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Word Builder, *Version 1.0*

By Joe Waters, (c) 1985

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**Distributed by The NOVATARI Program Exchange,
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INTRODUCTION

The WORD BUILDER disk consists of two ATARI BASIC programs, WORD and UPDATE, and nine dictionaries each with up to 100 words and their corresponding definitions. The WORD program can be used to increase your vocabularly and, as an interesting by-product, your speed-reading ability as well. The UPDATE program allows you to change any of the dictionaries supplied with WORD BUILDER as well as create entirely new dictionaries.

System Requirements:

Atari 400, 800, 800XL, or 1200XL computer with 48K memory, Atari-compatible disk drive, ATARI BASIC (or OSS's BASIC XL). Printer (Optional).

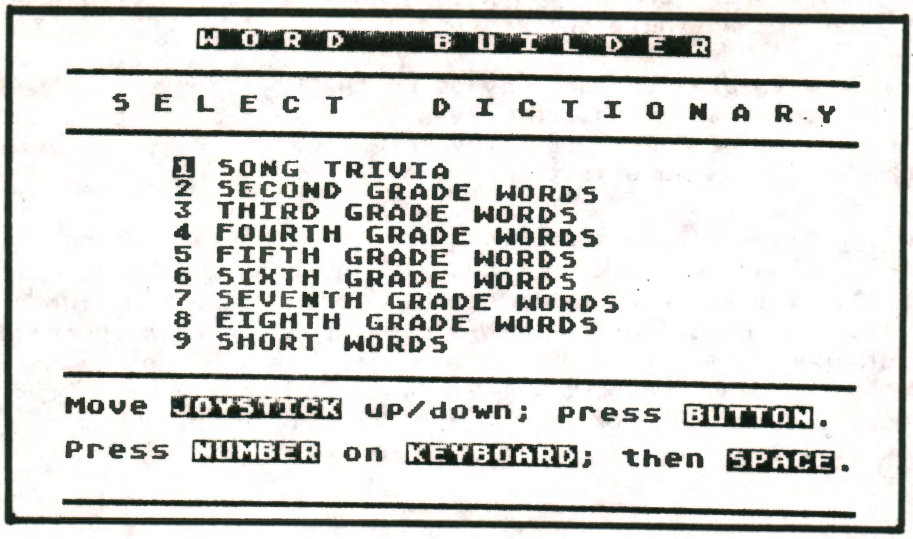
WORD

Getting Started. Turn on the disk drive and your TV or monitor. Place the Word Builder disk in the disk drive. If you have a 400, 800, or 1200XL, put the Atari BASIC cartridge in the computer. BASIC is already built into the 800XL. Turn on the computer. The program will load automatically.

The Title Screen. WORD BUILDER starts by building a title screen filled with words as it plays a little song. (If you want to skip the title, you can push the START key to interrupt the title and move on to the next step.) The title screen ends with the question INSTRUCTIONS? If you want instructions, enter "Y", otherwise enter "N".

Choosing a Dictionary. The program checks your diskette to determine which dictionaries are available. You can have up to nine dictionaries (numbered 1 through 9) on a diskette. Your WORD BUILDER disk comes complete with all nine dictionaries. Dictionaries 2 through 8 are filled with words introduced in the corresponding school grade levels. Dictionary 1 is actually a music trivia game that presents you with questions on song titles. Dictionary 9 is filled with short four-letter words.

You can select your dictionary in either of two ways. Use the joystick to highlight the dictionary of your choice and then press the fire button. Alternatively, you can press the appropriate number key on the keyboard and then press the SPACE bar to indicate your selection. The dictionary you selected will be transferred from the diskette into your computer's memory.



Selecting a Game. There are two basic game variants:

GAME 1 -- You are presented with one definition and five different words, one of which will match the given definition.

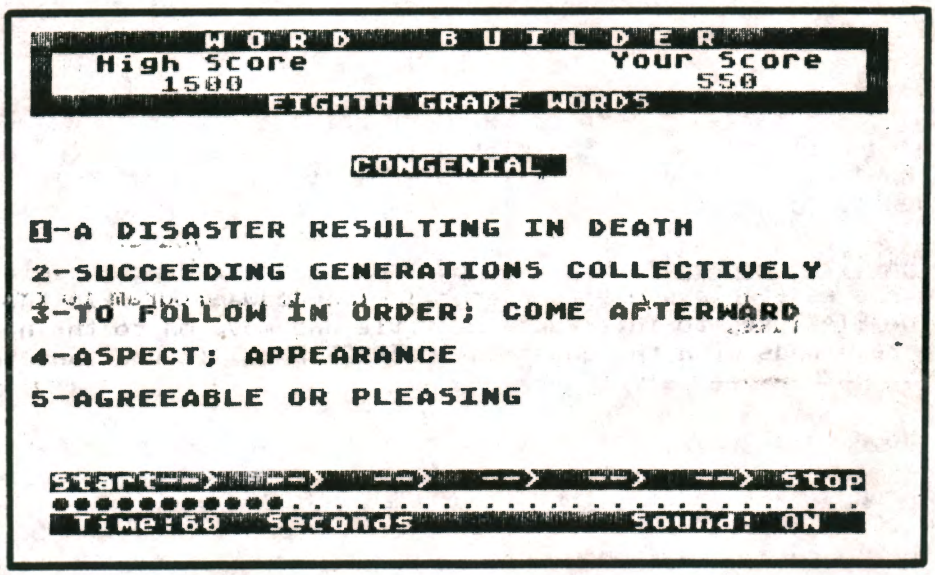
GAME 2 -- You are presented with one word and five different definitions, one of which will match the given word.

Use the SELECT key (or the keyboard) to choose between GAME 1 or GAME 2. As you can see in the menu offered, you can also choose to pick a new dictionary or to exit the WORD program. When you have highlighted the selection of your choice, press the START key (or the FIRE BUTTON) and the game will begin.

NOTE: When you are playing the game, if you press the START key, the current game will begin again. If you press the SELECT key, the selection menu is presented and you can choose a new game or new dictionary.

Object of the Game. The object of the game is to try and reach the "EXPERT" level on any particular dictionary. You have a fixed amount of time (which may vary in different dictionaries) to match as many word/definition pairs as you can. With each correct match, your point score increases and a new problem is presented.

Selecting Your Answer. Your cursor is initially positioned on the first of the five possible answers. You can use the joystick to move the cursor up or down among the various choices. When you think you have the cursor on the right answer, press the FIRE BUTTON. If you are right, your score will be incremented and a new problem presented. If you are wrong, the chosen word will disappear and you then can choose among the remaining four possible answers. If your second choice is also wrong, that word disappears and you now choose between the last three answers. This continues until you either answer the question correctly or a single choice remains.



You can also play the game by using the keyboard rather than a joystick. If you are using the keyboard, press the number corresponding to the answer you select. You need not press the RETURN key. Pressing anything besides the numbers 1-5 has no effect.

Scoring. You receive 100 points for a correct answer on the first try. If your first answer is wrong, but your next guess is correct, you receive 50 points. The third guess is worth 25 points and the fourth guess only 15 points. No points are scored if you do not get the correct answer in the first four tries. You can take as long as you want to make your selection; no points are deducted, but you are using up your time. To reach "EXPERT" level requires getting 50 or more words correct on the first try in a one minute time limit.

Timing. The amount of time used up and the amount of time remaining are displayed by an advancing white dots at the bottom of the screen. The timer only works while you are trying to select the right answer. The timer is turned off while your score is being incremented and a new word is being chosen.

Word Selection. The program chooses five word/definition pairs randomly each time a problem is displayed. The correct word can be any of the five possible choices. However, the program will select words that you do not know over ones that you have already answered correctly. Therefore, after you have played the game for awhile, the words you are having trouble with will appear more frequently than those you were able to answer correctly on the first try. This "experience" factor will continue to build as you work with the same dictionary (switching between GAMES 1 and 2 has no effect). However if you load a new dictionary, all words once more start out equal.

Screen Colors. You can control the color of the screen and brightness of the letters. When ia problem is presented, if you push the "C" key, the screen color changes. If you push the "B" key, the brightness (or luminance) of the screen color changes. If you press the "L" key, the luminance of the letters changes. Thus you could have white letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background.

Sound. You can also control the sound effects in WORD BUILDER. If you press the "S" key, you toggle sound effects ON/OFF. The sound toggle does not affect the song played when the result screen is displayed.

UPDATE

Dictionary Maintenance. The UPDATE program supplied with WORD BUILDER allows you to maintain your dictionaries. That is, you can change any of the word-definition pairs, you can delete words, or add new words (up to a maximum of 100 per dictionary). You can also use this program to create entirely new dictionaries.

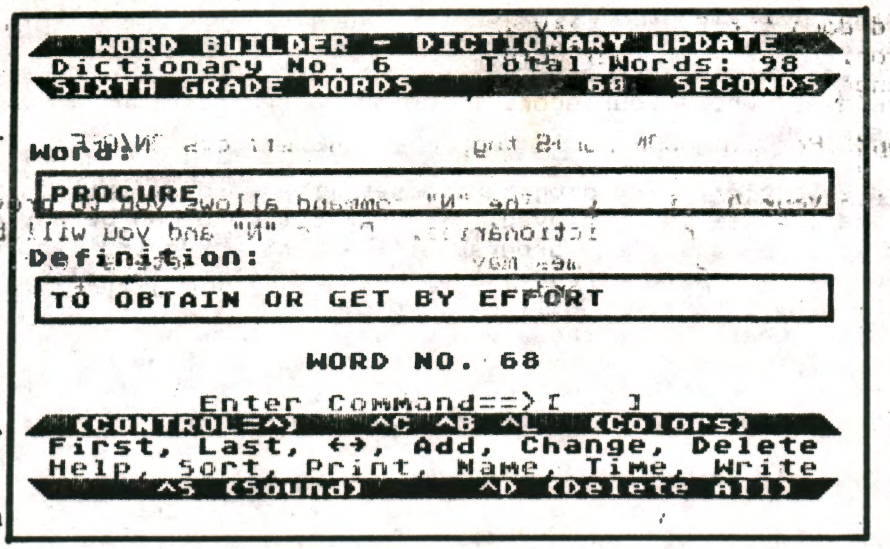
Loading UPDATE. When you are asked to select a dictionary or when you see the Select menu that allows you to choose the different game variations, you can load the UPDATE program. This choice is not listed among the possible choices. I assume that the person maintaining the dictionaries may not want the individuals playing the game to have easy access to the dictionaries themselves. To load the UPDATE program, press first the OPTION key and while holding that key down, press the SELECT key and then the START key. When all three keys are depressed simultaneously, the UPDATE program will load.

Selecting a Dictionary. You will once again be given a choice of the available dictionaries. You can choose any of these dictionaries by simply pressing the corresponding dictionary number on the keyboard. If a dictionary has no words, its title will be automatically represented as "<EMPTY>".

The Update Display. Once a dictionary is chosen, all of the words and definitions in that dictionary are loaded into memory. Your display screen will show you the last word and definition pair. Note that the display also shows at the top of the screen the dictionary number, the name of the dictionary, the time (in seconds) allowed, and the total number of words in the dictionary. The number of the worddefinition displayed is shown toward the bottom of the screen.

Update Commands. The last four lines are a constant reminder of the commands available to you. Commands consist of a single letter or keystroke (sometimes in conjunction with the CONTROL key). Some commands allow you to step through

the dictionary, others are used to add, delete, or change data in the dictionary and still others allow you to move all the information in the dictionary back to the diskette or to a printer.



Stepping Through the Dictionary. To go to the first word in the dictionary, simply type the letter "F" (for First). Similarly, to go to the last word, type the letter "L" (for Last). The left and right arrow keys can be used to move you backward and forward in the dictionary one word at a time. (Pressing CONTROL+an arrow key will move you 10 words at a time.) Pressing the RETURN key all by itself is equivalent to pressing the right arrow and will move you forward one word.

Changing Words. To change any word/definition pair, first find the word you want to change. When it is displayed, enter "C" (for Change). The cursor will immediately be positioned in the little box displaying the word. Make whatever changes you want. When you are done, press RETURN and the cursor will jump down to the definition box. Again, make whatever changes you want and, when finished, press RETURN. Your changes are recorded in the computer -- but not on the diskette. To make any changes permanent, you will have to use the "W" command (for Write) to move a copy of your dictionary back to the diskette.

Adding New Words. To add a new word to the dictionry, enter "A" (for Add). Your cursor will be moved to the word box. Enter your word and its definition. Note that words and definitions are limited to 36 characters. Some words may be too difficult to define in only 36 characters and you will have to omit these words. However, most of the words introduced in the elementary school levels can be defined with short phrases.

Deleting a Word. To delete a word from the dictionary, enter "D" (for Delete). You will be asked to confirm that you really want to delete this word.

Changing Your Mind. At any time when you are changing a word/def or adding a new word/def, if you decide that you just want to quit and forget this word, press the ESC key. You will be immediately placed back in the command mode. No permanent changes will have been made to the dictionary in your computer memory.

Sorting the Dictionary. New words added to the dictionary are automatically placed at the end of the dictionary. Although there is no inherent reason why your dictionary need be in alphabetical order, you may find it useful to keep your word list sorted alphabetically. This could make it easier when searching through the dictionary to find one or more words. To sort your list, enter "S" (for Sort). To sort a complete 100 word dictionary only takes a few seconds.

Changing Screen Color. You can adjust screen colors in UPDATE just as you did in WORD. However, since UPDATE uses one-letter commands, you will have to

hold down the CONTROL key while pressing the letter "C" to change screen color. Similarly CONTROL+B to change screen brightness and CONTROL+L to change letter brightness.

Sound. Pressing CONTROL+S toggles sound effects ON/OFF.

Naming Your Dictionary. The "N" command allows you to provide a unique name for any of the nine dictionaries. Press "N" and you will be prompted to enter a Name. Dictionary names may be up to 23 characters long. Note that the name is not permanently recorded on the disk until you write your dictionary back to disk (see below).

Setting the Time Limit. You can specify any desired time limit (from 40 to 240 seconds) for the dictionary you are working on. Enter "T" and then enter the number of seconds you want for the time limit. The time limit will not be permanently recorded until you write the dictionary back to disk.

Writing Your Dictionary to Disk. Remember that no changes you make will be recorded on your diskette until you use the "W" option to Write the dictionary back to your diskette.

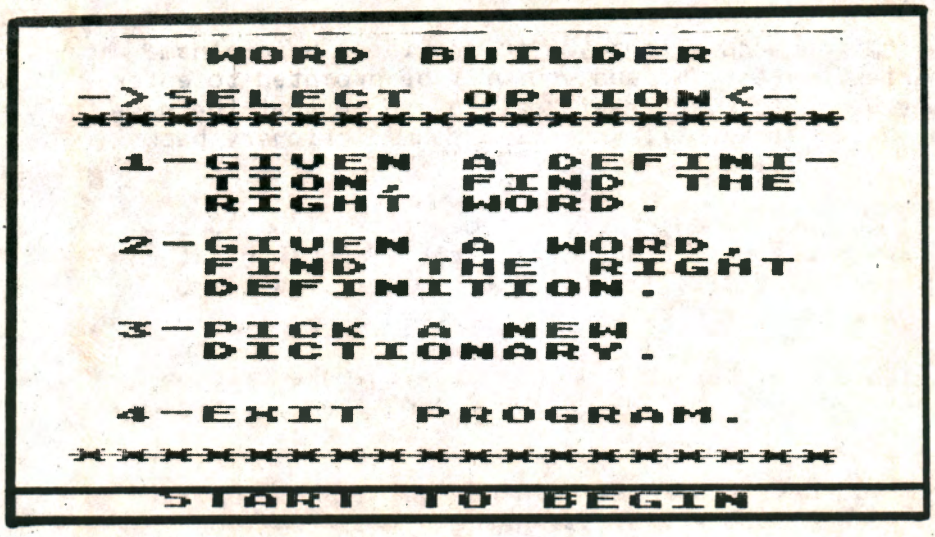
Printing Your Dictionary. If you have a printer, you can get a hard copy of the words and definitions in your dictionary by using the "P" option (for Print). Be sure your printer and any required interfaces are turned on. The program assumes a page length of 66 lines. It will automatically skip over perforations at the end of each page. Position your paper where you want printing to start, not at the top of the page.

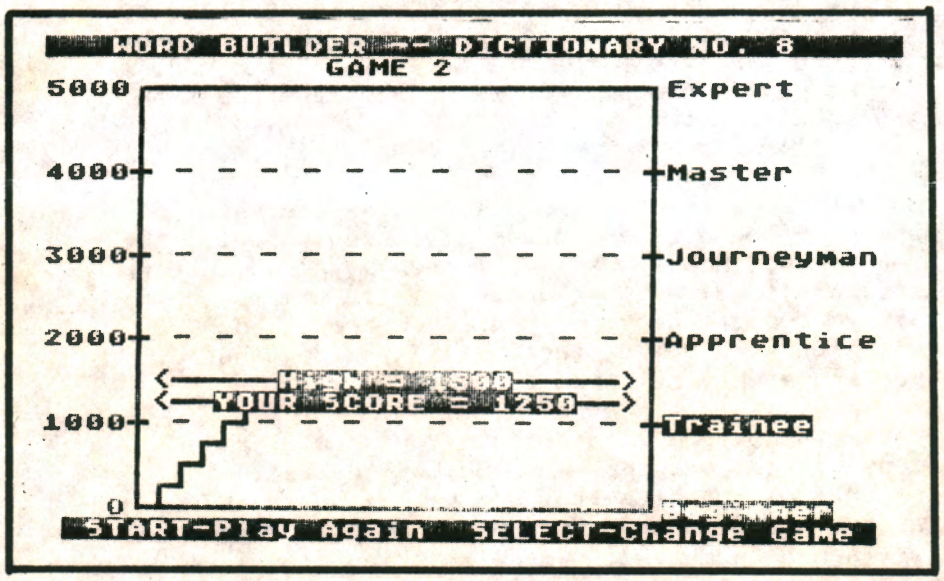
Deleting a Dictionary. You can delete every word in the current dictionary by pressing CONTROL plus the "D" key. You will be asked to confirm that you want to delete all words. If you respond YES, the words are deleted and the name is set to "<EMPTY>". Note that no permanent deletion is made unless you then choose to write this dictionary back to disk.

Quitting the Update Process. When you are done updating, you can quit by entering the "Q" command. You will once more be reminded of the necessity of permanently recording any changes on the disk and given an option to write the current dictionary back to disk if you choose. You will then be asked whether you want to update another dictionary. If so, the whole process starts again from the point where you choose your dictionary. If not, you are asked whether or not you would like to run Word Builder again. If you do, that program is loaded. If not, you are simply returned to BASIC.

Program Protection. This program is not copy protected. You should, as one of your first steps, make a copy of your original WORD BUILDER diskette. If you use DOS to examine the contents of the diskette, you will find the WORD and UPDATE programs. These are both BASIC programs and can be printed out and examined. The dictionaries are named "WORDx.DAT" where x varies from 1 to 9. The file "NAMES.DAT" contains the names and time limits used for each dictionary. The file AUTORUN.SYS is used to automatically load the WORD program when you boot up your diskette. Do not delete this file.

Other Uses. Note that you do not have to use this combination of programs only for vocabularly building. How about building a dictionary where the "words" are years and the "definitions" are the movie that won the oscar for best picture that year. Or one where the "words" are state abbreviations and the "definitions" are state capitals. Many other possibilities will, I am sure, come to mind. The Song Trivia included in the WORD BUILDER disk give you an idea of what an alternative use might look like.


WORD BUILDER
->SELECT OPTION<-
1-GIVEN A DEFINI-
TION, FIND THE
RIGHT WORD.
2-GIVEN A WORD,
FIND THE RIGHT
DEFINITION.
3-PICK A NEW
DICTIONARY.
4-EXIT PROGRAM.
START TO BEGIN


WORD BUILDER -- DICTIONARY NO. 8
GAME 2
5000
Expert
4000
Master
3000
Journeyman
2000
Apprentice
HIGH = 1500
YOUR SCORE = 1250
1000
Trainee
0
START-Play Again SELECT-Change Game