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Review
Reviewed Work(s): Computer Olympics by Stephen Manes and Paul Somerson
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Source: *The Arithmetic Teacher*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (October 1985), p. 49
Published by: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/41192713
Accessed: 25-03-2022 02:56 UTC

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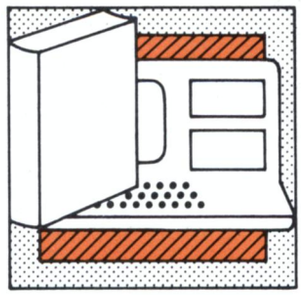

Reviewing and Viewing

- Computer materials
- New books for pupils
- New books for teachers
- Etcetera

Computer Materials

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Computer Olympics. *Stephen Manes and Paul Somerson. 1984, 168 pp., $4.95. ISBN 0-590-33176-0. Scholastic, 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.*

Computer Olympics is one of a set of books developed around a particular theme, in this case, the Olympics. The book is a compilation of program listings and sample runs that can be entered into just about any computer that runs BASIC programs. Included with each listing are any changes necessary for use with specific computers.

A few of the programs are "Toss the Javelin," "Silver Medal Diver," "Medal Grapher," "Track and Field Record Book—Women," and "International Olympic Months." "Toss the Javelin" prints a series of slashes across the screen to the statement "There goes the javelin!" and a series of backward slashes to "and here it comes back down!" "International Olympic Months" translates the months of the year into five languages.

The recurring question that arises in the mind of this reviewer is, *Why?*—why bother? What can be gained from mindlessly typing in programs, especially programs that offer nothing that cannot be found with much less trouble in printed resources. The programming itself is very simplistic. Just about any student with two weeks of programming instruction could develop more sophisticated and creative programs than what are found in this book.—*Jeff Bloom, University of Houston, Houston, TX 77004.*

Cyberlogo Turtle. *Cybertronics International. Apple II, II+, IIe, or Apple III in Emulation mode, 48K, disk drive. 1982, $55. Reston Publishing Co., 11480 Sunset Hills Rd., Reston, VA 22090.*

For those readers who are not familiar with Cyberlogo, it is another form of Logo that is not just a piece of software but a computer language and a tool for problem solving. The Logo turtle is also an excellent tool for developing a knowledge and an understanding of geometry.

The manual is straightforward with a hands-on approach that can easily be worked through by teachers and by students reading on a fourth-grade level or above. Each section explains a facet of turtle graphics, be it manuevering or programming. As one works through the chapters one builds vocabulary, as well as manipulative expertise with the Cyberlogo turtle, which is actually a small triangle. The chapters include an introductory overview of computers and programming, in-depth instructions, and practice excercises to build one's abilities to program the turtle.

Three modes are available in Cyberlogo: Sketch, Playground, and School. Help is always accessible: just type "Help." The computer accepts commands, or, in "Cyberlingo," instincts.

Sketch is a simple introduction to the turtle, which, in this mode, can be moved by single keys rather than regular commands. This mode can be used alone by younger children who would easily be able to remember the appropriate keys. In this way they can learn the headings and positions of the turtle, which is the purpose of Sketch.

The Playground is the place, or screen, where the turtle tries out the programs or is simply maneuvered for fun. "ESC" always returns you to Playground from any other mode. The computer accepts commands in the form of words or their abbreviations, for example, "Forward *n*" or "FD *n*." The commands "Forward" or "Back" followed by a number or number of degrees allow the user through the turtle to develop shapes and pictures.

These commands can be put into a program and taught to the turtle in the third mode School. One can edit within this mode. "Space" is a useful command in programming as it enables the user to learn how much space is left in which to program. Shapes can be developed, saved, or combined to form new programs. Subprocedures can also be used.

Sound can be added to the programs by the command "Note *nn*," which produces notes of different frequencies and durations.

If you do not always have access to a computer or do not have enough computers for all students, *Cyberlogo* has a bonus. Activities have been included for students to do away from the computer. These activities enhance the learning and general understanding of geometric principles and Logo itself.

If you or any of your students have a previous knowledge of a different version of Logo, Applelogo, Terrapin Logo, or Pilot, the Appendix has a chart that gives the commands in each version.

This package does require a color monitor. If you are using an Apple IIe or IIc or have an eighty=column card, make certain that the Caps lock is down. Cyberlogo is compiled, whereas some programs are interpretive. Therefore, once a program is written, debugged, and saved, it will execute more quickly. Cyberlogo also has printout capabilities that are exciting for the student. It is a recursive procedural implementation of the turtle graphics portion of Logo. One drawback of Cyberlogo, however, is that it has no list processing. Overall, I think one can go traipsing through this tortoise territory without trepidation—*Anne H. Meyn, West University Elementary School, Houston, TX 77005.*

Factoring Whole Numbers. *Commodore 64. 3 diskettes, teacher's manual, and student record sheet. 1983, $90. Quality Educational Designs, P.O. Box 12486, Portland, OR 97212-0486.*

Factoring Whole Numbers is a set of three diskettes including six tutorial programs offering instructions, explanations, examples, and guided practice, as well as six game and exploration programs in the following areas: factor pairs, primes and composites, exponents, and greatest common factors.

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