KEduca

Do-It-Yourself Quiz

If you need to set a multiple-choice style test, or simply want to amaze your party guests with a bunch of Mastermind type quiz questions, KEduca may be just what you were looking for. BY UTE HERTZOG

Neither its name nor its GUI are particularly memorable, but *KEduca,* which has been part of the KDE *kdeedu* package since KDE version 3.0 is the perfect answer for users looking for an edutainment program. *KEduca* is at the same time educational and entertaining, and can mean hours of fun for quiz addicts.
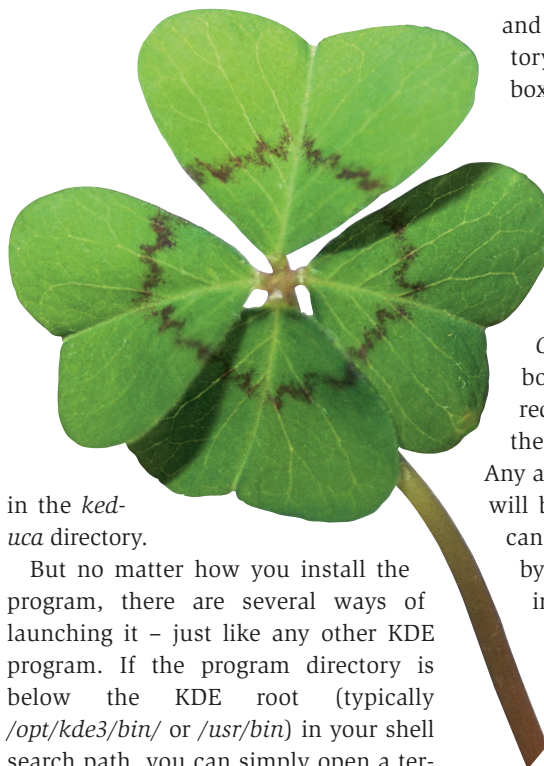
The Program

If you have already installed the basic and library packages that accompany the current KDE edition 3.1.2 from *http://download.kde.org/stable/3.1.2/*, you simply need to install the *kdeedu-3.1.2* RPM package for your distribution. Debian users can install just the KEduca package. If you are happy to use an older version, distributions such as SuSE (as of version 8.0) include KEduca.

If you have already compiled most of KDE 3.1.2, you can keep up the good work by compiling *kdeedu-3.1.2.tar.bz2*. After unpacking the archive file, you will discover an executable called *INSTALL,* and containing installation instructions,

in the *keduca* directory.

But no matter how you install the program, there are several ways of launching it – just like any other KDE program. If the program directory is below the KDE root (typically */opt/kde3/bin/* or */usr/bin*) in your shell search path, you can simply open a terminal session and type *keduca &* to launch Keduca. If this does not work, try again, but supply the complete pathname this time: */opt/kde3/bin/keduca &*. If you leave off the ampersand, you can open a mini command line [Alt-F2] to launch the program.

Most distributions add the program to the *Edutainment* group in the KDE menu (SuSE 8.1 uses *Edutainment / School / KEduca* for example). If you cannot locate the program at this position, or if you would prefer a different location, launch the menu editor – by right-clicking to open the drop-down menu, or by clicking on the *K* or start button.

Users who intend to run KEduca regularly might prefer to add a desktop shortcut. To do so, right-click an empty space on the desktop and choose *Create new/ Link to application…*

and type the above-mentioned directory and filenames in the *Command* box of the *Execute* tab.

First Steps

After launching the program, you might like to liven up the slightly boring KEduca toolbar, which comprises only two items. To do so choose *Settings / Configure toolbars*. In the dialog box that appears, click on the required action in the left panel and then click the right arrow button. Any actions you move to the right panel will be visible in the button bar. You can change the order of the buttons by selecting a button and then clicking on the up or down arrows.

You can now click on *Create/Modify* in the button bar to create your first multiple choice test: KDE 3.1.2 provides a dialog box with the option *Create new document*. If you have an older version, instead select the *File / New* function. In both cases you are prompted to enter the title and the author of the test you intend to create (see Figure 1). If you do not provide a title, Keduca will refuse to store your questions!

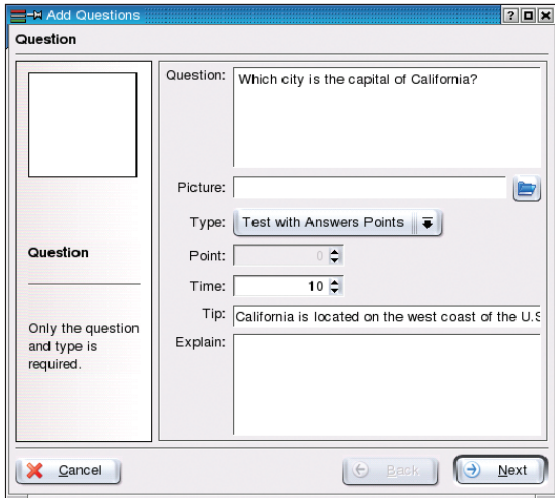**Figure 1: Entering information for the document**
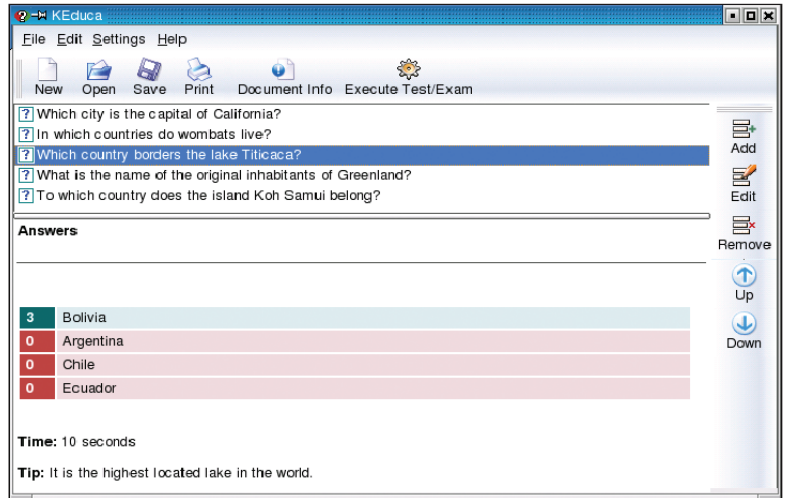
Figure 2: The first quiz question

Figure 3: A list of questions

The other prompts are purely informative, although it must be said that KEduca does not provide much in the line of support: One the one hand you have to enter a category (and this implies having designed a scheme of categories), on the other hand the only option available for *Type* is *Test*. The drop-down menus *Language* and *Level* are the only ones that provide useful options. You can assign a picture to your test, and add details on the author.

Creating a Quiz

To create the quiz questions click on *Add* in the test creation dialog box, and enter your first question. If the question refers to a picture, use the file selector button above the second text box to add the picture.

Use the *Type* field to specify if the answers are to be graded. In the case of a graded test, use the *Point* field to specify how many points will be assigned for the correct answer. To grade individual

answers separately, click on *Next* to open a dialog box where you can enter a different number of points for each answer.

The *Time* field allows you to specify the number of seconds test candidates will have to answer each question. You can use a default value for this in KEduca as of KDE 3.0, but the function is disabled in all but the latest version when you launch the quiz.

If you like, you can provide your test victims with a tip and an explanation for each question. Figure 2 shows a finished test question with a 10 second time limit for the answer. The correct answers and the points assigned to them still need to be entered in the dialog box that follows.

When you sign off a question and answer by selecting *Finish*, KEduca will confront you with a slightly irritating prompt, asking whether you would like to define another question. If you do not want to add any more questions, you can save the test at the end of this dialog by clicking on *Save*. You will need to assign a filename with the *.edu* suffix. Don't forget the suffix, KEduca will not add it automatically.

Of course you can modify a group of questions, like the one shown in Figure 3, any time later. *Remove* will allow you to delete a nonsensical question, or you can edit the question by selecting *Edit*.

Launching the Quiz

Select *Test/Run test* to launch a multiple choice test

you have saved (see Figure 4). Expect a disappointment at this point – KEduca versions have so far been unable to calculate the achieved grade.

The *Settings / Configure KEduca* option allows you to specify whether the correct answer should be shown at the end of the test or after each question.

The program will mark correct answers with a green bar (see Figure 5), and wrong answers with a brown bar either after each question or at the end of the test. In the latter case the program also supplies the right answers.

But you will have to wait for the next version if you want printed results to take home. The program can only print the questions at present, and does not have an option for outputting the answers. Teachers will just have to wait a little longer, before they can put the program to good use. ∎
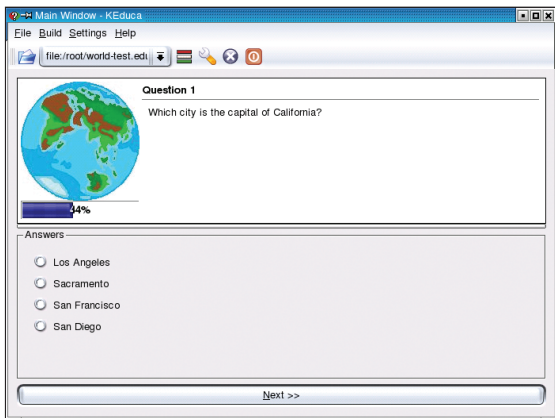

Figure 4: Calling up the test

Figure 5: Multiple choice test results