

# RESEARCH IN WORD PROCESSING NEWSLETTER

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## Teaching Newspaper Writing Using the Computer

An excellent way to get high school students writing on computers, I have discovered, is to get them involved in news writing. Although I am researching a high-school writing class where students are using the computer as their tool, the newspaper project I describe here was carried out after only a few days of exposure to the computers (Apple IIe and II) and to word processing (*Bank Street Writer*) by my regular sophomore English classes.

We had a week's subscription to the local newspaper, and before the actual writing, we read and discussed the paper, focusing especially on the various types of writing to be found in it — editorials, hard news, features, columns, and so forth — and contrasting writing that attempts to be objective with writing that tries to be persuasive.

For the writing, the students formed themselves into groups (two or three per group). The number of computers available (15) and the number of students in each class (30-35) influenced my decision to use a collaborative approach to this activity. Another factor was my realization that students working on computers in groups help each other and feel less frustration when the inevitable happens and things go wrong.

Within their groups, students determined the type of news writing they wanted to do and the particular focus they wanted it to have. One group, for example, decided to do an editorial on the problem of school crime; another chose to write an advice column; and a third elected to review a concert that had been performed locally by a nationally-known rock group.

The students then found and clipped newspaper articles similar to the type of writing they wanted to do. They were encouraged to carry out whatever sort of investigation that would help them become sufficiently informed to write their pieces. One interviewed one of the school's vice-principals concerning the type and amount of crime in the school and what was being done about it; another conducted a survey of students and faculty concerning their opinions on whether or not abortion should remain a legal alternative.

Working in their groups and from their previously jotted down notes, students wrote their pieces on the computers. The group writing and revising took a period of several class days. Once they had printouts of their stories, I collected each group's disk and hard copy. Classes then exchanged disks in order to edit each other's writing.

In the final phase of this project, a group of student editors designed the layout, collated the stories, wrote headlines, and printed out the paper on ditto masters using an electronic typewriter interfaced with one of the computers. This gave us letter-quality type and an easy way of quickly making a large number of copies via the mimeograph machine. We were thus able to run off papers at no cost, since we were using available school supplies.

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One of the unexpected bonuses of this newspaper writing experience was the students' delight in the very real communicative nature that writing and publishing a newspaper created. They liked reading their own and other students' stories. Some students requested that we do another issue so they could respond to provocative pieces they had read in the first one.

Although this project is similar to activities that have been done before the computer's arrival into the English classroom, there are notable differences. Students loved using the computers and worked effectively together; revision and editing became relatively painless; and the final printed version of the paper took less time and effort and yet produced a quality-looking product. The activity allowed students from different classes to collaborate on the same writing project, even on the same pieces of writing. This led to a more objective and efficient editing process and simulated, in a modified way, the real world of newspaper writing. Creating a newspaper with high school students, it appears, is an excellent way to introduce them to writing on the computer.

—Andrea W. Herrmann, Teachers College, Columbia University

### Database Management for Teachers and Researchers — Part III

This month, we'll describe how database management (DBM) systems index words and numbers within fields and how this indexing capability, being program-dependent, can help or hinder your quest for information.

Before entering data into a database, you should have analyzed your application-specific needs and determined whether or not the software is up to the task you wish it to perform. DBMs, whether file managers or relational, structure field information by key words within each record. Most DBMs allow for searching and retrieving text strings (words, phrases, clauses, sentences, etc.) only if two criteria are first met: the text string may only contain a certain number of characters, and the string must be input *exactly as it was when first entered into the database*. Of course, these restrictions can impose severe limitations on the educator who needs to scan multiple records for text-string near-matches. A case in point to illustrate this:

<b>Record # 1</b>	<b>Record # 2</b>
<b>NAME:</b> John J. Smith	<b>NAME:</b> John J. Smith
<b>BOOK:</b> <i>Trees and Me</i>	<b>BOOK:</b> <i>Billy's Trees</i>
<b>REMK:</b> This humorous study of pine trees is a seminal work for all botanists.	<b>REMK:</b> While less than a full-length treatise, this book is both scholarly and humorous.

If you queried your database for all references containing the text string, "This humorous study," in the REMK field, only Record # 1 would be indexed. Record # 2, although containing the word "humorous" in its REMK field, would be passed over because "humorous" is not flanked by "This" and "study."

How would you find Record # 2 without having to remember the entire sentence, "While less than a full-length treatise... scholarly and humorous."? In most DBMs, you couldn't unless you defined a key field, say "KEY 1," before you began entering data and put the word "humorous" in it for each record in which it applies. More work, and not very practical if you're building a database which contains hundreds of book and article annotations and which might contain tens of "KEY" word fields.

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Why not use a DBM that queries fields much the same way as a word-processing program searches for text in your documents — scanning real paragraphs, not length-limited key fields, for queried matches? Are there such programs? You bet! Do they cost an arm and a leg? Hardly! In the months to come, we will review text-oriented DBMs such as Pro/Tem Software's *Notebook II*, and Leading Edge's *Nutshell*, as well as some textfile-indexing programs from ZyLAB (*ZyINDEX*) and SAMNA (*SAMNA +*) that work in conjunction with word-processing software.

## Modern Language Association's 1984 Convention

In addition to a two-day "Electronic Workshop" of computer demonstrations and applications in the humanities, several computer-related meetings will be included in the MLA's 1984 annual convention to be held in Washington, DC, December 27-30.

### The Effect of Computers on the Teaching of Writing

"CAI in Writing Programs: An Overview of the Literature." Elaine Silver, Modern Language Association.

"The Politics of CAI and Teaching of Writing." Deborah Holdstein, Illinois Institute of Technology.

"An Evaluation of CAI Programs in Composition: The Purpose versus the Program." Donald Ross, Univ. of Minnesota.

### Computers and the Teaching of Composition: Empirical Studies

"Word Processing in the Remedial Classroom." William Condon, Arkansas Tech Univ.

"Combining Computer-Aided Instruction and Word Processing." Deborah Holdstein and Timothy Redman, Illinois Institute of Technology.

"A Computer Tool for Analyzing the Composing process." Geoffrey Sirc, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

### Computer-Aided Composition: Its Effects on the Creative Process

"Technology and the Creative Process: Friend of Foe?" Richard Ziegfield, McDonnell Douglas Astronautics.

"Cartoons to Climaxes: Speculations on Creative Computer Composition." Edward B. Versluis, Southern Oregon State College.

"CAI: The Attack against Urizen." Roger Easson. McDonnell Douglas Astronautics.

### Beyond Word Processing: Microcomputer Resources for Teaching the Writing Process

"Writer's Workbench and Teaching Style." John T. Day, St. Olaf College.

"Playing with the Writing Process." Edward B. Versluis, Southern Oregon State College.

"Public Domain Resources for Writing Programs." Stanley Doherty, Bentley College.

### Computer-Assisted Instruction: Language Specific Materials

"German CAI with Interactive Videodisc: The Extra Dimension." Randall L. Jones, Brigham Young Univ.

"Teaching Foreign Languages with Artificial Intelligence." Richard Barrutia, University of California, Irvine.

"Blossom: Computer-Assisted Instruction Materials for Beginning French." Robert A. Arieu and Richard L. Frautschi, Pennsylvania State Univ., University Park.

"The Capabilities and Advantages of Mainframe CAI in German." Peter A. Jorgensen, Univ. of Georgia.

### Computer-Assisted Instruction in German

"CAI on the Small College Campus: A Report from Baldwin-Wallace College." Mark W. Himmelein, Baldwin-Wallace College.

"Computer-Assisted Language Instructional System (CALIS) Program for Elementary and Intermediate German." Leland Phelps, Duke Univ.

"German CAI on the VAX 11/780." Peter A. Jorgensen, Univ. of Georgia.

"Philological Texts and Computer Printing." Jere Fleck, Univ. of Maryland, College Park.

### Beyond Bibliographies and Concordances: The Use of On-Line Data Bases in Modern Language Research

"Literary Criticism and Machine Readable Texts: Prospects for the Future." Danielle Mihram, New York Univ.

"Scholarly Access to American Fiction, 1901-25: Present Capabilities and Future Applications." Geoffrey D. Smith, Ohio State Univ.

"Beyond Concordances: Stylo-Statistical Analysis of Literary Texts." Robert F. Allen, Rutgers Univ.

"Irony in Charles Nodier: A Microcomputer Data Base." Robert Ponterio, St. Lawrence Univ.

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## Works in Progress (Including Computer Applications)

- "The Lexicographer and the Computer: Writing the Dictionary of Old English." Ashley Amos, Univ. of Toronto.  
"Establishing the Text of Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*." Thomas C. Faulkner, Washington State Univ.  
"Cataloging Shakespeare Music." Bryan M.S. Gooch, Univ. of Victoria.

## Tutorial — Selecting a Microcomputer for Humanities Research

Mary Dee Harris, Loyola Univ.; Alan Margolies, John Jay College (CUNY); Patricia Galloway, Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History; Jeffrey Huntsman, Indiana Univ.

## Computerizing Scholarly Editions: How the National Endowment for the Humanities Can Help

W. Speed Hill, Lehman College (CUNY); Helen Aguera, NEH; Elizabeth Witherell, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara; Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr., Univ. of Tampa.

## Notice of Vacancies

**Eastern Montana College** has listed knowledge of computer-assisted instruction as highly desirable in candidates for a tenure-track assistant-professor-level position in composition, rhetoric, and technical writing, which will begin September, 1985. Applicants must have a Ph.D. and show scholarly potential. Grant writing, writing-across-the-curriculum, and writing-center experience is also considered highly desirable. A full dossier with transcripts is due by January 23, 1985. Contact Personnel Department, Eastern Montana College, 1500 North 30th Street, Billings, MT 59101.

**Providence College** has announced two tenure-track, Ph.D.-level positions in which word-processing experience is helpful. One position combines British literature, rhetoric, and directorship of the writing program; the other is for a Victorianist who teaches writing. Interviews at the Washington MLA meeting are possible, and the application deadline has been set at December 29, 1984. Contact Rev. Robert J. Randall, Chairman, English Department, Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island 02198.

**Randolph-Macon College** is looking for a director of the new Writing Center who will also teach two courses each semester. A Ph.D. is required for this tenure-track position, in addition to "computer literacy, word processing proficiency, and an ability to train and direct student tutors." Applicants should provide a complete dossier along with any scholarly papers and teaching evaluations. Contact Dal F. Wooten, III, Chairman, Department of English, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA 23005.

**The University of Alabama at Huntsville** wants a Ph.D. in English to become the department chair at full professor with tenure. In addition to a distinguished record of teaching and publication, strong evidence of creative administrative leadership is needed to run this department of 24 with BA and MA programs in which "computer-assisted technical and professional writing" is central. An extensive service and community orientation is necessary in this city which has NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center. Along with resumes and three academic references, application letters should define the candidate's philosophy of departmental leadership (by January 30, 1985). Contact Carter Martin, Department of English and Communication Arts, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 35899.

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# Research in Word Processing Newsletter--7

## American Council of Learned Societies

A new *Office of Scholarly Communication and Technology* has been established by the American Council of Learned Societies, funded in part by a grant of up to \$225,000 by the National Endowment for the Humanities. According to its director, Herbert C. Morton, one purpose of the office is to examine "how the use of word processors, on-line data bases, and other modern tools affects scholars' work and their perceptions of it."

In general, the office will monitor the impact of communications technology on scholarship and encourage needed applications through conferences and similar efforts. Contact: Herbert C. Morton, Director, Office of Scholarly Communication and Technology, American Council of Learned Societies, 228 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017.

## SOFTWARE REVIEW - *WordMARC*

The newsletter does evaluations of word-processing software to help you discover programs that might fulfill your and your students' writing or research needs. This month, we evaluate *WordMARC*, a program which offers users a number of important features — the most interesting being user-defined system and printing functions.

When reviewing a word-processing package, we are not endorsing any product. Rather, we are describing the software's strengths and weaknesses and examining how these features (or lack of them) might affect students and teachers in academic writing situations.

<b>PROGRAM:</b>	<i>WordMARC</i>
<b>PUBLISHER:</b>	MARC Software International, Inc.
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	260 Sheridan Ave., Suite 200 Palo Alto, CA 94306
<b>LIST PRICE:</b>	\$495.00
<b>WILL RUN ON:</b>	Most PC—DOS and MS-DOS systems
<b>MEMORY (RAM) NEEDED:</b>	256k
<b>DISK DRIVES NEEDED:</b>	two
<b>SPELLING DICTIONARY:</b>	37,000 words (57,000 w/hard disk)
<b>CORRECTION METHOD:</b>	interactive
<b>ON-DISK TUTORIAL:</b>	n/a
<b>QUALITY OF MANUAL:</b>	good
<b>EASE OF LEARNING:</b>	involved
<b>EASE OF USE:</b>	fairly easy
<b>DISK COPY-PROTECTED:</b>	no

## COMPOSITION

FEATURES	YES-NO	COMMENT
HELP SCREENS (on-disk tutorials you can call upon while editing or formatting text)	no	this feature is not currently supported by the program, but will be included in future releases
AUTOMATIC HEADERS (titles)	yes	an unlimited number of header lines are supported
FULL-SCREEN CURSOR CONTROL (ability to move to any spot on the screen to edit)	yes	<i>WordMARC's</i> quite sophisticated in this respect, even allowing for going to specific pages in your text by using function key F1 unshifted (GOTO) then F1 shifted (PAGE) — see Fig. 1

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AUTOMATIC WORD WRAP (no "Return" or "Enter" required at the end of each typed line)	yes	
ADJUSTABLE LEFT- AND RIGHT-MARGIN SETTINGS (e.g., for indenting extended single-spaced quotations)	yes	left and right margins are fully adjustable, and the maximum line length is 163 columns; <i>WordMARC</i> is handy for bibliographic entries requiring the first line flush left and all following lines indented (hanging indent) — simply place the cursor on the character in the first line which marks the hanging indent margin, then press F5 (INDENT) and all following lines before the next carriage return will hang
SINGLE AND DOUBLE SPACING	yes	
AUTOMATIC TEXT ADJUSTING AFTER INSERT/DELETE	yes	
PRINT TO SCREEN (View your text on the screen as it will appear on paper after printing)	yes	
SEARCH FOR AND/OR REPLACE WORDS	yes	<i>WordMARC</i> , if the replacement string is too long (over 80 characters) or contains non-text tokens (like subscripts), allows you to call in a separate file of any length to replace a text string by pressing the F2 (FILE) key and then specifying the replacement text's filename
CUT/PASTE (Move text from one place to another in a document)	yes	these operations, like most in the program, are accomplished by using function keys

## LITERATURE

SUPERSCRIPTING (...the end." <sup>12</sup> )	yes	<i>WordMARC</i> displays superscripted text on the screen in a spatial manner (not through reverse video or alternate color), and six levels are supported — great for scientific equations, too
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## CREATIVE WRITING

VARIABLE LINE SPACING (Ability to space lines in less than whole-line increments — quarter- and half-line spacing)	yes	
PROPORTIONAL SPACING	yes	adjustments are made by inserting spaces between letters (true microjustification, which uses 1/120" increments between characters to make a document look like it was printed professionally)



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		<b>UNSHIFTED</b>	<b>SHIFTED</b>
<b>F 1</b>	--	GOTO	PAGE
<b>F 2</b>	--	FILE	AUX (see Fig. 3)
<b>F 3</b>	--	UNDERLINE	BOLD
<b>F 4</b>	--	ERASE	CENTER
<b>F 5</b>	--	INDENT	WHERE
<b>F 6</b>	--	CANCEL	REQUIRED SPACE
<b>F 7</b>	--	MOVE	OVERLAY (overtyping)
<b>F 8</b>	--	COPY	ALTERNATE (characters)
<b>F 9</b>	--	SEARCH	MERGE
<b>F 10</b>	--	REPLACE	SPELL
<b>(numeric keypad)</b>			
<b>1</b>	--	REVERSE	-----
<b>2</b>	--	CURSOR DOWN	SUBSCRIPT
<b>3</b>	--	FORWARD	-----
<b>4</b>	--	CURSOR LEFT	-----
<b>5</b>	--	HOME	BOTTOM
<b>6</b>	--	CURSOR RIGHT	-----
<b>7</b>	--	LAST	GLOSSARY
<b>8</b>	--	CURSOR UP	SUPERSCRIP
<b>9</b>	--	NEXT	DECIMAL TAB
<b>SCROLL</b>			
<b>LOCK</b>	--	FORMAT	-----
<b>+</b>	--	EXECUTE	-----
<b>-</b>	--	HYPHEN	REQUIRED HYPHEN

**FIG. 1: WordMARC PC Function Keys**

Please use the **SPACEBAR** to make selection and press **EXECUTE**

<b>EDIT</b>	an existing document
<b>CREATE</b>	a new document
<b>SPELL</b>	check spelling in document
<b>PRINT</b>	or review a document
<b>MANAGE</b>	files
<b>GLOSS</b>	glossary operations
<b>AUX</b>	auxiliary menu
<b>LANG</b>	language change
<b>EXIT</b>	from word processing

-----WordMARC [REV 4.1.0 08/14/84]-----  
 -----[C] 1983 MARC SOFTWARE INTERNATIONAL, INC.-----

**FIG. 2: WordMARC Opening Menu**



# Research in Word Processing Newsletter--11

## PRINTER SUPPORT

The ultimate test of any word-processing program is its ability to support basic and, when applicable, advanced text formatting features on both letter-quality and dot-matrix printers (more specifically, the printer or printers you either presently own or can afford to purchase). Note that specific model numbers within printer families aren't always listed; therefore, it would be a good idea to try the program out before purchasing it. Here, then, is a list of printers directly supported within *WordMARC's* PRINTER.CFG program: ANADIX, ANDERSON JACOBSON, CENTRONICS, C-ITOH, DAISYWRITER, DATA PRODUCTS, DATASOUTH, DIABLO, DIGITAL, QUME (including double wheel), DTC, EPSON, HEWLETT PACKARD, IBM, IDS, LEADING EDGE, MANNESMAN/TALLY, MICROPERIPHERALS, NEC SPINWRITER, OKIDATA, PANASONIC, PHILIPS, PRINTRONIX, RADIO SHACK (DAISY WHEEL II), ICOH, SANDERS, SEIMENS, SMITH CORONA, TEXAS INSTRUMENTS, TOSHIBA, XEROX 1650, and others.

## OVERALL EVALUATION

*WordMARC* is a workhorse: it is flexible, powerful, and adaptable to most writing situations. Foreign-language and math teachers will find its capabilities in these areas especially gratifying. Imagine a program which prompts students in, say, Spanish or German (*WordMARC* also directly supports French, Swedish, Italian and Dutch). its graphics capabilities are impressive, and its normal editing and command operations are transparent and free of control codes and computerese. Another thing about the graphics — folks with a color monitor and color graphics card will be able to see underlined text onscreen. While the initial price for the software and the additional memory required to run it (256k RAM) are high, the expense will be worth it for anyone needing a word-processing package that can change with the curriculum. A real hard look should be taken by high schools with limited resources and multiple needs (for example, math, communications, and foreign-language departments can all use *WordMARC*).

[ED. NOTE: The categories we include in our software reviews reflect course offerings found in academic settings. If you feel we should add other categories that address common writing initiatives, or if you would like to see more program features included under existing categories, let us know.]

## Manuscript Submissions Welcome

The newsletter welcomes from our readers article submissions which pertain to word-processing applications in academic writing. Manuscripts should be OCR readable (Courier, Letter Gothic, or similar letter-quality typefaces) or may be submitted on disk using *WordStar*, *SAMNA Word* (I, II, or III), *Microsoft Word*, or standard ASCII code in IBM-PC DOS (5¼" diskette; 1.1, 2.0, or 2.1) or CPT 8500 (8" disk) formats (direct uploading of articles via modem will be available soon). All manuscripts should include a short autobiographical sketch. The Editors reserve the right to edit articles, if necessary. If you want your manuscript returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your submission. Address all correspondence to the Editors, *Research in Word Processing Newsletter*, Liberal Arts Department, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, 500 E. St. Joseph, Rapid City, SD 57701-3995.

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