

review: Trivial Pursuit

by Roman Loyola

Type: Multimedia Board Game

Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Retail Price: \$59.95

Street Price: \$39.00

Requires: Macintosh 68020 or higher; 640 x 480 color monitor with 256 colors; System 7.1 or later; Double-speed CD ROM; 4 MB RAM required, 8 MB RAM suggested; 10 MB of free hard drive space.

Protection: None

Power Mac Native: No

In the '80s, Trivial Pursuit was the thing to do on a Friday night. It was cheap, entertaining, and challenging. If everyone knows you're really smart to begin with, then your success in the game was expected. But if you weren't known for your smarts and were able to spout off little tidbits like who was the first guest on the very first Tonight Show, or how many drummers did the Beatles go through before Ringo Starr, you became a pseudo-intellectual. That really wasn't a bad thing, because it's easier to admire someone who can name each member of the Partridge Family alphabetically than someone who likes to discuss the developments and applications of Hegelianism.

Now, Trivial Pursuit is back, but now it's a CD ROM. And this time, not only is it a test of your IQ (real or pseudo), it's a test of your honesty. There's no built in correction key, so the game never knows if you've entered the right or wrong answer. Your human opponent is suppose to keep an eye on you. You really can't play a one player game, unless you have the self-discipline to admit when you're wrong.

[iece By Piece](#). There are two different versions of the game that you can play. The first version is the classic version, with the circular/spoke game board, a pair of dice, and the pie-cut game pieces. The second version simply ditches the dice and game board and questions are randomly picked for you. Questions come from six categories: People & Places, History, Arts & Entertainment, Sports & Leisure, Science & Nature, and a Wild Card category (which replaces the Geography category in the board game). The winner is the one who collects all six pieces to fill your pie-cut game piece.

The game play in either version goes like this: when you land on a category/randomly select a topic, a question comes up. You then say the answer out loud, and then click on the answer button. The correct answer appears, and you click “Right” if you are correct, “Wrong” if you are incorrect, or “Repeat” if you want to see the question again, even though you’ve already seen the answer. The “Repeat” button also comes in handy if you’re slick enough to distract your opponents and check the answer before you announce it- but you really wouldn’t want to do that would you? That’s cheating...

The game uses photos by asking questions that require you to make some sort of connection to the thing in the photo. If a photo isn’t available, you get a really cute cartoon of . . . something. Usually it pertains to the question, but often times not, like a picture of a jigsaw puzzle used for a question regarding Amy Fisher’s (aka “The Long Island Lolita”) beeper contract. And if you think this CD-ROM takes full advantage of full motion video, forget it. It’s only used during inactive, dull sequences, and not used in areas that would prove interesting. The only interesting animation occurs when you win a game piece during the Classic version — you get a quick little cartoon of two mustachioed characters in some funny little scene that has nothing congratulatory to it.

[Technology Doesn't Improve Everything](#). Trivial Pursuit is a great board game and a lousy CD-ROM that doesn't have an internal correction key. It makes weak usage of video and photos, but it wouldn't have made the game play anymore enjoyable; it's the people you play against that makes Trivial Pursuit fun. And have you ever trying to play a six-player game on your Mac? It gets a little crowded, and the atmosphere isn't the same, since everyone faces the computer screen. Take your money and spend it on the board game instead of the CD-ROM — you'll have a better time, and you'll save space on your hard drive.

Pros

- Different variation of a great game
- You'll never lose those little game pieces

Cons

- Poor implementation of video and photos
- Honor system
- Lacks true one player game