

**Interview conducted with Emily Squires,
Library Media Specialist**

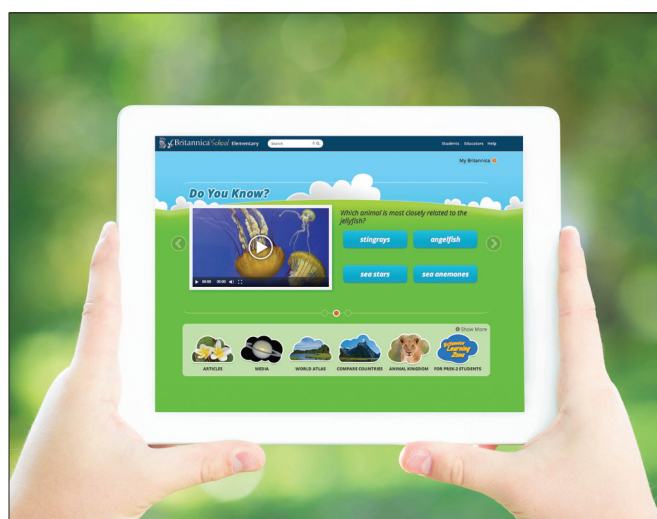
“These two Britannica resources—*Britannica School* and *ImageQuest*—are must-haves for our district. Access to the quality content and images in these resources allows our students to produce quality work and that’s what we’re trying to accomplish. We really use these resources and would be devastated without them.”

Dunbar Elementary is part of the Shelby County School District. The elementary school serves 360 students in pre-kindergarten to grade five. It’s a neighborhood school comprising 100% African-American students, all of whom qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Emily Squires, Library Media Specialist, said she uses Britannica resources every day in the library, tying research to the lessons being taught in the classroom. In addition to using Britannica for projects such as research on Martin Luther King, Jr., Squires said *Britannica® School* is an amazing resource for teaching math. “The short videos are awesome for providing visual ways to see how to work with fractions,” she said. “Sometimes students need to see things in a different way than the teacher has presented and *Britannica School* offers this through the videos.” She said *Britannica School* makes it easy to differentiate because students can choose a higher or lower reading level but maintain the age-appropriate look and format of the interface they are using so they aren’t embarrassed if they need to switch to simpler text.

According to Squires, *Britannica ImageQuest™* is the only resource students use to look for images because of its safe rights-cleared images. Students know they will find what they need immediately and they love the wide variety of pictures they can find from the millions of quality images on the advertising-free site. “Students learn in different ways,” she said. “My knowledge of these resources provides the outlet the teachers need to support learning for all their students.”

To make it easier for students, parents, and teachers to access the library’s resources, Squires created a web page which serves as the school’s homepage in the classroom. The attractive icons help parents see how to work on projects with their children at home. The page also gives greater responsibility to students, helping them learn about quality resources that they can find at their fingertips.



Students and Britannica Resources

Dunbar Elementary School students have used *Britannica School* to support their Science Fair projects. Students created written reports about their projects and built dioramas of oceans or grasslands. The visual images they found in *Britannica School* and *ImageQuest* were instrumental in creating the dioramas, she said.

Teachers and Britannica Resources

Squires said teachers are very impressed with the video clips they find in *Britannica School*. For students with short attention spans, the video clips imported into the teachers’ lessons help convey information in a lively, visual way that meets the students where they are in their learning. Teachers also report the images they find in *ImageQuest* help make their lessons better. They appreciate having a reliable source for pictures that provides high-quality, non-pixelated images that are appropriate and rights-cleared for their students.

Teachers also used *Britannica School* and *ImageQuest* to create lessons related to African American history. Students researched music, art, poetry, and the Harlem Renaissance, focusing on figures like Duke Ellington and Bessie Smith. Both *Britannica School* and *ImageQuest* were used to find pictures of the period to help students better understand the movement.

Squires said she has set up accounts in both resources for each teacher to enable them to save their work. She hosted a Technology Day for teachers to instruct them on how to use their accounts and set up lessons. She works with the teachers to closely correlate what they are doing in the classroom with what she does in the library. This work with teachers has helped to change the way the library and Library Media Specialist are perceived in the school.

“The library used to be seen as a break for the teacher rather than placing value on what we do,” Squires said. “Now there is more open communication with the teachers. They see that I know their curriculum and support it with resources like *Britannica School* and *ImageQuest*. They see the library and its resources as tools for them, not a break from teaching. We’ve really made this work this year.”

Key Benefits of *Britannica School* and *ImageQuest*

- **Ease of Use.** Keyword searching in both *Britannica School* and *ImageQuest* provides reliable, safe, and educationally appropriate results from among a variety of trusted sources. Content and images can be saved, shared, organized, and printed for later use. Both resources are accessible anytime, anywhere, and on any device, making them ideal for personalized learning and Bring-Your-Own-Device programs.
- **Differentiation for All Learning Levels.** *Britannica* resources provide flexibility to meet the needs of all students. For example, in *Britannica School*, visual learners can view a video while other students can use the read-aloud feature to hear articles being read.

- **Appropriate Content in Context.** Squires said kids can perceive history as being boring because they don’t understand the nuances of the time period. Being able to show pictures and videos of the past and the present makes the connection for kids and makes learning fun. A team of more than 100 editors write and update over 1,200 articles per month to ensure that *Britannica School* content is current, and in terms students can understand. *ImageQuest* provides access to educationally relevant images from more than 50 of the world’s leading collections that aren’t freely available on the Web. “This makes my job as the Library Media Specialist easier as students are able to navigate these resources easily on their own.”

