

School Library Journal

For Children's, Young Adult and School Librarians

Multimedia Review CD-ROM

Power of the Drum. A Cuban folktale of how one of God's messengers trades his power of fortune-telling for the power of playing the drum. CD would be a useful supplement to a lesson plan on Latin American countries. A valuable addition for public and school libraries.—*Maren Ostergard, Bellevue Regional Library, King County Library System, WA*

Songs to Blather By. 1 CD, approx. 32 min. Prod. by WonderWorks. Dist. by eduhub.com. 2002. \$11.99.

PreS-Bubborn's Times consists of the team of Bill and Jennifer Winegardner, who write, record, and perform their own music. Bill first created his character, Bubborn, the Royal Fool, at a Renaissance festival. Their voices are comedic, exaggerated, and over the top, which serves the content of the songs perfectly. The CD consists of 11 songs, and they are truly foolish. For example, some of the lyrics to "No Comprende Español" are: "Buenas Noches, Ay Camisa, Juan Valdez, Ortega Taro, Como Esta? No Problema, No Comprende Español." Another example is "The Cheese Song" which includes the lyrics: "It's what I've been dreaming of, it's milk's claim to immortality. This is my homage to fromage..." Other songs include "Funny Chicken," "New Sneakers," "Everyone Must Dance," "Goodly Goodly," among others. All of them are completely goofy and ridiculous, and children will find them vastly entertaining. An additional purchase.—*Maren Ostergard, Bellevue Regional Library, King County Library System, WA*

Wigglein' Collection. 1 CD, approx. 59 min. Wiggles n' Times. 2003. ISBN 0-9723972-0-5. \$15.95.

PreS-K—This collection of mostly traditional tunes gives preschoolers a solid musical foundation by combining fingerplays, instrumentals, action, free movement and play-along songs, as well as lullabies and rhythm patterns. Several musical styles are utilized, providing variety to the playlist. The full benefit of this title will be realized with adult interaction, but preschoolers will still enjoy listening and singing along. Songs like "Eeny Weeny Spider," "Grandpa's Farm," "Where Is Thumbkin," "Yankee Doodle," "Hokey Pokey" and "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" will be useful in story hours, especially for librarians who are not confident in their musical skills. A solid purchase for those looking to add to their music-and-movement collection.—*Kirsten Martindale, Buford Academy, GA*

CD-ROM

Language Arts

Two Ears & One Mouth. 1 hybrid CD-ROM. Systems: Win 95 & later, Macin-

tosh 7.1 & later. Boulden Pub. 2002. 2003 release. \$29.95 (contact distributor for additional pricing information).

Gr 2-6—The basics of good listening skills are presented in four activities. The first is a story, "Two Ears and One Mouth," which follows a young girl at home and at school as she experiences listening problems and must deal with the consequences. The school counselor gives her the steps for active listening. She applies what she has learned, and finds things improve. The story is presented in a cartoon format, and users can click forward or back, or allow the story to run at its own pace. The other activities reinforce the skills taught in the story. "The Ice Cream Party" allows users to make choices in a vignette and get feedback. "Quiz Show" is a game for one to three players in which they select one of four categories—"Other Kids," "Family," "Situation," and "School"—and then choose the points that may be won or lost depending on how they deal with real-life situations that are presented. Students can print out certificates from this activity. The final option, "Listening Puzzle," is a basic computerized jigsaw puzzle. Installation of the program is a breeze. Lively background music, clear instructions (both oral and written), and immediate feedback are provided. The cartoon graphics are clear, crisp, visually appealing and feature a multiethnic group of children. This CD-ROM teaches and reinforces good listening skills.—*Teresa Bateman, Brigsdon Elementary School, Federal Way, WA*

Social Studies

Geocycle USA. 1 hybrid CD-ROM. Systems: Win, Macintosh 7.5 & later. EdVenture Software. 2002. \$30.

Gr 3 Up—This software is engaging, fun, and educational. Students can practice geography skills by identifying states, capitals, cities, natural features, and famous sites in order to successfully compete in the GeoChallenge. Points are earned to attain the highest flight class as users fly over the United States and answer questions. Options include selecting a region, choosing the type of question, and determining flying mode. An animated sequence launches the flyer, a pedal-driven glider/seaplane, at the command of a military style flight controller. Users don't control the launch or landing, but steer the geocycle through obstacles such as hot air balloons, geese, and a mysterious black plane to answer questions correctly. A poor performance on questions results in a bumpy landing, catapulting the pilot into the water or landing net, with humorous sound effects. Independent skills practice takes the form of identifying the "Mystery Photo," practicing state abbrevia-

tions, and a game of "Save the States." A number of other challenging activities should keep students on task and entertained as they learn. Players will not quickly conquer or grow bored with this program. Cyclers are automatically saved, and statistics provide ongoing scores for users. One feature provides positive reinforcement in regional accents. Instructions and rules are extensive, for those who care to read them. Navigation is fairly intuitive. The software is self-starting and includes QuickTime installation. Put this program in your lab, classroom, or home to reinforce geography skills in a manner students will enjoy.—*Melba Town, Slippery Rock University, PA*

World History: A Comparative Civilization Perspective. 2 hybrid CD-ROMs. Systems: Win 95 & later, PowerMac. Teaching for Thinking. 2002. ISBN 0-97314694-X. 1-3 copies: \$199 ea.; 4-9 copies: \$149 ea. (contact producer for additional pricing).

Gr 5-8—This teaching tool for world history will appeal to many learning styles. It is a comprehensive history course using sound and images to teach about different historical periods and cultures. While more plays, a narrator representing each period in history tells the story of that era as maps, video, and images from works of art associated with the culture being discussed appear onscreen. Beginning with an introduction, eight chapters from Prehistory to Ancient History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the 20th century discuss and illustrate social, political, economic and cultural issues. Voices representing real or imagined people from each era (Nefertiti, Confucius, Archimedes, Machiavelli and others) describe what it was like to have lived during that time. Teachers may select chapters at random. Printable additions at the end of each chapter include study questions, timelines comparing cultures and events, links to Web sites, bibliographies, follow-up activities, and self-evaluation exercises. The program is easy to navigate and use. Some of the conversation is chatty and informal, which might detract from the seriousness of the subject or become distracting to some students. Teachers could use this program to supplement textbook learning, to generate research projects, for individual instruction, or for tests.—*Pat Bender, The Shipley School, Bryn Mawr, PA*

CORRECTION: *That's How We Build a House* (July 2003, p. 66) is distributed by Instructional Video, 2219 C St., Lincoln, NE 68502; 800/228-0163; www.invideo.com.

In the review of Robin Road Production's *Jonah and His Amazing Voyage* (June 2003, p. 79), a multimedia kit from the Bible Adventures Club Series, Jonah was incorrectly referred to as Noah.