Scripting Software

1. Describe and outline the category

   Scripting software is software which enables the user to generate scripts without the user writing the script manually.

   A script is a piece of code which is attached to another product (eg webpage, animation or game) which assists in handling user interaction and flow of dynamic data. Eg **Library Query System**
2. Identify advantages and disadvantages for the category

   Advantages:
   - Code can be produced by the software instead of by hand; this makes it much easier for users to understand; also eliminates the need for knowledge of multiple languages in order to create some features
   - A lot quicker to generate code than to write it by hand; also saves time resolving bugs/issues in the code, less fiddly
   - Users are the developers; no need for additional developers (end-user approach to software development): saves money
   - Users can see what the final product is going to look like (usually in the form of a WYSIWYG editor); this is an advantage because the user interface of the product often resembles a Microsoft Word editor which is familiar to less advanced users
   - Existing templathes are given as a starting point for users

   Disadvantages:
   - Scripting software is often expensive: Dreamweaver: $400, although other software is free but provides less functionality
   - Only provides basic and generic features: often some things can only be created by code as the feature required is too compleggx; or is very specific to the product required; eg a webform which generates a special ID for the user would be too dedicated and out of the scope of a product like Dreamweaver or ExpressionWeb
   - Style of the code may not suit later developers; scripting software is basically a series of 'shortcuts' that generate a script. However, what is a basic product will often be revamped by a developer dealing specifically with the code. Certain developers prefer to do things their way, as every one is different, so the generated code will not always suit later developers along the line. Eg an older developer may prefer to use the HTML <font> tag for formatting but a modern developer will prefer to use CSS
3. What are the typical uses of the category: what people and product
   - Most common use is in the web design industry, with web products such as Adobe Dreamweaver, Microsoft ExpressionWeb and Google Sites Editor are used by end user developers in order to create a basic web page. These are an example of scripting software which generates HTML code. Although basic, many dynamic content can be added using data bindings in order to retrieve queries from a database or add JavaScript events and behaviours to add interactivity without ever writing a single line of code.

     Show: Dreamweaver, Google Sites Editor, Woo Random Files
   - Animators also use scripting software. Adobe Flash animations all revolve around unseen Actionscript code that is automatically generated through graphical user interface. Saves time by not writing code and as opposed to drawing in each frame individually.

     Show: Flash Circle Tween, Mention: Home Star Runner
4. Concrete examples of the category
5. 5 marks words of question on your category

   Q: Outline what the purpose of a script is and 1 instance in which a script is used (1 mark)
   Q: Identify 3 examples of scripting software (1 mark)
   Q: A small computer company wishes to create a website which allows users to search products from their database. Identify the use of a script in the website and evaluate the use of scripting software in the creation of the website (3 marks)