

ESSENTIAL MICROSOFT WORKS 4.0

Tutorials for Teachers

Bernard John Poole

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University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown



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ESSENTIAL MICROSOFT WORKS 4.0: TUTORIALS FOR TEACHERS

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Written by

Bernard John Doole

Dedicated to

my past, present, and future students

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INTRODUCTION

I.1 THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS TEXT

These tutorials have been designed to introduce teachers and student teachers to the essential functionality of the *Works*¹ integrated software. The learning objectives of these tutorials are thus threefold:

- to help the pre-service and in-service teacher acquire the fundamental skills involved in using the *Works* integrated software package;
- to help the pre-service and in-service teacher learn how to apply these skills in the context of the classroom;
- to motivate the pre-service and in-service teacher to go on to learn the more advanced features of *Works*.

I.2 WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THIS TEXT?

This is certainly not the only set of *Works* tutorials available for the education marketplace. Why, then, will the pre-service or in-service teacher select this text rather than another? What features set it apart?

- The tutorials go beyond a cookbook approach to *Works*, emphasizing the concepts behind the keystrokes. On completion of the tutorials the student teacher will understand the fundamentals of managing a computer-integrated teaching environment. Students of education will also be introduced, directly or indirectly, to methodologies for teaching their students essential computing concepts and skills.
- The scope of the material presented in *ESSENTIAL Microsoft Works* is intentionally limited to what can be reasonably covered in 12–15 class hours. It will therefore fit nicely within

¹ For the sake of brevity this software will henceforth be referred to simply as *Works*.

the context of either a course devoted to the broader issues of computer literacy for teachers, or a stand-alone one-credit hands-on course that introduces *Works*.

- All the examples in the exercises are related to activities that might take place in K–12 classrooms. At the end of the tutorials, the teacher will take away a set of files that will have direct application in the classroom.
- Proficiency is promoted by frequent skill reinforcement.
- Appropriate exercises at the end of each tutorial provide an opportunity for skill consolidation.
- Teachers are encouraged throughout the text to build on, and grow beyond, the skills learned in the tutorials. This illustrated overview should prove useful both in teaching *Works* and as a source of reference when extending familiarity with the software.
- The author understands the needs of teachers who may not be naturally inclined to get excited about the latest technology. He has 25 years of experience teaching at all scholastic levels in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and North America. For 15 of his 27 years in the classroom he has taught in non-technical subject-areas. His undergraduate degrees are in English, History, French, and Data Processing; he has post-graduate degrees in Education and Information Science.

I.3 WHY WORKS?

Works is among the most commonly used integrated software applications designed to run on personal computers. Indeed, it was the very first example of integrated software for the Mac. It incorporates Word Processing, Database, Spreadsheet, Drawing, and Communications tasks into a single program, and it allows easy connectivity between these modules. Learn this one piece of software, and you will have learned a computing environment that will enable you to handle most of the productivity applications expected of a teaching professional. Teach this one piece of software to your students and, integrated into the curriculum, *Works* will enable them to engage in those powerful educational applications expected of the citizen of tomorrow's world.

Moreover, *Works* has reached a level of maturity in version 4.0 that makes it capable of handling most of the word processing, database, or spreadsheet tasks that might be asked of it in the classroom. It is becoming the most popular integrated software package in use in schools today. For this reason most college and university schools of Education are incorporating an introduction to *Works* into the curriculum that prepares student teachers to use the computer in the K–12 classroom.

I.4 THE STATUS OF COMPUTING IN SCHOOLS

The question is no longer: "Should the computer be used in schools?" The question is: "*How* should the computer be used in schools?" It is still less than 20 years since this tool for teaching found its way into the K–12 curriculum. If you believe the hoopla, and everything you see and hear in the media, you would think that a majority of children in schools were soaking up a large proportion of their education while seated at a computer keyboard. However, the reality is that the majority of teachers have not yet had a realistic opportunity to integrate computer-based activities into their curricula.

Too many sociological factors militate against the rapid restructuring of an educational system that has thousands of years of evolution behind it. Decades, even generations must come and go before computer-based systems become part of the educational process. Thus, many teachers—even in the United States—remain on the sidelines when it comes to incorporating the computer into the curriculum. It is not unusual to find classrooms where a computer sits idly in

one corner, carefully swaddled in a dust cover, rarely, if ever, used. Indeed, Piller (1992) describes the sorry state of computer use in schools under the headline "America's Shame."¹

The blame for this state of affairs is not to be placed at the individual teacher's door. As Gunn (1991) has pointed out, "Staff development typically receives comparatively little of the monies appropriated for technological advances." Too many school districts, with the best will in the world, have overlooked the sociological factors that inhibit technology transfer. There is, after all, a significant cultural adjustment involved in learning to use computers, especially for teachers who have not grown up around them. There is frustration, even fear, to be overcome.

Staff development and ongoing support are therefore key to successful integration of the computer into the generally accepted set of aids routinely used by teachers to provide students with the best possible learning experience. Buchsbaum (1992) quotes the experience of Vera White, a Washington, D.C. Jefferson Junior High School principal: "Sometimes technology can be frightening to people who have never had to use anything but a piece of chalk. But give them the time and space to work by themselves, and they can do it, and they enjoy it."

Hence these tutorials.

I.5 TEACHING IS A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR

No single tutorial can teach you anything unless you are committed to the learning process. Computing is a skill, rather than a body of knowledge. As such, it demands practice in order to foster and maintain proficiency. As Thomas Edison observed: "The most important method of education always has consisted of that in which the pupils were urged to actual performance." You, the teacher, must be prepared to work at mastering *Works*—and the myriad other examples of educational software that have been developed for your area of pedagogical expertise—if you are to ever feel comfortable using the computer as a tool for teaching.

All your efforts will bear abundant fruit when you incorporate computer-assisted instruction into your curriculum. Your students will then partake in that fruitful harvest; and you will touch their future even as you touch your own.

I.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

They say good teachers are born, not made. Well, here are two teachers who acknowledge an enormous debt to those dozens of teachers who have been a source of inspiration and, above all, of ideas. They have had a significant impact on our teaching commitment, philosophy, and style.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the students at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, especially Angela Sloan, who have class-tested the tutorials. Their feedback was voluminous and invaluable.

To all, our heartfelt gratitude. Life is a work in progress, so we would like to take this opportunity to thank in anticipation those from whom we will continue to draw inspiration and ideas to improve the quality of our teaching.

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- Buchsbaum, Herbert. "Portrait of a Staff Development Program," in *Electronic Learning*, vol. 11, no. 7, April 1992.
- Gunn, Cathy. In Proceedings of the National Educational Computing Conference, Phoenix, Arizona, June, 1991.
- Piller, Charles. "Separate Realities: The Creation of the Technological Underclass in America's Public Schools," in *MacWorld*, September, 1992.

¹ *MacWorld* special section on Personal Computers in Education.

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE WORD PROCESSOR

Writing a Conference Call letter

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Lesson 1 makes the assumption that you are already familiar with the Macintosh computer, though you may not be an expert in its use. If you are using a computer in a lab at school:

- you know where to find the computer lab on campus;
- you know how to turn your Mac computer on;
- you know how to log on using your login name and password;
- you are familiar with the windows, icons, mouse, and pointer with which you interact with the machine.

Lesson 1 also assumes that you have with you a copy of the *Student Disk* that accompanies these tutorials, along with the following three other disks on which to save your work:

- a disk named *Student Disk Backup* on which you have already made a backup copy of the contents of the Student Disk;
- an empty, formatted disk named *Primary Data* on which you will save all the files you create using these tutorials;
- an empty, formatted disk named *Backup Data* on which you will make a backup of all the files that you will store on your Primary Data disk.

If you do not have all these disks at hand, get them ready before proceeding with this tutorial. Getting them ready means:

- having each one formatted for the Macintosh computer;
- putting a blank label on each disk;
- writing your name on each label, along with the name of the disk.

You are now ready to learn about the *Works* Word Processor.