

InterModeller and Conception upgrades available for Windows XP, Windows Vista and Macintosh Leopard

PLP has launched upgrades to its top-selling InterModeller and Conception programs, available from our website www.parlog.com. Evaluation versions are free. For personal use by teachers and pupils, on their home computers, zero-cost licences for both programs are available on application.

InterModeller v4.5

PLP's expert system shell software continues to set the standard for

knowledge-based computing in education. With draw-and-run editors based on visual trees and tables as well as traditional text-based IF-THEN rules, InterModeller makes it easy for learners to specify knowledge bases with attractive graphical interfaces (see InterModeller v4.5 screenshot below).

This is creative, challenging software that enables learners to explore in accessible and realistic ways some of the biggest ideas in computing — such as the nature of intelligence and the difficulties involved in assisting humans and computers to work together to model, reason about, and provide access to human knowledge.

The screenshot displays three overlapping windows from the InterModeller v4.5 software:

- Erosion_table.imo**: A window showing a table with the following data:

Altitude	Rain	Soil	Grazing	Erosion
low	low	sand	low	false
high	low	sand	low	false
low	med	sand	low	true
high	med	sand	low	true
low	high	sand	low	true
- Untitled Forward rules.imo**: A window showing a list of rules:


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IF Altitude = low
AND Rain = low
AND Soil = sand
AND Grazing = low
THEN Erosion = false
IF Altitude = high
```
- Untitled Decision tree.imo**: A window showing a decision tree structure starting with 'Altitude' at the root, branching into 'low', 'med', and 'high', which further branches into 'Soil' and 'Grazing' nodes.
- InterModeller Consultation**: A dialog box titled 'The Coastal Erosion Advisor' with the text:

This expert system predicts whether land is at risk.

Thinking of buying a house on the beach? Check out the risk factors!

Buttons: 'Begin consultation...' and 'Cancel'

Conception v3.1

PLP's Conception software is unique in supporting a wide range of information map types, including argument maps, concept maps, SWOT maps, thematic maps, and writing plans. These are widely useful in many kinds of teaching and learning. Since it offers all of these and more in one package, Conception is a vastly more powerful resource than the numerous 'mind-mapping' programs that are heavily promoted in education.

Recent research has demonstrated a novel use for Conception. By integrating a set of tools that enable texts of any kind to be marked-up, mapped, and summarised as sentences, Conception can develop learners' reading skills (see diagram below). The necessary tools are bundled with the Conception v3.1 upgrade. This research, which has been trialled in Scotland with S5 Computing and S1 and S2 English classes, has been selected for presentation to the 3rd International Concept Mapping Conference. The conference will assemble in Finland and Estonia on September 22-25, 2008.

Apple's Leopard adopts X11 as standard

X11, the graphics manager that is used by the Macintosh versions of InterModeller and Conception, is now a fully-fledged component of Apple's OS X 10.5 (Leopard) operating system. Following the release of OS 10.5.3 in June 2008, X11 is installed by default under Apple's Software Update mechanism and it runs automatically whenever it is needed. This means that Macintosh users with up-to-date versions of Leopard should no longer have to make special provision for X11.

InterModeller and Conception are available from the PLP website, for both Intel and PowerPC-based Macintoshes. The Windows versions of the programs do not require X11.

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For the convenience of customers who prefer to pay by credit card, debit card, or PayPal, it is now possible to renew InterModeller licences online. See the Ordering/InterModeller page on www.parlog.com. More traditional methods of payment, e.g., cheque or BACS, are still very welcome.

