

Dear parents and guardians,

We are pleased to invite your child to participate in the Quest Atlantis Project. Quest Atlantis is a new, innovative computer program jointly sponsored by Indiana University and your child's school. Quest Atlantis strives to use technology to involve children in meaningful learning experiences – experiences where they might solve educational computer game challenges, called Quests. Completing Quests requires that your child participate in real-world, socially and academically meaningful activities, such as conducting environmental studies, researching other cultures, calculating frequency distributions, analyzing newspaper articles, interviewing community members, and developing action plans. Our hope is that through these experiences children will not only learn to use technology, but develop academic and communication skills as well.

In the Quest Atlantis program, your child will not only be using commercially available educational software packages, but he or she will also build web pages that will be placed online. As a result, your child will spend time online (using the Internet) participating in Quest Atlantis. All teachers using Quest Atlantis are provided with guidelines and structures that will help them promote online safety for your child. Additionally, our virtual environment is password protected and monitored constantly to ensure that it is safe and secure.

As a part of our project development, we will be observing your child interacting at the school and in the Quest Atlantis space. Our team will be taking notes on how children use the technology, and possibly interviewing them about their experiences in the program. Some of these observations and interviews may be videotaped so that we can better understand and improve the program. However, participating in Quest Atlantis is completely voluntary. Your child does not have to participate in Quest Atlantis. Further, if your child does choose to participate in Quest Atlantis, he or she is free to withdraw from the program at any time without penalty. However, we hope that you will choose to participate in this most exciting project.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child through the Quest Atlantis program. We are confident that participating in Quest Atlantis will provide your child with valuable experience using technology to participate in meaningful learning activities. At the same time, your child's participation will help us understand how children learn with technology and how to design meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

Please read and sign the enclosed consent form. Also, please note that you must initial the first page of this form as well. This signed and initialed form must be returned in order for your child to participate. If you have any questions about any aspects of this program, please don't hesitate to call me, Dr. Sasha Barab, the project director, at 812-856-1553.

Sincerely,

Sasha A. Barab, Associate Professor, Indiana University
Learning Sciences, Instructional Systems Technology, & Cognitive Science
School of Education Ph: (812) 856-1553
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INDIANA UNIVERSITY – BLOOMINGTON
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
Quest Atlantis

Your child is invited to participate in a learning and teaching project that uses an online, computer-based environment to engage children in educational tasks. The purpose of this study is to understand how children like the environment, whether it is engaging and exciting to them, and to learn about the program's effectiveness for supporting academic learning.

INFORMATION

Quest Atlantis is a new, innovative computer program sponsored by Indiana University and your child's school or after-school program. Quest Atlantis strives to use technology to involve children in meaningful learning experiences – experiences where they solve educational challenges called Quests. Completing Quests requires that your child participate in real-world, socially and academically meaningful activities, such as conducting environmental studies, researching other cultures, calculating frequency distributions, analyzing newspaper articles, interviewing community members, and developing action plans. Our hope is that through these experiences, children will not only learn to use technology, but develop academic and communication skills as well.

As a part of our project development, we will be observing children interacting at their school or in an after-school program and in the online Quest Atlantis space. All interactions in the online space are recorded by the computer and saved as part of our database. Our team will also be taking notes on how children use the technology, and possibly interviewing them about their experiences in the program. Interviews will last from 15 to 30 minutes. Information from these observations and interviews, as well as the computerized records of their participation in the online space will be entered into a password-protected database. Observations and Interviews may be audio or video taped so that researchers can analyze data more closely. We also may make copies of materials that your child produces in the Quest Atlantis space.

Your child is free to participate in this study as much or as little as he or she chooses. He or she may withdraw at any time without any penalty. Typically, your child might spend 40 minutes a session interacting with the program, with the number of sessions being determined by your child's teacher or staff member. If your child chooses to participate, we will need your consent for observing and videotaping your child's activities. Again, participation in this program is strictly voluntary. If your child chooses not to participate or to withdraw from this study, he or she will not be audio or video taped, and his/her data will not be analyzed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Protecting your child's confidentiality is extremely important to us. Computer labs are supervised and the online space is password protected so that only registered users with a password are in the online space. Every effort will be made to provide complete confidentiality for your child. In any reports of this research, there will be no mention of your child by name or the name of his or her school or after-school program. All computerized records of their work, emails, or chat will be sanitized so that in the reporting of the data your child will not be identifiable. Confidentiality will be maintained in all reports of this study. Further, all data will be kept in a locked place. All identifying marks will be removed from the data and pseudonyms will be used in any and all reporting of the data. Any tapes or materials will be destroyed at the end of the project, or within three years, whichever comes first.

Parent initials _____

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Sasha Barab, at Education Building, room 2232, sbarab@indiana.edu and 856-8462.

If you feel your child has not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your child's rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact the office for the Human Subjects Committee, Carmichael Center L3, 530 East Kirkwood Ave, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47408, 812/855-3067, by e-mail at iub_hsc@indiana.edu.

CONSENT

I have read this form and received a copy of it. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction. I agree to let my child take part in this study.

Child's signature _____ Date _____

I agree to allow my child, _____, to take part in this study.

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Consent form date: 09/25/07

**IU OFFICE OF HUMAN RESEARCH
PROTECTION PROGRAMS**

JUN 18 '08

JUN 17 '09

**APPROVAL
DATE**

**EXPIRATION
DATE**