Virtual Image News

Issue 5
July 2006

Welcome to your fifth Virtual Image newsletter. In response to feedback from our customers, we began sending out newsletters back in March 2005 and we hope you are finding them useful and informative. Each of the newsletters contains ideas that you can use in the classroom, articles on issues of current interest and the opportunity to win some of our market-leading software.

This issue looks at the following topics:
1. Connections in Space
2. David Benjamin (in the Guardian again)
3. What's New
4. Competition
5. Last Issue's Competition
6. In Development

We hope you like it!

1. Connections in Space

The long-awaited **Connections in Space** CD-ROM is due to be despatched free to all UK secondary schools in September.

The **Connections in Space** CD-ROM and website examine the connections between artistic and scientific representations of space, where 'space' is interpreted in the broadest possible sense. The project is a collaboration between the physicist and software author Dr. Nick Mee, the astrophysicist and mathematician Prof. John Barrow, the historian of science and art Prof. Martin Kemp and the artist Richard Bright. The project received its initial funding from the SciArt consortium in 2000. Further development has been funded by the Gruber Foundation, NESTA, the Millennium Mathematics Project and PPARC.

The software is built around a user interface that is based on an adaptation of the London Underground Map. The underground map, originally designed by Harry Beck, was inspired by electrical circuit diagrams and is regarded as a classic piece of design. Furthermore, the map is topological rather than metrical, as it is the connections between stations that matter rather than the distance between them. The map is a great example of the influence of science on art and design.

There are a total of 57 stations, with names such as: Penrose Tiles, Fractals, Anamorphosis and Curved Space, featuring artworks ranging from Leonardo's 'Mona Lisa' to the exotic millinery of Pip Hackett.

If you can't wait for the CD-ROM version, the **Connections in Space** website can be found at www.connectionsinspace.co.uk.

2. The Guardian

David Benjamin, Head of Mathematics at the Norton Knatchbull School in Kent and author of numerous Virtual Image CD-ROMs, has been in the papers again. You can read the article at the following link:

http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,,1806243,00.html

If you would like to see David himself, take a look here at his new website:

http://www.norton-knatchbull.kent.sch.uk/departments/maths/index.html

3. What's New

- **Nubble! Express**

  Following the overwhelming popularity of our compulsive arithmetic game **Nubble!**, we have developed a new faster arithmetic game **Nubble! Express**. A full game of **Nubble! Express** could be completed in about a quarter of an hour at the end of a maths lesson. It is also perfect for developing the number skills of younger or less able pupils.

  The rules of **Nubble! Express** are the same as the rules of **Nubble!**, except that numbers are formed by combining the scores on three (5-sided) dice rather than four (6-sided) dice. The **Nubble! Express** board is composed of just 25 hexagons, in place of the 100 hexagons of **Nubble!**.

- **Science Lesson Starters series**

  The **Science Lesson Starters** series of CD-ROMs has now been completed. The nine CD-ROMs in the series were specifically written for the new curriculum that comes into effect in September 2006. Each set of three CD-ROMs for the three subject areas: Biology, Chemistry and Physics, are now available at a reduced price.

  (Set of 3 CD-ROMs) – single user licence - £195 + VAT

  (Set of 3 CD-ROMs) – site licence - £395 + VAT

- **All About Numbers**

All about Numbers is the long-awaited new CD-ROM written by David Benjamin and Justin Dodd. It is designed to provide teachers with stimulating material and imaginative interactive activities for mathematics lessons. The software can be presented on an interactive whiteboard to provide lesson starters or plenaries, and networked to work stations where students can explore numbers independently. The software also contains interactive investigations and step-by-step constructions. The software includes an abundance of information about the history and development of numbers, plus a wealth of information about famous mathematicians and their discoveries.

- **Tangram**

The ancient Japanese art of Tangram has been brought to the computer screen. Our elegant new **Tangram** CD-ROM offers 501 different tangram puzzles that can be completed on-screen by dragging and rotating the traditional triangular, square and rhombic pieces of a tangram set.

Tangram is a great new addition to our collection of mathematical games CD-ROMs. The puzzles are perfect for developing an understanding of simple polygons and will suit pupils at the top end of the primary school or the early years of the secondary school. A single user licence costs £15 + VAT. Multiple user licences range up to £90 + VAT for an unlimited user site licence.

4. Competition

Each issue of the Virtual Image Newsletter will offer you the chance to win some of our market-leading software.

Nubble! Express is a great new game for younger or less able pupils, because it is far easier to combine the scores of the three dice thrown in **Nubble! Express** than it is to combine the four dice thrown in the original game of **Nubble!**. Using three dice also restricts the range of target numbers that can be generated in any throw.

In order to win a copy of **Nubble! Express**, you must answer the following question: What is the lowest number that can be generated by any throw of the four dice of **Nubble!**, but cannot always be generated by throwing the three dice of **Nubble! Express**?

5. Last Issue's Competition

Our recently released CD-ROM **Great Inventors** includes a section about Louis Braille who invented the Braille cipher that has been adopted universally as the means to produce text for blind people. The following word is written in Braille.

What is the word?

The answer is, of course, BRAILLE.

The winner was Mrs Andrea Goodheart of West Sussex who chose the Maths Lesson Starters Volume 1 CD-ROM as her prize.

6. In Development

Science Lessons

We are developing a new series of science CD-ROMs that will enable science teachers to make full use of the capabilities of the interactive whiteboard. We intend this software to push the boundaries way beyond what is currently available to schools. The software will include fully interactive demonstrations of difficult concepts and virtual experiments, illustrative animations and interactive activities for the pupils, as well as starters and plenaries. The software will also include printable materials designed to help with the design and set-up of experiments and worksheets for the pupils.

The first two titles in this series will be designed for the new Year 10 curriculum: **Genetics and the Environment**, which is being written by Debbie Nightingale and **Nanotechnology and Designer Materials**, which is being written by Sam Holyman.

Geography Lesson Starters

We are developing a series of three Lesson Starters CD-ROMs for Geography with a new author Sue Jenkinson, who is featured above. The series will be modelled on the Science Lesson Starters CD-ROMs and will consist of: **Geography Key Stage 3 Lesson Starters**, **Geography Year 10 Lesson Starters** and **Geography Year 11 Lesson Starters**.

Virtual Image Maths Scheme

Virtual Image intend to be the first publisher to produce a fully interactive Maths Scheme for the interactive whiteboard. This will represent a major step forward from the traditional textbook and revolutionize the way that mathematics is taught in the classroom. Our interactive Year 7 Maths Scheme is now in development and should be available some time in the next academic year.

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Virtual Image publishes software to support the teaching and learning of mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, history, literacy and French. For general enquiries about the software please visit www.virtualimage.co.uk or contact us on 0161 480 1915.