

# Mediaware Review

## *Teaching, Learning and Technology: A Planning Guide*

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Teaching, Learning & Technology is a two part, interactive, multimedia kit that has been designed to guide teachers and administrators in planning how to use current technology to enhance classroom teaching and learning. Part one contains a step-by-step guide to planning. Part two contains a library of audio and visual examples that are used to illustrate the planning process in action. Collectively, parts one and two do an excellent job of presenting a model for planning and modeling how multimedia can be used to support learning about and implementing a planning process.

### *Kit Description*

The main components of the kit include a CAV videodisc, CD-ROM disc, spiral bound workbook, workbook duplication masters, a 3.5 in. disk full of planning templates, and a map. The map displays the layout of the program and the interactive nature of the audio, video and text components. The videodisc contains classroom examples of active learning, cooperative learning, interdisciplinary learning and individualized learning. The CD contains over 10 meg. of HyperCard stacks to control the flow of all the text, audio clips and reference lists, an interactive plan book, audio interviews, and an assembly tool for creating customized presentations. The workbook has been divided into several sections. It starts with a focus on envisioning the future, and continues on to assessing where you are, setting goals, planning how to achieve the goals, making the plan happen, and evaluating the plan. Copies of the HyperCard-based reference lists and planning templates have been reproduced at the end of the workbook.

### *Hardware and Software Requirements*

A CD-ROM drive with a speaker or headphones, Macintosh LC or Mac II with a color monitor, videodisc player, and videodisc monitor are required in order to use this kit. The program will run under later versions of System 6 or current versions of System 7. At least 2 megabytes of RAM are required

for system 6 and 4 or more for System 7 operation. Mac Write II is not included in the kit but it is required in order to use the planning templates on the floppy disk. The kit is available from Intellimation in the U.S. (\$150.00 U.S.) or from Perceptix Inc. in Canada (\$180.00 CDN.).

### *Program Operation*

To get the program up and running, the T, L & T Program folder must be copied onto the hard disk. The HyperCard stacks will crash if they are run directly from the CD-ROM. They will also crash if they are loaded onto a hard drive in older black & white Macintosh. Assuming that all physical connections have been properly made, a sufficient amount of memory is available, and there are no conflicts with older versions of HyperCard or resident INITs, the title card will appear on the screen soon after clicking on the Main Program HyperCard stack. This is a welcome sight. When the title card appears, the users must then select an appropriate videodisc player from the set-up list. Having made this choice, they then must specify a communications port and a baud rate that is compatible with the videodisc player. Once communication has been established with the videodisc player, the Main Menu will appear. This is home base. From here, it is easy to gain access to and from all segments of the program.

For the information browser, the navigation system is a joy to use. In addition to the usual Next, Previous and Back arrow buttons, the control panel facilitates easy access to the utility tools, help files, and the program map. Given any point in the stack, at no time is the user more than two or three mouse clicks away from any of the program's resources. Both audio and visual feedback are given to the user to indicate the program's acceptance of the button choice. While the audio feedback is effective, the constant "clicking" noise can become a bit tedious after using the program for an extended length of time.

Each major section of program is further divided into sub-components. In each sub-component, there is a brief audio overview of what is contained in the sub-component. Then one or more video clips are available to illustrate real-life examples of the topic being explained. Radio programs, which are actually audio interviews with key teachers or administrators, compliment the video clips. In addition to the audio and video clips, clicking on "hot text" brings up a dialog box with additional information pertinent to the highlighted text. Finally, links can be made to the technical details associated with the production of each audio and video clip, appropriate help files, and the support materials associated with the sub-component.

Because the program has been organized in this manner many different types of user style can be accommodated. For example, users who feel most comfortable accessing and using the information in a linear manner can do so. Similarly, those users who feel most constrained by a linear approach to learning can choose their own paths. Each type of user is able to start from wherever they feel comfortable. For both user types, the constant use of real-

world metaphors, reversible actions, and internal command consistency goes a long way to help develop the illusion of, "gee whiz, it feels like I've been here before. I know how to do this stuff!"

### *Teacher Professionalism*

While there have been many books written on teacher professionalism, it is unusual to find this topic addressed in a multimedia kit. Teacher professionalism has been defined in the kit as "the sum of what teachers do both inside and outside of the classroom to orchestrate student learning, contribute to the art and craft of teaching, and influence educational policy making." Examples are drawn from case studies showing how teachers can use computer-based resources to create instructional materials and to collect, store, and exchange information for efficient decision making. While it is never stated explicitly in the program, implicit in examples provided in this section is the suggestion that by putting program decisions into the hands of motivated teachers and giving them access to a modest amount of current technology, the learning environment will improve for students and teachers will experience greater levels of satisfaction. "The dignity you have as a professional is very high because your decisions are given credence..you can fulfill them..you make a decision and see it implemented. You are respected for your ideas, for your knowledge, and for your experience. You have helped to construct something."

### *Conclusions*

In conclusion, it is important to note that models and examples contained in this kit are not prescriptive. This is important because the use of any planning model is often context dependent. This package is sufficiently flexible and customizable to be of help to almost any school staff who wishes to integrate technology into almost any subject area of the curriculum. The benefit of being able to actually see and hear what other teachers have been able to do in their classrooms provides a good starting point to begin discussing what is possible in one's own setting. And finally, once the plan has been formulated, the program provides the necessary printer support to assist the planning team in producing their presentation materials. A good plan should not only be good, it should also look good. The more care and attention that has been put into creating good audio, visual and print resources, the more effective the presenters are likely be in sharing their vision of the future with their colleagues, school officials, and parents.

### EDITOR

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