Logo

Seymour Papert, Wally Feurzeig, Cynthia Solomon; BBN (1967—)

Logo was intended to create a living world, a culture, in which a domain—in this case mathematics—could be easily absorbed by young learners. Just as French is most easily learned by children in France, Papert sought to create a microworld—mathland—in which children could easily learn math.

Early versions of Logo used tangible robots to perform programs—moving around and drawing pictures. Later, a virtual turtle on a computer screen was used. The turtle has "holding power" (it's fun), and affords "playing turtle" (identification). (Papert 1987)

The turtle was inspired by William Walter's autonomous tortoise robots.

Papert argued that linking the abstract and the sensory—for example performing a program or shape—was a powerful way to link multiple representations. He called this body linkage "body syntonic." The turtle functions as a "transitional object" between the self and a domain (Papert 1980).
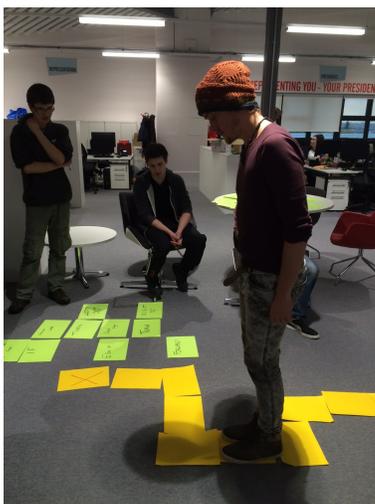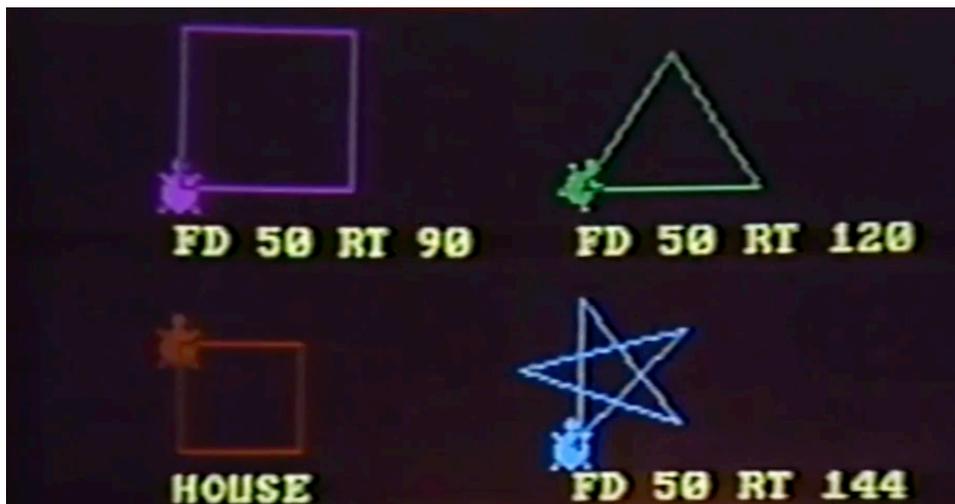
Image from http://battle-bot.blogspot.co.uk   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTO-Ruby-Uo   Uploaded by Cynthia Solomon

The turtle functions as a vital "body syntonic" link between a person and the domain. A classic example is closing your eyes and walking in a circle to gain an understanding of how to make a circle.