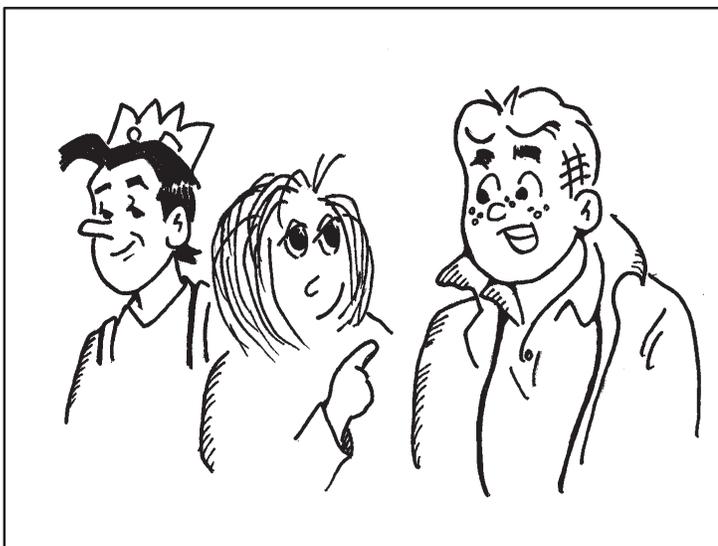# Science on the Web

Activity 5
Finding Programs

*S*aturday with her friends was really fun, Jane thought; they hadn't wanted to come home. But Sunday, which was supposed to be relaxing was far too busy. She had too much homework, she had to help bathe the puppy (actually, that was fun, although Jane got soaked too), and she had to do other chores and clean up her room. When did she get any time for herself? Monday had come too soon.

For a Monday, though, this was turning out to be pretty good. So far, none of her classes had assigned homework, and she was beginning to think that a few easy evenings might make up for the busy weekend.

Her computer class was usually pretty loose, with each student doing something independently. She had been hearing people say "oh, you can get that program on the Web," but she hadn't seen *any* programs. She wanted to find out where those programs were.

Today she had time to explore. Mrs. Fine was back in class, so Jane asked her where to start. With **archie** said Mrs. Fine. "Archie?" (Where do they get these names, thought Jane.) Mrs. Fine didn't have much time for Jane that day, and went off to help someone else, but she showed her where to find **archie**, and that was all Jane needed. She found out that **archie** is a tool that can be used to find programs at **anonymous ftp*** sites using a Web browser. She wanted to get some "shareware" programs for her best friend to run on her Macintosh at home, and Richard had been bugging her about bringing home some games. If Jane could get these free programs from the Web, she could help her friend use her home computer and could learn the new game, before Richard became the resident expert.

***FTP** "file transfer protocol," is a way to copy a file from one computer to another. **Anonymous** means you don't have to have a login on the computer. Everyone is permitted to login as "anonymous."

Running games on the Web

There are lots of games on the Web, and you should try to find some. Quite a few are at this site:

http://zippy.sonoma.edu/kendrick/games

Choose several games and run them. Are they fun? Are they slow?

Some games work well on the Web, but not fast-moving ones. You need to consider getting a game that actually executes on your computer. That will allow the game to run faster because it doesn't have to connect to the Internet—the greatest slow-down.

You can use the Web to preview a game you might like to buy. There are lots of commercial sites like this. Try one of these:

http://www.jumbo.com
http://www.sierra.com

At these sites, you will be able to download a program that will execute on your computer. Click on the link, and check where it is going to be placed. Look at the table of how long it takes to download a file; you may not be willing to wait an hour to get it. You may also encounter some problems with compressed files. Read on to learn about *unzip*.

Getting a game

Running programs on the Web is slow; buying games is expensive; running demos is time consuming and ultimately unsatisfying. There are some other alternatives.
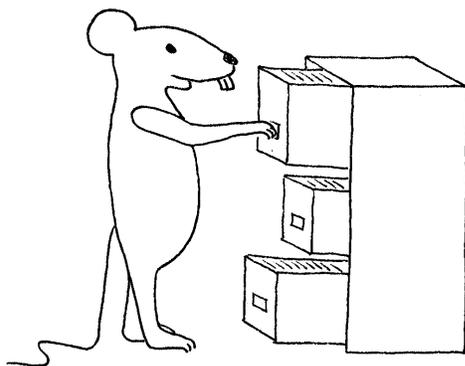
One alternative is software called "shareware" because you can get it for no cost, although they ask you to pay a little if you use it. This is a great site to find shareware programs:

http://shareware.com

You can search for topics at this site as with any search.

Try to download a game to your computer.

Where did that file go?

Sometimes the hardest part of working with computers is finding where stuff is.

If you request a file to be downloaded to your computer a menu will appear that allows you to control the destination of files that you get. After the file is transferred, you'll find it in the destination directory.
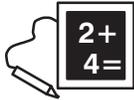
If you fail to select a directory, or forget the default, try asking for another download, only this time check the default directory and then cancel the download. Searching for a file on your computer is possible, too, so remember what you called it.

Questions

5–1. Describe a game that you have tried. What is the game's best characteristic? What are the biggest problems with it?

Using **archie** to find programs

You can see the advantage of having a program run on your computer. You may also realize that Web sites don't point to everything on the Internet.

The program **archie** allows you to search **ftp** sites on the Internet for file and directories names containing a string of characters that you specify. This is a little different from the search engines that find text strings in Web pages. The results of your search will be a list of file names of executable programs that don't "look like anything." You will have to select them by their names and install them to see how they play.

There are many **archie** servers, and if one seems to be very slow, you can try another. You can use a search engine to look for **archie**. One very good site is at Rutgers University.

http://archie.rutgers.edu

Try looking for the program *"netscape"* and see what kind of listing you get back. Just as with a search engine, the listing you get back can be large.

A program for the PC

A useful tool to have when you are downloading files to a Windows-based computer is **unzip**. This program is needed when a file has been "zipped" so as to compress it and sometimes to group items.

> Search for *unzip*.

Click on one of the listings that contains *UNZIP.EXE*. The "EXE" ending means it's an "executable," a program. You should then get a window that lets you select where to put the file and what to call it. You will have to learn how to use the program when you get a "zipped" file, but that should be fairly straight forward.

A program for the Mac

A similar program to the PC *unzip* is **stuffit-expander** for the Macintosh. This program should be bundled with your browser, but if it isn't, installing it on the Mac will allow Netscape to use it automatically.

> Search for *stuffit* or *stuffit-expander.*

Click on one of the listings to download. You should then get a window that lets you select where to put the file and what to call it. You will have to learn how to use the program when you get a "compressed" file that your browser cannot open. However, just having the software on your computer may be all that the browser needs to open the file for you.

Space
Environment
Center

? Questions

5–2. Which version of **unzip** or **stuffit-expander** did you select?

5–3. Use **archie** to locate a "paint" program for your computer. Which Internet computer has such a program? What is the directory and file name?

Archie can point you at some specific programs, but it is fun to actually look at a list of games that you can choose from. There are some good ftp sites with lots of programs. Try some of these; they can all be called up with your Web browser. Just type these into the URL (Location) line.

University of Texas Mac archive—**http://wwwhost.ots.utexas.edu/mac/main.html**
University of Texas Mac archive ftp equivalent—**ftp://ftp.utexas.edu/pub/mac/**
ftp server at Dartmouth—**ftp://ftp.dartmouth.edu/pub/software/**
Apple ftp site—**ftp://ftp.apple.com/**
NCSA ftp site—**ftp://ftp.ncsa.uiuc.edu/**
Washington Univ., St. Louis, ftp site—**ftp://wuarchive.wustl.edu/**

Heads Up!

*There are games that can be played on the Net, but be careful that they are played only during allowed hours. There are also pornographic materials on the Net. Accessing or transmitting these is **illegal**. You are responsible for your use of the Net, and you can find yourself in trouble for inappropriate use. You should have a copy of your school's policy for use of the Internet.*