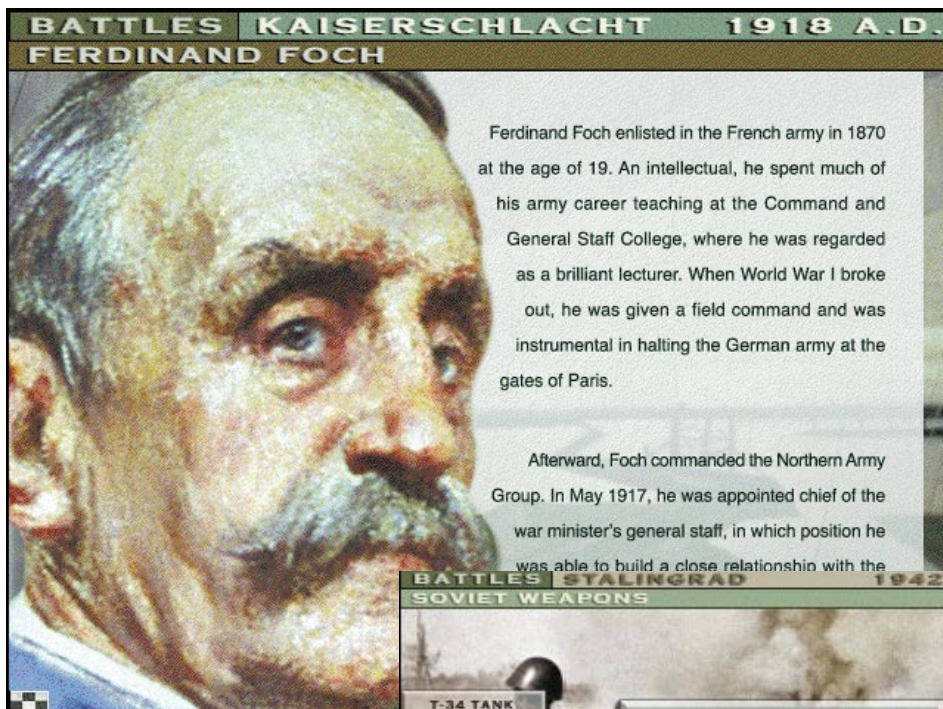


after hours: *family*

We enter the field of conflict with the Battles of the World, take a peek at the latest version of the Eyewitness Encyclopaedia of Science and join Goldilocks and the Three Bears for breakfast



Battles of the World

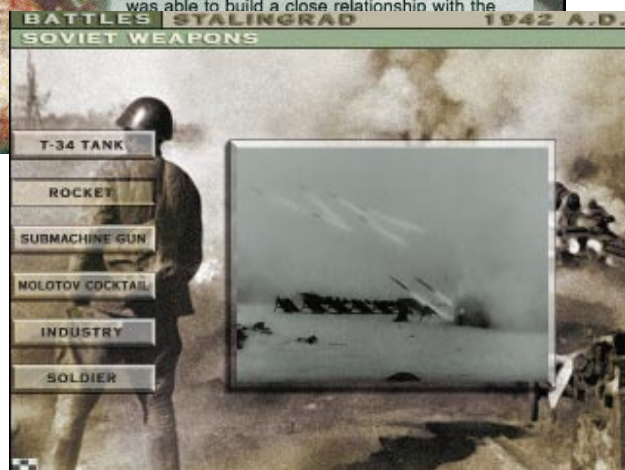
It would have been easy for this title to glorify war. Instead, it is a mature look at warfare, and a useful reference tool to boot.

Only 10 conflicts, from the ancient Egyptian battle of Kadesh to the Gulf War, are examined in depth, with the remaining wars catered for by an impressively large database and colourful timeline.

Once a battle has been selected it is introduced by a multimedia Alexander the Great – who smugly informs you that he is the greatest general of all time.

This is followed by slightly superficial looks at the weapons, tactics and major personalities of each side, complemented by an overview of each battle and its significance.

The re-enactments of the 10



family/multimedia news

The latest animated storybook from Disney is **101 Dalmations**. With sing-a-longs and a range of word games, it will bring Cruella De Vil to your screens from the middle of May, and is priced at £39.99.

Disney Interactive: 0181 222 1413
www.disney.com

A new series of children's games from Inner Workings

starts with the title **Lemon Dog in SoundLands**. Players aged from six to eight must solve musical puzzles to help Lemon Dog rescue the members of his band from the evil

clutches of the music-hating Sour Puss. In the meantime, **The Jolly Postman**, based on the books by Janet and Allan Ahlberg, is due to be released as you read this.

Inner Workings:
0141 552 4451
www.innerworkings.co.uk

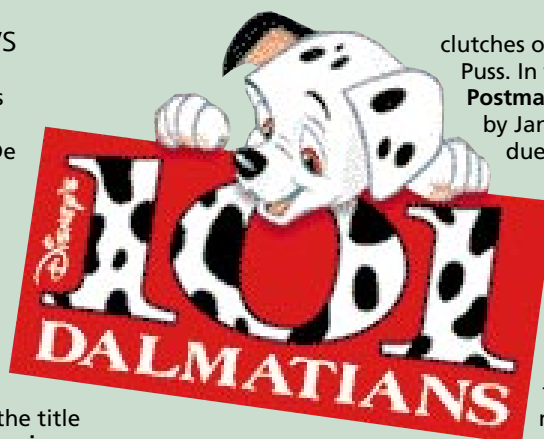
Willy Wabbit's 3D Maths Adventure, aimed at 11- to 16-year-olds, teaches techniques for solving maths problem questions. It's a 3D

adventure where players must find the solution to a problem before proceeding – with help from topic-based tutorials if needed. Further Willy Wabbit titles are available to suit other age groups.

US Dreams: 01483 728397

With the exam season approaching, **Winning the Brain Game** promises to help with revision and learning techniques. Featuring the voice of Hugh Dennis – of Punt and Dennis fame – and lively graphics, the disc is available now for £24.99.

Neil Taylor Professional Training: 01428 682550



After hours family

battles are superb. With animation and commentary, supplemented by contemporary pictures and some video clips, they take you through the entire course of the conflict, with excellent discussions of tactics and their consequences.

It's a shame more battles could not have been dealt with in the same depth, but the database certainly seems comprehensive. We tried to fox it with the most obscure battles we could think of but were rewarded each time with a description of the combat and notes setting it in its historical context. JS

Although it's perhaps a little superficial for serious study, Battles of the World is an excellent product. If you're interested in battles you'll want this disc.

○ £24.99 (inc VAT)
○ The Learning Company:
0181 246 4000

Battles of the World

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Presentation | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Ease of use | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Value for money | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Overall | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |

Minimum requirements: 486DX2, Windows 3.1 or later, 8Mb of RAM.

Eyewitness Encyclopaedia of Science 2.0

With around 1,000 new articles and interactive sections including a quiz and on-line links, this promised to be an exciting update to Dorling Kindersley's original encyclopaedia.

Although not a bad product, it's something of a missed opportunity. The content is all there: it's factually accurate as far as we could tell, and does a good job of explaining difficult concepts.

Despite this, too many entries switch between simplicity and complexity within a couple of lines, and not enough terms are cross-

referenced using hotlinks to other entries on the disc. Without hotlinks, it can be difficult to find information because the interface is fussy and over-complicated.

Most of the articles are colourfully illustrated and the diagrams are very informative. Where this disc should have succeeded, however, is in its multimedia content. Unfortunately, most of the sound clips are no more than the entry being read aloud, and the videos are superficial and often have interesting footage coupled with a banal sound track. JS

This looks nice, its content is adequate and its cross-referencing is convenient. However, the interface is difficult to use and the lack of multimedia items is a missed opportunity.

○ £39.99 (inc VAT)
○ Dorling Kindersley:
0171 836 5411

Encyclopaedia of Science 2.0

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Presentation | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Ease of use | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Value for money | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Overall | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |

Minimum requirements: PC - 486DX/33, Windows 3.1 or later, 8Mb of RAM, 22Mb of hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM drive, 8-bit sound card, VGA display. Mac - 68LC040 25MHz or better, System 7.0 or higher, 12Mb of RAM, 25Mb of hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM drive, 640x480 256-colour display, 8-bit sound.



Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Are you sitting comfortably? Then settle down and listen to the voice of Daphne Oxenford, doyenne of Radio 4's *Listen with Mother*, reading *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.

This is a cheap and cheerful animated storybook, with unsophisticated pictures and rather static animations. Click on a tree to watch apples grow, click on a bear to see it smile - dull stuff. More appealing were the clicks to turn a chair into a toilet, or produce a noisy burp from Baby Bear. A mildly amusing running joke was the sheep that appeared in ever less likely settings.

Along with the storybook there is a set of simple jigsaws, which are scenes from the book. These have simple cut-out shapes to slot into the appropriate gaps - when you do so, a very quiet click is the only recognition of your achievement. You may find it entertaining or irritating that you can put pieces into the wrong holes, with no feedback.

Tucked away inside the help pages is some background information on the habits of bears and the story of Goldilocks. This material isn't geared towards the youngsters who would be using the storybook, so it might be necessary for a helpful adult to wade through the dull-looking pages and help them interpret the information.

Running the program is easy enough, but we did encounter problems with it stopping altogether and starting up additional copies. SH

There's not a lot to it, but young children seem happy enough with it - and it costs less than many titles.

○ £9.99 (inc VAT)
○ Europress: 01625 859333

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Presentation | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Ease of use | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Value for money | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Overall | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |

Minimum requirements: 486DX, Windows 3.1 or later, 4Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, 256-colour display, Windows-compatible sound card.