

DESMOND micro computer

Clip: P544_01_clip1

Transcript:

Eugene Fraser (Narrator):

It's a DESMOND. A Micro designed specially by The Open University to teach how computers work. How does it differ from the BBC Micro?

Pupil 1:

It's got less function keys.

Geoff Bent:

It's got less function – well, it hasn't got any function keys in fact. So the keyboard is different, isn't it? What sort of keyboard would you compare that to?

Pupil 1:

Electric typewriter.

Geoff Bent:

Electric typewriter.

Eugene Fraser (Narrator):

So will using DESMOND help to understand control? At first, they simply copy a program from the board. It means very little as yet, but it does get them used to DESMOND.

Pupil 2:

Look, the LEDs are going.

Pupil 3:

What are those?

Pupil 4:

Don't touch anything.

Eugene Fraser (Narrator):

So DESMOND has outputs: those LEDs. And now they find it has inputs too. One is S11, a switch.

Geoff Bent:

S11. What does it look like?

Eugene Fraser (Narrator):

And so the children explore the switches. They're getting some idea of how DESMOND's different from the familiar Micro. Those inputs and outputs can be programmed – but how? A new way of programming is needed, and a new sort of language.

Pupil 1:

Fourteen.

Geoff Bent:

Fourteen. Alright. So, if I put 0-0 – that's the number of the address. And I'm going to put here fourteen. Okay? What's the next number you think I put, at 0-1? 0-1? What's the next number? I've said fourteen, but I want to...

Pupil 5:

Twelve.

Geoff Bent:

No, not yet, we're not to twelve yet. We haven't stored something there.

Pupil 6:

1-0-4.

Geoff Bent:

Good lad, 1-0-4. So 1-0-4, alright?

Eugene Fraser (Narrator):

Pretty soon, they've written the rest of the program. Now to try it on DESMOND.

Geoff Bent:

...put in to DESMOND, bearing in mind what we've done before. Key to press?

Pupil 7:

ACC.

Geoff Bent:

ACC. So press ACC. Make sure you're switched on. And now you've got the format to enter that in, you can now go and enter that in – so start with 1-4. Alright? Now what d'you think you press, after you press 1-4? ACC, and now we move on to 0-1. Alright? Yes, you can carry on now, you know what you're doing.

Eugene Fraser (Narrator):

It may seem as though they've only learned to light a lamp, but it's a start. And it's given them confidence to go further with DESMOND.