

Disney's Mulan

Fun and educational. Younger children will love the activities and learn from this **old Chinese legend**.

Based on an ancient Chinese legend, Mulan is a free-spirited girl who disguises herself as a soldier to save her ailing father from having to go to war. Disney will soon be releasing the animated film in the UK and is launching this CD-ROM to coincide with it.

The story is that Mushu, Mulan's feisty guardian dragon, has lost some important magical scrolls which tell the story of Mulan. The player's task is to find them and reveal the legend. During the quest, the player will encounter ten activities, including designing new costumes for Mulan and Mushu which can be printed and then dressed on the paper dolls which come with the package, playing mah-jong, and singing along to songs "karaoke" style. Once all the scrolls have been found, the Emperor crowns the player "Imperial Story Maker" and you then have the freedom to create new stories of your own, choosing from the characters and colourful backgrounds on the CD-ROM.



▼ **MULAN IS THE HEROINE WHO SAVES HER FATHER FROM THE WAR (INSET) THE FIRST MAGICAL SCROLL, WHICH TELLS PART OF HER STORY**

Mulan is beautifully animated and is aimed at children between five and nine years old. The story, word explanations and thesaurus will all help strengthen reading skills and improve vocabulary. Simple maths skills are also encouraged. As an adult I thoroughly enjoyed playing with this CD-ROM and I am sure any Disney-loving child would like it, too.

ETELKA CLARK

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £34.99

Contact Disney Interactive 0181 222 1571

www.disney.co.uk/disney_interactive

System Requirements Windows 95, P90 or faster, 16Mb RAM, 20Mb free hard-disk space, 4X CD-ROM drive, 16-bit sound card. Mac: PowerPC 75MHz or faster, System 7.5 or later, 24Mb RAM

Grossology

It's grotty, it's gruesome... it's a great **biology lesson** for kids.

Farts, snot and diarrhoea forms the core subject matter of Grossology — Gross Science That Kids Want to Learn. Based on the book series by Sylvia Branzei which aims to make biology fun,

this product really lives up to its name —

▼ **THERE IS EVEN A VERSION FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**



it's absolutely foul. But eight- to 12-year-old children are fascinated with all things smelly and nasty, especially if they make a noise or ooze gunk.

Guided by your host, Ginger Vitis, you can visit nine labs where various gross truths about the human body are revealed. Burps, barf, scabs or other unfortunate facts of life can all be found here. Characters include "Ripped Apart" who fronts the wounds and scabs theme, and "Rocky Isedafacio" teaches you about skin, or more specifically, acne. These study sessions get quite tedious, though. For example, you have to keep punching Ripped Apart to get a new fact out of him. There are games to complement the subjects covered, such

as "Don't Pee Your Pants". Other entertaining features include singalongs and the letter writer, where you can write a letter and use clipart of various characters and depictions of grossness to make it "pretty".

Equipped with stickers, Gross Factoids and peel-off Barf, Grossology is a truly offensive production which young children will no doubt love.

HELEN FORTGANG

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £29.99

Contact Sega Soft 001 650 654 2310

www.grossologygames.com

System Requirements IBM or compatible PC, 486DX-66, Windows 3.1 or later, 16Mb RAM, 256 SVGA display, 2X CD-ROM drive, 15Mb hard-disk space. Mac: 68040 or PowerPC, 16Mb RAM, System 7.1 or higher

Bananas in Pyjamas

As seen on TV: the very young will enjoy some **fun and games** with the Bananas and their friends.

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? You will be if you've watched the children's TV series, Bananas in Pyjamas. The programme features B1 and B2, a pair of bananas who exchange thoughts and play with assorted friends in Cuddles Avenue. Now B1 and B2 have followed Barney the dinosaur on to CD-ROM (reviewed here last month).

We asked some devoted banana fans, aged three to five, to try out this CD-ROM. All the familiar bits are there, including the teddy bear friends and the theme tune "Bananas in Pyjamas are coming down the stairs".

Ballet-dancing Lulu stars in a game where you try to make the flowers grow, and Rat in the Hat hosts a sandwich-making game.

The publishers claim that the program is designed to react differently each time to the user's commands, but our testers found the interactive sequences repetitive. The program is not as colourful as some other kids games, and the animated figures are small on-screen so they lose some of their impact. Perhaps the program is showing its age? Bananas in Pyjamas is an Australian import and it was No. 1 there *last Christmas*.

Our testers had plenty of fun nevertheless, but after a while they asked: "Is that all the games we can play?" Still, I suppose when you have your own B1 and B2, you can play anything you like.

DEBBIE DAVIES

► **B1 AND B2 SLIP OFF TO THE BEACH TO MEET A FRIEND**



PCW DETAILS

★★★★

Price £19.99

Contact Dorling Kindersley
0171 753 3488 www.dk.com

System Requirements Windows 3.x or 95, 486/33 processor, 12Mb RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA monitor, mouse

Floating, Fluttering, Flying Machines

Any child with their **head in the clouds** can get up, up, and away with this informative presentation.

I'm sure that most of us, when a child, have at least once dreamt of being able to fly. But reality can be very harsh at times, so it's comforting to have a second option. Tivola has attempted to address this unfulfilled fantasy.

With enchanting illustrations, this lovely production gives you a chance to gain real insight into the intricacies of the amazing phenomenon of flight. Through the eyes of Nick and Charly, you click your way around the hangar with

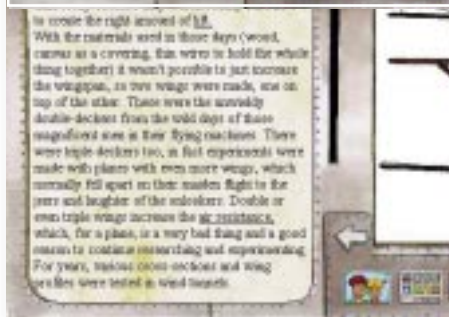
virtually everything having some information to reveal. Together you explore the database, build your own paper plane, catch the Dachshunds and navigate in the Flying Chart Game. You can also travel in a hot-air balloon and talk to the birds.

Video footage and photographs can be unearthed in this exploring adventure, expanding on initial interests and

providing real pictures to illustrate, rather than just cartoons. Whether or not you are interested in aeroplanes, there is information to fuel curiosity in other areas, too, such as Bumble Bees and Boomerangs.

Throughout the adventure you must collect the parts for building your own flying machine, with the ultimate goal to take part in the flying race finale. When you have collected enough pieces, you can move on to Hangar 2 for the construction stage. Although this CD-ROM is informative and stays in tune with Tivola's colourful and beautifully presented style, this subject would have benefited from more information about aerodynamics.

HELEN FORTGANG



◀ **CHOOSE A TOPIC AND FIND OUT ABOUT FLYING, OR GO FOR THE GAMES**

◀ **EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT WINGS**

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £24.99

Contact Tivola 0181 563 9091

System Requirements Windows 3.1/95, VGA graphics card, sound card, 2X CD-ROM, 486 PC, 8Mb RAM