

**Educational Software Evaluation Rubric:
Programs for K-6 Language Arts, MH Classroom**

Criteria:	0-1	2-3	4-5
Adaptability/accessibility for multiple skill levels (pk-6)	Little or no variation in skill levels, no control over sound, low-vision options, alternate keyboards, etc.	Some variation in skill levels, limited options for accessibility.	Wide variety of skill levels. Can be adapted to suit the needs of students on multiple developmental levels.
Age/developmentally appropriate	Software cannot be navigated or understood by the students it targets.	Software requires direct instruction as to its use, after which can be used with less support.	Software is easy to use by students. Allows most/all students to explore and learn how to use independently.
Aligns with state curricular standards and/or relevant instructional areas	Little or no educational basis for the software.	Has some educational value. More of a leisure activity than instructional tool.	Displays obvious connection to the curriculum.
Software teaches what it is intended to teach.	Description of software does not correspond to outcomes of use; is inaccurate or misleading.	Software does what is expected, although students may be learning skills other than what was intended (i.e. random clicking will eventually give a "right" answer).	Functions as expected.
Provides adequate feedback to users	Feedback is nonexistent, inaccurate, or occurs at inappropriate times.	General feedback is given, but requires additional explanation.	Feedback is given immediately and is very specific.
Ease of generalization/transfer to real life applications	Software has little or no obvious applications.	Students may make connections to real life, but are unable to perform tasks without the software.	Skills can be easily connected with and transferred to real life situations.

Appropriate use of time, graphics/animation, and sound	Too few (boring) or too many (distracting/ overly stimulating) special effects.	Provides a standard, tolerable/workable balance of effects, but needs improvement.	Effects are balanced, appropriate. Can be adjusted to suit needs of most/all students.
Accuracy and/ or conventionality of information/content.	Has many mistakes, teaches wrong information, and/or includes unfamiliar conventions.	Has a few mistakes and unfamiliar conventions, but not enough to hinder the learning process.	Any mistakes are hard to catch or irrelevant to the learning process. Conventions are followed.
Transparency	Controls do not follow a universal pattern.	Some functions can be navigated without instruction.	Follows expected methods of manipulation.
Security	Little or no security against students changing settings, deleting information, etc. via random clicking.	Mostly secure, but some settings may be vulnerable to students.	Requires password to change settings or settings are adequately hidden.
Compatible with software already in the classroom	Incompatible with present software.	N/A	Compatible with present software
Upgrade options	Upgrades are infrequent or extremely costly.	Upgrades occur at acceptable intervals, prices are fairly reasonable.	Upgrades occur frequently and are well within budget. May be free or discounted.

Specific Software Ratings:

Study Dog Level 1 (free trial version)

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Adaptability/accessibility for multiple skill levels (pk-6)	4	Offers many different activities and levels appropriate for early/emerging readers, as well as sound options. Level 1 seems most suited for average needs of MH classrooms.
Age/developmentally appropriate	5	Incorporates fun games with simple instructions spoken to the user.
Aligns with state curricular standards and/or relevant instructional areas	5	Every game is clearly related to Ohio Academic Content Standards.
Software teaches what it is intended to teach.	4	Has strategies to ensure that a user learns the lessons rather than getting a correct answer by chance.

Provides adequate feedback to users	5	Feedback is given in many forms, both immediately and as a "whole picture." It also allows teachers to keep track of progress AND to email the results to a parent/guardian!
Ease of generalization/transfer to real life applications	5	Provides an excellent combination of isolated reading instruction and simple sentence comprehension.
Appropriate use of time, graphics/animation, and sound	3	In general, graphics enhance lessons. Most animation/sound sequences are lengthy and may not hold attention. The number of correct responses required in order to pass each level also seems to be slightly too high.
Accuracy and/or conventionality of information/content.	4	Lessons provide accurate instruction, but there are a few small problems (i.e. alphabet song uses an unfamiliar tune; one activity includes a sentence with improper punctuation).
Transparency	5	Works similarly overall to other computer games/activities.
Security	1	An independent user has several opportunities to access progress records and potentially read, erase, or change them.
Compatible with software already in the classroom	5	Can be used with a Mac or PC.
Upgrade options	5	Has an option of either automatic or manual updates.

Intellitools Reading: Balanced Literacy

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Adaptability/accessibility for multiple skill levels (pk-6)	5	Can be used with standard keyboard or Intellikeys, mouse, and/or switch; "Low Vision" mode, and sound options. Suitable for a variety of levels of learning.
Age/developmentally appropriate	5	Incorporates fun games with simple instructions spoken to the user.
Aligns with state curricular standards and/or relevant instructional areas	5	Specifically designed to meet state standards.
Software teaches what it is intended to teach.	4.5	Lessons are well put together, though there is room for guessing.
Provides adequate feedback to users	5	Verbal and visual cues are given whenever appropriate. Automatically keeps a report of each response to each question.

Ease of generalization/ transfer to real life applications	4	Reading and writing skills can be generalized easily, though the focus upon animals is rather limiting to users.
Appropriate use of time, graphics/animation, and sound	5	Very nicely balanced.
Accuracy and/or conventionality of information/content.	4	Lessons are clear and accurate; some pictures are unclear as to what word they are supposed to represent (i.e. rocket vs. torpedo).
Transparency	5	Works similarly overall to other computer games/activities. Extra accessibility features provide more opportunity for transparency.
Security	5	Blocks students from accessing teacher reports or accidentally leaving the program.
Compatible with software already in the classroom	5	Very versatile.
Upgrade options	4	Upgrades are expensive, but discounts are available. Because the software works so well, frequent upgrades may not be necessary.

Summary of Top Two

Software	Study Dog Level 1	Intellitools Reading: Balanced Literacy
Information	Study Dog Reading Program © 2004 Study Dog Inc. Version 1.0.0 PC rev 1a	Intellitools Reading: Balanced Literacy © 2005 Intellitools, Inc.
Average Rating	4.3	4.7