

Author Plus



Author Plus helps you design computer-based activities aimed at your students' exact needs. While the program is extremely easy to use (in recent training sessions over 300 primary school teachers each created two multimedia activities in the first 90 minutes), the output is of professional quality. Cambridge University Press, for example, chose Author Plus to create the interactive activities for the best selling *English Grammar in Use*. The program is also extensively used in universities.

Author Plus is available in a Windows version giving fast and efficient delivery to students on a network and in an Online version enabling teachers to deliver activities to students anywhere via the Web.

Author Plus Windows has been developed and enhanced over ten years and is now installed and running on well over a million computers worldwide with a 99.99% technical success rate.

What are the activity types?

The program is extremely flexible, enabling you to make exercises based on your students' problem areas for use in class or as a homework assignment. Alternatively, a department can use Author Plus to create a whole course for the self access centre or for online delivery. Author Plus provides a range of activity types to keep interest levels high and to suit a range of teaching objectives and learning styles. The basic activity types shown below can all be enhanced by the addition of sound files, reading texts, weblinks, graphics, time limits, even video. The program also enables you to link activities together to form courses.

- drag and drop
- gapfill
- multiple choice
- true/false
- listening comprehension
- reading comprehension
- proofreading
- target spotting
- free practice
- text only
- dropdown selection (Online version only)

Author Plus Online allows you to mix activity types within a single exercise, so your exercise can include, for example, gapfill and multiple choice questions. Both versions enable you to add feedback to individual questions. This is particularly useful when students are studying alone as it is very frustrating to make a mistake and simply be told you are wrong. Intelligently designed feedback enables you to explain to the student why she was wrong, and how she can avoid making the same mistake in future. Alternatively, feedback can be attached to particular scores achieved in exercises.

Is there any help for teachers?

The program comes with substantial teacher support. New users can get to know the program with the Getting Started manual and with Clarity's support book, *Mastering Clarity Programs*. There is also a pictorial fold-out manual which covers the complete functionality of Author Plus as well as extensive context-sensitive help within the program and a support website at www.ClaritySupport.com

Is Author Plus just for English?

Author Plus can be used to teach any script-based language. When students log on they can choose their interface language from a current selection of English, French, German and Spanish. Manuals are available for teachers in the same four languages. The screenshot on the right shows an activity to teach animal vocabulary in Bahasa Malaysia.



Author Plus is also suitable for teaching many other subjects. It is, for example, being used by the Royal College of Music in London.

What's new in the Online version?

Author Plus Online gives much greater flexibility in delivery: on a CD, through a network, on an intranet and on the Internet. There are also significant functional enhancements:

- mixed mode exercises, so you can mix up question types within a single activity enabling you to, for example, simulate exam papers.
- graphical menu capabilities to replace the standard list-type menu.
- question banks which enable you to set up random tests for students, for example for student placement.
- record and playback facility for speaking activities. Student sound files can be saved.
- enhanced customisation capabilities which will enable you to 'brand' your Author Plus based course.
- support for MP3 audio files.
- enhanced exercise types such as dropdown and graphics-based multiple choice and target spotting.

Is authoring Windows-based or Online?

For both Author Plus Windows and Author Plus Online, the authoring is done in the Windows environment. The authoring module can be installed either on a single computer or on a network.

Once you have created your activities, they will be run from the network if you are using Author Plus Windows, or will be posted to your intranet or website if you are running Author Plus Online.

Can I publish my work commercially?

Author Plus has been used to create several commercial CD-Roms (including Clarity's *STUDY SKILLS Success* and *Tense Buster*). NAS Canada used Author Plus to create *L'Amour des Temps* and Richmond Publishing chose Author Plus to create the *Freeform* CD-Roms as well as the recent *FCE practice CD*. For more details of publishing licences, contact Clarity.



How does the licensing work?

- Author Plus for Windows: purchase a licence for each student installation.

- Author Plus Online: purchase a licence for each author installation and pay a small annual fee per simultaneous student user.

How much does it cost?

Sample costs in pounds sterling:

Author Plus Windows

1-computer licence.....	£49.95
5-computer licence.....	£99
10-computer licence.....	£175
20-computer licence	£249

Author Plus Online

Authoring module per licence:.....	£199
Simultaneous student access	
50 access licence @ £3.....	£150
100 access licence @ £2.50.....	£250
1,000 access licence @ £1.75.....	£1,750

Please note that for Author Plus Online, student licensing refers to simultaneous access rather than individual students. For example, if you have 500 students but believe that no more than 50 will be using the program at any one time, you should opt for a 50 access licence. (You can always extend it later if necessary.)



ClaritySupport.com provides extensive teacher support on Author Plus and other Clarity programs.

Technical requirements

- Author side for Windows and Online and student side for Windows: Win 95/98/ME/2000/NT/XP, 800x600 full colour screen, network compatible
- Student side for Online: Any application, typically a browser, that is capable of playing Flash. For example IE5 and above.

Why is Author Plus Online so useful?

Let's look at three scenarios.

Primary and secondary schools

- ✓ In several countries in East Asia, the SARS outbreak has kept children off school for weeks. Many schools, such as the ESF schools in Hong Kong, have compensated by posting homework on the school website. But this has been restricted to worksheets and projects to be downloaded and completed on paper, and to be marked when classes resume. Would the students not find it much more immediate and motivating to have the focus occasionally shifted to online activities with instant feedback (and scores stored on a central database at school)? Teachers could do this using Author Plus Online to convert some of their

worksheets to interactive activities - a straightforward process. They could also add encouraging feedback - and perhaps go on to make these activities a regular feature of homework.

University language centres

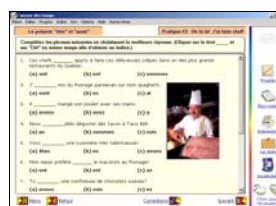
- ✓ It is an acknowledged problem among universities that the English level of arriving overseas students is, for one reason or another, often below expectations. Author Plus Online not only enables students to devote extra hours to English when they arrive, it also means that pre-course work can be set up for them before they leave their home country. This has the dual benefit of giving them a headstart when they arrive at the language centre, both in terms of language areas covered and familiarisation with the methodology you use, while at the same time giving you, the teacher, a good idea of the syllabus they are likely to need to bring them up to the required levels of English. This is possible because their activity is logged in the Author Plus Results Manager which you can access on your server.

Private language schools

- ✓ In the private sector, meanwhile, a major challenge facing language schools is how to keep in contact with their students after they have left so as to generate repeat business. The British Council network's response to this has set up the Learn English website which provides a range of interactive materials that current, former and prospective students can work on. Most language schools don't have the financial resources to commission this kind of project, but Author Plus Online, designed for teachers rather than high-end programmers, enables them to do it themselves, providing a real draw for students for an affordable financial outlay.

These three scenarios illustrate how useful the judicious application of online activities can be. If you'd like to know more about how Author Plus Online can help you to expand and enhance your online presence, please visit the Clarity website.

Created using Author Plus...



L'Amour des Temps

