Software Evaluation: Playing with Language: Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Publisher: Syracuse Language Systems
Content Area: Listening, story vocabulary
Grade level(s): Unidentified; suitable for kindergarten children and young pupil and young ESL/EFL beginners.
Hardware Required:
- Multimedia PC or equivalent
- MS-DOS or PC-DOS operating system version 3.1 or later; Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later; Microsoft MS-DOS CD-ROM extensions version 2.2 or later.
Cost Information: Unavailable.
Software Functions: Interactive storybook
Objectives: Users can develop reasoning and perception (including identifying images and listening comprehension) skills, and learn vocabulary.

Appropriateness of Content for Audience  4.5/5
--Richness of Content/Skills Trained
This interactive “storybook” has about twenty “pages”; every page is accompanied by games which ask the users to identify objects, make choices according to comprehension, and take action as directed. Despite the simplicity of the story, the interactive games are quite rich in content.

For young children, the software helps develop their general perception skills (vision, hearing, comprehension, and reasoning). It also helps build the learners’ vocabulary. The software can also be used by English as a foreign/second language students.

It might be pointed out that this software does not train the users’ reading or production skill. But this design is appropriate for the audience. The only pity is that the software contains only one story.

--Difficulty Level
This software is very suitable for children at the age of 5-8, and EFL/ESLs at beginner level.

Presentation; Appeal  5/5
The layout of the storybook is very attractive, with lovely cartoon characters and children language. The “mouse” is also shown as a smiley face.

Feedback/Interaction  4/5
The interaction comes in the game part of the story. The “smiley face” turns into a “sad” one when the user picks up the wrong answer. Choices are all presented in the form of pictures. Because of the constraint of difficulty level, however, one page of the “book” is only accompanied by one question-answer “game”.

User friendliness  5/5
The software is easy to install and to use. A small pamphlet comes together with the
software that briefly introduces usages.

**Recommended Use**

This interactive storybook would prove very interesting for kids. It is a good listening comprehension exercise for English language learners too.

(Evaluated by Yi Xu, 2005.)