

Missing Letters

Adapted from a program
by Carol Chomsky and Judah L. Schwartz

Education Family

One day a thirsty crow
puzzles
pitcher with a little
riddles
in it. He tried to drink
he couldn't reach for
rhymes
the pitcher to drink
dropped pebbles into
fables
the level of the water
of the pitcher. Then
pitcher handle and dra

IBM

**Personal
Computer
Software**

Guess missing letters in passages and score points. Find out interesting facts—about food, sports, animals, travel...and more! Learn new words with rhymes, riddles or twistogram teasers. Create original passages with the Editor. For ages 8 and up.

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Missing Letters

by Carol Chomsky and
Judah L. Schwartz

Education Family

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**Personal
Computer
Software**

First Edition (March 1985)

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About this Book

This book is a guide to using Missing Letters. It is divided into five parts:

- *Chapter 1: About Missing Letters* presents an overview of the Missing Letters game, as well as directions for preparing the program diskette for use.
- *Chapter 2: Playing Missing Letters* gives complete directions for starting and using the program.
- *Chapter 3: Using the Editor* discusses how to use the Editor to enter and customize passages from books with Missing Letters.
- *Chapter 4: For Parents and Teachers* provides educational information about Missing Letters and suggestions for choosing sample passages.
- *Appendix A: Technical Reference* provides technical information for installing the program on a fixed disk.

Related Books

We assume that you are familiar with the operation of your IBM personal computer and the IBM Personal Computer Disk Operating System (DOS). For further information about your computer and DOS, refer to the following publications:

- IBM Personal Computer *Guide to Operations*
- IBM Personal Computer *Disk Operating System*

Hints

Here are some hints on learning Missing Letters:

- Read this book while seated at your computer.
- As you go through the book, set a comfortable pace for yourself.
- Read the chapters carefully, and follow the instructions exactly.

The tutorials teach you how to use Missing Letters and the Editor quickly and easily.

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Chapter 1. About Missing Letters

Missing Letters is an entertaining and challenging language game. A literary passage appears on the screen with some of its letters and/or words missing. Players must guess the missing letters to score points. Clues from the surrounding context help you in this task.

```
Th- -bj-ct -f th- g-m- -s t- g--ss th-  
m-ss-ng l-tt-rs -nd w-rds, -nd f-ll -n  
th- bl-nks in as few tries as possible.
```

A passage can appear in a variety of deletion *formats*. Here are a few examples:

- All vowels missing
- All consonants missing
- Every other word missing

You can allow yourself up to five guesses on a letter before the program supplies it. When you complete a passage, the program gives you your score and a detailed record of your guessing performance. You then can begin play on a new passage, or you can try the same passage in a different deletion format.

The passages in Missing Letters include puzzles, riddles, rhymes, fables, and other literary selections for both children and adults. You also can add your own passages using a special Editor program included on the Missing Letters program diskette. The Editor is designed to add passages not only in English, but also in any language the keyboard permits. You can play these new passages in all the deletion formats.

What You Need

To use Missing Letters, you need these items:

- One of the following IBM personal computers with at least 128KB of memory:
 - IBM PC
 - IBM Personal Computer AT^{TM1}
 - IBM PC XT^{TM2}
 - IBM PC_{jr}^{TM3}
 - IBM *Portable* Personal Computer
- DOS Version 2.00 or higher
- One double-sided diskette drive
- One of the following displays:
 - An IBM Color Display
 - An IBM PC_{jr} Color Display
 - An IBM Monochrome Display
 - Any compatible display or TV
- The appropriate adapter for your display or TV
- The BASIC Cartridge (IBM PC_{jr} only)

¹ IBM Personal Computer AT is a trademark of International Business Machines Corporation.


² IBM Personal Computer XT is a trademark of International Business Machines Corporation.

³ IBM PC_{jr} is a trademark of International Business Machines Corporation.

- An IBM Graphics Printer or a compatible printer and the appropriate printer adapter (optional)
- Two blank, double-sided, double-density diskettes for preparing your Missing Letters program diskette and for making a backup copy of the prepared diskette

Using Your Keyboard

You need to understand how to use the keyboard for your particular IBM personal computer. If you have any questions, refer to your IBM Personal Computer *Guide to Operations*.

In this book, we refer to most of the keys by name, for example, the Cursor Right key. In the case of the Enter key, we show you the symbol, .

Note: If you have an IBM PCjr, remember to press the Fn key before pressing any of the function keys.

Preparing Your Program Diskette

Before you can begin using Missing Letters, you need to prepare your Missing Letters program diskette for use. To do so, you need these items:

- Your DOS diskette
- Your Missing Letters diskette
- A blank, double-sided, double-density diskette

Follow these steps to prepare your program diskette:

- 1** Insert your DOS diskette in drive A.
- 2** Turn on your computer.

If your computer is already on, hold down the Ctrl and Alt keys and then press the Del key. This is called a *system reset*.
- 3** You're asked for the date. Type the date in the form of month-day-year (MM-DD-YY), for example, 4-11-85. Then, press the **↵** key.
- 4** Next, you're asked for the time. Type the time in the form of hours:minutes:seconds (HH:MM:SS), for example, 13:01.

Note: When typing the time, you work from a 24 hour clock; in other words, 0 to 24 hours. For this reason, one o'clock in the afternoon is 13:00.

- 5** *If you have a single-drive system, go to step 6 now.*

If you have a dual-drive system, insert a blank diskette in drive B, then go to step 6.

6 When you see the **A>** prompt, type **DISKCOPY A: B:** and then press the **↵** key.

7 Now, follow the directions on your screen to continue.

Remember: Your Missing Letters diskette is your *source diskette*, and your blank diskette is your *target diskette*.

When the copy process finishes, put your original Missing Letters diskette in a safe place, and use your new diskette to continue.

8 Now, insert your DOS diskette in drive A.

9 *If you have a single-drive system, go to step 10 now.*

If you have a dual-drive system, insert your new diskette in drive B, then go to step 10.

10 Type **COPY A: BASICA.COM B:** and then press the **↵** key.

11 Now, follow the directions on your screen to continue.

Remember: Your DOS diskette is your *source diskette*, and your new diskette is your *target diskette*.

From now on, whenever we refer to the Missing Letters program diskette, we mean the diskette you just created.

Backing Up Your Program Diskette

We recommend that you use the **DOS DISKCOPY** command to make a backup copy of the Missing Letters program diskette you just prepared in case of accidental damage to your original diskette. Refer to your IBM Personal Computer *Guide to Operations* or your IBM Personal Computer *Disk Operating System (DOS)* manual for instructions on backing up your diskette.

Summary

In this chapter, you saw an overview of Missing Letters, and you prepared your program diskette for use. Now, go on to Chapter 2, where you'll learn how to start and use Missing Letters.

Chapter 2. Playing Missing Letters

This tutorial gives you complete directions for starting and using Missing Letters. The object of the game is to fill in all the blanks in as few tries as possible. You achieve the maximum score of 100 if you fill in all the blanks correctly on the first try.

If this is the first time you are playing Missing Letters, follow the steps in this tutorial to familiarize yourself with how the game works. Then, when you feel comfortable with the game, you can make the choices that suit your particular needs and interests.

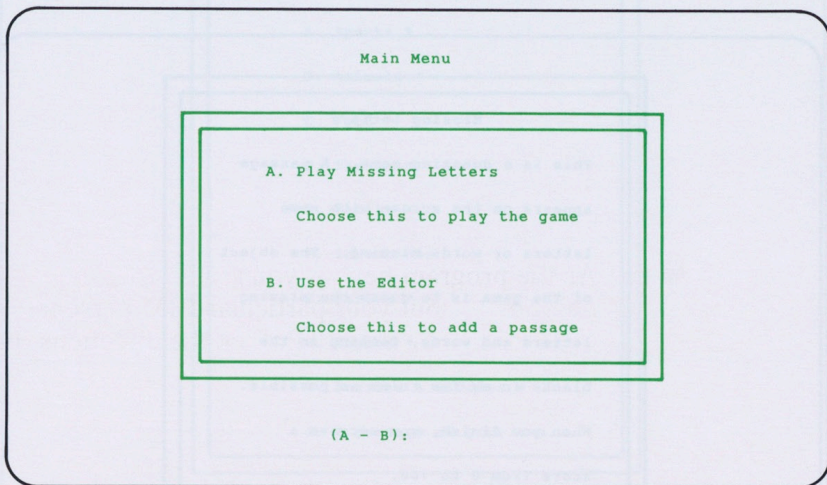
Starting Missing Letters

Follow these steps to start Missing Letters:

- 1** Start DOS in the usual manner.
- 2** When you see the **A>** prompt, remove your DOS diskette and insert your Missing Letters diskette in drive A.
- 3** Type **G** and then press the **↵** key.
- 4** As the program begins, you see a series of questions about your particular IBM personal computer and display. Follow the directions on your screen to answer these questions.
- 5** After a few seconds, the title screen appears briefly, followed by the introduction screen. Continue to follow the directions on your screen until you see the Main Menu.

The Main Menu

This is the *Main Menu*. It lists the *options* (choices) the program offers. Take a few moments to study this screen.

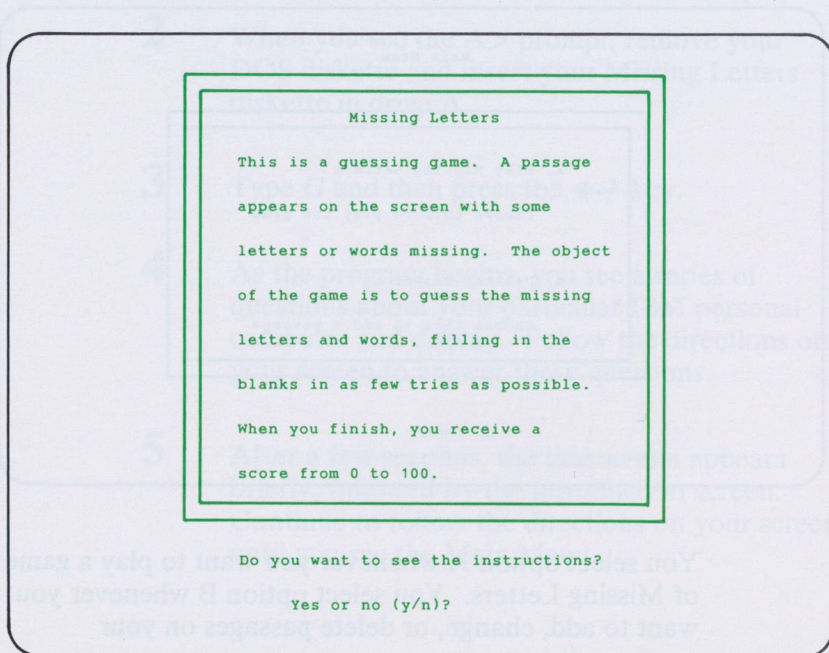


You select option A whenever you want to play a game of Missing Letters. You select option B whenever you want to add, change, or delete passages on your program diskette.

Setting up the Game

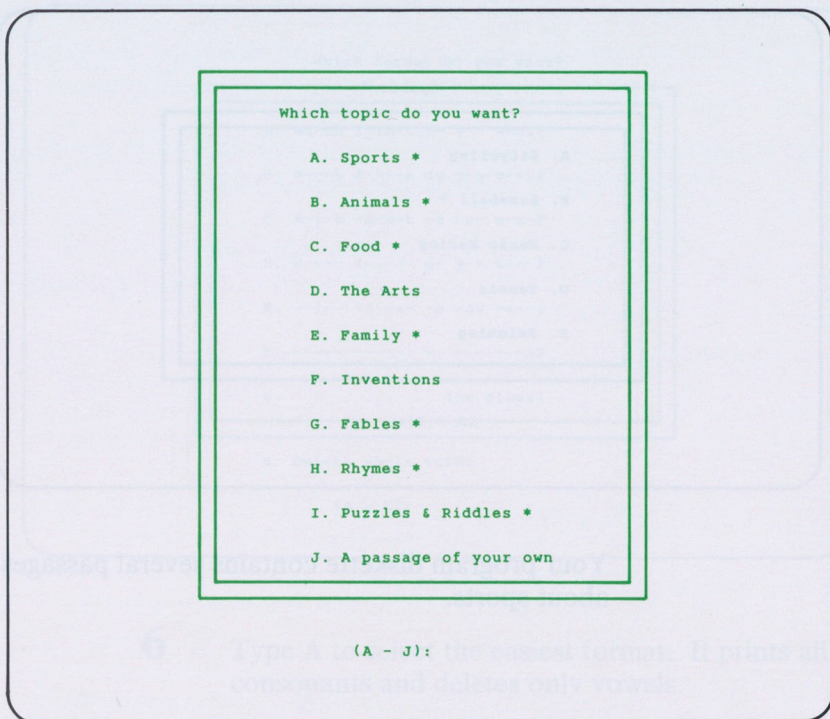
Follow these steps to play the game:

1 Type A. You see this screen:



2 There are several instructions screen. Type **Y** to start at the first screen, then continue to type **Y** to page through the remaining instruction screens.

- 3 When you finish looking at the instructions, press any key to continue. You see this screen:

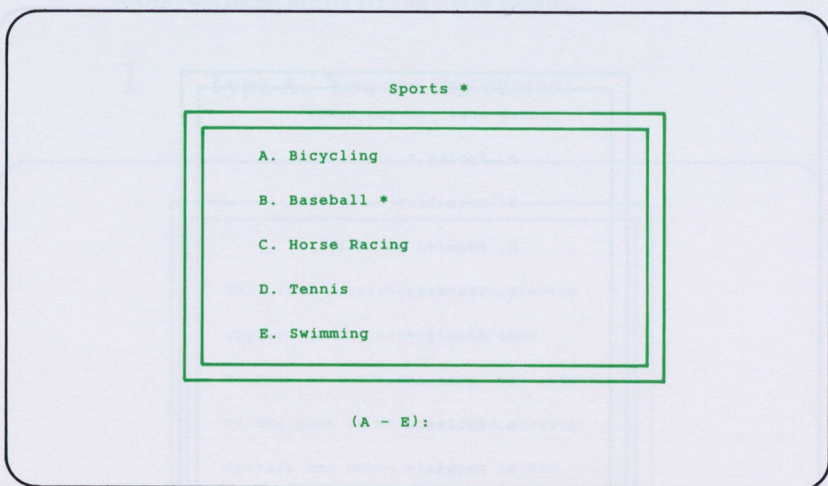


Your program diskette contains nine general categories of passages, and a tenth category that lets you view original passages that you create with the Editor.

Note: Categories *without* asterisks (*) are recommended for adults.

4

Type A to see a passage about sports. You see this screen:



Your program diskette contains several passages about sports.

- 5 Type **B** to see a passage about baseball. You see this screen:

Which format do you want?

A. Wh-ch f-rm-t d- y-- w-nt?

B. W---h f----t do y-u w--t?

C. W-i-h -o-m-t -o -o- w-n-?

D. W---- f----- d- y-- w---?

E. --i-- -o--a- -o -ou -a--?

F. -----

G. (no clues)

H. Delete whole words

(A - H):

- 6 Type **A** to select the easiest format. It prints all consonants and deletes only vowels.

Note: Refer to the "Formats" section of this guide for a description of all of the available formats.

Next, you see this message:

How many guesses do you want

on each blank?

(1 - 5):

- 7 Type **3** to allow yourself three tries on each blank before the program supplies the missing letter. Your passage now appears on the screen in the format you chose, and you are ready to start playing. Have fun!

Things to Remember

As you play Missing Letters, follow the directions on your screen, and remember these important things:

- When you guess correctly, the letter appears in the blank, and the cursor moves to the next blank.
- When you guess incorrectly, the letter you guessed appears at the bottom of the screen.
- If you use up all your tries without guessing the correct letter, the program fills in the correct letter for you.
- Press each letter key briefly, then let go. Letter keys have a "repeat" feature and continue to register as guesses as long as you press them.
- The program distinguishes UPPERCASE (capital) letters from lowercase (small) letters when it judges your guesses. For example, it treats T and t as separate characters, and you must enter the appropriate one.
- The program treats the letter y as a consonant when it occurs at the beginning of a word and as a vowel everywhere else. For example, the word *day* appears in format A as d-- and in format E (Print vowels only) as -ay.
- The program supplies numbers, punctuation, and spaces between words.
- If you type any non-letter keys, the program ignores them.
- Look over the entire passage before making any guesses. You might find clues later in the passage that help with the opening words.

When you have difficulty deciphering a word, reread the passage from the beginning. Context clues often give hints about difficult words.

Skip around in the passage and fill in the easier words first. They may provide clues to the more difficult words.

- When you finish a passage, take a moment to read it again to study the language and the style.

Special Keys

Here are the special keys you can use when playing Missing Letters:

↑, ↓, ←, →

The Cursor Movement keys, located at the right-hand side of your keyboard, enable you to move the cursor anywhere in the passage.

Home

The Home key moves the cursor to the first blank in the passage.

End

The End key moves the cursor to the last blank in the passage.

←

Press the ← key at any time during play to see your current score. You then return to the game where you left off.

Esc

Press the Esc key if you want to end the game. You return to the Main Menu.

Ctrl-S

Press Ctrl-S at any time in Missing Letters to turn the sound OFF if it is on or ON if it is off.

F1

Press F1 to review the instructions. The program then returns to the point where you left off.

Note: If you are using an IBM PCjr, remember to press the Fn key before pressing any of the function keys.

Ctrl-P / Shift-PrtSc

Use either of these key combinations to print a copy of the passage at any time during play.

Shift-PrtSc prints the text exactly as it appears on the screen. Ctrl-P centers the passage on the page and rearranges the text for printing.

You may want to try both commands (Ctrl-P and Shift-PrtSc) to see which one gives the best printed passage on your printer.

Remember: Whenever you want to use your printer, make sure it is correctly attached to your computer and turned on. Check to see that the Online button is lit and that paper is properly inserted in the printer.

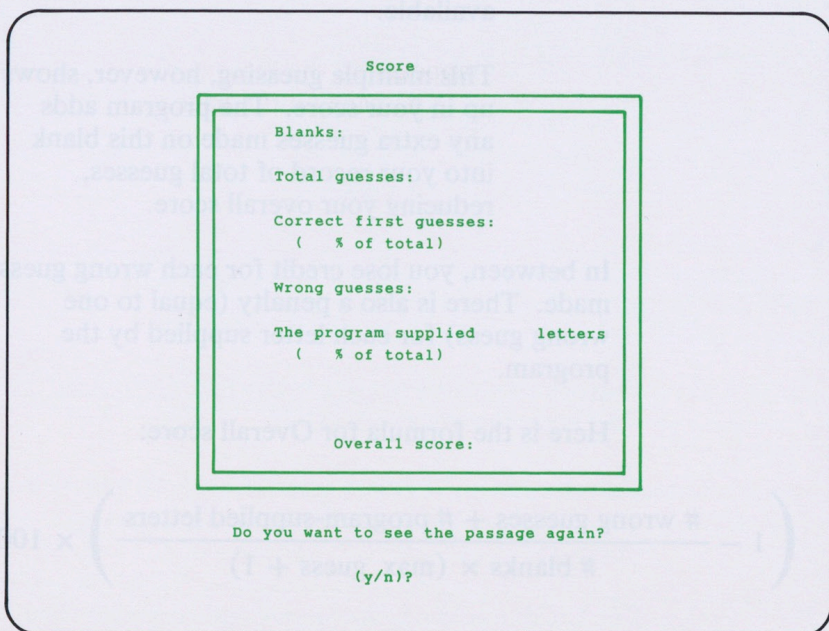
Score

After you play the game and finish the passage, you see this message at the bottom of the screen:

Good! To see how you did, press **↵**.

Now, follow these steps to see your score and end the round of play:

1 Press the **↵** key. You see this screen:



This is your score for the round of play. It shows you how many blanks there were in the passage, how many blanks you filled correctly on the first try, the total number of guesses you made, how many wrong guesses you made, and how many letters the program supplied.

You also receive an *overall score*. Here is how Missing Letters computes the overall score:

- Score is 100 if all blanks are filled correctly on the first try.
- Score is 0 if all blanks are filled by the program (you never guess a correct letter).

Note: You can move away from a blank before filling it in correctly. The blank remains until you fill it in. When you return to that blank, you again have the maximum number of tries available.

This multiple guessing, however, shows up in your score. The program adds any extra guesses made on this blank into your record of total guesses, reducing your overall score.

In between, you lose credit for each wrong guess made. There is also a penalty (equal to one wrong guess) for each letter supplied by the program.

Here is the formula for Overall score:

$$\left(1 - \frac{\# \text{ wrong guesses} + \# \text{ program-supplied letters}}{\# \text{ blanks} \times (\text{max. guess} + 1)} \right) \times 100$$

Max. guess is the maximum number of tries you selected on that round of play.

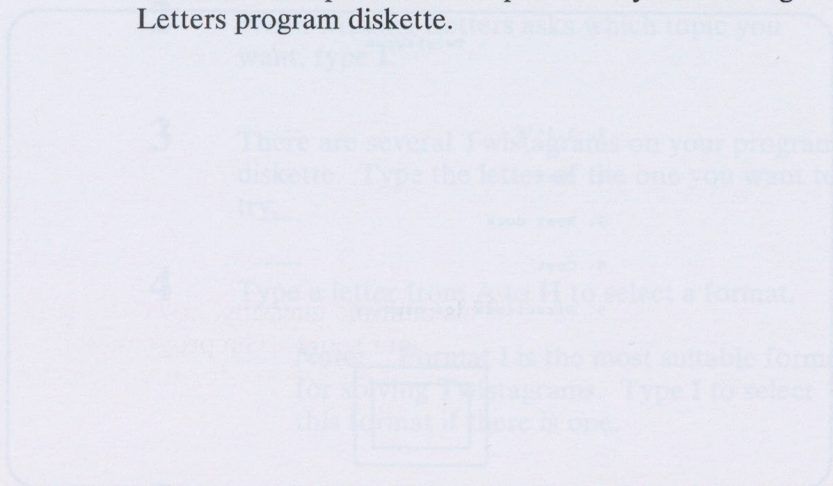
2

You can see the passage again, or you can return to the Main Menu. For now, type **N** to return to the Main Menu. You have three options:

- Option A lets you play another game of Missing Letters.

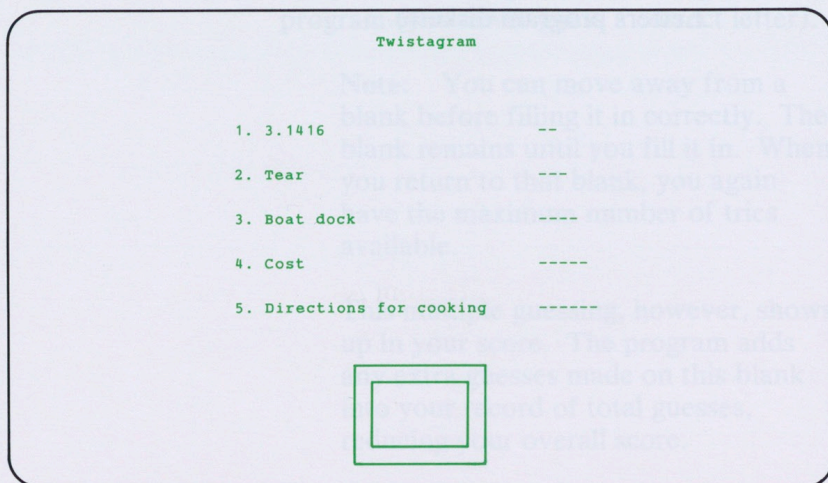
- Option B lets you use the Editor.
- Option C lets you exit the program and move to the Missing Letters closing screen.

We'll use the Main Menu again in a moment, but first let's look at a special kind of puzzle on your Missing Letters program diskette.



Twistagrams

There are puzzles on the diskette called *Twistagrams*.
Here's an example of a Twistagram:



Here's how to solve the sample Twistagram:

1. Guess a two-letter word for the first definition. In this case, the answer is **pi**.
2. The answer for the next word uses these same two letters plus one more, scrambled. Add an **r** to make **rip**.
3. For word 3, add another letter and scramble them again. Here you add **e** to get **pier**. Keep this up until you solve the whole twistagram.
4. For word 4, add **c** to get **price**.
5. For word 5, add **e** to get **recipe**.

Twistagrams naturally get harder as they get longer. Here's how to play a Twistagram on your program diskette:

- 1 Type **A** on the Main Menu.
- 2 When Missing Letters asks which topic you want, type **I**.
- 3 There are several Twistagrams on your program diskette. Type the letter of the one you want to try.
- 4 Type a letter from **A** to **H** to select a format.

Note: Format **I** is the most suitable format for solving Twistagrams. Type **I** to select this format if there is one.

- 5 Type a number from 1 to 5 for the number of guesses you want to allow on each blank. The Twistagram appears, and you are ready to begin.

Good luck!

- 6 When you finish, follow the directions on your screen to see your score and return to the Main Menu.

Formats

Missing Letters offers a variety of game formats. This sample passage illustrates them:

This is an entertaining game of educational value. An individual player proceeds by making educated guesses about language from an increasing number of cues.

The Standard Formats

The standard game formats, A through G, are listed in increasing order of difficulty:

A. Print consonants only, omit vowels

Th-s -s -n -nt-rt--n-ng g-m- -f -d-c-t--n-l
v-l--. -n -nd-v-d--l pl---r pr-c--ds b-
m-k-ng -d-c-t-d g--ss-s -b--t l-ng--g- fr-m
-n -ncr--s-ng n-mb-r -f c--s.

B. Print first and last letters

T--s is an e-----g g--e of e-----l
v---e. An i-----l p-----r p-----s by
m----g e-----d g-----s a---t l-----e f--m
an i-----g n-----r of c--s.

C. Print every other letter

T-i- i- a- e-t-r-a-n-n- g-m- o- e-u-a-i-n-l
-a-u-. A- i-d-v-d-a- p-a-e- p-o-e-d- b-
m-k-n- e-u-a-e- g-e-s-s -b-u- l-n-u-g- f-o-
a- i-c-e-s-n- n-m-e- o- c-e-.

D. Print first letter of each word

T--- i- a- e----- g--- o- e-----
v----. A- i----- p----- p----- b-
m----- e----- g----- a----- l----- f---
a- i----- n----- o- c-----.

E. Print vowels only, omit consonants

--i- i- a- e--e--ai-i-- -a-e o- e-u-a-io-a-
-a-ue. A- i--i-i-ua- --aye- --o-ee-- -y
-a-i-- e-u-a-e- -ue--e- a-ou- -a--ua-e --o-
a- i---ea-i-- -u--e- o- -ue-.

F. Print all blanks

-----.

G. Print nothing (title appears at top, rest of screen is blank)

This is the blank screen format. You must guess all of the letters in order.

Important: The Cursor Movement keys do not function in this format.

The Cloze Format

A *cloze* format often is used to test reading comprehension by deleting certain words in a passage. Missing Letters offers these cloze formats:

H. Delete whole words

The Cloze format lets you delete every second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth word.

When you select option H, you see this screen:

- A. Delete every eighth word
- B. Delete every seventh word
- C. Delete every sixth word
- D. Delete every fifth word
- E. Delete every fourth word
- F. Delete every third word
- G. Delete every second word
- H. Delete every word
- I. Return to previous screen

(A - I):

Type the letter of the cloze format you want, or type **I** to return to the format selection screen.

The sample passage with every third word deleted looks like this:

This is -- entertaining game -- educational
value. -- individual player ----- by
making ----- guesses about ----- from
an ----- number of ----.

The Custom Format

This is a special format that you create and save with the Editor for a particular passage.

I. Custom format

You may, for example, want to customize a passage to delete all nouns or prepositions. Several of the passages on your program diskette already have custom formats.

Note: If there is no custom format for a particular passage, option I does not appear.

Try option I if there is one—it is included because of the special nature of the passage.

Remember: You also can play these passages using any of the other formats.

Summary

In this chapter, you learned how to start and use Missing Letters. Now, go on to Chapter 3, where you'll learn how to use the Editor.

Chapter 3. Using the Editor

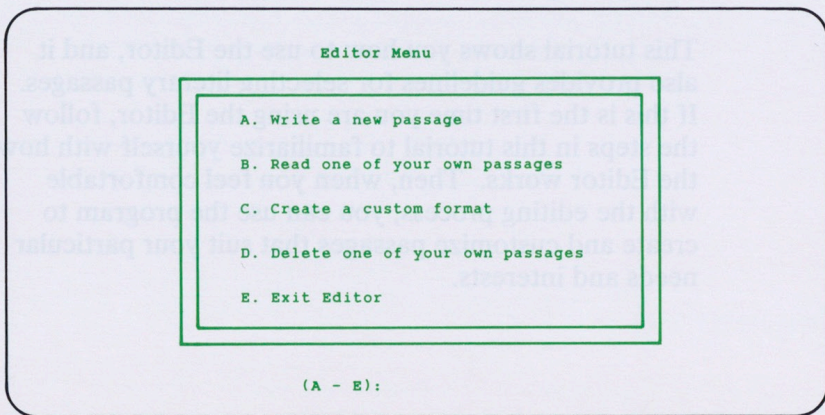
The Missing Letters diskette contains several passages that were created with the Editor. These passages are permanent passages, and you cannot change them. You can, however, use the Editor to create and customize original passages. You type in passages and save them on your program diskette. Then, when you select these passages at game time, the program presents them in the format you choose.

This tutorial shows you how to use the Editor, and it also provides guidelines for selecting literary passages. If this is the first time you are using the Editor, follow the steps in this tutorial to familiarize yourself with how the Editor works. Then, when you feel comfortable with the editing process, you can use the program to create and customize passages that suit your particular needs and interests.

Starting the Editor

Follow these steps to start the Editor:

- 1 Start Missing Letters in the usual manner. You are ready to begin when the Main Menu appears on the screen.
- 2 To start the Editor program, type **B** on the Main Menu. You see the Editor Menu:



This menu gives you several options:

- Option A lets you enter a new passage and save it on your Missing Letters program diskette.
- Option B lets you look at and edit an existing passage on your program diskette.
- Option C lets you create a custom format for a particular passage.
- Option D lets you delete a passage from your program diskette.
- Option E lets you exit the Editor.

Using the Editor

In order to learn how to use the Editor, imagine that you want to save a passage on your program diskette. You save an original passage in a *file*. Each file has a *filename* that is one to eight characters (letters, numbers, or symbols) in length.

Follow these steps to create a file:

- 1 Type **A** to write a new passage. You see this screen:

Choose a name for your passage

(up to 8 letters).

Filename: _____

Type the name, then press **↵**.

The filename you give to the passage is important because that is how you recall the passage when you are playing Missing Letters. Here are some things to remember when naming passages:

- Limit the filename to no more than eight characters.
- The filename can contain both letters and numbers, but no spaces or punctuation marks.
- Be sure to use a different filename for each passage.

- You can type the filename in either uppercase or lowercase letters. The program automatically converts the letters to uppercase as you type them.

Here are some examples of correct and incorrect filenames:

Correct Names	Incorrect Names
A	"A"
CART2	CART 2
raining	rain.ing
12345678	123456789

2 Type **SWIMMING** for the filename of this sample passage, and then press the **↵** key.

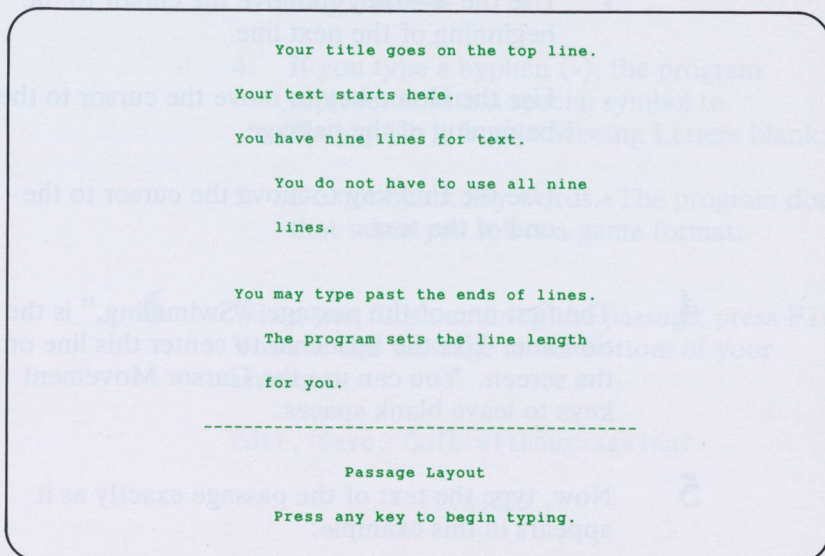
Note: If there is a passage with the same filename already saved on your diskette, you see this message:

File *filename* already exists.

Press Spacebar...

Press the Spacebar, then enter a new filename for the passage.

After you name your passage, you see the passage layout screen:



This screen gives you an overall picture of how your text appears after you enter it.

3

Now, press any key to see the text entry screen. The bottom of the screen contains this message:


Type Passage

Keys: ← ↑ ↓ → ← ← Home End

Press F10 when finished.

Here's how to use the keys listed at the bottom of the screen:

- Use the Cursor Movement keys to move the cursor to any existing text in the file. You can use the Cursor Movement keys to move the cursor beyond the last character you have typed.

- Use the Backspace key to erase characters to the left of the cursor.
- Use the  key to move the cursor to the beginning of the next line.
- Use the Home key to move the cursor to the beginning of the passage.
- Use the End key to move the cursor to the end of the text.

4 The first line of the passage, "Swimming," is the title line. Use the Spacebar to center this line on the screen. You can use the Cursor Movement keys to leave blank spaces.

5 Now, type the text of the passage exactly as it appears in this example:

In ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, swimming was considered very important. During the middle ages, people in Europe stopped swimming because they believed that it helped to spread epidemics. It was only about a century ago that competitive swimming began again. Swimming events were part of the first modern Olympics in 1896.

Notes:

1. Don't worry about fitting your words onto a line. The program has a *word-wrap* feature that automatically moves the entire word to the next line if it is too long for the current line. Word-wrap only works as you are adding new text to the end of a passage.
2. When you use the Cursor Movement keys or the Backspace key to correct errors, word-wrap does not re-adjust lines.

3. To enter a long dash (--), type two consecutive underscores. This appears on the screen and in the printed passage as a long dash.
4. If you type a hyphen (-), the program replaces it with a special symbol to distinguish it from a Missing Letters blank.
5. Do not blank any words. The program does that when you select a game format.

6 When you finish entering the passage, press F10. You see this message at the bottom of your screen:

Edit, Save, Quit without saving?

(E,S,Q)?

7 Let's assume you want to change something in the passage you just entered. Type **E** to edit the passage. The cursor moves to the beginning of the passage, and the editing keys appear at the bottom of the screen.

8 Let's capitalize the words **middle ages**:

1. Use the Cursor Movement keys to position the cursor on the **m** in **middle**, then type **M**.
2. Next, position the cursor on the **a** in **ages**, then type **A**.

9 When you finish editing the passage, press F10. You see this message:

Edit, Save, Quit without saving?

(E,S,Q)?

- 10** Your passage now is correct, so you can save it on your program diskette. Type **S** (for Save). You see this message:

Do you want it called SWIMMING (y/n)?

- 11** Since SWIMMING is the correct filename for this passage, type **Y**. While the passage is being saved, you see this message:

Saving SWIMMING ...

When the file is saved, you see this message:

File SWIMMING has been saved.

Press Spacebar to continue.

- 12** Press the Spacebar. The three options appear again.

- 13** For now, type **Q** to return to the Editor Menu.

Read One of Your Own Passages

Now, let's read the passage you just entered:

- 1 Type **B** on the Editor Menu. At the top of the screen, you see the names of the passages on your program diskette. The passage you just entered, **SWIMMING**, is highlighted. At the bottom of the screen, you see this message:

Choose passage ← ↑ ↓ →. Then press ←.

- 2 You can use the Cursor Movement keys to highlight the name of any passage you want to read. Since **SWIMMING** already is highlighted, press the ← key. The passage appears on the screen along with these options:

Edit, Save, Quit (E,S,Q)?

You now may make changes to the passage and save it again.

- 3 When you finish, type **Q** to return to the Editor Menu.

Creating a Custom Format

You may want to customize a passage for various reasons. The Twistagrams passages show one use of customizing—the clues are left intact, but the answers are blanked.

You may want to blank all nouns or verbs in a given passage, or you may include special vocabulary words in a passage and then blank them in the customizing process.

Follow these steps to customize the SWIMMING passage:

- 1 Type **C** on the Editor Menu. The list of topics appears on the screen.
- 2 Type **J** to select a passage of your own. The list of available passages appears on the screen, and the first passage, SWIMMING, is highlighted.
- 3 Press the **←** key to customize SWIMMING. The passage appears on the screen. Notice that a blank line separates the title line from the rest of the passage.

Important: *You cannot customize the title line.*

At the bottom of the screen, you see this message:

Create custom format

Keys: ← ↑ ↓ → - + Home End Esc
Press F10 to save.

You use two new keys when you customize passages:

- The - key *blanks* letters at the current cursor position.
- The + key *restores* previously blanked letters at the current cursor position.

4

Let's blank all of the adjectives in this passage:

1. Use the Cursor Movement keys to position the cursor on the **a** in **ancient**.
2. Press the - key seven times to blank the adjective **ancient**.
3. Next, move the cursor to the **v** in **very**, then press the - key four times to blank this word.
4. Oh, but **very** is an adverb, not an adjective, so let's not blank it. Position the cursor under the first blank, then press the + key four times to restore the word.

Note: You can use this procedure whenever you want to restore any letters in the passage.

5. Next, position the cursor on the **i** in **important**, then press the - key nine times to blank this word.
6. Now, repeat this procedure for each of the remaining adjectives in the passage:

competitive (line 7)
Swimming (line 8)
first (line 9)
modern (line 9)

- 5** When you finish making blanks, press F10. You see this message:

Saving custom format ...

When the file is saved, you see this message:

Custom format has been saved.

Press any key to continue.

- 6** Now, press any key to return to the Editor Menu.

You only can save one custom format per passage. If you already have one custom format for a particular passage and you make another, only the second format is saved.

Here's how to create more than one customized version of a passage:

- 1** Type **B** on the Editor Menu.
- 2** Since **SWIMMING** already is highlighted, press the **←** key.
- 3** Type **E** to edit the passage.
- 4** Press F10 to continue.
- 5** Type **S** to save the passage. You see this message:

Do you want it called **SWIMMING** (y/n)?
- 6** Type **N**. You are asked for a new filename:

Filename? _____

- 7 Type **SWIMNEW** for the filename, then press the **↵** key. Your passage now is saved on the diskette under two different names.
- 8 Press the Spacebar to continue, then type **Q** to return to the Editor Menu.
- 9 Now, type **C** on the Editor Menu to customize the new version of the swimming passage.
- 10 Type **J** to see the list of files. Notice that there are now two versions of the swimming passage, each with a different filename, and the new passage is highlighted.
- 11 If you want, customize the new passage. This time, why not delete all of the verbs?
- 12 When you are finished, save the new custom format and return to the Editor Menu.

Summary

Deleting One of Your Own Passages

You can delete any of your original passages from your program diskette.

Note: You cannot add to or delete any of the passages included with the Missing Letters program diskette.

Follow these steps to delete a passage:

- 1 Type **D** on the Editor Menu. The list of passages appears, and you see this message at the bottom of the screen.

Choose passage ← ↑ ↓ →. Then press ←↵.

- 2 You really don't need the SWIMNEW passage, so let's delete it. Since it already is highlighted, press the ←↵ key. You see this message:

```
Are you sure you want to delete
file SWIMNEW?
```

```
Press Y to delete it.
```

```
Press any other key if
you change your mind.
```

- 3 Type **Y**. You see this message:

```
Deleting SWIMNEW ...
```

When the file is deleted, you see this message:

```
File SWIMNEW has been deleted.
```

```
Press Spacebar to continue.
```


Exiting the Editor and the Program

Follow these steps to exit the Editor and the Missing Letters program:

- 1** Type **E** on the Editor Menu. You return to the Main Menu.
- 2** Type **C** on the Main Menu. You see an ending screen, and the program asks if you want to play again.
- 3** *If you want to continue with the program, type Y.*
If you want to exit to DOS, type N.

Summary

In this chapter, you learned how to enter and customize original passages. You may want to review the material in the tutorials until you feel comfortable with Missing Letters and the Editor. When you are ready, go on to Chapter 4, which provides educational information about Missing Letters and suggestions for choosing sample passages.

Exiting the Editor and the Program

Follow these steps to exit the Editor and the Missing Letters program:

1. Press **Q** on the Editor screen. You return to the Main Menu.
2. Press **Q** on the Main Menu. You see an ending screen, and the program asks if you want to play again.
3. Press **N** if you want to exit the program, type **Y** if you want to continue with the program, type **Y** if you want to exit the program, type **N**.

Summary

In this chapter, you learned how to enter and customize original passages. You may want to review the material in the tutorials until you feel comfortable with Missing Letters and the Editor. When you are ready, go on to Chapter 4, which provides educational information about Missing Letters and suggestions for choosing sample passages.

When you are ready to exit the program, press **Q** on the Editor screen. You return to the Main Menu. Press **Q** on the Main Menu. You see an ending screen, and the program asks if you want to play again.

Chapter 4. For Parents and Teachers

The Educational Value of Missing Letters

Who Can Play

Anyone who can read can play Missing Letters. Missing Letters is suitable for home use as entertainment, and for school use at any grade level to improve reading, writing, and spelling skills. Both children and adults enjoy playing Missing Letters.

Missing Letters appeals to anyone who enjoys language games or puzzles. It can be played in any language that can be typed on the keyboard, with any written passage that you choose to enter.

Missing Letters is a challenging game that is both fun and stimulating. It is easy enough for the first-time player, but remains interesting over time because of the variety of texts and formats. It can be used by both children and adults, at any reading level, with any number of players.

The game is easy for the first-time player, and challenging, rewarding and intriguing as players progress. It requires players to invoke their implicit knowledge of language to solve a problem, guided as well by their knowledge of the universe in which the passage is set.

The strategies used by players encompass numerous aspects of what they know about the world and the word.

The game continues to be interesting as players try new passages, or redo passages in new formats. Observers may enjoy watching a player tackle a passage, making their own guesses and comparing their train of thought with the player's. Several players may play at once by an agreed-upon system of turn-taking and individual scoring.

The game is intellectually stimulating because it calls up hidden knowledge about language. Guessing is guided by the player's intuitive knowledge of the properties and probabilities of the language itself. People often are surprised by how much implicit knowledge they have about language.

Easy Format

In the easier formats, the guessing is usually quite simple.

W-th -ll v-w-ls r-m-v-d, f-r -x-mp-l-,
m-n- s-nt-nc-s c-n b- c-mp-l-t-d r--d-l-.

As the formats get harder the guessing becomes more difficult, although many clues remain.

Hard Format

Consider the hardest format of all, the blank screen. Here no information at all is given about the passage except the title. The cursor points to the position of the first letter, and you start guessing. After you guess the letter or the program supplies it, the cursor moves to the position of the next letter.

The blank screen format may seem mysterious at first, or perhaps even pointless. Indeed, it may seem impossible to make educated guesses when there are no clues at all. Random guessing may appear to be the only way out.

This is not the case, however. You actually have a great deal of information to guide you. Although the blank screen format appears to offer so little in the way of help, you may be able to guess up to 60% of the letters correctly in a passage in this format. This is because of your built-in knowledge about the nature of language, and, as the passage progresses, familiarity with the particular topic.

Nature of Language

A language has many constraints on the occurrence of letters in words and words in sentences. Your intuitive sense of these constraints guides the guessing.

For example, not all letters are used at the beginning of words with equal frequency. In English, Z and X do not begin words very often, whereas T and A do. You are thus unlikely to guess X as the first letter of a passage. And once you know the first letter, you greatly reduce the possibilities for what comes next. If the first letter is T, for example, the next letter cannot be B, C, D, F, G, J, K, and so forth. The choices are limited, and you know to choose among the vowels, or perhaps H. If these fail, a few moments of thought may yield tr-- and tw-- as possibilities, but not, on the other hand, tm-- or tp--. English words just don't begin with tm- and tp-. As you progress through a word, the choices tend to reduce still further, so that the final letters of a word are often fully predictable.

As the sentence unfolds, its meaning and structure offer help in guessing whole words. Clues come from both the particular sentence underway and from the subject matter. For example, it may be easy to guess the next word in this passage:

But I can't believe fad diets are all bad.
No one in his right ---- ...

It's very likely to be *mind*.

And in a passage on music:

Mozart composed his first sym-----...

the topic and structure together strongly suggest the word *symphony*.

In general, the possibilities at each point in the sentence are narrowed down by clues about part of speech, articles and prepositions that are required by context, verb tense, idiomatic expressions, and topic. You are guided by all of these at once.

Choosing Sample Passages

Literature can provide interesting passages for Missing Letters. Children may enjoy passages from stories they recognize, and adults may take pleasure in the classics.

A good passage meets these three criteria:

- It is self-contained.
- It says something satisfying.
- It uses language that is stylistically interesting.

Here's a good example from *Treasure Island*, by Robert Louis Stevenson:

I have never seen the sea quiet round Treasure Island. The sun might blaze overhead, the air be without a breath, the surface smooth and blue, but still these great rollers would be running along all the coast, thundering by day and night; and I scarce believe there is one spot in the island where a man would be out of earshot of their noise.

This passage gives a good picture of the feel of the island, is complete in discussing the activity and noise of the sea, and has interesting expressions:

the surface smooth and blue...
I scarce believe...
out of earshot...

Here's another good passage from *Treasure Island*:

I now felt for the first time the joy of exploration. The isle was uninhabited; my shipmates I had left behind, and nothing lived in front of me but dumb brutes and fowls. I turned hither and thither among the trees. Here and there were flowering plants, unknown to me; here and there I saw snakes...

This passage conveys a sense of excitement and anticipation. It is complete in itself, and gives the flavor of the language of the book:

my shipmates I had left behind...
nothing lived in front of me but...
hither and thither...

In contrast, a less successful passage may not be interesting enough, or it may need additional context to make it complete. Here is an example of a less appropriate choice from *Treasure Island*:

And with that he turned on his heel and rejoined the other two. They spoke together for a little, and though none of them started, or raised his voice, or so much as whistled, it was plain enough that Dr. Livesey had communicated my request.

While this passage is part of the plot of the novel, it really isn't interesting by itself. It is difficult to identify the characters and the action, and there is no way to infer names unless they are part of the title or well-known in connection with the book.

In general, try to choose passages that give players a sense of satisfaction, that are worth rereading many times, and for which thinking harder and using context clues may contribute to the solution. Avoid passages that contain unrelated names of people and places, and references that cannot be guessed from the context.

Suggestions for Using Missing Letters

This section describes some of the ways in which you can use Missing Letters. First, there are some suggestions for ways to use the set of formats A through H. The first seven of these eight formats, Formats A through G, constitute a sequence of increasing difficulty, while Format H may be recognized by teachers and others interested in the learning of reading as a *variable cloze format*. These formats are each generated according to a definite procedure that the program executes when you call for the passage. These formats can therefore be thought of as *automatic* standard formats. You can use them with any of the passages supplied with the diskette or with any passage of your own that you have entered.

Following that, there are some descriptions of the ways in which you can use the custom format feature of Missing Letters. An important aspect of the custom format may not be present when you use Missing Letters in the automatic formats A through H. When using the custom format, one person or a group of people is preparing a specific passage as a challenge or exercise for a second person or group of people. Therefore, in using the custom format, you must have clearly in mind who it is that will be working through the passage and exactly what kind of linguistic challenge you want to pose.

Finally, there are some suggestions for the use of the Missing Letters Editor. Passages you enter with the Editor can be played using either the automatic formats or the custom format. When you use the Editor to enter passages, you are confronted with the problem of how to choose an effective passage to accomplish your aims, be they the instruction of a beginning reader or the amusement of a sophisticated friend.

Activities with Automatic Formats

In setting a linguistic challenge for someone else, you will probably find the automatic formats easier to use than the custom format, in that the automatic formats do not require you to customize the text of the passage you want the children to work through. Moreover, many of the suggestions made in the "Activities with Custom Formats" section will be appropriate here as well.

- Specifically, you can use the automatic formats to strengthen spelling, vocabulary, and knowledge of parts of speech. In general, you will probably find that most of the benefit you might like your students or youngsters to derive from the use of the custom format can be derived, albeit in somewhat less sharply focussed manner, from the use of the automatic formats.
- Try several of the formats with one passage, going from Format A to Format G in order of increasing difficulty. Then try the same set of formats with a single passage going from Format G to Format A in order of decreasing difficulty.

Activities with Custom Formats

Here are some activities with custom formats:

- You systematically can replace all the occurrences of a set of spelling words you would like your children to practice.

Here you might consider a variety of kinds of deletions. For example, in one passage you might choose to delete all occurrences of the letter combinations -ie- and -ei-. In another passage, you might choose to delete all occurrences of double letters. In yet another passage you might delete all the letters of any word that appears on the spelling list.

- You systematically can replace all the occurrences of a set of vocabulary words you would like your children to practice.

A particularly interesting thing to do here is to choose a list of vocabulary words, each of which contains the same number of letters. In preparing the custom format, the student or child is then obliged to rely on the meaning of the word in context rather than irrelevant cues such as the number of letters in order to fill in the blanks properly.

- Have children you are working with use the Editor to compose a passage. After they have finished entering the passage, use the Editor to recall the passage. Edit it, correcting errors of spelling, grammar and usage. Save the corrected passage. Now make a custom version of the corrected passage with deletions at the sites of the errors the student or child made. When the authors of the original passage now work through the custom version of their own passage, their attention is focussed on those parts of the passage that were sources of difficulty for them in the first place. The game now requires them to redo those parts correctly.
- You systematically can replace all the occurrences of a particular phonetic combination (such as -ight/-ite, -ough/-uff and -ough/-ow) you would like children to practice.

If the passages supplied with the diskette do not contain enough examples of the phonetic combinations you want to stress, you may want to compose suitable passages of your own.

- You systematically can delete all occurrences of silent letters, such as:
 - Silent E (mak-)
 - Silent T (sof-en)
 - Silent K (-nee)
 - Silent C (mus-le)
 - Silent B (lam-)
- You systematically can replace all the occurrences of a particular prefix (such as *dis-* or *un-*) that you would like children to concentrate on.

Prefixes can be tricky, however. Ordinarily, you think of the prefix *un-* as indicating negation or reversal. It should be noted that not all words that begin with the letters *un-* can be said to have the prefix *un-*. For example, the *un-* in such words as *unit*, *united*, *unitary*, and *universe* derives from a root meaning "one". The *un-* in such words as *under* and *until* is not related to either of these cases.

- Similarly you can replace all occurrences of a particular root (such as *serv-* or *port-*) or a particular suffix (such as *-er* or *-tion*). When players become agile with the use of the several prefixes (or suffixes) you have replaced, you might try deleting all of them simultaneously.
- You systematically can replace each of the nouns by blanks. Similarly, you may replace all the verbs (prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, etc.) with blanks.

Activities with the Editor

Here are some activities with the Editor:

- From a book that the class or the child is reading, choose and enter a passage. Challenge the players to see how quickly they can identify the place in the book from which the passage is drawn.
- If there is a passage from a book or a poem that you would like students to memorize, enter the passage using the Missing Letters Editor. Have students work through the passage in a sequence of formats of increasing difficulty.
- Choose or write a passage that is a message from one person to another. Use the Editor to enter the passage. Now rewrite the passage in the way in which you might send that message by telegraph or cable and enter the rewritten passage as well. Compare the difficulty of the two passages.
- Have a friend choose a set of passages written by different authors that deal with a common theme, and enter them using the Editor. See if you can unravel who wrote what.
- Divide students into teams of four players each. Each week, appoint a different team member as Managing Editor. The Editor's job is to find and enter a suitable passage by the end of the week. At that time, the rest of the team plays the game using the new passage with a particular format and number of tries.

Summary

The educational value of Missing Letters is an important one. Practice with the game can improve reading skill by engaging players in reliance on context as they read. A player rereads a passage many times, with guesses about words made on the basis of context. For inexperienced readers who may still tend to read word-by-word, this experience in the use of context is an important benefit.

Players also develop a sense of an author's style and a sensitivity to nuance of word meaning by working through a passage in this detailed manner. By having to consider at each point in the sentence what can come next, players become accustomed to generating alternatives and thus may increase their flexibility in writing style. And finally the game helps with the mechanics of writing, giving immediate feedback on spelling and capitalization.

Foreign language passages for students of a second language provide interesting practice. Vocabulary and usage are impressed on the mind and memory. In German, for example, case endings and article agreement can receive focus in a natural way, without tedious or artificial drill.

A particular virtue of the game is the indirect nature of the instruction it provides. The game develops language "skills" through players' interaction with language and with each other in an interesting, engaging activity that is worth doing for its own sake. The puzzle-solving aspect of the game is its primary feature, and the varieties of educational merit derive from the thought, concentration, and feedback that occur during play.

Appendix A. Technical Reference

This section contains information of a technical nature and is not intended for those just beginning with Missing Letters. It assumes you are familiar with data storage and retrieval techniques as they pertain to the fixed disk. It further assumes you are familiar with the DOS commands pertaining to fixed disks and subdirectories.

Important: Do not continue with this section unless you are thoroughly familiar with data storage and retrieval techniques.

Setting Up on a Fixed Disk

Follow these steps to install Missing Letters on a fixed disk:

- 1** Start DOS from the fixed disk.
- 2** Make certain that BASICA.COM is in the root directory on the fixed disk.
- 3** Insert your Missing Letters program diskette in drive A.
- 4** Type **A:SETUP** and then press the **←** key.

Starting From a Fixed Disk

You have two options for starting Missing Letters from your fixed disk.

Option 1

Use this procedure if you want to enter the appropriate startup commands each time you use Missing Letters:

- 1 Type **CHDIR \ML** and then press the **↵** key.
- 2 Type **G** and then press the **↵** key.

Option 2

This option lets you create a special batch file to combine the two startup commands. Here's how to create the batch file:

- 1 Type **COPY CON: \ML.BAT** and then press the **↵** key.
- 2 Type **CHDIR \ML** and then press the **↵** key.
- 3 Type **G** and then press the **↵** key.
- 4 Press **F6** and then press the **↵** key. The file is placed in your root directory.

Now, whenever you want to start Missing Letters from the root directory, type **ML** and then press the **↵** key.

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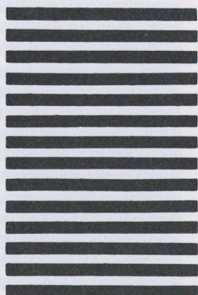
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Diskette

System requirements:

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Color Display, compatible
display, or TV

IBM PC, PC XT, PCjr, *Portable*
Personal Computer, or Personal
Computer AT

128KB of memory

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IBM Color/Graphics Monitor
Adapter or appropriate adapter

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