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Playing the Game

General

Cryptographer is a program designed to help in solving cryptograms. A cryptogram is a writing of text in code which makes it unreadable. Each letter has been substituted with another symbol or letter.

The game consists of finding the proper substitutes and thus decipher the code. This is done through trial and error and looking for clues. Clues maybe one letter words of which there are only two in the English language, i.e. "I" and "A". Statistics may also help, for example the letter "E" is the most common letter followed by "T", "A" and "O". The 5 vowels cover 40 % of all text. "LNRST" account for 30%, "JKQZ" for 2 % and the rest for 28%. Also words like "people" is a frequent occurrence in quotes, thus the pattern of ABcAdB is a giveaway. The start is always the hardest part. Three letter words such as "The" and "You" are common. Also some combinations of letters such as "th" or "ng" at the beginning or end of words can occur more than once. The secret is to keep on trying. It is this process which makes the program useful, because it facilitates the mechanical part, not the thinking or intellectual part

The program was designed to be played immediately without instructions or manuals to read. It tries to follow all Windows conventions. For the more curious, HELP files have been created to explain some of the inner workings and additional features.

Start

Simply click on any of the characters on the initial coded text in the **Code Window**. This will activate the **Alphaboard**, which provides a means of selecting the substitution character. Before clicking on any of the characters you can just move the cursor over the board and it will substitute the particular character at all its occurrences in the text of the Code Window. You can reset any character any time by clicking on it again in the Code Window.

Quit or Exit

To quit simply click on Quit, this will automatically cause the current quote in the current file to be displayed at the start the next time the program is started. It will also preserve the custom settings you may have selected. If you click on File and then Exit the program will start the next time with the same quote it started with this time and previous preferences..

Preferences

Personal preferences relating to fonts, colors and other features can be selected by clicking on Preferences from the **Menu Bar** on top of the window.

Fonts

Fonts can only be selected for the **Code Window** . You can select a different font for coded characters and solution characters. This way you can make solution characters very big and bold (max. Size 18) and at the same time coded characters small (min. Size 12). The size of the **Code Window** will adjust to accommodate 6 lines of 40 characters of the largest selected characters. To avoid confusion with the 2 sets of characters you can also select the Wing Ding font from windows as the coded characters. This way you can still see patterns, but there is no confusion.

Color

Four groups of characters can be colored with Back and Fore ground colors:

- Code Characters.
- Solution Characters.
- String or Word Highlighted characters.
- Next Character.

It is best to pick high contrast combination for solution characters, for example black on white and low contrast for coded colors for example dark grey on light yellow. This will make the solution more visible for the eyes.

Frequencies

Character frequencies can be selected which will enable frequencies of characters in the **Code Window** to be shown in the **Alphaboard**. Be careful the frequencies are with respect to characters shown in the **Code Window**, not those part of the solution text.

Running Clock

Makes the timer always visible .

Custom Alphaboard

Allows the Alphaboard to be customized.

File System

Default File

When first installed the program loads the first quote from a default file. Whether the user solves this quote or not, if he or she clicks on Quit, the next time the program is loaded, it will always show the same quote from the last used file.

One can always browse the current file with the spin buttons in the **Status Bar**. The name of the current file is shown in the upper right hand corner.

Open

To load a new file, click on File then on Open and a dialog box will appear from which to select a new file. The file name is of the form: *.CGA To order new files look at Registration under Help. This only works with the licensed version of the program.

Exit

Clicking on File then Exit will terminate the program and will cause the next time the program is started to start with the same quote it started with this time.

Editing System

The standard way of using Cryptographer is with the file system, however there are other ways of entering quotes or any text.

Clipboard

One way to enter quotes is via the clipboard. When importing a quote, get it into the clipboard from any source, then use Edit and Paste (Ctrl.V) to replace the current quote. You can also import straight text via the clipboard with Edit and Text Paste (Ctrl.T) it will be treated the same way as manually entered Straight text. It will be encoded and Hints will be available.

To export any quote use Edit and Cut (Ctrl.X) or Copy (Ctrl.C) and the whole quote will be transferred to the clipboard. Note that no highlighting is required, it will always take the whole quote. Cut will also remove the quote from the window..

Type in your own

You can type in quotes in two ways, either as encrypted text from a newspaper or other source by clicking on Edit and then on Type in Quote. When you enter text you can mix upper and lower case characters, the program doesn't care. Of course no Hints will be available for already encrypted quotes. When you enter straight text, upon completion, the program will automatically generate a key and encode the text. This means that all the Hints are available when desired, which is not the case when you type in Encrypted text.

The supplied quote files are always in upper case to make it more challenging.

Hints

Letter

Sometimes it is difficult to find a good start in a Cryptogram, for this purpose you can ask for a hint. First select a character (with a click). Next click on Hints from the **Menu Bar** and click on Letter.

Word

First click on a word (with a double click) or any string (mouse-down, move left or right, mouse-up). As you might expect there is a penalty for using Hints, see Scoring for more information on this.

All

Selecting All will solve the whole cryptogram at once. No preselection is required.

You may see options for Cartoon and Double-Crostics in light grey, these are build in for future use when these features may become available.

Timing

Many people are challenged when performing certain tasks and try to improve their abilities to do those tasks. This is true in sports, games of skill and mental games. For this purpose a timer starts to run as soon as the **Code Window** appears. The elapsed time is not shown normally, but can be made visible by clicking on the word Started in the Status Window. You can also elect to have a running clock via Preferences on the Menu Bar.

Scoring

Scoring is simply the elapsed time on the timer when the text has been decoded. This score is modified by the penalties for characters or words via the hint mechanism. For each quote in the file system there is also an average and the standard deviation stored as well. These scores were generated from either actual data from beta testers or from an algorithm. The comparison is then made with the current score and the stored score. An estimate is then made to rank the player against the stored parameters using the Normal distribution.

Penalties

Penalties are calculated based on stored parameters as follows:

Single Letter Penalty:

$$P = (C / N) * (A + 3 * SD)$$

Where:

A = Average time

C = The number of occurrences of this character in the text

N = Total number of characters in the quote not counting spaces.

SD = Standard Deviation

Word or String Penalty:

P = The sum of all characters in the string as single letter penalties.

Registration

You are given a reasonable time to evaluate this program and to register. Please fill out the **Registration Form** by clicking on the underlined text and printing out the form via the File and Print Topic from the Help Menu. You can also Copy the form to the clipboard via Edit and put it in a file and use the keyboard to fill it out. Also see **License** for more information. Each separate installation of the program requires a license.

When you register, you will receive the latest version of Cryptographer plus 300 quotes. You will receive information on future updates, discounts and availability of additional quote files. If you later order additional quote files you will also receive the latest version of the program.

You will receive technical support via telephone or On-line service and E-mail.

Single License

A single license gives you the right to install the program on one computer and costs \$10.00.

Group License

The first copy costs \$10.00 , additional copies can be ordered at \$5.00 a piece. This will give you a group license. The person signing the form will be the principal owner, all other members of the group need to fill out only the upper portion of a registration form for identification. If you don't know who the members will be at order time (use it as presents, etc), they can send the individual information later. If they fail to do so, technical support may be withheld if things are too busy. They must indicate at that time who the principal owner is and give the registration number. It must be one order, you cannot add new members to an existing group. You will receive only one copy of the program and it, or copies there off, must be used for all other installations. Later, any member can order more quote files and they will work on all the other installations, in fact the latest program version, that comes with it, can be shared with all group members. The group will have one registration number. Maximum group size is 10, for larger groups contact us.

Future Plans

Future updates may include cartoons as hints and so-called double-crostics, where an additional encrypted word is given plus a description in crossword style. There will be a webpage with a daily quote and possibly a cartoon at <http://www.mindspring.com/~fmnshare>.

Registration Form

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, Prov, etc.: _____

Postal Code (Zip): _____

Country: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

First copy _____ \$ 10.00

Additional copies _____ times \$5.00 _____ \$ _____.00

S and H \$2.00 (\$5.00 outside USA and Canada) _____ \$ _____.00

Total (US\$ only) _____ \$ _____.00

Make Checks out to: Forget Me Not Shareware

Mail to: 407 Clayton Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
USA

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Where or how did you get this program ? _____

You will receive the latest version of this program plus files with 300 quotes.

You will receive technical support via Email or telephone. 3 1/2" diskettes will be sent. Check here _____, if you want 5 1/4" instead.

MS2

License

By using this game you accept the terms of the following agreement. You can copy this program and distribute it unmodified without charge. You cannot charge for this program, only for reasonable reproduction and distribution fees. After using this program for a reasonable time (1 month) you must register this program.

The program is supplied as is, without any guarantee for quality, performance or integrity.

Forget-Me-Not Shareware does not assume any responsibility, expressed or implied, for any damages this program may cause to other programs, data, hardware or self-esteem.

Code Window

The window where the encrypted text appears initially. Its size depends on the largest font being used. Its horizontal position is always centered on the screen, the vertical position can be customized. The background color is the same as the solution background color.

Alphaboard

The rectangular area with on top all letters of the alphabet. Initially it is shown on top with the same colors as the Code Window. As characters are replaced the substitute characters are replaced on top with Solution Colors. The default location is between the code window and the bottom of the screen. The size and location are fully customizable and can be set by selecting Custom Alphaboard under Preferences and preserved by exiting the program via Quit.

Menu Bar

The area on top of the window with the words File Edit Preferences etc.

Status Bar

This is the upper area which displays the current file, scroll bars, Timer and Reset button. The scroll bars can be clicked on to display any of the quotes within the current file. You can hold down the mouse on the slider and preselect any quote quickly, then when you release the button it will show that quote. When clicked on the word "Started" it will take a reading from the timer. Reset will reset all the characters in the Code Window and restart the timer.

