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ware, viruses, robotics) and a technical topic (including the C language and operating systems). The main skill practised is reading, but listening texts are provided to exploit the topics. Speaking tasks are built in to each unit as pair work or discussions.

A wide range of reading texts is used (articles from magazines, newspapers; extracts from manuals; advertisements). The authors have meticulously ensured that every kind of task is em-



ployed - questions, tables, diagrams, matching, etc. What is irritating, though, about the reading texts in both *Computing* and *Electronics* is that none of them is sourced. What this means is that a teacher who wishes to point out different registers has to guess where the texts come from by using the acknowledge-

ments at the front of the book.

Writing is featured in every unit in the form of reports, discussions or translations. There is also a special letter-writing appendix which, once you've made it to the end of the book, provides a problem-solving section that could be used as a short course in itself.

Attempts to use American and French-sounding voices for the listening material show that the authors appreciate the need for a variety of accents.

The texts, as in *Electronics*, sound altogether too cardboardy.

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## Professional reading

*Advertising and the Promotion Industry*, (£5.95), cassette, (£5.50) Maggie-Jo St John.  
*Accounting*, (£5.75) cass (£9.00) Michael R. Sneyd.  
Prentice Hall International 1994

Bryan Robinson

**THESE TWO SIMPLE** and cheap, but nonetheless well-groomed newcomers look capable of successfully carrying *Prentice Hall's* colours in the EFL stakes.

*Advertising and the Promotion Industry* and *Accounting* have sharp, straightforward cover designs which, predictably enough, are colour-coded to distinguish between them. Inside, everything is in black and white as befits the price; and organisation is suitably precise.

Throughout the books, text exploitation is based on a range of five exercise types: pre-reading; skimming and scanning; text organisation; comprehension; and vocabulary questions.

All the material is authentic, although sometimes it has been adapted. Texts are graded in order of presentation, and activities follow an established sequence. Each volume is reader-friendly with line- and paragraph-numbers given in the margins, although this means texts have been re-set in a standard type-face. In *Accounting* perhaps this is an advantage, but in *Advertising* we lose out in terms of variety. In fact, overall, the presentation of this latter is more attractive and motivating, and the writer has made liberal use of flowchart-filling comprehension exercises.

*Advertising* really does have a head start as the theme lends itself to a wide variety of texts and the text-types: advertisements for products like 'Deb Swarfega Rapid Hand Cleanser', and extracts from *The Independent on Sunday*, *Marketing* magazine, and *Marketing: Basic concepts and strategies*.

One disappointing aspect of the series is the decision to sell cassette-recordings of the printed texts. While these have clearly been professionally read, they do seem rather unnecessary, since recordings of texts written-to-be-read-silently, do not do much for learners' competence.

Finally, both authors demonstrate through their choice and range of texts, and the manner of exploitation, that they are quite expert in their subjects. The books are cheap, thorough and easy to use. Conclusion: a good, odds-on bet for any library or resource centre, but avoid the extra weight and don't bother with the cassettes.

Bryan Robinson teaches in the Faculty of Translators and Interpreters, University of Granada, Spain. He is also a Senior Examiner in EFL for the International Baccalaureate.