

A Guide to Gamequarium

<http://gamequarium.com>

What is Gamequarium?

Gamequarium is a portal to online, educational, interactive games and learning activities. The term "portal" is synonymous with "doorway." The purpose of Gamequarium is to provide a doorway to the Internet for teachers, parents, and students who are seeking interactive, instructional online resources.

Gamequarium has become one of the most popular educational web sites. Its happy underwater theme has made it a favorite of elementary students. It is used in all 50 states and worldwide in many countries. It has gained popularity with teachers and parents because it serves as a valuable, well-organized resource for teaching and learning with the Internet.

Why is Gamequarium needed?

In 2001, The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was signed into law by President George W. Bush. It is the most recent authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the principal federal law affecting K-12 educators. A part of NCLB is the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Act of 2001. The primary goal of this part is to improve student academic achievement through the use of technology in elementary schools and secondary schools. Two additional goals set forth specific requirements:

- Every student must be technologically literate by the time the student finishes the eighth grade, regardless of the student's race, ethnicity, gender, family income, geographic location, or disability.
- All schools must effectively integrate technology resources and systems through teacher training and curriculum development to establish research-based instructional methods that can be widely implemented as best practices by State and local educational agencies.

Gamequarium helps students become technology proficient with Internet technologies. It also helps teachers and schools integrate technology resources into all curricular areas.

How does Gamequarium benefit teachers and schools?

In addition to helping schools meet the requirements of NCLB, Gamequarium benefits schools in the following ways:

- Funding for technology in schools is always a challenge. Gamequarium provides free, online educational materials that can be used in place of traditional software. There is no charge for using Gamequarium.
- Teacher's time is often limited. Gamequarium eliminates the need to search for appropriate instructional materials. Students are just a few clicks from appropriate instructional content. This makes the best use of instructional time.
- Web-based access allows students to learn anytime and anywhere there is a computer with an Internet connection, be it in the classroom, a computer lab, or at home. This extends the curriculum that is used in the classroom to the home.
- Because it is web-based there are no CD's to scratch or lose and no server system to maintain. There is nothing to download or install. There are no registration or participation fees, or software or hardware expenses. Therefore, there is no impact on budgets. Gamequarium is free. There is no catch.
- While educators have made progress, many are still in the process of learning to integrate technology. Many educators still do not have the knowledge or skills needed to create a classroom website. Gamequarium can fill this void by serving as a student-friendly website for these teachers.
- Gamequarium is organized by subject, topic, theme, and grade level. This allows teachers to easily find interactive online resources to supplement traditional curriculum.

How does Gamequarium benefit students?

Today's students are intrinsically motivated and engaged by technology. Gamequarium is motivating and engaging for students of the Information Age. The use of Gamequarium supports the following principles supported by research:

- High motivation in students is linked to reduced dropout rates and increased levels of student success.
- Students are more engaged in learning when they are active and have some choice and control over the learning process, and the curriculum is individualized, authentic, and related to their interests.

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- Intrinsically motivated students retain information and concepts longer, and are less likely to need remedial courses and review.
- Intrinsically motivated students are more likely to be lifelong learners and continue to educate themselves outside the formal school setting.

Why Games?

The instructional philosophy of Gamequarium is supported by research. Research has documented the effectiveness of games for instructional purposes. The following statements, drawn from research, support the use of games:

- Even today, "practice makes perfect." Most students don't like to practice. The Internet and games can capture student attention, engage them in learning, and make practice happen.
- The Internet and multimedia technology deliver challenging visual and spatial tasks which serve to organize information and develop logical thinking. Additionally, many technology based games can graphically illustrate many concepts thereby making abstract ideas concrete.
- Online educational games challenge fine motor coordination while developing logical thinking skills and content mastery.
- Interactive games allow learners to construct new understandings on many different levels through seeing and hearing.
- Technology-based games encourage students to think more deeply, pursue curiosity, and explore and expand intelligence as they build mental models with which they can visualize connections between ideas on any topic.
- Teaching with Internet technology and online games allows educators to better meet the needs of students with diverse abilities while at the same time increasing motivation of all students.
- Games are dynamic, intrinsically motivating, and involve high levels of involvement. They provide immediate feedback to participants, and mistakes do not result in unwanted consequences.
- Games have been found to serve a range of functions in education including tutoring, exploring and practicing skills, and attitude change.
- The beneficial effects of games are most likely to be found when specific content is targeted and objectives precisely addressed.
- Students learn more when they are presented information in several modes. Students learn through different modes, styles and multiple intelligences. Teachers should access and integrate these modes for increasing opportunities for students to access and retain new knowledge.

How can schools and teachers provide easy student access to Gamequarium?

Easy access to Gamequarium can be provided to students, by using one of the following methods:

- Open the main page (<http://gamequarium.com>) on each classroom/lab computer and create a desktop shortcut: File > Send > Shortcut to Desktop.
- Open the main page (<http://gamequarium.com>) on each classroom/lab computer and click "[Make This Gamequarium Page Your Homepage](#)" link to set Gamequarium as the homepage.
- Open the main page (<http://gamequarium.com>) on each classroom/lab computer and click the "[Bookmark This Page](#)" link to add Gamequarium to your bookmarks/favorites.
- Provide a link to <http://gamequarium.com> from your school's web site or your classroom web site.
- Let parents know about Gamequarium. Print and send home the parent handout located at <http://gamequarium.com/parenthandout.pdf>.

Why is Gamequarium free?

Gamequarium was created and is maintained by Diana Dell, Ed.S. As an educator of more than 25 years (23 years as a classroom teacher!), mother of four, and grandmother of one, Diana understands the many demands that are placed on teachers, parents, and schools. Teachers, parents, and schools need as much help as possible in preparing our children to be the future leaders of the world. **Diana's mission is to organize the Internet for teachers, parents, and students and to contribute to the change that must take place in the way that today's students are educated.** Gamequarium provides an easy to navigate portal to the world of online learning. There is no charge for using Gamequarium, and there never will be. Gamequarium is Diana's gift to children of the world. Enjoy!

Who can be contacted with question or comments about Gamequarium?

Questions or comments should be directed to Diana Dell through email at diana@gamequarium.com.