

MACMILLAN HEINEMANN

EURO PLUS + REWARD

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GENERAL:

The Euro Plus + Reward has developed the Reward coursebook series as a multimedia package on a CD-ROM. It incorporates a wide variety of activity types based on the original Reward coursebook and Reward Video, but it can be also used independently.

The Euro Plus + Reward gives students up to 150 hours of intensive, but also interesting, language learning at each level (from elementary to upper- intermediate).

Each level has 2 CDs and consists of up to 8 units per level, each with 5 lessons, one video lesson and one progress check. Each lesson has 12-15 separate screen pages and there is a full progress check at the end of each unit.

The program has very attractive graphic design. It also contains **a wide range of activity types** including:

- gap filling;
- multiple choice ;
- chart filling;
- identification;
- word ordering;
- matching;
- correcting and editing etc.

Students can check their answers after each exercise (with a special report which points out their mistakes and shows correct answers) or meaning and pronunciation of words (a special dictionary) . What is more, students can **work online**. The course contains :

- Forum*, where you can exchange opinions with other EPR users.
- News service*,

-*Teacher service* with teacher's comments about your mistakes.

-*Online games*.

Generally speaking, Euro Plus + Reward is attractive and cooperative for students. It can be interesting as a supplement to any coursebook they use. But it is better as self-study rather than an activity in class. If the student wished to repeat the whole stage of the course (e.g. pre-intermediate), they could go over the computer version. The activities on the computer are basically the same, however the user can get translations of the instructions and the grammar pages. Also recordings of exemplary sentences are provided which is very useful.

GOOD POINTS:

- ◆ excellent graphic design, elegant and not kitsch; the icons are well suited (Internet Explorer style); even the border line changes according to the level of the course – it is linked to the colour of the coursebooks;
- ◆ operated fully with the mouse;
- ◆ clear and intuitive; easy to navigate;
- ◆ good integration with the Internet; the idea of Teacher Service is fine;
- ◆ sounds are reduced to minimum – they do not distract the learner;
- ◆ top right corner is always active, providing instant access to the basic options;
- ◆ when connecting to the Internet no native language Windows boxes appear, therefore the user seems to be entirely immersed in a different environment;
- ◆ the Course Exploration menu works fine: it's got excellent browsing capabilities; the range of search can be easily adjusted and the number of the pages found is updated in real time;
- ◆ good multimedia extensions: the futuristic audio and video player;
- ◆ nearly every page is richly illustrated;
- ◆ some Video exercises appear difficult to follow, for example those where the still frames of a given video are put one on another;
- ◆ too few exercises on listening; these could be easily accommodated by reducing the volume occupied by numerous graphic illustrations to almost every page of the course;

WEAK POINTS:

- ◆ perhaps some repeated commands could be doubled by the keyboard;
- ◆ more space could have been devoted to additional drilling exercises, e.g. page 6 of lesson 5 or page 10 of lesson 5 show far too much form than content;
- ◆ there's something misleading about the way Euro Plus informs the learner about the mistakes they've made; the programme doesn't distinguish, for example, between a word which is spelled incorrectly and a word which has not been supplied at all; if the user hasn't even begun a given exercise he will learn that he has done 0 items correctly and 0 items incorrectly, which seems to be illogical;

On the whole it seems that Euro Plus Reward is either a very good supplement for the coursebook or a standalone programme for learning English. However, more video materials could be provided (perhaps on a separate CD-ROM). It's intuitive and easy to navigate, the installation is quick.

MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS:

- IBM PC compatible with Pentium® 100MHz
- Windows 95
- 16MB RAM memory
- Video monitor with 800/600 pixels resolution and high colour
- 8 speed CD-ROM drive
- Mouse

Euro Plus + Reward Software © Young Digital Poland 1999 www.ydp.com.pl,
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