ENGLISH

PLAYTOONS n° 3

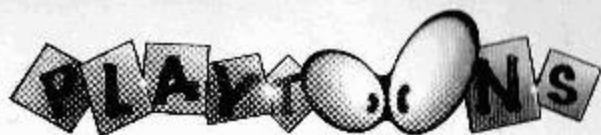ANIMATED STORIES TO CREATE AND ENJOY...
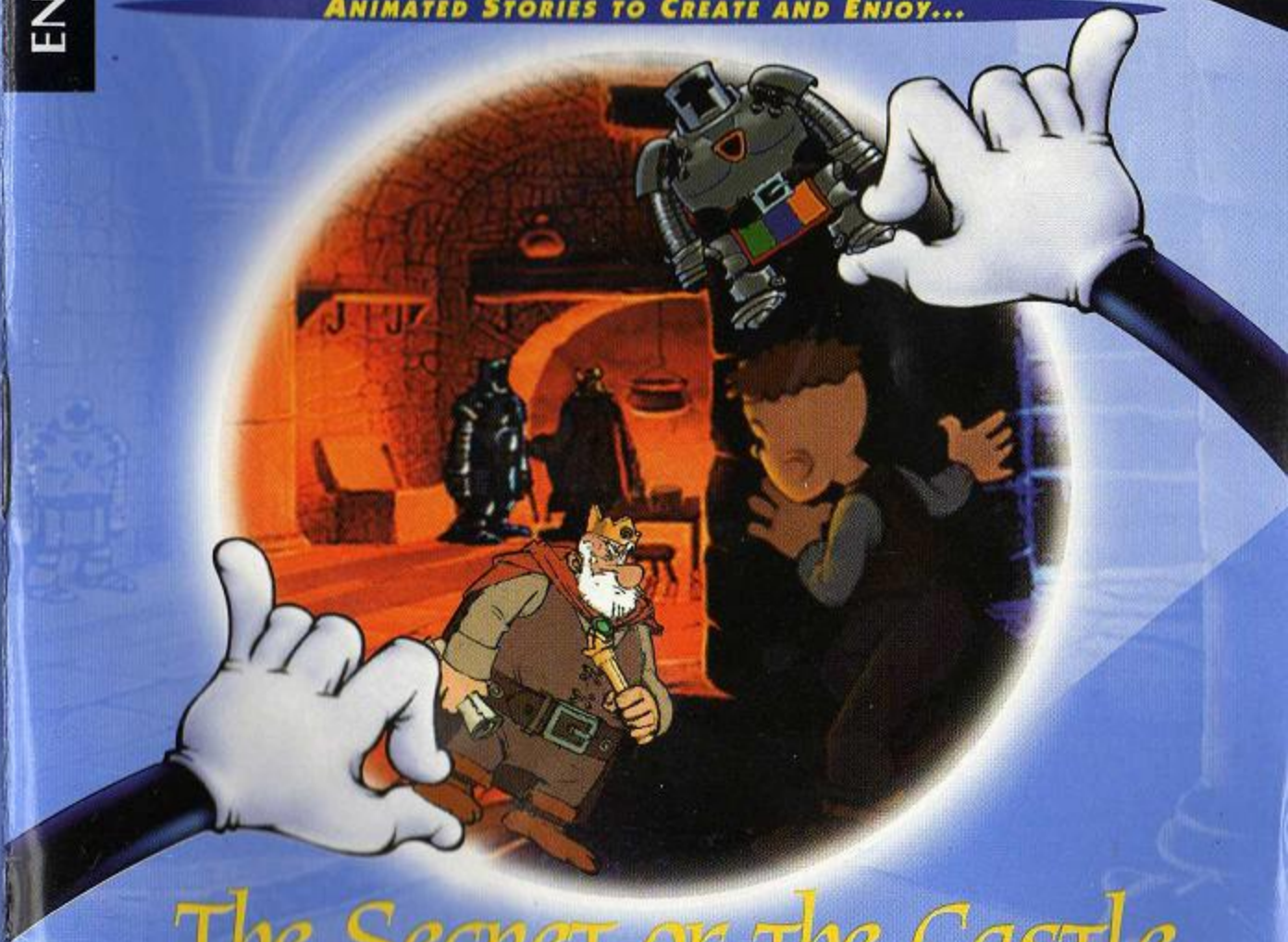
The Secret of the Castle

SIERRA EDUTAINMENT

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The story of " The Secret of the Castle "

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Letter from Sierra

Our educational collections are designed with the double aim of enriching and entertaining children. Each program fits into a particular educational genre: School Support, Educational Adventure and Construction of Stories. All are specially designed for a particular age group. All the ranges published by Sierra are designed for all educational levels in the 4-15 age group.

We intend to enrich the PLAYTOONS range by regularly publishing several new titles each year. Designed for the 4 to 10 age group, its aim is to offer the child an imaginary space within which they can develop their own creative skills.

The Playtoons collection is made up of fascinating stories, each containing a fabulous game of constructing an animated world (which is common to all the collection). Famous international characters from children's stories have contributed: thus, the celebrated Spirou is present in several of the first titles in the range, and other heroes will soon be joining him. Initially, the child, takes an imaginative journey, discovering, as the sequences progress, a marvellous story made up of superb screens, on which all they have to do is click to animate the characters and objects to take part in the adventure!

The child can then bring their own creations 'to life', thanks to the Playtoons "action" sequence : in fact, he/she can create the landscapes they desire and invent different settings, into which they can put the objects and characters bringing them to life on screen in the image they have created. Each character has their own unique personality so that their newly created world starts moving, providing surprises for the child by a whole series of different reactions during the sequences created.

Thanks to the catalogue of images and animations that grow richer with each new title published, the child will have access to a multitude of characters, objects and settings at their disposal.

These long hours of creative play will develop the child's imaginative capacities.

If, in spite of all the care we have taken with the design of our games, you would like to make some criticisms, write to us at SIERRA and we will examine your suggestions with the greatest attention.

The Sierra educational team

The Sierra Club service

You can join the club just by purchasing one piece of software with SIERRA CLUB mentioned on it, and by sending us your guarantee coupon. You will then receive a member's card and number. Membership allows you the following advantages:

- access to a technical adviser, from Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm, on (01734) 303171,
- the exchange of any defective disk (if that particular one is still available),
- a free subscription to ADIZINE, a magazine especially created for you and your parents. Published quarterly, ADIZINE contains regular columns, reviews covering current and cultural topics, a quiz, a comic and the full Sierra Edutainment range of products...
- access to promotional operations, competitions, reductions for some European museums and exhibitions, etc.,
- the possibility of corresponding with other members of the Sierra Club throughout the world, thanks to the pen-friend club.

The basic concept of the collection

One story with each title and a construction game common to the entire collection.

An interactive story that is read, discovered and listened to through a succession of animated screens: this is the first part of the Playtoons concept. This imaginative journey encourages the child to make up their own worlds, and this is possible by means of the second part.

With the Playtoons construction game, the child finds again the characters and various objects of the story in the catalogue of animations. The child can choose from among these

comic strip characters the ones they prefer to put into the settings they construct. Animated objects and characters will interact according to the situations invented by the child; a chosen character will have different reactions, depending on the object encountered in the image, and if two characters meet in this invented space there will be surprises in store!

As the catalogue of images can be extended, it means that the more titles the child possesses, the richer the catalogue becomes. The child can move freely between the various modules.

THE STORY : an interactive comic strip

How is the story told?
As in a traditional comic strip or cartoon for children, the collection proposes a series of imaginative journeys. The child reads, listens and becomes drawn into a script that will make them tremble with excitement or burst out laughing. The player can set off numerous animations full of surprises and emotions from each screen.
Humour is predominant, thanks to an original scenario and graphics and characters that are clearly portrayed.

The animated sequences contain gags, narrative sequences, and explosive cartoon sound effects. Music accompanies every stage in the story. An actor's voice tells the story in all its smallest details, but the child can also call up on the screen the summaries of the various episodes, if they like.

THE TOOL: a game of constructing animated stories

How is this tool used?
The Playtoons tool allows the child to find again the characters, landscapes, objects and settings of the stories that they possess and use them to create their own story.
The child creates their setting by making a landscape in 3 parts: sky, horizon, and foreground, using animated objects if so desired.

The child can make characters move about in the setting they have composed simply by directing them where to go.
The characters then come alive and, if they come across an object or another character, they react in certain ways and the story starts to take off. So this construction game consists of creating different situations which link up to form a story.
The story can take place with several images that the child calls up by turning the pages, and which they can save. In this way the child can be the director of their script, by setting off a series of actions.

Characters, objects and settings then combine in the different titles to produce worlds that are constantly growing richer. Thus, the child can make a character from title n°1 "Uncle Archibald" meet with one from title n°2 "The case of the counterfeit collaborator". Peter and Spirou, for example, could become friends or enemies, depending on the story invented by the child.
All this in a setting of beautiful landscapes, mountains, strange houses and fantastic caves, etc.

INSTALLATION AND START UP

PC CD ROM

Installation

Insert your disk into the CD ROM drive and start up Windows. Double click on the MAIN icon, then on the FILE MANAGER. Double click on the icon for the CD ROM drive to call up the contents of your disk, then on SETUP.EXE.

You are now into the main menu of SETUP. Click on the button INSTALL to install your CD ROM in the SIERRA EDUTAINMENT file, following the instructions that appear on the screen, then on the QUIT button once you have finished the installation. From now on you double click on the PLAYTOONS icon to start up your disk.

WARNING : THIS INSTALLATION PROCEDURE MUST BE REPEATED FOR EACH NEW TITLE PURCHASED.

Start up

To start up your CD ROM disk, insert it into the CD ROM drive, start up Windows, then double click on the PLAYTOONS icon in the SIERRA EDUTAINMENT file.

Troubleshooting

Double click on the SETUP icon of SIERRA EDUTAINMENT in Windows. This will call up the main menu of SETUP. Click on the TEST THE EQUIPMENT button to test if it is properly configured, following the instructions on the screen.

MAC CD ROM

Installation

Insert your disk into the CD ROM drive. Double click on the PLAYTOONS' icon. Double click on the PLAYTOONS.INSTALL icon. Follow installation instructions. An alias of the PLAYTOONS program will be automatically created on your desktop. Double click on it to start the game.

WARNING : THIS INSTALLATION PROCEDURE MUST BE REPEATED FOR EACH NEW TITLE PURCHASED.

A - Stories to discover...

A - 1 Choose a story
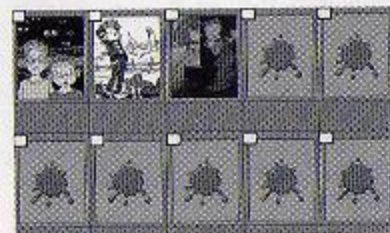
From this screen by clicking on a picture you can choose :
• to look at a story that you've got (colour pictures),
• to see an extract of a story you haven't got yet (black and white pictures).

A - 2 Read a story

You have chosen a story you want to see.

From this contents page, you can decide :
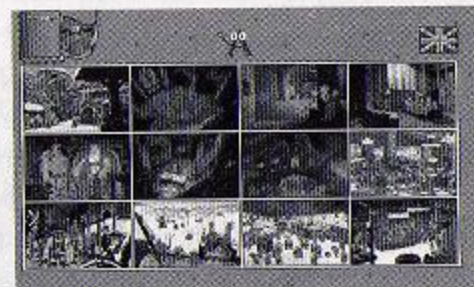
• to read the story from the beginning,

• to look at the story with or without the text,

(The little flag indicates which second language you can also read the story in).

• and lastly, you can go straight to one of the story's chapters by clicking on whichever picture you like.

A - 3 Looking at and reading a story

The Playtoons' Collection contains interactive stories, full of humour, mystery and fantasy. You can look at and listen to all the stories just as if they were normal cartoons. They are all based on the same concept of interactive screens and animated sequences.

Interactive screens

You can look at a scene, read the story's text and trigger off large quantities of animations that are hidden behind objects and characters in the story. By moving your mouse about, you'll be able to find them. When the cursor looks like this [image] , you know that you can trigger of an animation ! All you have to do is click on your left-hand mouse button to see it.

Animated sequences

These sequences are real animated films, with all the atmosphere and fun of the best cartoons. These sequences link the interactive screens to each other. You can interrupt a sequence by clicking on your right-hand mouse button.

You can read the story just like a book, by turning the pages. At the bottom of the screen there are 5 icons that you can use to help you, they come to life when you point your mouse at them. The icon selected is always highlighted.

Click here to go backwards.

Click here to continue the story.

By clicking on this icon you can make the speech balloons of each interactive screen appear and disappear.

Each time you see a speech balloon on the screen, the narrator will read it to you. At which point you can :

• click on your mouse's right-hand button to interrupt the narrator,

• listen to all or part of the text over again. If you want the narrator to read a word out slowly, highlight it by clicking on it. If you want to hear several words, highlight them by keeping your finger pressed down on the mouse button. The narrator will read them again and they will be underlined as they are read out.

• change languages. All you have to do is click on the flag to the right above the speech balloon. All the reading options will then be available in the new language you have selected.

To return to the contents, click here. The narrator will check that you are sure of your choice. Answer by clicking on the Yes or No button.

Click on this icon to get more information. The cursor will turn into a question mark, which you can then move about to find out more about an icon or a specific part of a picture. Everything will be explained in detail. To quit this function, click on the Quit icon.

B - Stories to create ...

Playtoons contains a construction game that you can use to create your own stories, cartoons and even animated films ! The construction game is universal, so you can add elements from all the other titles in the collection you've got. Furthermore as the collection progresses with each new title, new options are regularly added to the construction game. **These improvements are designed so that they remain compatible with even the oldest titles in the collection. So to update your construction game completely, just insert the CD-ROM with the highest number.**

For example, if you've got " Uncle Archibald " (Playtoons 1) and "The Secret of the Castle" (Playtoons 3), it's better to use " The Secret of the Castle " so that your game includes the options from both games.

B - 1 Before starting.

If you're using the construction game for the first time, we recommend taking a look at the Guided Presentation. To do so, answer Yes when asked. This presentation will introduce the game to you and also present the main functions. At the end of the presentation, you will see an example of a story created with the construction game.

We're sure you'll want to continue improving this story yourself...

If you do, answer Yes when the vocal aid asks you the question.

You can return to the presentation whenever you want, by clicking on the robot and selecting Guide. (For more information, please consult the chapter " Progressing further " and the Guide and Loading options of the Robot).

B - 2 Your first story.

Let's have a look at the construction game's more basic functions. You can use them to create the pictures of your first story.

If you need any information at any time, don't hesitate to click on this icon. The cursor will turn into a question mark, and you can use it to click on different icons to find out what they're for or to click on part of the picture you're interested in. Everything is explained in detail. To quit this function, click on the Quit icon.

Pictures and scenery.

You can use the three icons to the right of the screen to change parts of the scenery :

To change the bottom part of the picture.

To change the middle part of the picture (horizon).

To change the upper part of the picture (sky).

By clicking on the arrows that surround these 3 icons, you can see all the various scenery elements.

◄ 2 / 20 ► This counter tells you how many pictures you've created in your story. You can create a maximum of 20 pictures (the right-hand figure). When you begin playing, you start on picture 1. You can click on the arrows to move from picture to picture.

The construction elements' catalogue.

All the construction features are kept in this bag. To have a look inside, click on it. In the catalogue, the elements are arranged by category.

By clicking on these arrows you can change category.

To see all the elements in a particular category, click on the lower arrows.
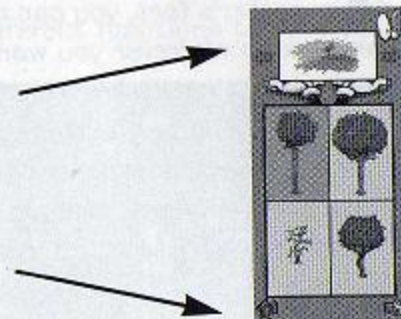
The different categories include houses, house interiors, countryside and town scenes, strange objects, musical backgrounds, characters, text features (fonts and speech balloons) .. and many others still to come in the future titles in the collection.
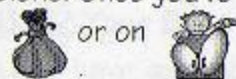
Selecting and placing an element.

When you like an element, click on it (left-hand button) and then place it in your scene by clicking again. You can put the same element in several different places in your picture, if you like. When you've finished, click on the bag icon to deselect the object. Then you can choose another.

Stationary and animated objects.

Stationary objects are on a white background and animated objects are on a blue background. If you want to see what the animation's like before actually selecting it, click on the question mark icon and click on the object. The animation will be displayed in a window. Click on the right-hand mouse button or on 🐵 when you've finished looking at the animations. Once you've selected all your elements, take them out of the catalogue by clicking on 👜 or on 👦

Moving elements and animations.

🐑 You can use this hand to pick up an object or a character whenever you like and move it to your scene or put it away in the bag.

🐑 By clicking on this icon, you'll be able to use the animation mode. By clicking on a character's feet, you can make him move. The cursor will turn into a magic wand and you can click on wherever you want your character to go to. When the cursor turns into a red hand, it's letting you know that you can make the characters and the animated objects interact. Then it's up to you to discover all the surprises in store for you, if you dare !

If you want your character to go into a house or into the next picture of your story, click on the character's feet, then on the door of the house or on the edge of the screen.
The cursor 👆 will turn into a ➡ to let you know that your character is going into another picture or a house. To make him or her leave the house, click on its feet and then on the bottom of the picture. The cursor will then look like this ⬇ .

Quitting the construction game.

🐵 By clicking on this icon you can leave the construction game.

B - 3 Progressing further...

The construction game contains multiple possibilities for creating cartoons or mini-animated films with a sound track.

Inserting text into a story.

You can write text in the speech balloons of each of your story's pictures. Choose the category with this icon **A** .

You will then be able to use speech balloons or (text spaces) and characters *A* .

First select a text space with your mouse. Then click on *A* and a keyboard will appear on the screen. All you have to do then is type your text on the keyboard, or if you prefer, click directly on each letter with your mouse.

You can erase ⌫ , and you can write in capital letters M/m . When your text is ready, click on OK to validate.

The robot.

🤖 By clicking on this icon, you'll be able to use lots of different functions to save your stories and print them, to name just a few.
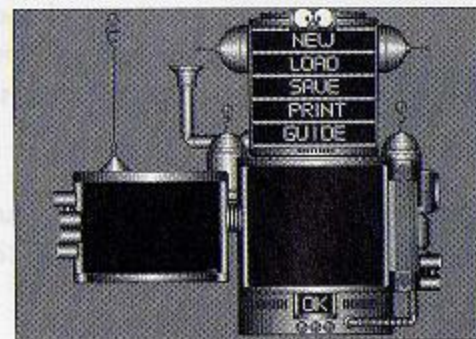
NEW Click here to start a new story.

SAVE You can keep the stories you create. Click here to see a list. Choose where you want to save your story in this list. Click on **OK**. The keyboard will appear. Type your story's name, then validate by clicking on OK on the keyboard. Your story's main picture will be visible in the left-hand window. You story has been saved. If you want to save several creations, be sure to remember to give them all different names.

LOAD By clicking on this icon, the list of the stories you've saved will appear on the screen. Click on the name of the story you want to look at, then on **OK**. The example story is called EXAMPLE. You can also load this one if you would like to finish it.

PRINT If your computer is connected to a printer, you can print out your stories. If you want to print out the picture on the screen, select the picture per page option. If you want to print the whole story, select the 4 pictures per page option. It will take longer to print out the latter.

GUIDE If you want to have another look at the quick Guided Presentation of the game, click here.

Making animated films.

With the camera you can record everything on the screen and produce your cartoons. By clicking on the camera, you will see the full range of options available.

By clicking here, you begin recording. The light indicator tells you how long the recording will last.

By clicking here you can stop either recording or looking at one of your stories.

If you would like to see your latest recording, click here.

Adding sound to your films.

You can use the camera to record either sounds or your voice in two different ways :

+ : click on the icons in this order to record your voice live, while you create animations,

+ : click on the icons in this order to record your voice over an existing story.

Warning : this function will only work properly if you make sure that your microphone is correctly connected and the volume is loud enough. If you use the microphone in your stories, you won't be able to record for longer than a total period of around 30 seconds. The sound options (microphone and background noises) require more than 8Mb of memory.

We wish you many long hours of creative fun with Playtoons !