

Kids' **CORNER**

# Piano game puts fun into learning

**A**llegro Rainbow has created a novel way of teaching kids (and adults) how to play the piano. With "Piano Wizard Premier," kids learn how to play the piano by playing a video game on the computer using an attached keyboard as the controller.

In this game, kids play music first, then learn musical notation.

You start by hooking the included digital piano keyboard to your computer. Next, you select a song from the 200 offered. When the song starts, game characters glide up from the bottom of the screen into a "target zone," which looks like a virtual keyboard with colored keys. When a character passes over a colored key on the screen's virtual keyboard, you push the corresponding colored key on your keyboard. If your timing is right, you hear a tone and earn points.

You can choose songs from a wide range of music, including children's favorites, classical, folk, and pop; or you can download songs from the Internet. You can practice the right hand, left hand or both.

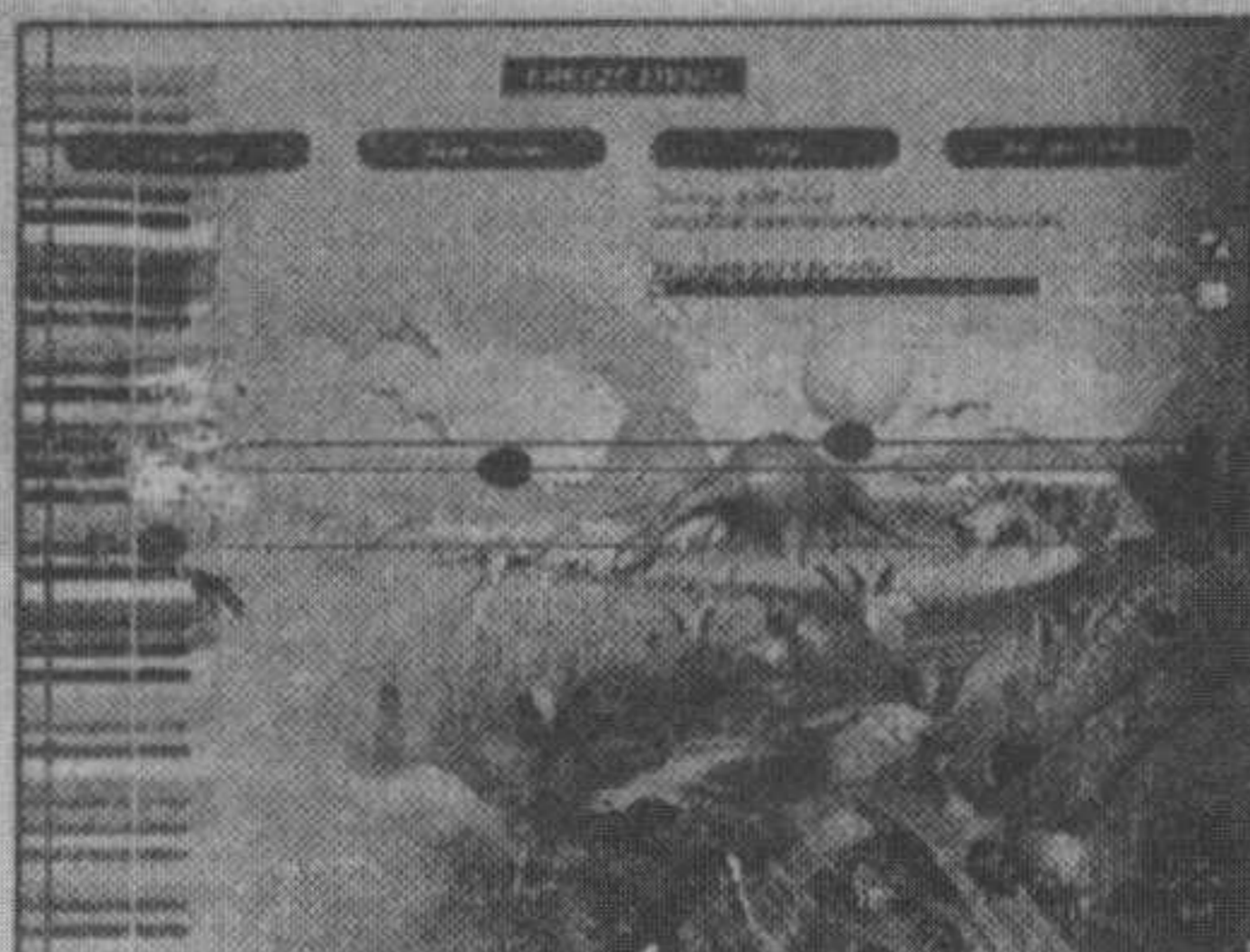
The software breaks down the learning process into four steps. The first is the one described above, where you match moving characters to colored keys. In step two, the virtual keyboard is moved to the left side of the screen and the characters move sideways to reach the colored virtual keyboard. In the third step, colored musical notes replace the characters. And in step four, the notes appear on a musical staff without colors. In all of these steps, you can control the speed of the moving characters.

As you progress through the steps, you learn to read music while playing. The video game aspect of trying to improve your score really motivates you to practice and is an exciting way to interest kids in music.

— Gannett News Service

**Bottom line**

- **WHAT:** "Piano Wizard Premier"
- **FROM:** Allegro Rainbow
- **COST:** \$199.95
- **BEST FOR:** Ages 5 and up
- **RATING:** ★★★★★
- **ON THE NET:** [www.pianowizard.com](http://www.pianowizard.com)



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**TICKLE THE IVORIES:** "Piano Wizard Premier" teaches piano by having children operate a program using a musical keyboard.