

Computer Programming through Animation with *Alice*©

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What is *Alice*©?

Alice is a software tool that lets us create 3D worlds populated by graphical objects that have built-in behaviors and properties. Objects in *Alice* can move, spin, change color, make sounds, react to the mouse and keyboard, and more. Plus, we can create new behaviors for our objects. Originally created by the University of Virginia and further developed by Carnegie Mellon University under government and private funding, *Alice* is *freely downloadable*. For details, see www.alice.org.

For students:

Alice is a fun, interactive environment that allows you to create animations. Although you are technically writing computer programs, *Alice* is designed for people who have no experience with computer programming.

Once the software is downloaded onto your computer, you can use the built-in tutorial to learn how to make your very own graphical worlds. To view the *Alice* tutorial, launch *Alice* and click on the "Start the Tutorial" button in the *Welcome to Alice* dialogue box. You can also jump to a specific tutorial by clicking on one of the tutorial worlds below the "Start the Tutorial" button.

The tutorial shows you how to do the basics. If you want to learn more, there are several books available, all of which are designed specifically for students with no programming experience. For more information, check out the "Textbook" link under the "Teaching" menu at the *Alice* web site, www.alice.org.

For parents:

The focus of the *Alice* project is to provide the best possible first exposure to programming for students ranging from middle schoolers to college students. The beauty of *Alice* is that it appeals to all students regardless of their interests or computer experience. Freely downloadable from Carnegie Mellon University (www.alice.org), this software is a safe and fun environment for young people to experience the joy of programming.

For students and parents:

If anyone has questions, you are invited to email them to Dr. Eileen M. Peluso (pelusoem@lycoming.edu).