

Overview/Introduction

This is a simple to use piece of software that can be tailored for use by children as an alternative to a 'pencil and paper' worksheet, and also fun to use for teaching and 'games'. It is particularly useful for children who cannot easily manipulate other types of materials due to physical disabilities. It is motivating for children - so long as you give them enough variety so they don't get bored.

ChooseIt Maker 2 is an empty 'framework' program - you can make exercises to match whatever subject area or ability level you are working with and can easily 'mix and match' activities. Exercises should be kept fairly short (max 10 screens per exercise) but, for variety, combined and recombined with different partner exercises in a different 'set' each time.

The child should be asked to complete one 'set', consisting of about 2 or 3 exercises, per day. He/she should never be left to do it alone at first - she/he needs an adult with her to prompt and monitor, encourage, praise, correct etc. as necessary. But maybe later he/she can enjoy working independently on it for short periods.

ChooseIt!Maker2 is a motivating program at first because of the visual and musical reward. However, in order to get the reward, sometimes children learn to just try each option in turn randomly, until they hit the right one. This has to be discouraged - the child must be taught from the beginning to listen to the prompt (repeating it if necessary) and to look carefully, think and only hit the one he/she feels is the right one. An external score card, showing how many he/she gets right first go! (while successes on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc. goes are not rated).

There is a very good website with information about *ChooseIt!Maker2*, at <http://www.chooseitmaker2.com/>. Printed copies of the main information are attached but there are also Flash 7 videos that can be viewed online and used as tutorials about each stage of making ChooseIt!Maker2 activities.



Creating a Set and Playing Activities with the child

1. Double click on the shortcut icon to open up ChooseIt Maker 2.
2. From the title screen, click on **Play Activity**
3. Then you will be on the **Teacher's screen**. You need to work your way down the list of settings on the left hand side.
4. First click on the **Activities** button on the top of the left hand side list. Click on the red Group 1 tab at the bottom left to see all the activities in that folder. Go through and click to tick all the Activities you want to play in this exercise. (1, 2 or 3 max, to start with)

*For now, click on the box for **findtransport** and **Actions2** only - a tick will appear in each box to the left of the name*

5. To determine what order these two Activities are played in, click on **Sort Activities** (2nd on the left hand list). Then select each one and use the **Move Up** and **Move Down** on the right hand side to reorder the list to your satisfaction.
6. Before you play these activities, go through all the other setup options on the blue list down the left hand side; to check they are set the way you want them. (Once they are set, you won't need to keep going through them again every time - unless you are changing over for another child to use the program with different settings, eg. A switch user.)
7. **Rewards** - you have the choice of music on or off, animations (*that just means movement*), on or off, and the length of the reward. Unless the user really doesn't like music or doesn't like movement, then really these should both be ON to make it as interesting as possible. The length of the rewards, maybe 8 seconds is a good one to start with.
8. **Prompt** - this gives you a chance to make the activities either more or less supportive as required. A picture of the target choice gives the user a visual prompt or clue (sometimes a picture to match), a button onscreen to let the user play the spoken question again can be helpful.

9. **Colour** - Unless there are particular reasons why, go with the following settings:
Black, White, Red
10. **Switch access** - **Mouse** (or Single switch or Two-switch as necessary)
11. **Scan speed** - if using single switch scanning, **3 seconds** is a reasonable starting point - can be increased or decreased later.
12. **Delay** - **No Delay** is the usual setting.
13. **Import** - ignore this at first - no need for it unless you had an older version of the program.
14. When you're ready to start, click on **Play**

Making a New Activity

1. Open ChooseIt Maker 2 and click on '**make new activity**'.
2. Decide on a name for your new activity and type it into the top window on the blue 'new list' screen that comes up (headed '**New Activity**'). *Make sure it's a name that means something to you that you'll remember and will be able to distinguish from other activities!*
3. Write a descriptive note about it if you want to - *this is optional not obligatory - might help staff using materials others have made.*
4. Decide which folder you're going to store it in. Try and plan in advance so that similar types of activities are stored in the same folder. *For example, all the word/letter-based exercises in one, all the basic 'find the' in another', all the more advanced on in a third etc.*
5. Click OK

Now you will start to build your exercise step by step

6. Decide how many option boxes you want on your first page (*the default is 3 but you might want to start with 2 then work up to 3 or more later*). Position the cursor (*the box goes yellow*) and click on the one you want.
7. Then click OK

8. Then you'll see on the pink checklist on the left that you're now down onto the 2nd task, which is '**Choice Boxes**'.
9. Move the cursor to choose one of the flashing boxes on the top half of the screen (any box), then go down to the blue bottom half of the screen and click on whether you're going to put a picture in or writing or a sound. *Let's start with a picture.*
10. At this point there's sometimes a slight delay while the computer goes off and searches for where it thinks your pictures are stored.
11. It will usually go either to the place where you last took a picture from or to the folder where it expects pictures to be. *i.e. My pictures in My Documents.*
You have to know where the pictures are stored that you want to use. Or you'll have to know how to 'Browse' through your various folders until you find them. The computer can't know.
 - *To go down into a folder, double click on the folder.*
 - *To climb back up one level (e.g. to get out of a folder again), you'll have to use the up one level arrow at the top of the screen*
 - *And/or use the back and forward arrows.*
12. Find your pictures and click on the one that you want, then click **Open** and you'll see that it jumps immediately into the box on your ChooseIt Maker page.
13. Click on the next empty flashing box then down to click again on Picture, and your computer will go looking for your next picture. Browse until you find it, click it, click **Open** to select it, and it will jump into the box.
14. When both or all your picture boxes are full on the page, click '**Done**'.
15. Now you're on item 3 on the pink Checklist on the left, i.e. **Tick Reward Boxes**. Click on the picture that you want to be the right answer when the user plays your exercise, i.e., the one that gets the reward.
16. A green tick will appear to show that it's been selected. Then click 'Done'.
17. Now you're on item 4 on the checklist, **Instruction Text**. Do you want to add any text to the page, along the bottom of the screen? (a complete question or a

partial prompt, or an item to match etc.) If yes, click 'Yes', if no, click 'No'. *Let's click 'yes' for now.*

18. Type in the text that you want the user to see you can have the text small, bigger or biggest by clicking on the appropriately sized 't' on the bottom left of the keyboard screen. Then click '**Done**'.
19. Now you're on item 5 on the checklist, **Instruction Sound**. Do you want to add a spoken (or other sound) question or prompt to the page - *usually Yes*. If so, you can import a sound file or record a prompt. *Let's record a spoken prompt this time.*

Make sure your microphone is connected correctly - usually pink plug into the mic hole, look for little microphone symbol.

20. Click onscreen on the one that says '**Record sound from microphone**'.
21. Decide what you're going to say and then click on the red '**Record**' button onscreen. You'll see the voice going in. Speak clearly at a reasonable pace, and the minute you're finished what you want to say, click '**Stop**' onscreen.
22. Now you're on **Reward Sound**, item 6 on the checklist. Time to choose a reward sound. You can choose to import a special sound file of your own (or from the Music folder in Inclusive Resources folder) or you can record a sound specially, or you can just have the built-in reward (easiest and quickest!). *Let's just go with the built in music just now - so to refuse the fancy ones click 'No' onscreen.*
23. This screen tells you you've finished that page. Click **OK**.
24. Now you have one page made. Click on '**Add new page**' and go through the whole thing again for page 2 (and then 3 and so on...). You'll find you get quicker and quicker as you go on.
25. Whenever you've finished, just press the cross in the top right hand corner to close down that activity.

Minimum 5 - maximum 12 or 15 pages per activity is about right, depending on the user. You can set up a series of Activities to be played one after the other, so 3 Activities of 10 pages each gives the user a 30-page exercise, for example.

Going back later and changing an activity (Editing)

26. When you are on the blue Teacher's Screen, go to the Activities button on the top of the list on the left hand side. On the right-hand side, click to tick the activity that you want to edit, and click on **'edit'**.
27. You'll be given the opportunity to either sort the pages into a different order, or to edit the activity.
28. If you just want to move the pages around, click on **'Sort the pages'**. Follow the instructions onscreen and click on the page you want to reposition and then click to move it either step by step towards the beginning or towards the end. When you get it to the place you want, click **'Finish'**. (If you don't want that page at all, just click on **'Delete Page'**).
29. When you've finished with that, if you want to make any other changes/edits, click on **'Finish'** and then click on **'Edit this activity'**.

*You can click on 'play the page' to remind yourself what's in it, but if you do that, you then leave Editing and go into the activity. You have to press ESC to stop the activity playing and then click **edit** again to get back to where you were.*

30. If you want to edit a page, click **'Change this page'**. You will then get the chance to go through all the set-up options one by one again and a chance to make changes at every step. If you don't want to change at any step, just click **'done'** or **'skip'** or **'OK'**. When you get to the item that you DO want to change, then just choose the option you want.

It's really just like being back at the stage of making an activity again it's just that you get a 2nd chance at it.

You also get a chance at this stage to add in additional pages to expand your activity if you want to.

31. To do this, click on **Add New Page**, and go through the setup options for that page as before.

32. Whenever you've finished editing just click on the cross on the top right hand corner to get back to the Teacher's screen.

Now, you have made and edited an Activity. You are ready to Play

33. If you want to rename an activity later or else move it from one coloured folder to another, click on Activities from the blue Teacher's Page, then on the right hand side, select the activity you want to rename and click on Manage instead of on Edit.

34. Then click on Rename and write in the name you want to use in the top window, and click on the folder you want to put it in, then OK.