



Modeling CD, a set of interactive CD-ROMs developed for Granada Learning

Developing CD-based tools to meet curriculum objectives

Granada Learning (GL) is the UK's leading educational multimedia company, publishing innovative, curriculum-based resources for the UK and abroad. It currently supplies materials to more than ninety-five per cent of schools in the UK and exports to more than thirty countries internationally, with a catalog of over 800 software and hardware products.

THE NEED FOR INTERACTIVE CD-ROMs

Granada Learning commissioned Tata Interactive Systems to design and develop a set of Modeling CD as standalone applications with PC and MAC compatibility. The aim of the program was to aid the teacher and children when covering the compulsory modeling objectives of the National Curriculum. The requirement was to develop eight different activities in total, designed to explore and highlight the differences between simulated and real environments. The activities were developed to support the curriculum specified by Granada.

HOW OUR SOLUTION HELPED

Modeling CD was developed as an interactive CD-ROM introducing children to computer simulations that represented real and imaginary situations. It allowed them to try things that were difficult to do in practice. Eight activities were designed to help lower KS1 and KS2 children explore; they highlighted the differences between simulations and reality via two differentiated levels. Additional worksheets helped the children evaluate the game and identify the rules and patterns on which they were based. The following activities were developed:

- Dress the baby
- Find the teddy
- Design the bedroom
- Decorate a cake
- Monster
- Explore the environment
- Road safety game

The program had several interesting features:

- It provided a good range of exploratory activities, both real and imaginary.
- The design was consistent—helping the children save time.
- Fair testing was at the heart of each game as the interactive feature encouraged the children to select one variable at a time.
- Spoken instructions guided the children, allowing them to work independently.
- It supported predictive skills—for instance the 'Results' pop-up showed the children what they had tried before so they could decide the next course of action.
- It encouraged the children to collaborate and develop decision-making skills.
- 'Worksheets' and 'Extension Sheets' helped the children evaluate the game, identify the rules and patterns on which they were based, and extended their knowledge of a particular topic.
- It was extensively tested during development to ensure suitability of the levels for upper and lower KS1 and KS2 levels.



Other components of the program included:

■ Menu Screen

The menu screen showed all the eight activities available. Each activity had two levels, which were designed to cater for the needs of upper and lower KS2 levels.

■ Worksheet, Extension sheets, and Teacher Support Material

PDF Worksheets, Extension sheets, and Teacher Support Material were provided with each activity for further work away from the computer. The worksheets helped the children to evaluate the game and identify the rules and patterns on which they were based. The extension sheets were provided to extend their knowledge of the particular topic covered. Teacher support material presented a consolidated list of activity sheets that could be accessed from outside the program.

■ Activity Screen

When entering an activity, an introductory audio clip explained the game and other features. This introduction played automatically every time the learner entered the activity, but could be interrupted at any point by clicking anywhere on the screen.

Children could continue to make changes and test different settings in the activity. There also was a print option available to the users.

■ Teacher Information

Teacher Information gave a description of the activity, print options, and details of the rules and patterns on which the game was based. A detailed breakdown of curriculum links based on the English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh curricula were provided.

■ Printing

A number of options were available when clicking the print button. Children could choose to print out a picture showing the whole screen from the activity that could be displayed. A blank writing sheet could be printed out that showed the current settings and could be used for independent writing to demonstrate what the children had learned.



The Modeling CD is an effective example of a project adding value to the curriculum—it enabled the students and teachers to successfully meet their objectives.

TECHNOLOGY USED

The CD-ROMs are developed on Flash MX, Photoshop, and Illustrator.

SOME SAMPLE SCREENSHOTS

The screenshots offer a brief glimpse of Modeling CD, designed for Granada Learning. To experience our products at work, you may view some of our demos by registering online at www.tatainteractive.com.



Screenshot depicting an activity screen, where the child is required to arrange a room.

The visual design of the menu screen allowed easy access to all the activities.



The Teacher Support Material Screen from where lesson plans and relevant links could be accessed.

