

## Program Hints

Living letters was designed to be *highly interactive* for children. They are much more likely to learn by doing, rather than just watching. We made the program easy enough for a 3 year old to operate themselves, but some children may require occasional directions from parents. Encourage them to click the mouse on areas of the screen other than the obvious buttons (e.g. pictures, words), but don't show them everything about the program the first time. Each time they learn something new about the program, they'll have a renewed enthusiasm to play.

The following sections should help you get the program working correctly and inform you of the different features available.

### Technical Considerations:

Music: In order for the music to play, you must have a sound card that is capable of playing MIDI files. Any card compatible with a Sound Blaster should work. If you feel that the music is too loud, you should be able to lower the MIDI volume in your sound cards mixer control program.

Video Quality: The photographs in Living Letters are 256-colors. If the apple and baby pictures included with this version aren't clear and colorful, you may be running in a 16-color video mode. To change that, use you Windows Set-up program (usually located in your Main program group) or use the video set-up program that may have come with your system.

### Missing Letter Game:

We encourage parents to use the program to teach children the sounds letters make (human interaction will never be replaced by a computer). Their learning can then be reinforced with the **Missing Letter** game. When the "?" (question mark) appears in place of the large letters, Living Letters is in the **Missing Letter** game. While in this mode, children are instructed to find the letter that starts a word (by clicking on the correct letter along the bottom).

### Mixed-up Letters:

Occasionally, a letter will appear in a goofy position. The child will then be instructed to click on the "mixed-up letter". The eyes and mouths of the letters should give sufficient hints for the children. The principle of this activity is to help children become more conscious of correct letter formations.

### Adding Sounds:

To keep the size of this shareware version within reason, we eliminated the sound files

associated with many of the words. If you have the ability to record sound files (".wav" files) through your sound card, you can create your own. When a word is displayed in Living Letters (e.g. APPLE), a wave file of the same name (APPLE.WAV) is played when the mouse is clicked on it. The following steps tell how to add wave files for those words that don't already have them:

- 1) Select a word from Living Letters (e.g. AIRPLANE) that you want to record
- 2) Record someone saying the word (using Windows Sound Recorder or a similar program)
- 3) Save the wave file in sub-directory "wordsnds" (under the directory in which you placed liveabcs.exe) with the proper name (e.g. AIRPLANE.WAV).