated that they were fun and a way to read stories that they might not necessarily read in hard copy.

5.2 ix Disadvantages of a CD-ROM book:
By looking at this sample an assumption could be made that at present few families own a CD-ROM drive. A much larger survey would need to be undertaken to see if this is so. The trend in home ownership of computer equipment is always changing so the results from this sample might even be different in a year's time as several parents said that they were looking to update their systems. One of the main disadvantages identified was the need for appropriate hardware. The physical handling of a CD-ROM book was also mentioned suggesting that it will not become a replacement for a hard copy book but an addition to it.
5.2x Suggestions for future titles:

The information provided on Table 4xxii can be used to determine future titles. The responses from this sample would suggest that there would be a need for three series of books to be developed. A classic series, a modern books series and a series of fairy stories. More research of a much larger size would need to be carried out to determine which titles should be developed but the use of the Young Telegraph list can act as a guide. If the results are put together and only those classics mentioned by the Young Telegraph referred to for classics, it can be seen from Table 5i that The Jungle Book, Winnie the Pooh and the Secret Garden would be popular titles for the future ‘Living Classics’.

Table 5i Suggestions for future titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Children who have read/seen the book</th>
<th>Total of suggestions children and adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jungle Book</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secret Garden</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Beauty</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Pan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Witches</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Twits</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 101 Dalmatians</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion King</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping Beauty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty and the Beast</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aladdin</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Mermaid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Twits, The Witches and The Lion King would be suitable for a modern series and Snow White, Beauty and the Beast and Aladdin would be suitable for a fairy stories series.

The development of the modern books series raises the question of copyright and therefore the cost of the product. To develop the fairy stories a decision who have to
be made of which version of the story to use, to seek out an original such as Hans Christian Andersen and The Brothers Grimm or use the idea of the story and develop a completely new version for the CD-ROM.

5.2 Price:

The response to the request for a fair price for a CD-ROM book was too varied to be conclusive. A much larger survey needs to be carried out. £15 - £20 would appear to be the most popular, sensible price, although three parents said £25 would be fair. This would put them out of the reach of less well-off families as concern was raised about how often the children would use the program, when with books, once they are read, they tend to stay on the bookshelf.

5.2 Libraries:

Everyone wanted to be able to borrow CD-ROMs and all except one boy thought that it would be a good idea to be able to borrow these from the library. Suggestions of how much to pay for this service were too varied to reach any conclusions. It does raise an interesting question about software license agreements which is discussed in 1.9. The boy who did not want CD-ROMs in the library suggested that there should be CD-ROM shops complete with a bank of computers on which you could try CD-ROMs before borrowing and then after trying them at home, if you liked them, you could then go and purchase one. There would appear to be a definite demand for a borrowing/rental service. As discussed in 1.9 this is in the control of the software publishers. They should consider this area seriously - the demand is there - who will be the first to meet the demand?

5.3 Overall Evaluation of 'Alice':

5.3i Criteria List

By applying the criteria list (Appendix B) and also considering the design guideline developed by Barker it is possible to make the following evaluation of the Living Classic 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland:'
Animation: The addition of animation to Alice created a new dimension to the story however there is room for improvement.

Custom features: The icons available were not tested in this study however they were noticed and remarked upon by some of the children and accidentally used by two. The addition of a feature to hear and learn individual words in the text would be beneficial.

Supporting material: The packaging was favourably received but suggestions were made for the inclusion of an age range to be added.

Willingness to use original stories: Yes the original story, written in hard copy first has been well adapted to CD-ROM.

Activities: These were satisfactory but there is room for improvement to develop variety. Interaction is a major feature of a multimedia program and as such should be a priority in the design of a CD-ROM book.

High production quality: The use of professional English speakers was well thought of and is a feature that should be maintained.

An understanding of when to use technique: No one suggested that any unnecessary items had been added or that aspects had been over used that detracted from the story. Some features of multimedia were well used but others, such as video, were not used at all but this did not detract from the product.

A social activity: When two children were using the program together then there was plenty of social activity going on. When one had control of the mouse then the other would talk to them and point to items on the screen for them to click onto.

Provide options for multiplayer interactions: There was no facility for this in the games but children still interacted together by offering advice or making comments about the player’s action and performance.

Allow settings for players of different abilities: This is debatable having only looked at one game. The Duchesses game needs to have easier levels added at the beginning of it.
Provide room for reuse, change and growth: On the evidence from this study it is not possible to respond to this.

Provide several layers of complexity: Again there is insufficient evidence to comment on this.

Allow children to explore nooks and crannies: Each screen offers this facility to the children however they did tend to become repetitive and predictable.

Learning combined with entertainment features: Comments from the children and parents would suggest that the CD-ROM has been successful in this aspect although improvements could be made.

Play to a child’s imagination and engage the child’s sense of wonder: The results from the video would suggest that this product has succeeded in this aspect.

5.3ii Summary of the evaluation

‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland’ has been more than satisfactory in several aspects for example, providing the ‘fun’ aspect to a classic story through the use of multimedia. It has been less satisfactory in other areas such as activities which lack variety. A review of the CD-ROM in CD ROM Magazine (July 1995) gave it a score of 2½ out of 5 criticising it for its lack of interaction. The study would disagree with this in that there is interaction but it is not well developed. Europress Software have been aware of some of the weaknesses and have aimed to improve these in their next title, Treasure Island. Professional cartoonists have been employed so that animations should be better. Attention is also being given to the amount of text which is placed on a screen.

5.4 Recommendations:

5.4i For further research:

Ownership of CD-ROMs

Do ethnic families own computers? If so, is there a market for ethnic stories to be put onto CD-ROMs?
Are ethnic families and working class families disadvantaged by their lack of access to CD-ROMs?

Gender and computer programs

Are girls being disadvantaged? Should programs be designed specially for girls to develop use of the computer. Should computer programs be designed to encourage boys to see the computer as something more than an expensive games machine?

Games

More research would need to be carried out to determine the response to the other games on the CD-ROM to compare with the comments and reactions to the Duchesses Game in this study.

Price

A much larger survey needs to be carried out to determine what would be an appropriate fair price for the product. A price in the range of £15 - £20 would seem to be fair.

Exposure to ‘Alice’

None of the participants had been aware of the product before coming to the test. They had neither seen any adverts for the product nor seen it in the shops or knew where to purchase a copy. This is despite the range of promotional materials produced by Europress Software and their press releases (Appendix E.) If LISU’s suggestion of a link with the retail book trade was developed, more consumers would become aware of the product.

5.4ii Future Developments:

Education

The use of CD-ROMs in school is growing and is for a lot of children their only accesses to this piece of technology therefore perhaps this is the market that should be targeted.
The narration

The addition of a mechanism to be able to switch off the narration whilst keeping the sound effects needs to be considered in future products.

Text

Thought should be given to including in future products the ability to click onto words in the text, hypertext links, so that they may be heard several times and also an explanation given. The amount of text on a page should also be given careful consideration.

Animations

Care should be taken by the designers that the movements are life like, meaningful additions to the illustrations and not a gimmick and that there is plenty of variety.

Activities

There should be plenty of variety and less repetition.

Packaging

Choice of materials for the packaging should be give consideration.

Future titles


Titles for a modern series, ‘Living Books’, would be The Twits, The Witches and The Lion King.

For a ‘Living Fairy Stories’ series Snow White, Beauty and the Beast and Aladdin would be suitable.

Rental/Borrowing

There is a definite demand for such a service. At present consumers access to knowledge of programs is limited which would affect sales of a product. To be able
to experience a CD-ROM before purchase would possibly encourage consumers to buy more if they thought them worthy of the price charged.

5.5 Summary

'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' is a satisfactory pilot for a market which is fast developing. The potential for 'Living Classic' both in the education market and home users market is great. There is an immense range of titles to exploit and it could be developed to create a 'Living fairy tales' series and a 'Living Books' series. Some of the multimedia aspects of the program need to be better developed to ensure continued success. More also needs to be done to increase the consumer's awareness of these products perhaps by developing links with book retailers.
APPENDIX A

Vocabulary used in Chapter 1.

Multimedia

Multimedia is the combining of computer graphics and animation, sound, scanned images and video. Educators recognise multimedia’s role in condensing complex information and making it more understandable, and even fun, to learn. (Anderson, 1990)

Multimedia books

“Multimedia storybooks may incorporate pictures, video, animation, activities, games, narration, music and sound effects along with the text of the story (Bennett 1994)

Polymedia Books

These “…use a combination of several different media (CD-ROM, magnetic disc, paper and so on) in order to deliver their information” (Barker, 1992)

Hypermedia

This has been defined by McKnight, Dillon and Richardson, (1991) as “ a more general term than ‘hypertext’ and suggests that links exist to information held on different media. …looks set to be as mis-used as the previously fashionable ‘multimedia’.” (p2)

Hypertext

‘Ted Nelson coined the term hypertext in 1965. He chose the prefix hyper- because it means beyond or multidimensional. ... Hypertext, has a minimum of three dimensions (length, width, and depth) because words are hidden beneath words.’ (Franklin and Kinnell 1990)

The term Hotspots is also often used. These are areas on a page, not necessarily text, which when clicked on by use of the mouse causes something to happen, either animation, sound or a new graphic.

Hypermedia and hypertext are often confused. This is because both combine text, audio, and video. ‘A key difference is that hypermedia software is much more interactive than multimedia software.’ (Franklin and Kinnell, 1990)
Hypermedia electronic books

These "...have much in common with multimedia books ... but unlike multimedia books, (they) employ non-linear organisations of information based upon the use of web-like structures ... These books are capable of dynamic adaptation as a consequence of interaction with end-users. (Barker, 1992)

Telemedia books

" uses telecommunication facilities to augment the capabilities of a CD-ROM publication in order to support highly interactive distributed distance learning activities."(Barker, 1992)

Cyberspace books

These "provide their readers with access to various types of virtual reality facility; they employ different kinds of interactive simulation environments in order to provide end-users with participative, 'real-life' encounters that they would not normally be able to experience" (Barker, 1992)

Knowledge engineering

"refers to the tasks involved in creating the underlying knowledge corpus upon which an electronic book depends" (Barker, 1992)

End user tools and services

These include:

"retrieval tools; browsers; bookmarks; notepad facilities; copy and paste facilities; on-line help; tutorial modes; glossaries and dictionaries; tracers; collectors; backtrack facilities; navigation tools" (Barker, 1992)

Edutainment

This is a newly coined term used to describe programs which are games and activities which include or are designed to deliver educational values, i.e. make learning fun or through play and fun learning takes place.
APPENDIX B

Criteria for evaluation

The criteria for evaluation are developed from the suggestions made in Chapter 1.

Animation

Custom features

Supporting material

Willingness to use original stories

Activities

High production quality

An understanding of when to use technique

A social activity

Provide options for multiplayer interactions

Allow settings for players of different abilities.

Provide room for reuse, change, and growth.

Provide several layers of complexity.

Allow children to explore nooks and crannies.

Learning combined with entertainment features

Play to a child's imagination and engage the child's sense of wonder.
APPENDIX C

The first table in this appendix is a compilation of the suggested children’s classics discussed by Winfield, (1986), Darton, (1982), Carpenter (1985) and Inglis (1981) in chapter 1. The second is a list of suggestions from these authors of ‘modern’ classics and the third is a copy of the Young Telegraph poll of books.

Compilation of the suggested children’s classics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>SUGGESTED BY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Women</td>
<td>Louisa May Alcott</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Pan</td>
<td>J. M. Barrie</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wizard of Oz</td>
<td>L. F. Baum</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</td>
<td>Harriet Beecher Stowe</td>
<td>Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secret Garden</td>
<td>Frances Hodgson Burnett</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</td>
<td>Lewiss Carroll</td>
<td>Carpenter, Inglis, Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through the Looking Glass</td>
<td>Lewiss Carroll</td>
<td>Carpenter, Inglis, Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinocchio</td>
<td>Carlo Collodi</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson Crusoe</td>
<td>Daniel Defoe</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Carol</td>
<td>Charles Dickens</td>
<td>Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Expectations</td>
<td>Charles Dickens</td>
<td>Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wind in the Willows</td>
<td>Kenneth Grahame</td>
<td>Carpenter, Inglis, Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Brown’s School Day’s</td>
<td>Thomas Hughes</td>
<td>Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Water Babies: a fairy tale for a land baby</td>
<td>Charles Kingsley</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalky and Co.</td>
<td>Rudyard Kipling</td>
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<td>Jungle Book</td>
<td>Rudyard Kipling</td>
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<td>Kim</td>
<td>Rudyard Kipling</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<td>Just So Stories</td>
<td>Rudyard Kipling</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Wonderful Adventures of Nils</td>
<td>Selma Lagerlof</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>SUGGESTED BY:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward Lear</td>
<td>Book of Nonsense</td>
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<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
<td>A. A. Milne</td>
<td>Inglis, Darton</td>
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<td>The Railway Children</td>
<td>E. Nesbit</td>
<td>Carpenter, Inglis</td>
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<td>The Wouldbe goods</td>
<td>E. Nesbit</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<td>The Borrowers</td>
<td>Mary Norton</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tale of Peter Rabbit</td>
<td>Beatrix Potter</td>
<td>Carpenter, Inglis, Darton, Winfield</td>
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<td>The Tailor of Gloucester</td>
<td>Beatrix Potter</td>
<td>Carpenter, Winfield</td>
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<td>Heidi</td>
<td>Johanna Spyri</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<td>Treasure Island</td>
<td>Robert Louis Stevenson</td>
<td>Carpenter, Inglis, Darton</td>
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<td>Robert Louis Stevenson</td>
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<td>Jonathon Swift</td>
<td>Carpenter, Darton, Winfield</td>
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<td>Mark Twain</td>
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<td>L. L. Wilder</td>
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The titles in red are the ones that children in the research group have read.

**Modern Stories**

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133
YOUNG TELEGRAPH TOP 100 CHILDREN'S BOOK POLL

This was compiled by the Young Telegraph in 1993 by asking its members to write and tell them the names of their favourite books.

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**CLASSICS**

**Modern CLASSICS**

J = joint position
# Puffin Modern Classics

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This appendix contains copies of all the questionnaires used.

1. The Focus Group Questionnaire

**Questionnaire on Alice in Wonderland**

Name: .................................................................................. Age ...................

Which computer do you own? ..........................................................

Do you own a CD ROM drive? ..........................................................

How much memory does your PC have? [ ] 4MB [ ] 8MB [ ] 12MB or more

Have you ever read Alice in Wonderland? ..........................................................

What other classic stories have you read? ..........................................................

What do you most like about Alice in Wonderland?

What did you like least about Alice in Wonderland?

Which of the games did you like best? ..........................................................

And which least? ..............................................................................

What did you think of them?

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<td>[ ] Easy</td>
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138
The Pilot Questionnaire

Child          PRE EXPERIENCE

1. What CD ROMs do you have?

2. What CD ROMs do you use?

3. What classic stories have you:
   a) read?
   b) seen on TV?
   c) seen on video
   d) seen at the cinema?

4. Which stories would you like to have in CD ROM format?

5. What would you expect a CD ROM story to include?

6. Do you have experience of stories on CD ROM?

7. If yes how do you use them?
Adult

PRE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What CD ROMs do you have?

2. What CD ROMs do you use?

3. What classic stories have your children:
   a) read?
   b) seen on TV?
   c) seen on video
   d) seen at the cinema?

4. Which stories would you like to have in CD ROM format?

5. What would you expect a CD ROM story to include?

6. Do you have experience of stories on CD ROM?

7. If yes how do you use them?
Child POST EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: Name

1 is a low grading and 5 is high

1. How would you rate the quality of the narration? 1 2 3 4 5
What other comments do you have about the narration?

2. How would you rate the quality of the text? 1 2 3 4 5
What other comments do you have about the text?

3. How would you rate the quality of the illustrations? 1 2 3 4 5
What other comments do you have about the illustrations?

4. How would you rate the quality of the animations? 1 2 3 4 5
What other comments do you have about the animations?

5. How would you rate the quality of the activities? 1 2 3 4 5
What other comments do you have about the activities?

6. How would you rate the quality of the game? 1 2 3 4 5
What other comments do you have about the game?

7. Would you expect a classic story to keep the original illustrations?
8. What do you consider to be the benefits of a CD ROM book?

9. What do you consider to be the disadvantages of a CD ROM book?

10. What other books would you like to see in this format?

11. What do you consider a fair price for a CD ROM book?

12. How would you rate the quality of the packaging? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the packaging?

13. Would you like to have CD ROM books available in libraries like music CDs?

14. How much would you be prepared to pay for this service?

15 What other comments do you have?
Adult POST EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _________________________________ Name ________________________________

1 is a low grading and 5 is high

1. How would you rate the quality of the narration? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the narration?

2. How would you rate the quality of the text? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the text?

3. How would you rate the quality of the illustrations? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the illustrations?

4. How would you rate the quality of the animations? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the animations?

5. How would you rate the quality of the activities? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the activities?

6. How would you rate the quality of the game? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the game?

7. Would you expect a classic story to keep the original illustrations?
8. What do you consider to be the benefits of a CD ROM book?

9. What do you consider to be the disadvantages of a CD ROM book?

10. What other books would you like to see in this format?

11. What do you consider a fair price for a CD ROM book?

12. This product cost £19.99. Do you think this is cheap, about right or expensive?

13. How would you rate the quality of the packaging? 1 2 3 4 5

   What other comments do you have about the packaging?

14. Would you like to have CD ROM books available in libraries like music CDs?

15. How much would you be prepared to pay for this service?

16. What other comments do you have?
Research Group Questionnaires

Child PRE EXPERIENCE

Name Date

1. What CD ROMs do you have?

2. What CD ROMs do you use?

3. What classic stories have you:
   a) read?
   b) seen on TV?
   c) seen on video
   d) seen at the cinema?

4. Which stories would you like to have in CD ROM format?

5. What would you expect a CD ROM story to include?

6. Do you have experience of stories on CD ROM?

7. If yes how do you use them?
Adult PRE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name Date

1. What CD ROMs do you have?

2. What CD ROMs do you use?

3. What classic stories have your children:
   a) read?
   b) seen on TV?
   c) seen on video
   d) seen at the cinema?

4. Which stories would you like to have in CD ROM format?

5. What would you expect a CD ROM story to include?

6. Do you have experience of stories on CD ROM?

7. If yes how do you use them?
Child POST EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: 
Name 

1 is a low grading and 5 is high

1. How would you rate the quality of the narration? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the narration?

2. How would you rate the quality of the text? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the text?

3. How would you rate the quality of the illustrations? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the illustrations?

4. How would you rate the quality of the animations? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the animations?

5. How would you rate the quality of the activities? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the activities?

6. How would you rate the quality of the game? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the game?

7. Would you expect a classic story to keep the original illustrations?
8. What do you consider to be the benefits of a CD ROM book?

9. What do you consider to be the disadvantages of a CD ROM book?

10. What other books would you like to see in this format?

11. What do you consider a fair price for a CD ROM book?

12. How would you rate the quality of the packaging? 1 2 3 4 5

  What other comments do you have about the packaging?

13. Would you like to have CD ROM books available in libraries like music CDs?

15. What other comments do you have
Adult POST EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: 

Name

1 is a low grading and 5 is high

1. How would you rate the quality of the narration? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the narration?

2. How would you rate the quality of the text? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the text?

3. How would you rate the quality of the illustrations? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the illustrations?

4. How would you rate the quality of the animations? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the animations?

5. How would you rate the quality of the activities? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the activities?

6. How would you rate the quality of the game? 1 2 3 4 5

What other comments do you have about the game?

7. Would you expect a classic story to keep the original illustrations?
8. What do you consider to be the benefits of a CD ROM book?

9. What do you consider to be the disadvantages of a CD ROM book?

10. What other books would you like to see in this format?

11. What do you consider a fair price for a CD ROM book?

12. This product cost £19.99. DO you think this is cheap, about right or expensive?

13. How would you rate the quality of the packaging? 1 2 3 4 5
   What other comments do you have about the packaging?

14. Would you like to have CD ROM books available in libraries like music Cds?

15. How much would you be prepared to pay for this service?

16 What other comments do you have?
APPENDIX E

Europress press releases and promotional materials.
Product

- The first of Europress Software's new 'Living Classics' series which brings favourite children's tales to CD Rom
- Over 50 pages with animated pictures colourfully recreated from Sir John Tenniel's original drawings
- Modular audio track to simplify translation

Selling points

- Tradition meets technology
- A welcome reversal to the computer violence trend
- Educates children in the value of good literature

Promotion

- Full press campaign including editorial or advertising in computing, lifestyle, education and literary titles as well as national newspapers

Age range: 8 to 80  Launch date: April 6 '95  RRP: £19.99

- Story soundtrack recorded by Shakespearean actors who bring Lewis Carroll's characters vividly to life
- Text highlight feature synchronised with voices to aid understanding
- Choice of four games for children to play
- Animated menu screen giving a bird's eye view of Wonderland

- Quality audio track that also plays on an ordinary CD player
- Attractive and economical buy for both parents and grandparents
- Classic 'book-look' packaging
- Fun way to encourage children to read

- Novel TV/radio reviews and interviews
- Extensive retail promotion with POS leaflets, dispensers and posters
- Exhibition appearances

Europress Software, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.
Tel: 01625 859444 Fax: 01625 879962
"Begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end, then stop," said the King of Hearts to the White Rabbit. And that's just what Europress Software has done in this interactive version of the world's best-loved children's story.

Shown here are just some of the 50+ graphics scenes that make up this engaging story of Alice's remarkable adventures after she falls down the Rabbit-hole...
"What is the use of a book without pictures or conversation?" So said Alice in the opening paragraph of Alice in Wonderland.

There is a great deal more than just pictures and conversations in Europress Software’s new interactive version of this most famous of all children’s stories. Alice in Wonderland is being launched to mark the start of the company’s new Living Classics series of children’s CD-Roms – a collection of compact discs which will bring the best of classic children’s literature to the personal computer screen.

The ‘book’ consists of more than 50 graphic screens with text highlighted as Shakespearean actors bring Lewis Carroll’s characters vividly to life, from the throaty roar of the Duchess to the screeching of the Cheshire Cat, the nervous mutterings of the White Rabbit and the strident tones of the Mad Hatter.

Sir John Tenniel’s original Victorian drawings have also been beautifully recreated, in glorious colour and fully animated.

Among the pages are four multi-level interactive games children can play, featuring the characters in the book. ‘Readers’ are invited to help Alice escape from the strange hall at the foot of the Rabbit-hole, play a noisy Simon game with the hookah-puffing Caterpillar, ward off an army of lethal cups and saucers in the Duchess’s kitchen, and interrupt the Queen of Hearts in the middle of a tense game of croquet.

But this version of the story has an extra dimension even Lewis Carroll, for all his extravagant fantasising, could never have dreamt of. For the first time it is the reader who is completely in charge – who makes the characters jump out of the pages using the PC’s mouse as a magic wand to direct the action.

Alice in Wonderland is the first full-length release produced entirely with Klik & Play, the new game creator from Europress Software, and is directed by international award-winning TV director Eric Harrison. Available on CD-Rom only, it costs £19.99.

Non-PC users will also be able to enjoy Alice’s adventures. The disc, with the complete story, including dialogue and original music, can be played on an audio CD player, with a running time of 56 minutes.

It is available in computer and book stores, or direct from Europress Software (01625 859333).

- ends -

Further details: Fiona Carey, Europress Software • 01625 859333
Low price point fixed for Living Classics range

Europress Software has announced that the retail price of Alice in Wonderland, the first of its recently-announced series of Living Classics on CD-Rom, will be £19.99.

"This low price reflects the public's growing demand for cheaper software," said Europress Group chairman, Derek Meakin. "But it has only been made possible by creating Alice in Wonderland with Klik & Play, which has dramatically slashed development time in a way that would never have been possible using conventional programming."

Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland, would have welcomed the decision to retail the Living Classics range at the lowest possible price.

At Christmas, 1896 – just 30 years after Alice in Wonderland first appeared – he announced he was dropping the price of the Nursery version of Alice from four shillings to one shilling.

He wrote at the time: "Four shillings was a perfectly reasonable price to charge, considering the very heavy initial outlay I had incurred. Still, as the Public have practically said, 'We will not give more than a shilling for a picture-book, however artistically got-up,' I am content to reckon my outlay on the book as so much dead loss and, rather than let the little ones, for whom it was written, go without it, I am selling it at a price which is, to me, much the same thing as giving it away."

Klik & Play, which has made the £19.99 price-point possible, is a revolutionary product that is expected to pave the way for a completely new generation of low-price Windows software.

Launched in the UK and US last October as a game creator anyone can use, without the need for conventional programming skills, it can be used to produce a wide variety of games, from shoot-'em-ups to logic games or, as Alice in Wonderland has proved, fully interactive books.

As progenitor of a new breed of cut-price software, Klik & Play was itself released at a remarkable low price for a new programming language – £39.95.

– ends –

Further details: Fiona Carey, Europress Software - 01625 859333
Lewis Carroll would have loved to see Alice in Multimedia!

To those purists who would say that immortal classics like Alice in Wonderland should be left alone as books and never go anywhere near a multimedia PC, Lewis Carroll himself would have had the answer.

Two years after the acclamations that greeted the publication of the first edition of Alice in 1865, he started asking about how it could be turned into a pantomime!

The Reverend Charles Lutwidge Dodgson – Lewis Carroll's real name – wrote to Sir Arthur Sullivan, the musical side of Gilbert and Sullivan, suggesting he should set the Mad Hatter's "Twinkle, Twinkle little bat!" and other songs to music.

The first stage appearance of Alice in Wonderland was actually in 1886, when it was presented as an operetta at the Prince of Wales Theatre in London. Henry Savile Clarke, who adapted it for the stage, was instructed by Carroll to provide a written guarantee that in no way should "any coarseness, or anything suggestive of coarseness, be admitted."

There have been more than ten film versions of Alice in Wonderland, the first being a British silent film in 1903. But Carroll never lived to see it. He had died five years earlier.

The story attracted some of the greatest names in the cinema. Stars like Cary Grant, Gary Cooper and W C Fields wore masks in the 1933 version. Television jumped on the Alice bandwagon in 1966, when Jonathan Miller's production featured Ralph Richardson, John Gielgud and Michael Redgrave. American TV also brought out its own version, with Sammy Davis Jr as the Caterpillar. In 1972 Michael Crawford played the White Rabbit, Dudley Moore the Dormouse and Flora Robson the Queen of Hearts.

For the first multimedia version of Alice in Wonderland Europress Software has recruited Shakespearean actors Delia Corrie and David Mahlowe to play the characters. Among the voices supplied by Delia Corrie are those of the White Rabbit, the Duchess, the Queen and the Cheshire Cat, as well as Alice herself. David Mahlowe plays the Caterpillar, the Mad Hatter and the King, and also acts as narrator.

Alice in Wonderland on CD-Rom is a production of Europress Software, the UK's largest publisher of educational software. It is directed by award-winning TV director Eric Harrison, and produced by Derek Meakin.

Further details: Fiona Carey, Europress Software - 01625 859333

Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.
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