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## **Britannica Online School Edition**

Britannica Online School Edition. [[http:// school.eb.com](http://school.eb.com)].

The opening page of the Britannica Online School Edition has not changed significantly this year and continues to offer users multiple points of entry. Students have the ability to search all of Britannica's online encyclopedia "libraries": Encyclopaedia Britannica (high school and up), Compton's by Britannica (middle school and up), and Britannica Elementary (elementary school and up) as well as Britannica Concise Encyclopedia. The main opening page also provides links to other features such as Dictionary, Learning Materials (study guides and activities to review concepts learned in class), and Teacher Resources (training materials and curriculum standards). Among the new features are Workspace (to create customized pages and save information for retrieval at a later time), country comparisons, 200 full-length videos, Britannica Blog, a contributor browse, and a Spanish translation tool.

Search results are listed by encyclopedia, allowing students to choose their appropriate reading level or informational need. Lewis and Clark and Lewis & Clark do not return identical results. Links to journals and magazines (also sorted by grade level), Web sites, and multimedia are displayed with each set of results. Articles in Compton's also link to state curriculum standards. Citations are offered in both MLA and APA formats. Students can click on any word within the article for audio pronunciation and [Merriam-Webster's](#) definition, a highly useful and user-friendly feature that will especially benefit English-language learners or any students searching for information slightly above their reading level.

In addition to searching across all three libraries, users can work in just one. Within each, content such as Learning Materials and periodical articles are specific to the age group. Compton's offers a colorful front page, with photographs of middle-school students. The dictionary here is [Merriam-Webster's](#) Student Dictionary. Features include Important People, Big Events, Highlights, Featured Spotlight, Discover America (instant access to statistics and information for every state), and News by Student News Net (which had a current article on the iPhone on July 1, 2007). Also available are an A-Z Browse, a Subject Browse, a Learning Materials link, Biographies, and an interactive Timeline. . . .

A new feature, Britannica Learning Zone, is described as a preschool-grade 2 "learning environment." This zone (also available from the opening School Edition page) is a fun source for online learning and activities for the youngest of students. Assisted by Newton, a cute dog mascot, children can decide whether to Explore, Play, Read, or Draw. Explore gives students the option to click on the flags on a world map or on photographs scrolling across the bottom of the screen to see pertinent videos. Play

provides opportunities to play educational games about numbers, adding, colors, counting, shapes, sounds, time, subtracting, and words. Read is an online dictionary of age-appropriate words. Draw allows students to choose from different-colored crayons to draw pictures of their own choosing or one of the samples offered.

The high-school-oriented Encyclopaedia Britannica page within the School Edition combines some of the features of Academic Edition with some of the features (Discover America, for example) from resources aimed at younger students. What you won't find anywhere within School Edition is a quotations feature. On the other hand, only School Edition has links to three additional Britannica databases: Enciclopedia universal in Español; Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged Online; and Annals of America.

Britannica Online School Edition provides many useful features that meet the needs of students from kindergarten through high school, as well as their teachers, and librarians.