



Alice's Adventures Under Ground

Reviewer: Colin Hynson

On a summer afternoon in 1862, a young mathematics teacher in Oxford called Charles Dodgson went on a river trip with the three daughters of the Master of Christ Church College. While they were rowing down the river, he entertained them by weaving a fantastic tale about one of the girls having a series of strange adventures after following a rather anxious rabbit down a hole. That girl, Alice Liddell, begged him to write the story down. Two years later he presented her with a bound volume of the story (now on display in the British Library), hand-written and with his own pen and ink drawings. A few years later it was published as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, with drawings by John Tenniel and under the pseudonym of Lewis Carroll.

There are three ways in which pupils can explore the manuscript version of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*. The first part allows pupils to simply watch as the digitised pages are turned automatically and the text is read by actor Miriam Margolyes. The reading can be paused at any moment and even bookmarked so that pupils can return to where they had left off before. On the face of it, this part of the CD-ROM seems the least interactive and less

useful from a classroom point of view. However, it could easily be used as part of a whole-class teaching exercise in which all pupils can watch and listen together using an interactive whiteboard or projector screen. Teachers can pause the reading to discuss what the pupils have just listened to.

The major section of the CD allows pupils, with the click of the mouse, to 'turn the pages' of the whole of the bound volume that once belonged to Alice Liddell. Lewis Carroll's handwriting is clear but is not always easy to read on the screen. To help with this, pupils can read a typescript of the text. They can also magnify the pages and listen to Miriam Margolyes reading that page.

There are many stylistic and content differences between this manuscript and the first printed volume. This makes it especially useful for the comparison of texts, an important part of the literacy strategy for Key Stage 3.

The last part of the CD-ROM is a short video (about 7 minutes long) that gives the background and context to the writing and publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Again this can be watched as a whole class activity. Knowing more about the reason why the Alice story was written can help pupils gain a much deeper understanding of the book itself.

This CD-ROM is one of several created by the British Library in their 'Turning the Pages' series. Treasures such as the Lindisfarne Gospels or the Sherborne Missal have already been



produced, and they bring into the classroom some of the greatest works of English literature in their original form. All are excellent resources for teaching and are very good value for money.

Alice's Adventures Under Ground

Platform:

PC and Mac

Age Range:

Key Stage 3

Supplier:

British Library

Tel: 020-7412 7735

Fax: 020-7412 7172

Email: bl-bookshop@bl.uk

Url: www.bl.uk/bookshop

Price:

£14.95 + VAT

Albert's Paintbox

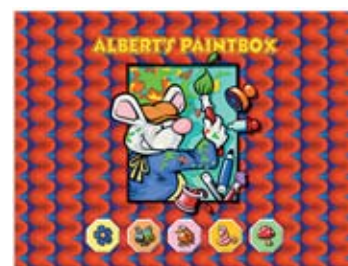
Reviewer: Jo Knight

As the name suggests, *Albert's Paintbox* is a simple painting program for younger children. It will serve as a good introduction for these children to the features seen in more sophisticated art packages, including colour selection, painting tools and brushes of various types, fill and pattern tools, shape drawing, stamps, cut and paste and many more. The great thing about this program, however, is that it does not overwhelm beginners with all this at once.

The program opens with a menu from which six pre-defined configurations can be selected, and each of these can be customised to suit your own particular children and their ages and abilities. For example,

the very simplest configuration allows only basic paint and fill tools plus the colour selector. Later configurations gradually work up to the full range of tools available within the program, including more sophisticated ideas such as flip-and-turn, making their own patterns and painting in different textures.

This is an excellent package for infants, and also for lower Key Stage 2 children and those with special needs. Its ease of differentiation means it will be a popular choice for teachers, too.



Albert's Paintbox

Platform:

Windows 98 and above

Age Range:

Key Stage 1

Supplier:

Resource Education

Tel: 01509-672 222

Fax: 01509-672 267

Email: info@resourcekt.co.uk

Url: www.resourcekt.co.uk

Price:

£37.50



Indigo Illustrations: British History

Reviewer: Colin Hynson

Every history teacher knows the problem of finding illustrations that pupils can use in their work. Images can be scanned in from a book or magazine;

problems that are mentioned above. It has well over 100 high-quality colour drawings that span across Key Stage 2 British history (along with a brief

accompanying text).

There are images linked to the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Tudors and Victorians. For some strange reason, there is nothing on World War II or Britain since 1948 but, even with this inexplicable gap, this is still an

Finally, they can also print out the images, with or without titles and accompanying text.

The uses for this collection are only really limited by the imaginations of the teacher and pupil. Teachers could use the images on an interactive whiteboard for whole-class teaching. For instance, if a class is looking at the Tudors, there is an excellent cut-away picture of the Globe Theatre. A class can study this and learn quite a lot about how 16th century theatres worked. For pupils, the images can be exported into many other applications such as PowerPoint or wordprocessing or a local website.

There is no issue of copyright to worry about. All of the images have had copyright waived for educational purposes, so they can be used with a clear conscience. Teachers could even use this as a discussion point for citizenship. The collection can also be placed on the school network so that the whole school can take advantage of it and there is no network licence to pay. The purchase price might seem a bit steep but, given that it can be used right across the whole school for many years to come, it suddenly seems like a much more modest outlay.

but this takes time, the quality of the scan is not always that good and there are copyright issues to think about. There are also some websites that have images that can be used by pupils, but again there is a problem of image quality. Images on the Web tend, by their very nature, not to be high enough in resolution to be used for printing – and there is still copyright to think about. There are lots of photographs that can be used, but printing photographs is always problematic.

This CD-ROM solves many of the

extremely useful product that can be used in nearly every primary classroom.

Pupils will find this CD very easy to navigate and they are able to do three things with what they can see. First, they can copy the images in three different sizes (small, medium and large). This is a useful facility, because one problem we all face is that when we resize any image, the initial quality of the image can be lost. Secondly, pupils can also copy the accompanying text that goes with the images, which might be especially useful for SEN pupils.

Henry V

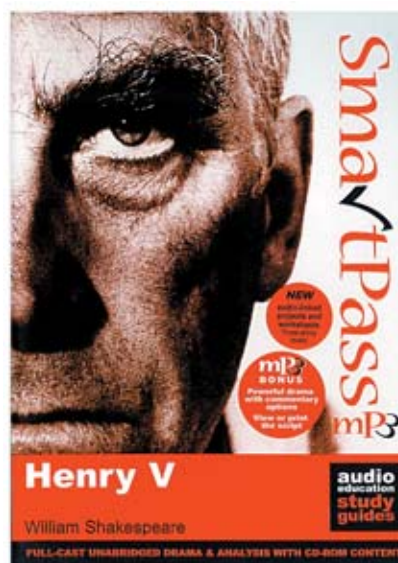
Reviewer: Brian Asbury

It might be unusual to see a review in *InteracTive* which is not an all-singing, all-dancing multimedia presentation, but there is more to ICT than fancy graphics, as a product like this amply demonstrates. Studying Shakespeare on paper can be difficult, especially for young people, given the often archaic language. The best way to experience Shakespeare's words is they were meant to be experienced – spoken aloud. Ideally, this should be accompanied by the spectacle of actors on stage, or at least on video, giving a full performance with all the requisite actions and expressions. However, this isn't always possible, especially when revising for exams.

One piece of ICT hardware that is beginning to come into its own for educational use, though, is the MP3 player. Any audio material can be

transferred to an MP3 file and played back anywhere, any time. This is where a product such as this can help. The magic of the MP3 format enables the SmartPass Henry V to contain Shakespeare's play in its entirety, broken down into scenes and both with and without commentary. The files can be played from the disc itself, or transferred to an MP3 player for study on the move.

There are also additional files providing historical background, study and exam strategies and dealing with various themes around the play and the turbulent period of history in which it is set. Further, there are .pdf files of the play text as well as project ideas and worksheets included on the disc.



It might not be multimedia, but this is nevertheless a super resource for anyone studying the play at exam level.

Indigo Illustrations: British History

Platform:

PC only

Age Range:

Key Stage 2

Supplier:

Indigo Illustrations

Tel: 01480-354 335

Fax: 01480-354 345

Email: sales@indigolearning.com

Url: www.indigolearning.com

Price:

£75.00 + VAT

Henry V

Platform:

Windows PC

Age Range:

Key Stage 4 and up

Supplier:

SmartPass Ltd

Tel: 01273-300 742

Fax: 01273-605 662

Email: info@smartpass.co.uk

Url: www.smartpass.co.uk

Price:

£24.99