INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS TEXT
These tutorials have been designed to introduce teachers and student teachers to the essential functionality of the Microsoft *Office 2010* suite of software applications. The learning objectives of these tutorials are thus threefold:

- to help the pre-service and in-service teacher acquire the fundamental skills involved in using the Microsoft *Office 2010* suite of productivity programs;
- to help the pre-service and in-service teacher learn how to apply these skills in the context of the K-12 classroom;
- to motivate the pre-service and in-service teacher to go on to learn the more advanced features of Microsoft *Office 2010*.

1.2 WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THIS TEXT?
This will certainly not be the only set of Microsoft *Office 2010* tutorials available for the education marketplace. Why, then, will the pre-service or in-service teacher select this text rather than another? What features set it apart?

- The tutorials go beyond a cookbook approach to Microsoft *Office 2010*, emphasizing the concepts behind the keystrokes. On completion of the tutorials, the student teacher will understand the fundamentals of managing a computer-integrated teaching environment. Students of education will also be introduced, directly or indirectly, to methodologies for teaching their students essential computing concepts and skills.
- The scope of the material presented in ESSENTIAL Microsoft *Office 2010* is intentionally limited to what can be reasonably covered in 10-15 class hours, depending on the computing abilities of the students. It will thus fit nicely within the context of a course devoted either to the broader issues of computer literacy for teachers, or for a standalone, one credit, hands-on course for teachers that introduces Microsoft *Office 2010*.
- All the examples that are worked in the exercises are related to activities that might take place in K-12 classrooms. At the end of the tutorials, the pre-service or in-service teacher will take away a set of files that will have direct application in the classroom.
- Proficiency is promoted by frequent reinforcement of skills learned and appropriate exercises at the end of each tutorial provide an opportunity for skill consolidation.
- Teachers are encouraged throughout the text to build on, and grow beyond, the skills learned in the tutorials.
- The author understands that there are still teachers out there who may not be naturally inclined to get excited about the latest technology. For more than 40 years, the author has taught at all scholastic levels K through college, including experience teaching various disciplines in the Arts and the Sciences in countries around the globe, including the UK, USA, Albania, India, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria. He thus has worked extensively with
teachers from across the range of the technology spectrum and has written these tutorials with every teacher, no matter what their technology-savvy, in mind.

1.3 WHY MICROSOFT OFFICE 2010?
Microsoft Office 2010 is among the most commonly used software applications designed to run on today’s computers. It incorporates a function-rich Word Processor, a Relational Database, a professional-strength Spreadsheet, sophisticated Graphics-manipulation tools, and state-of-the-art Presentation programs, along with other communications applications such as Outlook, OneNote, and Publisher, which need not concern us here.

In Office 2010 you have a computing environment which will enable you to handle most of the productivity applications expected of a teaching professional. Furthermore, when you teach Office 2010 to your students—and integrate it into the curriculum—you will help them gain skills in the use of computer applications expected of the citizens of tomorrow's world.

The user of these tutorials should be aware that the goal is to learn the ESSENTIALS of the Office 2010 software. It is beyond the scope of the tutorials to cover all the features of this function-rich software suite. Your task, as a teacher, is to become sufficiently familiar with Office 2010, such that you can use it to produce your own teaching and assessment materials, and, more to the point, help your students learn.

It is the author’s hope that students and teachers, on completion of the tutorials, will be motivated to venture forth on their own and become proficient in the many quality and productivity-enhancing aspects of this and other computer-based teaching and learning tools.

1.4 THE STATUS OF COMPUTING IN SCHOOLS
The question is no longer: "Should the computer be used in schools?" The question is: "How should the computer be used in schools?" It is now over 30 years since, in the 1970s, this tool for teaching and learning first became available amongst the grab-bag of tools for teachers and students in the K-12 curriculum. If you believe the hoopla—and everything you see and hear in the education media even today, in 2010—you would think that most of the children in our schools are soaking up a large proportion of their education while seated at a computer.

The reality is that the majority of teachers—in the USA and elsewhere—have not yet had a realistic opportunity to integrate computer-based activities into their K-12 classrooms. This may be because they do not have in their classrooms a sufficient number of institutionally and centrally-maintained online computers for their students to use. Even if they do, the time it takes for the teachers to prepare appropriate technology-integrated lessons is often too much to bear in school systems where the teachers are expected to teach 30-40 hours a week with inadequate allowance made for preparation time.

Staff development and ongoing support are therefore key—KEY—to successful integration of the computer as one of the many generally-accepted aids routinely used by teachers to provide students with the best possible learning experience. Buchsbaum (1992) quotes the experience of Vera White, a Washington, DC, Jefferson Junior High principal: "Sometimes technology can be frightening to people who have never had to use anything but a piece of chalk. But give them the time and space to work by themselves, and they can do it and they enjoy it." Hence these tutorials.
1.5 TEACHING IS A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR

No tutorial in and of itself can teach you anything unless you are committed to the learning process. Computing is a set of skills, rather than a body of knowledge. As such, it demands practice in order to foster and maintain proficiency. As Thomas Edison observed: "The most important method of education always has consisted of that in which the pupils were urged to actual performance."

You, the teacher, must be prepared to work at mastering Microsoft Office 2010, along with myriad other examples of educational software and hardware, and also the non-computer-based tools and techniques that have been developed, over the years, for your area of pedagogical expertise, if you are to ever feel comfortable integrating all these ancient and new technologies for teaching and learning.

All your efforts will yield abundant fruit when you thoughtfully incorporate computer-based instruction into your curriculum. Your students will partake in that fruitful harvest and you will touch their future even as you touch your own.

1.6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A final word for non-USA users of this text. I have used USA spellings for words along the way. For example, in the UK, and in most former UK colonies such as Zambia or Nigeria or Australia, “initialize” is spelled “initialise,” and so forth. Please adjust to this Americanization since, for the past number of years, as both a UK and USA citizen, I have adjusted to being Americanized, too.

Bernard John Poole, August 17, 2010.

REFERENCES