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CONTENT Britannica Image Quest is an online file of more than two million rights-cleared images from some 40 image collections, including Action Plus, Arcade Images, Chicago History Museum, Picture Library, DK Images, Encyclopædia Britannica, Getty Images, the Granger Collection, Lebrecht Music + Art, National Geographic Society, the National Portrait Gallery, Natural History Museum, Oxford Scientific, Planet Observer, Royal Geographic Society, Superstock, the Times Picture Archive—NI Syndication, Universal Images Group, and many others (see link above for a full list). For every image in the database, Britannica provides complete metadata, which includes the source, copyright holder, caption, and keywords.

USABILITY The opening screen is clear and uncluttered: the top toolbar has a product logo and links to Home, Guided Tour, Help, and a Lightbox content button (more on this later). A toolbar below lets you search and/or browse within subjects (with a drop-down menu listing all subjects ranging from Animal Kingdom to Visual & Fine Arts) or within specific collections (another drop-down ranging from Action Plus to Wellcome Images Library) or simply search by keyword in a single search box. Below that are links to the collections, as well as a series of Featured Images and Searches.

I first checked out the Featured Searches by clicking on the image for one of them: ballet. That took me to a set of 2,399 crisp thumbnail images, including photographs and illustrations of ballet artists and costumes across the decades from many countries, ballet programs, ballet scores, and even the camellia flower variety known as the ballet queen. When I clicked on the thumbnail image of—Diana’s ballet shoes,” I got a screen with an enlarged image of — A pair of ballet shoes belonging to Princess Diana (1961–1997) on display at a memorial exhibition at her family home at Althorp, Northamptonshire, July 1999.” The caption accompanied the photo, along with copyright details (displayed on each page in this file) and a couple other significant enhanced pieces of information provided by Britannica: hyperlinked Subject Headings and Keywords (great for helping users find related materials within the file with a single click) and the proper citation for the image in MLA and APA styles. Very nifty, very easy, very helpful, and very high quality.

But what can you do with the images? Helpfully, there’s a link to Copyright Guidelines/Usage Agreement at the bottom of the screen, which led me to a clear statement about the appropriate —personal, non-commercial use” of the file’s content. Employing the images for purposes outside that definition requires Britannica’s permission, which can be sought via the handy linked syndication inquiry form provided. This is a remarkably clear way to let folks know how they can use the file and how to ask for permissions if they want to go beyond the personal and educational. I’m not accustomed to seeing such clarity and helpfulness in copyright-related files of images—it’s a breath of fresh air.

Next, I racked my brain for the best third-grade homework topic I could muster: vultures. This netted 948 thumbnails ranging from a—White-Headed Vulture *Trigonoceps Occipitalis*, Serengeti National Park, Tanzania” to—Extinct mammals at the tar pool of Rancho La Brea, California” (with vultures flying overhead). When I checked out the keywords listed for this last

illustration, I saw the word —vulture,” not —vultures,” so I went back to the homepage and did a search for —vulture,” singular, and got...948 thumbnails of vultures. Checking out different plural forms, I found that for simple singular plural words (goat/goats, etc.), Image Quest searches for both regardless of which search word you use (and displays both individual images and group images); for complex plurals (woman/women), it differentiates appropriately and shows in the first instance a single individual and in the second, groups of women. Very sophisticated.

It was extremely easy and straightforward to save images to my Lightbox (a kind of virtual folder), email them as JPEGs, download them, or print them. And that ease of use brings me back to what is probably the most significant aspect of this file (taking into serious account the excellence of these images, most of which are not freely available anywhere online): every image in Image Quest is rights-cleared for educational use, so your patrons can access them secure in the knowledge that they are acting responsibly within copyright guidelines.

The only thing I found myself wanting was a way to page through the larger images automatically. I had to go back to the thumbnail view to see them screenful by screenful. I would have liked to be able to pull up a larger image with its information screen and then page through the list quickly, much as photo-sharing sites like Flickr and Picasa allow users to browse.

PRICING It costs 60 cents per FTE student served for an annual subscription, with a \$390 minimum purchase, or 99 cents per FTE student served when combined with Britannica Online (see info.eb.com)—that is, you get both items for 99 cents per FTE students for annual subscriptions.

BOTTOM LINE This is a top-quality product with content and usability that exceed my normal scale; a ten all the way. Excellent throughout, with pricing that’s favorable to many (and, I hope, offered to consortia at a discount), Image Quest is going to serve researchers from grade school through university levels very well. This one is headed for my Best Reference list.