

options and going for high scores. Errors in keyboard entry and/or paddle board coordination often occur during a game. The important factor may be the ability of the student to demonstrate knowledge of that basic fact with a quick self-correction.

The authors indicate that errors are learning opportunities and students should feel free to make errors during game play. Strategies recommending how to improve performance and learning through teaching to the errors are outlined in the manual. However, specific errors made during the course of a game are not recorded or indicated in any manner. The student is provided an error count but not a listing of the specific errors. Even at the termination of a one-minute game, one does not remember the specific errors made during play. This makes it difficult to employ a "teach to the errors strategy" unless someone else can record or verify errors. For this reason, it may be helpful for students to work in pairs - one student as player and another as recorder.

A glut of poor to useless microcomputer software is currently in the marketplace, and much of it has found its way into educational settings. Arcademic Skill Builders in Math and Language Arts provide a clear alternative to what currently exists in drill and practice packages. Students really do enjoy playing the games. Approach responses to Arcademics are very strong as players always want to do one more. Most drill and practice software is painfully slow and imposes very low response ceilings on students. The action can be very fast in Arcademics. The control options make the programs very affordable, applicable and adaptable for users. The documentation and support materials which explain rationale and procedures are excellent. Actual game operation directions are somewhat sketchy, but they can be easily figured out. See Table 2 for additional information.

TABLE 2

DLM Arcademic Skill
Builder Information

HARDWARE: All 12 programs are compatible with Apple II and IIE, as well as Commodore, IBM PC and Atari 400, 800 and 1200. Programs published before October 1983 may not be compatible with all these systems. DLM will work with customer replacements.

SOURCE: Developmental Learning Materials
One DLM Park
Allen, Texas 75002

Toll-Free Phone 800-527-4747

COST: \$44 per program

BACK-UP: Defective disks replaced at no cost within six months of purchase. After six months disks can be replaced for \$20 each.

What effects will Arcademics have on students' learning in your classroom? The authors suggest research was conducted in the form of a developmental or pilot study. However, no data or references are included in the manual. Therefore, the aforementioned question remains an empirical one. I think that you will certainly want to give them a try. For all the shortcomings the programs have, they may very well be the best drill and practice software on the market and the only frequency-based software designed to ensure many painless student trials in these curricular areas.

About PT

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Patrick McGreevy

Welcome to Volume V of JPT. First of all, I would like to thank you for

your patience and your support. I have experienced a great many difficulties in moving the Journal. However, most of these difficulties have been resolved and JPT is once again on an even keel.

I have one very specific and sincere request: send us your manuscripts and chart shares. Many of us have attended presentations at regional and national conferences where data are presented to support various conclusions. Most of the time, these data and conclusions never appear in a published article or book. As a group, PTers need to publish more--not just in JPT, but in other journals as well. Maybe we can pick up some hints from Tom Lovitt's article and chart our writing behavior!

Remember, if you see a Chart-based article in another journal, let us know so we can "spread the word."

I would like to thank the consulting editors, designated Precision Teachers and others who have recently reviewed manuscripts. The reviews have been precise, to the point, and very helpful.

The National Precision Teaching Conference in Park City, Utah went very well. Congratulations to Susan Ryberg, Steve Kukic, Cy Freston, Bruce Griffin, Joan Sebastian and the many others that made this conference an overwhelming success.

There was discussion in Park City concerning the formation of a national association of Precision Teaching. Pros and cons were presented. Although there was some support for such an association, it was decided that one would not be formed at this time. Some of those in attendance felt that we can more efficiently spread the word of PT by participating in other national organizations. Others felt that it might be advisable someday to apply for sub-group status within the Association for Behavior Analysis (ABA). Still others expressed the opinion that local and state PT organizations might be more useful at this time. These organizations could sponsor smaller PT conferences.

Well, with some people, a simple suggestion is all it takes. The Davis

County School District in Farmington, Utah will hold their own PT Conference on June 13. It is being organized by Mary Butler, P.T. Consultant, and Ruth Kunkel, Coordinator of Special Education Inservice Programs. We wish you the best of luck, Davis County! Let the readers of JPT know how it goes!

COMPUTING

Bill Wolking

The last column introduced and described Aimstar, an Apple II program for Precision Teachers. This time I can pass along some experiences with Aimstar and then finish the column with some information about Macintosh, the new Apple personal computer. Seven students doing practicums with me have now used the program for almost three months. Everyone started with high enthusiasm for the program. They saw their charted data on the screen, the potential of the computer application of decision rules and took off. However, it is difficult to continue, because of the time required to input the data. Recovery from errors is also time consuming. The program is very sensitive to dates and we have experienced some problems in this area. At this point, none of the teachers have elected to continue using Aimstar. The ratio of benefits (manipulable video screen charts, quick calculation of last 6 celeration lines, and computer application of decision rules) to costs (time entering data, time tracking and correcting errors, nonparticipation of learner in charting and decisions) is not good. This isn't too surprising. Discussions over the past several years about the possible contributions of microcomputer programs like Aimstar have generally led to the conclusion that they would probably detract from, rather than enhance, day-to-day Precision Teaching. Lindsley has probably been among the most consistent in saying that it would be very difficult to improve Precision Teaching with computer assistance or management programs.

When we started, I thought the computer application of decision rules would be a useful program function.