

We have designed each "White Paper" to explore a fundamental educational principle and key issues engaging the education community we serve. It is our goal to partner with our readers as they meet the challenges they face.



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## Gaming in Education and Castle Learning Online

Watch the rabbit chase the letter "e" down a hole in order to pull it back into the word "help." Bells and whistles sound, a smiling face shows up and about 50 questions later, the student wins a trophy. When this happens, parents and educators might ask whether there was any in-depth instructional feedback for the student. Games can be a good thing, but when the "eye candy" of technology education surpasses the content foundations that are intended as the end product of a student engaging in study, it misleads the student into believing they have made great strides.

Expressions used when discussing the "gaming life" can include whether the games engage students, whether their offerings are click and are they embedded with quality graphics. Katie Ash, a writer who contributes to *Education Week*, referenced commentators who wrote that many game designers have no background in education, and vice versa. She concluded that no matter what folks say about the sophistication of the graphics, "the real trick to making a good educational game is to avoid a "drill-and-kill" approach to relaying the educational material and thinly-veiled quizzing methods that allow students to move to the next level."

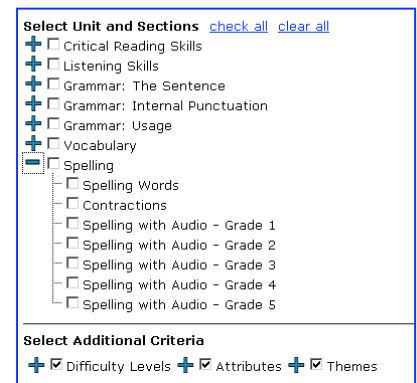


Fig. 1

Castle Learning Online has been used in many early grades and teachers are not surprised at how easily students become **engaged** in the content. Castle's *Elementary English* allows students to select a "Spelling with Audio" component by grade level, listen to the word along with a sentence, and follow instructions to type the correct spelling in a space. Useful reasons follow the experience. They progress at their own pace and educators can determine weaknesses in order to provide additional experiences to improve spelling (Fig 1 and 2)

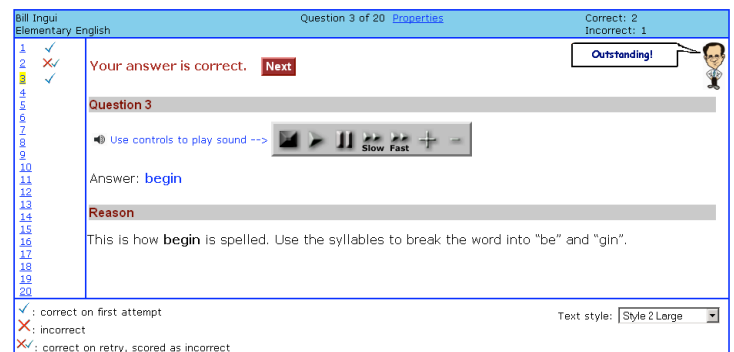


Fig. 2

Imbedded graphics are not the exclusive domain of elementary course content. Anywhere you turn in middle and high school content, the student will find eye-catching graphics that engage students in learning (Fig 3), as seen in this graphic from Earth Science.

Castle Learning may not have moving parts that skip and jump, but students like the "Wow!" that comes from results on year-end exams and parents are appreciative of the way *Castle Learning* has supplemented the classroom educator's work. Instead of talking frogs, *Castle's* "bells and whistles" are the carefully designed and powerful reviewing and assessment tools for educators. Instead of entertainment and diversion, the results are measurable mastery of subject content, improved skills in reading and mathematics. We actually believe that **learning is the ultimate entertainment!**

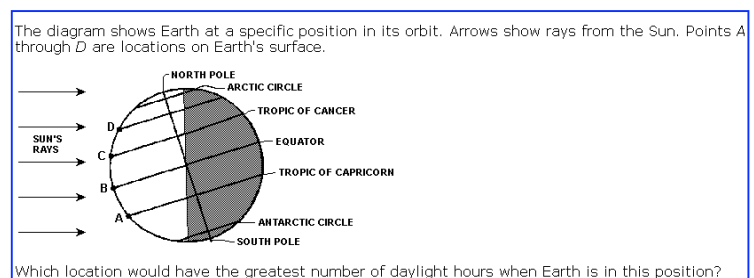


Fig. 3