to learn from. After all, it has a tutorial, and it is easy to use. But then, what is learned from using a toy word processor?

One thought is that it gets reluctant young writers started along the path of writing creative prose. Another thought is that it teaches "typing" rather than word processing. There is a big difference.

Typing is the process of putting words on paper. Word processing is a whole level of abstraction above typing. The difference between typing and word processing is the difference between backspacing over an error and completely reforming a paragraph. It is the difference between looking a word up in the dictionary by hand and using a spelling checker. A typist produces text on paper, a word processor creates entire documents of elegance, clarity, and sophistication.

The price of Bank Street Writer makes it a bargain, and it is a rugged typing tool that has many uses in the home. Don't buy it to teach young minds what word processing is. Buying it to teach word processing will give first-time computer users the wrong impression. Instead, buy it because it is inexpensive and handily replaces the worn-out, old typewriter.

Broderbund Software responds

Richard Whittaker

There seems to be a condescending attitude about BSW that appears unrelated to the program itself. Perhaps one must read Ted Lewis's other reviews to fully comprehend the foundations and biases of this attitude. In the context of this single review, however, it is unclear why he reacts so negatively to the program.

Specifically, we are puzzled by his characterization of BSW as a "toy word processor" that does nothing to teach young people what word processing is.

We, and countless reviewers, feel, to the contrary, that BSW is a valuable word processing tool for writers of all ages.

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, "word processing" is "...an automated computerized system, incorporating variously an electronic typewriter, video display terminal, memory, printer, etc., used to prepare, edit, store, transmit, or generate letters, reports, records, etc., as for a business."

We, and countless reviewers, feel BSW is a valuable word processing tool for writers of all ages.

Bank Street Writer fulfills this definition superbly. It allows children and adults to write, edit, store, retrieve, perform global replacements, move blocks of text, format their entered text in numerous ways, search, center, indent, paginate automatically, number pages, place automatic headers, and perform many other useful word processing functions.

The fact is, no word processor can fulfill Lewis's definition of creating "documents of elegance, clarity, and sophistication."

Writers create documents of elegance, clarity, and sophistication—using pencils, typewriters, or word processors, such as BSW and others that are even more powerful.

It is worth noting that a word processor as uncomplicated and easy to use as BSW can actually facilitate the creative process (and contribute to the desired result of elegance, clarity, and sophistication) by not getting in the way of the creative flow of thoughts.

We feel that Lewis is being unfair and less than objective in his negative evaluation of BSW.