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## Computer Aided Creativity

Bruce Peterson

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## COMPUTER AIDED CREATIVITY

By Bruce Peterson

For years I have jokingly said to my students "I am an art teacher." I taught art at Courville Elementary School in the Detroit Public School system for 15 years. My first assignment of the year was always an adventure landscape drawing with vocabulary words and a short story attached to the back of the picture. "Every teacher is a reading teacher—every picture tells a story." The students were making an illustrated short story. They were mixing two types of creativity—drawing and writing. I found that the students didn't have much experience writing stories.

A few years ago we received a computer at Courville and I experimented with it during my prep period and lunch hour. I was hooked! But, how could I use it with my students? After some research on my part, the PTA paid for the necessary equipment for us to draw and printout our ideas on the computer. We were using a joystick and the program **Special Effects** to make the original drawings, and the program **Zoom Graphics** to print them out on paper. It was great, after all these years, to find a new and special tool to gain the students interest in their future in art. They might become auto designers, engineers and architects.

In the spring of 1984 we had 12 computer drawings in the Detroit Public Schools Student Art Show at the Detroit Institute of Arts. We were the first and only computer artists in the show. We even had a computer at the opening of the show and there was always a crowd around my 5th and 6th grade computer artists. They even showed some of our work on the TV news that night. A little limelight felt good to all of us.

By December of 1984 we had a new and better drawing system - the **Koala Pad**. It allowed us more control over detail in the drawing. We put the best 14 computer drawings together into a 1985 calendar - the **Courville Computer Calendar**. All of the artists received a copy and we sold the rest to buy more equipment for the computer.

In the spring of 1985 we entered our calendar and other computer graphics into the DPS Student Art Show again. We were adding color to the printouts now and making them bigger—10" x 14". New ideas were becoming contagious - one student made a "stand up" city, all on the computer. They were becoming "serious artists."

In April of 1985 I moved to Cleveland Middle School, also in the Detroit Public Schools, and I am now teaching Computer Literacy. This includes computer applications, the history of computers, computer careers, programming, word processing and my speciality - computer graphics. My favorite "project" is an illustrated short story.

By June of 1985 we made a book—**Computer Literacy - Illustrated Stories - Cleveland Middle School**. There were 90 student computer written and illustrated short stories in the collection. I have since joined a new organization called Book/net - an international exchange of student

Bruce Peterson  
Computer Literacy Instructor  
Cleveland Middle School  
Detroit Public Schools



computer books. We are trading our book with 14 other schools - 9 of them are in other countries; they include Japan, Norway, Australia, Israel, England, Canada, France, Scotland and we just received a book in Swedish. What a great creative feeling! We are international artists, writers, editors and publishers. The only problem is finding the funds necessary for postage and printing costs.

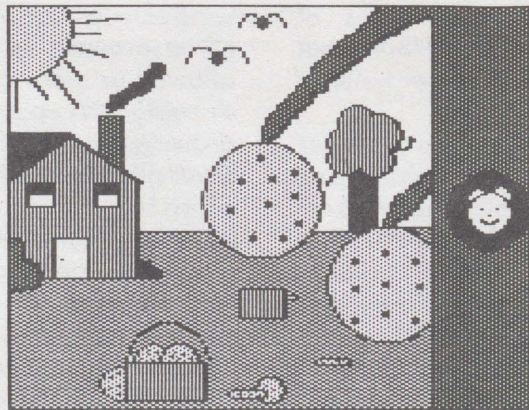
Future books for Book/net will include a book of low-resolution graphics with the student written program below the picture, another illustrated story book and a book relating to another subject. I would like to involve the English, social studies, science and other teachers in the writing part of the book.

The computer has also made a major change in my creative life. Besides editing and publishing student work I use the computer for all of my correspondence,

record keeping, test making, signs and bulletin boards.

The exhibitions of student computer drawings prompted the Education Department at the Detroit Institute of Arts to ask me to do the computer graphics for a new educational game. The drawings included the museum building, the Thinker and the Egyptian hieroglyphic alphabet. We will use this new educational program in my classroom. I've also done workshops for the Art Department, the Computer Literacy Department, Area E, Area F, and the Center for Creative Growth and Development.

The computer is a very creative tool. We've used it in some interesting ways and we look forward to new educational uses. The students love to make a product, so, we will continue to make and trade books on various topics. We will also continue to exhibit computer drawings in student shows.



### The Magic Cookie

Once there was a little boy, Ju-Ju, who loved cookies. But cookies were hard to get where he lived. Sometimes they could cost up to twenty dollars a box.

On Ju-Ju's birthday his parents thought that they would buy him a few toys and maybe that would take his mind off of cookies. When Ju-Ju went to open his presents he was really happy. But how he wished that he could get a cookie.

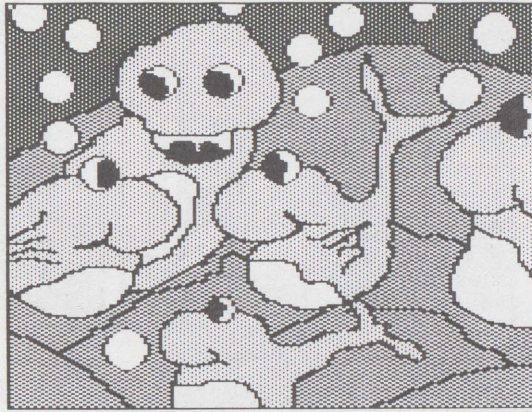
His father worked for a very rich man. And they were best friends. His boss decided that since Ju-Ju's father was such a good worker and friend he would give him a cookie to give to Ju-Ju.

Instead of eating the cookie, Ju-Ju saved it for days. Then he had a wonderful idea. He would plant the cookie and maybe in a couple of weeks it would grow into a huge cookie tree. Day after day he watered, watched, and waited. Finally after four weeks he gave up. He hadn't even tasted the cookie, what a waste, and he probably would never get another one.

The next spring, while he was playing in the field where he had planted the cookie, there was the largest cookie tree that he could ever imagine. Week after week it grew bigger, bigger and still bigger, until Ju-Ju and his family had all the cookies that they needed. Now they were rich. Ju-Ju gave cookies to all the kids on the block.

LaChandra Wilkerson 8-213

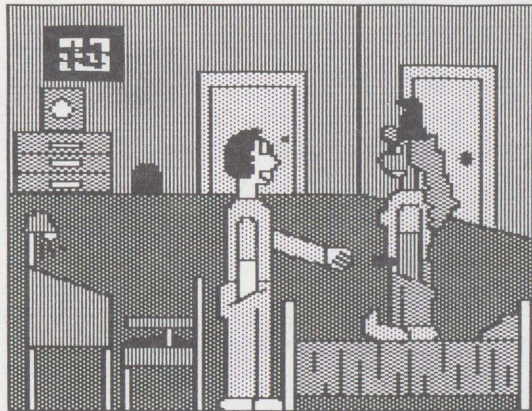




### The Strange Fish

One day I was swimming in Lake Tabo. I heard a strange noise come from the water. So I went under water to see what it was. I swam under water for about three minutes, then I came up for air. I heard the noise again so I went back under. The noise got louder and louder. Then I saw that the noise was coming from a fish-like creature playing. I hid behind a huge rock. The creatures seemed to be half fish and half tadpole. One of the creatures saw me so he made noise that sounded like "come out". So I came from behind the huge rock. The creatures seemed to be friendly, so I tried to touch them, but they swam away. I know that they're still down there, but I never saw them again.

Darnell Billings 8-112



### A Very Strange Night

One night I was sleeping in my bed. Suddenly I woke up to a strange noise. I listened for a while to see if I heard it again. I didn't, so I went back to sleep. But then I heard it again. This time I got a little worried.

I started to get out of bed, but then I said "Maybe it's just the wind". Then I heard it again, this time I got scared. I got out of bed and headed for the door. I opened it slowly and started to walk out.

I took my first step and tripped over something. That something turned out to be the strange noise. It was a little yellow and black woman with purple and green hair. She wasn't hurt but she was mad. She started to fuss but I couldn't understand a word she was saying. Then she stopped and smiled and said, "Hello my name is Srilaisthazef, in your language - Cara." She pulled me back into my room and closed the door. She was a magical dwarf from the land called Gandoff. She came here on a mission to take someone back to her planet. She wanted me to go. I told her I couldn't. She got mad and fired a lightning bolt at me. I couldn't move an inch. Just as it was going to hit me it disappeared. She said that she was just kidding. She told me that she will come back in a year and ask me again. A year in her time is 20 year in ours. So I said "See you later".

Markyta Armstrong 8-230





### A Day In The Future

One day, at the Detroit Institute of Technology, some scientists and I were finishing a "Time Machine". It was experimental. We took it outside and tried it. I set the dial for the year 2001 and pushed the GO button. All of a sudden it became dark. Then the door opened.

A beautiful place was before our eyes. Everything was different. Everything except pollution. Dark clouds of smog here and there.

We even saw a building with a sign that said - BIBBS ART GALLERY. The art was nice indeed. It inspired me into doing art more often.

Before we left we agreed not to tell anyone, because, who's going to believe that we went into the future?

## REVVING-UP RELUCTANT READERS

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These rewards that are given toward my goals are used to fire the more typical strategies such as reading for meaning, use of context-consonant for decoding a difficult word, vowel combination sounds used as analogies to like words, author's purpose, text styles, etc. Each one of these strategies must be **demonstrated** as a way to "get meaning." Demonstrate how a good reader uses each strategy, and when each strategy would be used in real life.

Every day will be a challenge as you change your focus from materials, skill workbooks, and dittos to decision making. You have the responsibility to plan and carry out instruction wherein students will perceive possibilities for success. You will help to build that expectation of success by tailoring individual (reachable) goals and following up with rewards. The student will begin to see you as a teacher, not someone who is just going "to do a reading thing" on them. When these students attempt difficult reading strategies you will know they have a reasonable expectation of success.

The goals which you develop must support a life of successful learning, where "reading for meaning" is an accomplished life skill.

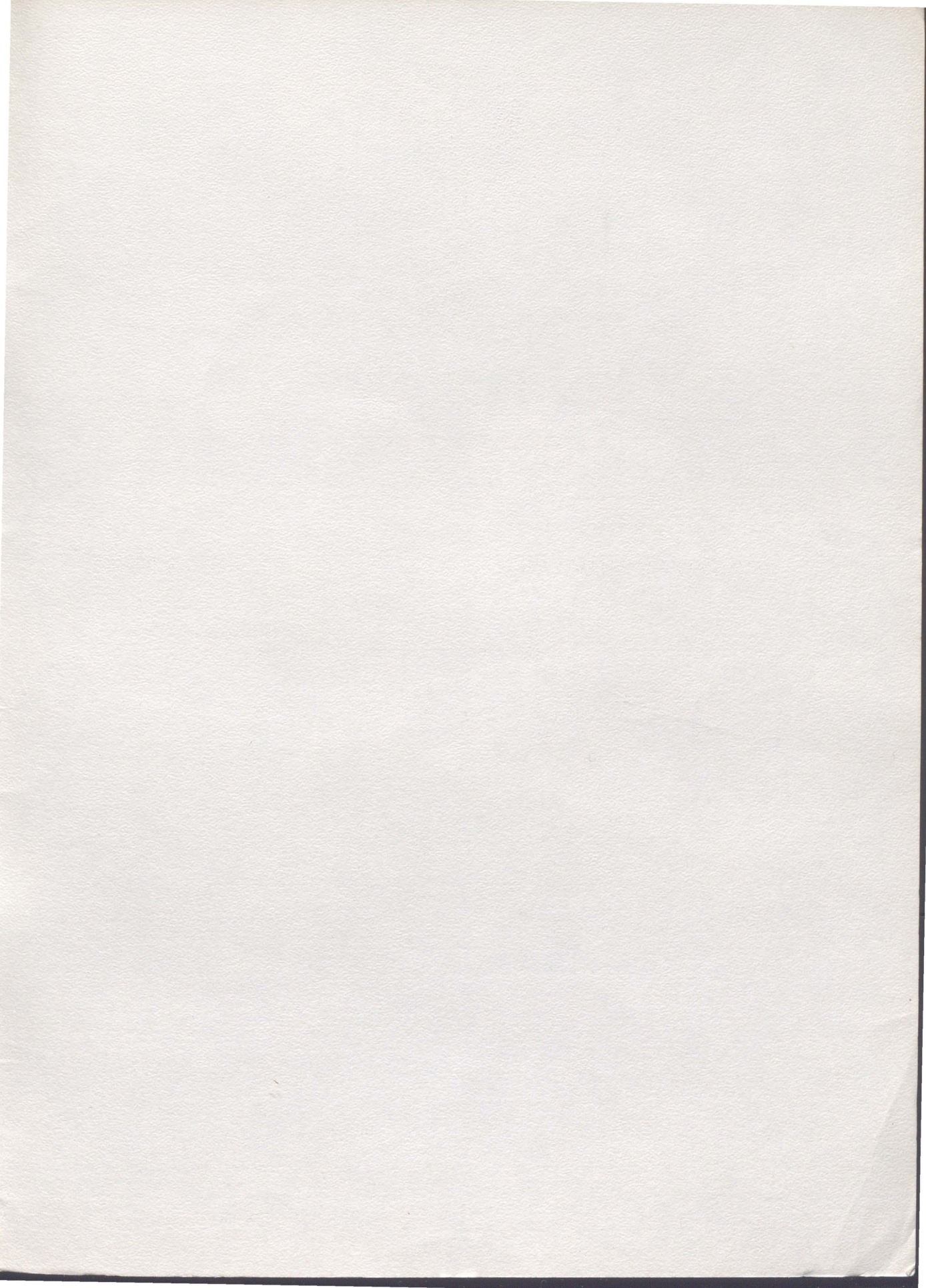
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## COMMUNICATIVE INTERACTION BETWEEN WRITER AND READER

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**THE MICHIGAN READING ASSOCIATION**  
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