KIDSPELL v1.1

KIDSPELL is a spelling program for children. KIDSPELL associates   a picture with   a word so that children can enjoy spelling words. KIDSPELL is a user-configurable spelling program.

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INSTALLATION

 KIDSPELL should come as a LHA self-desolving archive and thus the installation is done by running the archived .exe file under DOS.

 After self-desolving, you should have kidspell.exe and a subdirectory "data" which contains kidspell.his, kidspell.hlp, .lis files, and many .bmp bitmaps.

 If you do not have a subdirectory called "data" under the kidspell.exe directory, please create it and move kidspell.his, kidspell.hlp, .lis files, and .bmp bitmaps into the "data" subdirectory.

 All but two bitmaps are in 16 colors (earth.bmp and shuttle.bmp obtained from NASA are in 256 colors, which does not look good under a 16 color screen).   Most SVGA card with 512Kbyte memory can do 640x480x256 on a standard VGA monitor. It is worth having 256 colors.   Yes, a bitmap with 256 colors consumes much space on a hard disk but I cannot make myself drop these two pictures.

HOW TO PLAY

There are two ways to play, "Guess What" and "Spell This." The current mode is shown in the window caption.

Menu

The menu bar has several options in playing which an adult may want to pick, using a mouse or a keyboard.

GAME: to pick which mode to play.   You can pick "Exit" to quit the game.

WORDS: to change a word-list.

MATCH: to pick how many characters should match with a word in a word-list. For example: practicing alphabet needs to pick "First letter only" option.   For learning lower-case alphabet, pick "First letter only" from the MATCH menu and "Lower case" from the CASE menu.

CASE: to pick either lower case or UPPER CASE.

SOUND: to make sound on or off.

SCORE: to see the score.

HELP: to get this help.

Guess What !

A child types a word and hits <RETURN> key.   If the word is in the current word-list, then a picture associated with the word is shown.   If the word is not in the word-list, then a picture of a sad face with "NOT FOUND" appears.

Spell This !

There are two options:random and sequential.   The option characterizes the way a picture is picked up from a word-list.

In either option, a picture is shown and a cursor is blinking. You type a word and hit <RETURN> key.   If the spelling is correct (up to a number of characters set in the MATCH menu), then a "GOOD" picture shows up and the next picture will come up. If the spelling is wrong, a sad-face "WRONG" picture appears and then the correct spelling will appear at the bottom so that you can type the word again. Until you have the correct spelling up to the matching length, the picture will not change.

HOW TO CUSTOMIZE

The best feature of KIDSPELL is that you can customize your word-list and associated bitmaps to your heart's content.

You can create a new word-list. You can customize the word-list by adding a word or deleting a word of a particular word-list.   For example, I included numbers.lis   for spelling numbers and alphabet.lis for just learning A,B,Cs on the keyboard.

Create a new word-list

For example, if you want to create your own word-list, then pick <Words> in the menu and then pick <Change the word-list>.   The dialog window shows up with the existing word-list files.   If   you type in a non-existing word-list and click <OK>, then a new word-list file with empty list will be created.   The word-list filename must end with ".lis". Note that the game option changes to "Guess What!"

Add a word to a word-list

If you are creative, create a bitmap with a bitmap editor from QCWIN, WINDEV from Microsoft, Resource Workshop from Borland C++, or Paintbrush which comes free as one of Windows accesories.   If you are not, pick a bitmap among what you have.

One more way is to use the clipboard: If you have a picture in an active window (a game or whatever), you can get the picture in the clipboard by hitting <ALT><PrintScreen>.   Then open a bitmap editor, paste the picture in the clipboard, and then edit and save it as a bmp file. A 256 color bitmap is trickier, since a bitmap editor must pick up the correct palette for the clipboard.   Paintbrush in Windows 3.1 usually failed on me.

Remember that a bitmap will take space on your hard disk.   A reasonable size is 16 color x 72 pixel width x 72 pixel height.

A bitmap file must be in DIB format (Windows v3 format with .bmp extension). KIDSPELL can display a bitmap whose size is the limit of your machine's capability under Windows and up to 256 colors. KIDSPELL will expand a bitmap to fit the size of the KIDSPELL window. A bitmap whose size is bigger than the KIDSPELL window is shown only the part of it.

If you create a bitmap, you must save it   with extention .bmp in the subdirectory called "data" where you installed KIDSPELL.   If you want to use an existing bitmap, you must copy it in this subdirectory.   KIDSPELL will look ONLY at this subdirectory to find a bitmap associated with a word.

Now start KIDSPELL and pick <Words> in the menu and then pick <Add a word>. You have the box for a new word, the box for a bitmap, and then the list of bitmaps in the subdirectory.   If you click one of the bitmaps, it will be in the bitmap name box.   Type a word you want to associate with and then click on <Done>.   You can view a shrinked bitmap in this dialog box.   Use the shrinked bitmap as only a reference, since a bitmap is sometimes garbled when reduced.

Delete a word from the list

Just pick <Words> in the menu and then pick <Delete a word>. You find a word box and a list of words in the current word-list. If you click on a word in the list box, then it is copied into a word box. Click <OK> to delete it.

Warning in customization

Do not remove kidspell.his, kidspell.bmp, question.bmp, correct.bmp, wrong.bmp, notfound.bmp, and at least one .lis file. Without these files, KIDSPELL does not run.   If you do not like bitmaps, edit or replace them.

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

 Send me comments to my compuserve account [71320,1430] or the address below. I will try to fix bugs and add more features in future.

 Please help me make this program better and useful to other people.   If you create your own word-lists with bitmaps and like to share with others, please post an archived file with .lis files and bitmaps on compuserve or send them to me.

 You can distribute KIDSPELL to anybody, but you are not allowed to sell for profit.

 Please encourage the author by sending a donation of one dollar.

 Thank you.

Y. Tosa
5643 Melvin Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
USA

CompuServe [71320.1430]

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Version History

Version 1.1: November 5, 1992.   You see the differences.

Version 1.0: May 14, 1992.