Software Central
NCTE Software Evaluation Framework

Software Title: As given on the software

Publisher Information
Publisher: As given on the software
Publisher's website: www.-------
Target Group: As indicated on the software i.e. age, special needs etc.
Curriculum Areas: In which this title might be useful
Year of Publication: xx/xx/xxx
Platform: Mac, PC or other (please specify)
Format: CD Rom, DVD, Floppy, Internet download, etc
Minimum Specifications required to run the software title? Memory, op system, CD-Rom, etc
Licence: Single user, multiple user, network licence, trial version?
Recommended Price: Retail price, (is education price available)

Evaluation Information
Evaluators Name: person carrying out the evaluation
Evaluation Period: Duration (no of weeks), time of the year
Class group evaluated on: e.g. 1st class, senior primary, resource, junior cert, senior cycle etc.

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1. SUMMARY

Give a brief description of the program and your views on how it can be used in the classroom. (approx 200 words)
If you have parental consent to use pupils photos please include some photos of your pupils actively using the software.

2. OVERVIEW OF TEACHING WITH THIS TITLE
This section should include the evaluators feedback on how they used the software in their classroom (200 – 500+ words)

It should include the following:

– What curriculum areas does this software title support? i.e. English
– Please **list** the **curriculum links** (i.e. developing reading skills, developing comprehension skills, developing response to fiction etc)

– Is this software title suitable for use with students with special educational needs?   If the answer is yes, please elaborate on how it can be used and provide some information on the levels of ability needed by such students" Did you use the support of another adult to effectively use the software in your classroom?, e.g., a special needs assistant?

– Does this title contribute to the learning scenario in ways that cannot be achieved equally well by other (non-computer based) resources? e.g. instant feedback to answers? Was this visual /audio feedback?

– How did you use the software title? Did it serve to introduce a lesson? Did it form part of project activity or development e.g. concept mapping software? Was it used by the students as part of their project development?

– In your opinion, how best can this product be used in a classroom setting?
a) individual b) pairs c) small groups d) whole class

– What are the potential strengths/weaknesses of this software title for **classroom use**?

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3. CONTENT
This section should describe the content of the software evaluated. (200 – 500+ words)

It should include the following information:

– Is the content accurate, reliable and up-to-date?

– Is it culturally, gender and/or racially balanced

– Is the language and/or product style appropriate for the target age? (i.e. suitable vocabulary, accents used, etc.)

– Does the program have multiple levels of difficulty and challenge? And if so are they appropriate and do they add value to the learning?

– Does the user (teacher and/or student) have control over the rate of delivery and level of difficulty of the content?

– How is the information structured to support learning?

– Is the software designed to tap a variety of learning modes (e.g. visual, aural and linguistic)?

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4. DESIGN and NAVIGATION
This section should contain the evaluators opinion of the ease of use and layout of the software, i.e. was it intuitive? (200+ words)

Consider the following questions when writing this section.

– Is the interface simple enough to be used with little or no reading of the documentation?

– Can the user by-pass the introductory sequence?

– Can the software be easily used by pupils without teacher instructions?

– Is the on-screen help useful and appropriate and available at all times?

- Can you get in and out to the section you want easily; can you bookmark where you've been, or record an individual users place so that they can restart where they left off?

- Is the software designed to be accessible to students with special needs? Is it switch accessible / can it be used with a touch screen? / Is there a possibility to change settings?

- What is the nature of the feedback the program provides to students? Is it in the form of text/sound/score?

- Is there a record keeping or record management system, and can these be printed out? How simple or how complex is it?

5. INSTALLATION and USE

Consider the following questions when writing this section.

- Does the product auto-load or do you have to manually install it?

- Does the software load to the hard drive or is the CD Rom needed each time?

- Does this product launch quickly enough for classroom use? If not try to quantify e.g. it took 10 minutes to load which is too slow.

- Does the program respond quickly enough to input from the child?

- Is there a network version of the program available? If yes, does the teacher need a lot of technical network knowledge?

6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Consider the following questions when writing this section.

- Is the documentation clearly separated into elements that deal with running the software, and those that deal with classroom practice?

- Are the loading and operating instructions clear?

- Is sufficient information given to enable the user to know what the software does, and basically how it behaves without having to run the software?

- Are the teacher notes and pupil activities relevant to the target group?

- Are the ideas presented appropriate to good practice?

- Are there any resources provided for use with pupils? If there are, were they useful, and did they enhance the use of the software within the classroom? (Please comment)

7. **Exemplar**

Software name or software image/logo	Exemplar name *i.e.* *Using "software title" to create short stories.*

Curriculum Area/s	Strand/s	Strand unit/s
Language: English	Imaginative development through language	Writing: ………….

Approaches and methodologies	Read short story. Discussion.

Level	What level is this exemplar aimed at?

Objectives	At the end of this session the pupil should be able to:
	  –
	  –
	  –

ICT resources	e.g. Software title, digital camera if picture is added.

Other resources	Book of short stories, writing materials

Preparatory activities	

Methodology	

Extension activities	

Appropriate scoilnet links	List suitable links on www.scoilnet.ie that will enhance this activity.