



Authoring Suite: _____ Pinpoint



It's easy to match a text with a title – but how much of the text do you need to see first? With *Pinpoint*, there are 6 titles to choose from, and you start with just one word selected at random. If you're lucky, that's enough – if one of the titles is *Papua New Guinea*, and you see *mountainous* or *volcanoes*, you're probably home and dry. If you get something less helpful, such as *the, of, in* or *said*, you can 'buy' more text before committing yourself. For 10 points a time the program will reveal 2 further words, one on either side.

Pinpoint, devised and originally programmed by John Higgins, is fun, but it has a serious underlying aim. Less experienced readers tend to read very much from left to right, expecting understanding to come after they have read all the words in a text. Good readers, by contrast, use inferences and guesswork, creating a set of expectations about a text which they then test as they read. *Pinpoint* gives learners practical experience of this second kind of thinking – and shows them that they understand more than they think they do.

Pinpoint includes a second activity called

Matchpoint, in which learners simply browse around a selection of (unmutilated!) texts and match them with their titles.

The third *Pinpoint* activity is *Jumble*, where learners have to place the lines of a jumbled text in the correct order.

The *Pinpoint* writer program allows you to create files containing 30 or more short texts (each about 9 lines long). You are not, of course, limited to stories with titles. Here are a few other ideas:

- Descriptions: *countries* + facts; *jobs* + what they involve; *biographies* of famous people; *class members* + descriptions.
- Parts of a novel, a diary, an advertisement, a play, a poem...
- Functions: suggesting, introducing, giving directions, apologising...
- Dialogues between boy-/ girlfriend, boss/employee, parent/child, two friends, a married couple, teacher/student, two strangers...
- Dialogues in a station, a café, an airport, an office, a shop, a bus...
- Quotations from different writers, or different characters in a novel.

