TRS-80
Feasibility Experiment

FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT

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PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT runs on these TRS-80 microcomputers:

- Model III
- Model 4

LOADING THE PROGRAM

Turn on your machine. Put the FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT diskette into Drive 0 (the bottom one). Boot up your system by pressing the <RESET> button. FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT executes automatically.

INTRODUCTION

Far beyond the outermost galaxy of our known universe, outside the realm of human imagination, lies a newly born World. This World was artificially manufactured from the raw material of the universe itself. This event was painstakingly conceived and created by the pure thought processes of beings immeasurably more intelligent than ourselves. These beings possess no physical form, but exist only as psychic clouds of pure mental energy, capable of projecting their will over virtually infinite galactic distances.

At the geometrical center of this artificial world, like the eye of a hurricane, lies an immense cavern. This seeming void was created by these fantastic beings as their place of worship. The solitary object in this shrine is a statue in the image of mortal man. At the base of the statue reads the inscription: ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

After millions of years these beings discarded their physical forms. Bodily needs were viewed as intolerable burdens to bear in the struggle for the ultimate enlightenment possibly only in the purely intellectual existence of the disembodied mind. The result of this escape from corporeal constraints was the catastrophic realization of their own impotence. Their perceptions were shrouded by this horrible vision. These beings roamed the universe for eons, fascinated by their own ability to create or destroy entire galaxies upon the merest whim. Slowly they achieved an awareness of their disastrous handicap. Despite their incredible power to create and destroy other entities, they had lost the one ability that assured their own eternal existence—the capacity to reproduce themselves.

With the waning of their power and their energy slowly dissipating over the vastness of space, they began the desperate search for a sustaining life force. At length, their thoughts drifted to our world. Here they beheld the spectacle of a Great Warrior. They were invigorated by this event and drew power from the life force of this charismatic individual. They then retired to a region beyond the reach of mere mortals and created their own place of worship. They believed such homage would ensure the survival of their race.

Eventually they realized that creating a shrine and adoring an idol was not enough. The mere image of a hero could not sustain them. They knew they would have to draw their life force from a real, living hero. To achieve this end, they built an artificial world where they could test the heroism of their subjects. Bravery was the essential element to satisfy their hunger for a sustaining life force. Once again their thoughts turn to our planet.

As you attempt to sleep this night, your dreams are continually disturbed by a ghostly voice. At first the voice seems to ask you gently to follow it. Your vague, somnolent refusal causes it to become more imploring, more insistent. Soon the voice crescendos to a howling demand for your presence. The last shreds of your resistance are shattered as you suddenly awaken to find yourself on the floor of what appears to be an old mansion. You rouse yourself in an attempt to make sense of your surroundings. You have no way of knowing that you are now the subject of a . . . FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT is an Adventure game. The Adventure player must travel through uncharted territory while attempting to perform a specific task. There are objects you must obtain and use. Some of these objects are mere tools, others are magical. There are puzzles to be solved during the course of the Quest. Danger is your constant companion. Death looks over your shoulder at every turn. Yet you can perform heroic tasks and escape unscathed.

The challenge to an Adventure is that very few instructions are provided. You must use logic and ingenuity to find your own way. However, the following guidelines may prove helpful.

FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT has about 60 locations. There are about 30 problems to solve in order to proceed to the next step. When you load the program you get this prompt:

> DO YOU WANT TO RESUME PLAY ON A STORED GAME?
> Y OR N?

If you want to resume a stored game, type Y. If you want to start a new game, type N.

The author of the MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES series is British. Therefore you may encounter subtle language differences that make your Quest harder. The program only examines the first three letters of any word you give it. Thus many spelling differences (such as "color" in the U.S. and "colour" in the U.K.) do not affect the program.

You can enter compass directions with a single keystroke. If you press the <CLEAR> key by accident, you will clear the screen. You can restore your game by typing LOOK.

SAVING A GAME

To save a game, type SAVE. You can save more than one ongoing game on a diskette. You are prompted to specify either file 1 or file 2. Take a blank diskette and copy your operating system onto it. The operating system for the Model III and the Model 4 is TRS DOS 1.3. (If you are unsure how to copy the operating system, check your TRS DOS manual for details on the BACKUP utility.) Put your operating system backup into Drive 0. Then choose a file number and your game is automatically saved to the diskette.

FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT is a program in a series of programs called MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES. These programs are available in the United States and published by Acorn™ Software Products. When you have unraveled the secrets of FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT, you can try other challenging Quests.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES

Are you having trouble making progress on your Quest? Are you getting frustrated because your computer will not cooperate? Are you ready to give up on adventuring altogether and return to Space Invaders? Have no fear!

Here are some pointers that will make your adventuring task a little bit easier, but not too easy! You cannot qualify as a Master Adventurer by merely following a set of written instructions. These notes should give you the knowledge you need to interact successfully with any of the MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES scenarios. If you want, you can refer to the advice sheet in the Appendix to help you tackle a particularly difficult situation. However, if you admit defeat and check the hints, you may kick yourself afterward for not working out the solution on your own.

All the MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURE programs have been extensively tested by experienced and novice adventurers. The test results show that each and every problem faced in these ADVENTURES does have a logical solution, however obscure it may seem at the time.

When you turn on your computer and load a MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURE you are entering another dimension. You will find yourself in a world where things are not always what they seem to be and the basic laws of physics and nature as we know them do not always apply. You place yourself in the computer's power, vowing to abide by its rules and its reality for the duration of the session. In return,

the machine accepts any comment or command you care to give it (no expletives, please). Your entry is evaluated and in the blink of an eye you receive a report on the results of your action.

This basic act of communicating with the machine can present quite an obstacle for newcomers to the world of MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES. You must remember that, unfortunately, it is not yet possible to converse with the computer in plain English. This is due to the ambiguities inherent in any human language. We humans can cope with such ambiguities by examining and interpreting words in context. We are also sensitive to tonal variations and the emphases in spoken language.

Once you accept the fact that you must make allowances for the computer, you are well on your way to establishing a working rapport with the machine. If you want the computer to interpret your commands properly, you must organize your entry in a form that the machine can process easily.

You may find the following format helpful in playing MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES. In almost all cases your input consists of two words. The first word is usually a verb. There are a few exceptions to this rule which will be discussed below. Once you enter a verb you must also enter a noun describing some object which the verb acts on. For example, GET LAMP is a typical response. Your computer will understand this statement perfectly and it is reasonably plain English as well. We humans would probably say something like GET THE LAMP OFF THE TABLE. Both statements mean the same thing, but the computer can only understand the shorter statement.

It is helpful to remember that the computer only looks at the first three letters of any word. However, you must include a space between the two words in order for the machine to understand your statement. If you are a novice adventurer, you may find it frustrating to confine your statements to two words. For example, during the course of an adventure you may find an object that can be worn, such as gloves or a cloak. It is fairly easy to don such an item by entering a command such as WEAR GLOVES. However, what do you do when you want to disrobe? It would be nice to be able to say something like TAKE OFF GLOVES. But as you know, you can't enter such a command. With a little reflection, though, you will come up with an equivalent two word statement, such as REMOVE GLOVES.

Don't be afraid to try out any word that comes to mind. There are extensive error-trapping facilities built into the MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURE programs, so you can't crash the system with bizarre words.

You may find it helpful to have a dictionary handy when you are adventuring. A good thesaurus is also a useful tool.

Another common stumbling block for many adventurers lies in interpreting the description of your surroundings. You may try to use words that are contained in the description. Usually this is feasible, but you shouldn't take it for granted that a word used in a description is bound to be contained in the program's vocabulary. For example, consider this description:

I AM IN A DARK, DREARY FOREST. I CAN HEAR BIRDS
SINGING IN THE DISTANCE. EXITS ARE NORTH AND SOUTH.

Upon reading this description you may decide to search the forest for something. You might type SEARCH FOREST and receive this reply:

SORRY...I DON'T KNOW WHAT A "FOREST" IS.

The reason for this is obvious. If there is something to be gained by searching the forest, you can rest assured that the word "FOREST" will be in the computer's vocabulary. On the other hand, if you are in a forest, then there must be trees around. You might try a command like SEARCH TREES or CLIMB TREE. Since the computer's memory is limited, it cannot have a vast vocabulary. Situations like this require on-the-spot judgment calls.

In some situations you can enter one word commands instead of two word commands. The single word commands include: HELP, SCORE, QUIT, SAVE, INVENTORY. These commands are usually self-explanatory and produce a direct response. You can try the HELP command to see an example. If the computer deems it reasonable to give you a helping hand, you may receive a little guidance. Otherwise you may receive a snide remark, such as SEARCH AND EXAMINE. Experience will teach you how to interpret these vagaries.

There are some single word commands that will make the computer perform some action, such as RUN, JUMP, SHOUT, WAIT. These commands are self-explanatory and can be used at any time during a game. Be careful, though! It is not advisable to SHOUT when you are standing next to a sleeping dragon, nor is it wise to JUMP when you are standing at the edge of a precipice.

The last category of single word commands is directional, such as N for NORTH and S for SOUTH. You don't need to type in the entire word. Just type the first letter of the direction you want to travel in.

You should have some idea of how to communicate meaningfully with your computer. Now you must address the business of actually solving the MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES.

You will need all your faculties when you embark upon an adventure. Be aware as you come across different locations and objects that EVERYTHING IS THERE FOR A REASON! Do not be afraid to ask questions. When you encounter an object, be sure to examine it, taste it (but watch out for poisoned food), smell it and manipulate it in every way you can think of. If you find a painting, try to see what is behind it. If you come to a door, try to open it. If you see a tree, try to climb it. Don't worry about your computer—it has no sense of time and thus is infinitely patient (though you may not be). If you run out of time after a particularly long session, you can use the SAVE command to store the game up to the point you have reached. Maybe after you water the plants and feed the cat the solution will come to you.

You may find it helpful to make a map of the locations you have visited during your adventure. There is nothing more frustrating than to arrive someplace and then be unable to find your way back.

Now that you are primed to begin your Quest, it is only fair to warn you of the dreaded Scarlet Fish, more commonly known as a Red Herring. This is a fiendish ploy by the MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURE writer to deprive you of the last remnants of your sanity. Consider yourself warned—this is an official disclaimer.

If you are still baffled by a particular problem in your adventure, refer to the advice sheet in the Appendix. This is a drastic action—be sure to take this step only after you are sure you cannot discover the solution for yourself. Good luck and happy adventuring!

APPENDIX

The following notes have been compiled in order to help those adventurers who are experiencing difficulty in making progress in FEASIBILITY EXPERIMENT.

It must be stressed that direct answers or solutions to problems will not be given here. The comments will simply try to point the player in the right direction so that he/she may be able to solve the puzzle alone.

The advice will be split into three sections. Each section will be on a separate page so that you will not be tempted to "peep" at sections that you have not yet completed. The three sections are as follows:

Section 1—To find out the reason for being here!
Section 2—From the Stone Huts to the Mine Shafts.
Section 3—Gathering the Final Treasures.

Section 1

Your initial location is in a strange, unearthly place. You feel a surge of strange power—this is caused by the beings who worked their will upon you and brought you here. Your mission is as yet unknown to you. . . . For now you must simply EXPLORE your surroundings and wait for a Clue.

Getting lost in the underground Tunnels? Could be very dangerous! You may walk straight into a Lion's Den! A shield would be useful in that eventuality.

If possible, try to pick up a few nondescript items and use them in the maze of tunnels. Making a map this way could save your life more than once!

Have you encountered a Gladiator? If you had a Short Sword you could kill him! Seems a little cruel, but he is preventing a KEY event from happening!

Having trouble with the Lions? For now it would be better to avoid them. You can deal with them later when you have found a suitable Weapon!

Found your way into the Emperor's box? I don't think he will be happy with you until you have dealt with the Lions. Until then I wouldn't push your luck with this Character!

Found a Glowing Brazier? This will be of use later when you find yourself in an ICY situation. Beware, though! It's Hot stuff! Wear something like Gloves.

Having trouble getting through the Studded Door? You will obviously need a Key!

Section 2

In a Stone Age Village? If you find Rope in one of the Huts, keep it! You will need it later on.

Have you come to the Mine Cage? Be careful which Button you Press. The Mine cage is a little Faulty!

Found a useless old Oil Lamp? With a little bit of FIXing up, this could be quite useful to you. At the moment you will need a Wick for it and some Oil.

In a Stone Circle? If you had a Shovel you could do a bit of Digging. Maybe you will come across some buried treasure!

Having trouble in an ICY situation? The Glowing Brazier will Melt your troubles away!

In the Ice Vault? This is where you can bring all your *Valuables* to be accounted for!

In an underground Temple? The best thing to do in a temple is to PRAY!

Down the Mine? For one room you will need a Key. For the other you will need a Dagger!

Is PRAYing doing you no good? Have you read the inscription on the Altar?

Section 3

Have you managed to kill the Lions? If so you may well appeal to the Emperor. . . . He may be pleased enough to bestow upon you a Treasure!

Have you come to the Edge of a Chasm? If you have the Rope with you, why not go down and explore a little? You may find something to your advantage!

Have you found a Fire-Breathing Dragon? He may be guarding a treasure that you need. To get it from him you will almost certainly have to kill him, for which you will need a weapon.

When in combat with a Fire-Breathing Dragon it is well to make sure that you are adequately Shielded from his Fiery breath!

Still having trouble finding the treasures you need? Here are a few tips:

Almost all doors will be closed and locked. One or more Keys will usually be required.

Treasures seem to be traditionally buried. . . . A shovel is a useful tool when Treasure-hunting!

Examine things carefully . . . they are not always what they seem to be! The beings who placed you in this scenario may have gotten their facts wrong about a few things, so be alert!