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Before Writing, Volume I: From Counting to Cuneiform — Denise Schmandt-Besserat. This perspective on the evolution of communication argues that the beginning of writing in Mesopotamia was an outgrowth of many thousands of years of experience at manipulating symbols. The author, a professor of Middle Eastern studies, presents a system of tokens as the immediate precursor of Sumerian writing, documents how numeracy was the privilege of an elite, and shows that the more complex the token system became, the more power it wielded. With b&w photos, line drawings, tables, and charts. U of Tex Pr, 1992, 269 p., hardcover, \$60.00.

Math Fun With a Pocket Calculator — Rose Wyler and Mary Elting. With chapter titles such as "Monkey Business," "Mind Reading With Your Calculator," "Upside Downers," and "Downside Uppers," this book offers math fun for young readers. Activities include detecting the number of coins in a friend's pocket, figuring out the number of Ninja Flamingos in a zoo, and sniffing out the winner in the Witch's pizza hunt. For readers age 9-12. Messner, 1992, 63 p., hardcover, \$10.98.

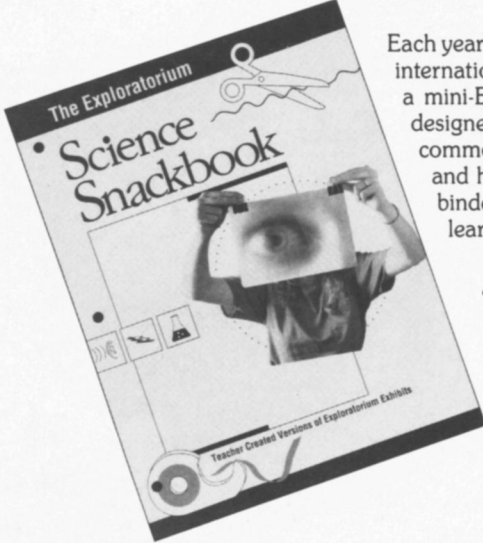
Neptune: Voyager's Final Target — Franklin M. Branley. On Aug. 24, 1989, Voyager 2 reached Neptune after a journey of more than 4 billion miles. Its cameras revealed a violent world of 1,000-mile-an-hour winds, high, fast-moving clouds, dark hurricanes, a dim ring system, and six previously unknown moons. Text and color photographs offer a close-up view of a planet at the cold outer reaches of our solar system. For readers age 8-11. HarperCollins, 1992, 56 p., hardcover, \$15.00.

Paddle America: A Guide to Trips & Outfitters in All 50 States — Nick Shears. This guide to outfitters, liveries, and rental organizations offers state-by-state listings of rivers, lakes, and coastal waters for family trips, wilderness expeditions, and whitewater adventures. With descriptions of fishing, wildlife, camping, scenery, and the challenges of each location. For casual paddlers and experts alike. Starfish Pr, 1992, 312 p., b&w photos, paperback, \$12.95.

Programming As If People Mattered: Friendly Programs, Software Engineering, and Other Noble Delusions — Nathaniel S. Borenstein. The author shows software engineers how to avoid the pitfalls of "user-friendly" programs, while describing the realities of software engineering and user interfaces to project managers and design researchers. For readers with a basic knowledge of modern computer systems; requires no specific technical or programming expertise. Princeton U Pr, 1991, 186 p., hardcover, \$34.50.

When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting Our Children — Sylvia Ann Hewlett. With true stories and a wealth of statistics, the author makes her case that the United States has fallen far behind other countries in its commitment to children and demonstrates why many babies born in the United States are more likely to die in the first year of life than their counterparts in Jamaica or Singapore. She outlines a plan of action encompassing such remedies as parenting leave, child-care policies, tax reform, family-friendly workplaces, and volunteer efforts. HarperCollins, 1992, 427 p., paperback, \$12.00.

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