

□ ARE CHILDREN REALLY OBSESSED WITH VIDEO GAMES? □

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rently it was too much like taking dictation, a fastidious and commonly disliked exercise.

In the section where they were asked to give their personal impressions one child wrote that what he disliked most about the computer was its refusal to answer when he spoke to it. Another was angry with the machine for having lost the text that he had just put into the memory.

In general, the survey showed that children are very interested in computers and everything associated with them. When asked whether they would

rather play in the park, have an open discussion in class, play board games or play with the computer, most of them chose the computer.

Some 18% of the children who answered the questionnaire already had a home computer, and 84% of those who did not would like to.

The authors of the research have prepared an ingenious program integrating robotics and natural science. Children in the 4th, 5th and 6th grades are asked to use the computer to design a robot mover, a robot gardener and a robot that can be used to bury nuclear waste.

Video games are not what children find most fascinating about computers. This conclusion, which some might find difficult to believe, is the result of a survey conducted in Montreal with a small group of Grade 4, 5 and 6 children.

After successfully introducing a program of robotics applied to the natural sciences, three teachers questioned their students on their impressions, needs and preferences in so far as computers were concerned.

They were surprised to find that video games were not what the children liked best about computers. Their favourite functions were word processing and drawing with Logo language.

The least interesting activity to the students was sentence copying. Appa-

