

Hangman Jr Test Drive

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User Guide

i. Manual Installation

Copy any *.VBX and *.DLL files into your Windows\System directory. Place the rest of the files in a separate directory. Start Windows. From the Program Manager, select New. Select program item. Click Browse. Look for file HJR2.EXE in the directory you made in the step above and doubleclick it. This will get the icon installed for you. Sorry about the manual install, but it's required because of problems with getting BBS's and disk vendors to always distribute the DLL. When you buy the program it really does install like a real Windows program. Honest.

1. Description

Hangman Jr is a spelling game for children ranging from 5 - 12 years old. It features the ability to present a picture and a sound to give the child a hint rather than a sentence, which may be confusing for younger children. Rather than straight Hangman, this game is a cross between Hangman, flash cards, and memory games.

Essentially, Hangman Jr presents a graphics image (which can range from a clip art picture to a photo of a relative) and the child can choose letters from the alphabet (presented at the top of the window) until the name of the image is correctly spelled. At this point the child is rewarded with a graphic animation and sound proclaiming that he or she is a good speller.

Unlike conventional Hangman styled spelling games, there is no penalty for not getting a letter correct. Indeed, there is no negative reinforcement at all in this game, so there is no undue pressure for your child to "get it right." If the child chooses a "wrong" letter, for instance, it simply migrates over to the on-screen TrashCan and 'dumps' itself. As with conventional Hangman styled games, the letters already chosen are not usable, and the word is written on the screen so that the child can see it forming. To enhance the fun of the game, sounds are used to punctuate letter action: when the letter falls into the trashcan, for instance, the child will hear something being tossed into a metal trashcan.

We did not include underscores (_) to the letters as we felt it would be confusing to younger children. We don't want to intimidate them in any way: learning should be a pleasurable experience. Having a number of underscores in larger words may intimidate some children.

In short, Hangman Jr is a fun and educational game allowing children to associate words with accompanying pictures and sound, without pressure.

2. Features

The idea behind Hangman Jr is that you can specify what your child learns. If it is important to you to teach your child about a particular subject, you can easily create a word and picture/sound list that fits that subject. For instance, you can get your child a head start in science by teaching them parts of the Greek alphabet using pictures of the letters and their spoken sounds. This would result in a child seeing D and associating it with a spoken and written "Delta." Children are capable of learning amazing amounts of information, and this game makes this process fun and something that they look forward to. You don't have to tell them it is educational...

The files used by Hangman Jr can be modified, added to, and otherwise easily manipulated by Mom & Dad. Hangman Jr files are denoted by a .HJ2 extension, and they are simply a list of words and associated pictures and sounds. There's built-in file Creator / Editor for this purpose. The nice thing about this is that you are not limited in any way to the files we provide, or a limit of files at all. Hangman Jr can work with ANY number of data files. The only realistic limit you have is hard drive capacity or time to create a word/picture/sound list.

Each file, as it is opened by Hangman Jr, is randomised. If a child likes a particular subject, for instance, he or she is not presented with the list in the same order every time, even if the same file is opened time after time.

The window was designed such that the child using it has a minimum of items on screen, which can be confusing. The NEXT button, for instance, will grab the next available word/picture immediately. The button with the picture of a speaker allows the child to hear the sound associated with the picture. This can range anywhere between the spoken word or a sound that is part of the subject matter. For instance, if you were to have a Animals data file with animal pictures, you could either record pronunciation of their names OR you could plug in recordings of the sound this animal makes.

3. Operation

The design of Hangman Jr tries to keep things as simple for Mom & Dad as for the intended 5 - 12 year old user. For instance, there are only 3 menu items: FILE, OPTIONS, and HELP. The File menu allows you to edit, create, and otherwise manipulate data files. The OPTIONS menu allows you to turn sounds on and off, and HELP allows you to determine the program's revision level, read this manual, or order the deluxe version.

Here's the menu items and what they do:

FILE

FILE | NEW -- This item allows you to create a NEW file from scratch. You will be asked to enter a filename, such as ANIMALS. You are then put into the EDIT window.

FILE | OPEN -- You will be presented with a standard windows FILEOPEN dialog box. You can choose the disk drive and the directory; the list of valid *.HJ2 files will appear in the left hand listbox. Click the name of choice and choose OK, or doubleclick the filename. This file will now be

used by Hangman Jr. It may be up to 500 words long, but no more than that.

FILE | EDIT -- This will allow you to edit an existing file. Like the FILE | OPEN description, choose the file you wish to edit. See the section titled "Editing HJH Files" for instructions on the EDIT window.

FILE | EXIT -- quits the program.

OPTIONS

As the letters are clicked, "wrong" letters falling into the trashcan are enhanced with a sound -- they yell. When they hit the trashcan, the trashcan also makes a noise. Correct letters make a SPLAT sound as they are shown on screen. By toggling these selections on and off you may enable or disable the sound effects. You may view this setting by clicking OPTIONS; as the menu drops down you will see a checkmark by this selection if enabled. Click to toggle the sound (and the checkmark) off.

OPTIONS | FALLING LETTER SOUND

OPTIONS | WRITTEN LETTER SOUND

OPTIONS | TRASH SOUND

HELP

HELP | TOPICS (F1 Key can access) Allows you to read this manual on-line (like if you're learning how to edit) or print it as you require.

HELP | ORDER INFORMATION -- Online reminder of who to call to order, how much, and prints an order form for you.

HELP | ABOUT -- shows the program revision level, and who we are.

4. Editing Data Files

A Hangman Jr HJ2 file is essentially a list of words, pictures, and sounds. The editing function works with this list (or creates one) and provides a way to access pictures and sounds, which are associated with whatever word you type in. This word will be the one that the child will spell in normal 'play' operation.

The editing window is kept as simple as possible. For instance, you do not need to type in all of those picture or sound file names -- each is listed in a separate box. All you do is click the box entry. As such, you'll find the right side of the editing window to be nothing more than lists. The top one is for the graphic presented on screen of the item that the child needs to spell. The PREVIEW button allows you to see it to make sure that the chosen file is the correct one. Also, to ease the confusion, we color coded this red. Note that the name of the file you chose will appear to the left of the list box.

Below this is the list for sounds. Click the list box entry, and just like in the other descriptions, the entry will be written to the left of the

list box. Click the speaker button to hear the sound. This one is color coded blue.

ADDING / DELETING:

You enter the name the child will spell in the ENTER WORDS HERE textbox. Click the ADD Button, and the spelling word will be ADDED to the DropDown list of words. To verify that a Word is associated with the correct graphic and sound files, choose the word from the Dropdown list. The associated filenames will appear in the area to the left of each box. You may also use the PREVIEW and SOUND buttons to see or hear the entries.

Deleting a word is similar: click the DELETE button instead of the ADD button. The word shown in the top position of the Dropdown list (i.e. the one in the box window) will be the one deleted.

When you are done editing the list, press the SAVE button. You can cancel editing by pressing the CANCEL button.

5. MISC.

Your License:

You may use this program for a reasonable period of time to see if it meets your needs. We figure 30 days or so is a reasonable time. If you decide not to order the program, please delete it from your drive. This program is copyrighted material, just like the stuff in the stores, and this evaluation license is just as binding. The idea behind shareware is to allow you to evaluate the program cost and pressure free for some time to see if it does what you want.

What do you get if you purchase this program?

Ahhh, the sixty-four dollar question. Well, for starters, to save you time we have over 200 more pictures, words, and spoken sound for you. This is at present, and we may add more yet. You will also get at least 12 more animated sequences. In addition, you'll also get more sound files that play during the animation sequences. You'll also get an enhanced version of the program with real Windows help.

Disclaimer:

Hangman Jr is supplied as-is with no warranty whatsoever with regard to merchantability or fitness for purpose. Alston Software Labs assumes no responsibility for any consequences of use or misuse of this program.

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