

## **Learning® Magazine**

### **14th Annual**

### **Teachers' Choice<sup>SM</sup> Award for the Classroom 2008**

Below you will find the comments for your product. As you read the comments, please note that this is the literal text from the evaluation forms. We have not differentiated comments between the teachers on each team.

Although we encourage teachers to provide comments, it is not a requirement. Therefore, you may notice if you had multiple entries, the responses may be more or less in depth depending on the team of teachers. **We do not use comments in the scoring process.** They are provided as insight into the panel's thoughts on your product.

We hope you find the responses helpful and continue to participate in the Teachers' Choice Awards in the future. Applications will be available in January 2008 for the 15th Annual Teachers' Choice<sup>SM</sup> Awards program.

**Product Key** - 239

**Product** - Britannica Student Encyclopedia

**Company** - Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

#### **What aspects of this product did you like most?**

The books were easy for the students to follow and read. The pictures were of good quality and went along with information. The books are light and easy for the students to carry around. The presentation was very nice and kid-friendly. What I liked most about this product, was that it was kid friendly. Even my lower reading students were able to use this product as a resource. The encyclopedias have colorful pictures. I also like the "How To" section at the beginning of the book. The reading level and text features of this set were very appropriate to elementary school. It is sturdy and durable, easy to read and information is clearly presented. I like the idea of having print instead of computer sites in the hands of my students. I feel it is vital to encourage them to seek a variety of resources for research purposes. Therefore, using this set enabled my students to see the value of written documentation on a variety of subjects. I liked the use of text features and color throughout each book. The print was easy to read so that it does not intimidate elementary students.

#### **How would this product need to improve to better support your curriculum?**

I do not feel these books need to improve in anyway. The students were able to use the books without any difficulty. I have no suggestions for improvement. This was a great resource in my classroom. I even recommended that our school librarian purchase a set for our school. To support the curriculum for my grade level (first), I would suggest smaller words for the students to understand. The explanations need to be so they can read it and know what it means. I would prefer an index in each volume instead of the single index for the entire set. My classroom is quite structured and I would like to see individual indices in each volume for management purposes. Sharing the one index is not as efficient.

I like it just the way it is.

## **How did you make use of the product, or integrate it into your lesson plans?**

Our second grade students worked on a unit of nonfiction study in writing. Each student learned how to write their own nonfiction book on a topic of their choice. The students used the encyclopedias as part of their research. We used this product during our writing unit. Students searched for facts about a specific topic and created their own nonfiction books. I used it to briefly discuss how to look up a subject when we were doing informational topics in our writing unit. I showed the students that there were many different resources to use to find out information on a topic. My students used the encyclopedias to research states. Students were easily able to locate, read, and take notes on their respective assignments. Our entire grade level researched states and Native Americans this year. Using this set of books, we were able to expand student understanding of a variety of resources. This set was easy to read and enabled even my low readers to succeed.

We used them for Native American research and state research. I liked the fact that children have an actual text to refer to rather than just using a computer as a resource.

## **What skills did your students learn from this product?**

The students learned how to read guide words to find information. The students also learned how to take notes from the information in the encyclopedia. Students learned how to use resource books to find facts about specific topic. They are learned how to use guide words when searching for a word. The students learned of different resources and ABC order. I used these books to teach note taking. Students researched a state and used index cards to rerecord important information.

Research skills, reading comprehension and new ways of acquiring text so that it was usable in their reports and presentations were learned.

They learned how to use reference materials. They were able to use headings and subheadings to identify main idea and key elements in text. They also used diagrams, tables and maps for gathering information.

## **If funds were available, would you recommend this product to another teacher at the appropriate grade/age level? Please explain why or why not.**

If funds were available, I would recommend that all classrooms have a set of encyclopedias for different projects. It is not always possible to go to the school library for research and having a set in your room makes this much easier. If funds are available, I would recommend this product to all elementary teachers. This is a great resource to have in your class, when students need to research a particular subject. I feel this would be a great resource tool for kids at a higher grade level. Yes, I think it is valuable for children to have a book in their hands rather than always going 'online' for information.

Yes, I would recommend this set for elementary use. It could also be an asset in middle school exception children's programs that need lower reading levels with high interest material.

Yes, because I feel it is important to have text in the hands of the students rather than using a computer only. Students need to see many different resources for information acquisition.