What is BrainSpan?

BrainSpan is an innovative collection of serious quiz games for e-learning.

BrainSpan presents you with compelling online quizzes and challenges. Log into the BrainSpan lobby (menu page) and access your learning games. Answer the questions, receive and send feedback, offer challenges to your peers and accept or reject challenges issued to you by classmates.

The purpose of each quiz game is to impart and/or test knowledge on a particular subject or subject module. Each question has a multiple choice format with one correct answer. Feedback and references to more information about the subject may be incorporated into the questions allowing you to broaden your horizons.
Login to BrainSpan

Upon gaining access to BrainSpan at http://www.brainspan.ca you will see the following login screen. Each time you go the BrainSpan web site the background colour may change. This has no significance in the functioning of the site.

- In the USER ID space, please enter your University CCID (Campus Computing ID).
- Enter your current password into the PASSWORD space.
- Click on ENTER, or press the ENTER/RETURN key on your keyboard.

A successful login event will normally take you to the Main Lobby (menu). If you are a first-time user of BrainSpan, you will be confronted with the Conditions of Use before you may proceed to the Main Lobby.
Conditions of Use

As a first-time user of BrainSpan, you will be presented with the Conditions of Use before you may proceed to the Main Lobby.

You agree not to submit any abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening or other material that may violate standards of decency and civility. Users will be sensitive to the public nature of shared facilities and take care not to display in such public locations images, sounds or messages which could create an atmosphere of discomfort or harassment for others. Users will refrain from transmitting to others in any location inappropriate images, sounds or messages which might reasonably be considered harassing, offensive, or defamatory.

The University retains the right to access all data stored on or transmitted on or using University computing and network resources, however, any such data will be treated by the University and all users as confidential and not to be accessed without authorization, or cause and due process. The University will not normally monitor individual usage or data, although all usage of a general facility may be monitored to enable accurate auditing. The University reserves the right to monitor and record stored or in-transit data, as well as the usage of any computer or network resource in cases of suspected or alleged impropriety, or as necessary to maintain a well functioning and secure computing and network environment. The University

Should you disagree with the terms, you will see the following message. Clicking on OK will result in an automatic Log Out.

If you agree to the terms, you will proceed to the Main Lobby.
The Main Lobby

There are six menu buttons, each of which will take you to a functional area of BrainSpan.

My Games

This option contains the essential quiz game playing functions in BrainSpan.

The MY GAMES selection will take you to a list of quiz games which you are eligible to play. Should it be your first attempt at the game, BrainSpan will identify the game as a NEW GAME:

If you have not been given access to any of the BrainSpan games, the following message will appear:
Should you have attempted a particular game, you will be given the option to **CONTINUE** the game or to **START OVER**, or to **EXIT** to the Main Lobby. Please disregard the **CHALLENGES** option for now.

If one of the options is not available, its bar will appear faded.

You also have the option whether or not to send and receive **challenges** from others playing the same game. To enable this option, place a mark in the **check box** at the bottom of the display.
1. **Playing the Game**

A quiz game is comprised of a series of questions. You answer each question as it is presented, by selecting one answer from a 'multiple choice' list of possible answers.

![Quiz Game Example](image)

Should you select an incorrect answer, e.g. 'B', the chosen, incorrect answer will be crossed out. The correct answer – in this case ‘A’ – will be high-lighted.

![Quiz Game Example](image)

At this time you will also be presented with further options:

![Quiz Options](image)

Your score will **not** have changed – the result of an incorrect answer – and you will be given the opportunity to **learn more** about the **answer** in more detail if the Learn More button is lit up. You may **EXIT** the game at any point, to be resumed later. The likely option is that you would want to continue the quiz with the **Next Question**.
Should you select the correct answer, e.g. 'A', a checkmark will appear next to the answer.

![How much is 2+3?](image)

Your score will have changed – the result of the correct answer. You will still have the opportunity to learn more about the answer in more detail. You may EXIT the game at any point, to be resumed later. The likely option is that you would want to continue the quiz with the Next Question.

Answering a question correctly also gives you the opportunity to issue a CHALLENGE (more below).

2. **Levels**

A game may be structured to present the questions in a series of LEVELs. Each level will either present questions of a different degree of difficulty or different subject matter. Your option bar will show you the level in the game you'll be playing at the time. In our simple example the game has two levels, with level one of the two being played:

![1/2 LEVEL](image)

There are a predetermined number of questions to answer for each level as seen in the denominator below. In the following example the level contains three questions; with the first question being presented as question one of three:

![1/3 QUESTION](image)
3. **Viewing Images related to a Game Question**

During the course of playing a game you may encounter questions with associated images. Under each such question there will be a link, “(view image)”. Click on the link to open the image.

Should you find the details in the image too small for your viewing comfort, you may enlarge it – “zoom in” – by clicking on the “ZOOM IMAGE” control below the image. The image should expand to a more viewable size. To reduce the image, click on the “ZOOM IMAGE” control in the expanded version.

While an image is open the background screen will be disabled. The image is closed by clicking on the “X” control in its upper-right corner.
4. **Feedback during the Game**

After answering a question you may have the opportunity to **Learn More** about the **correct Answer**:  

The correct answer (‘C’ in our example) will be shown, and if available, there will be some elaborative feedback in the space below the answer, often in the form of links to appropriate websites. Please note the scroll control to the right of the window – more information may be revealed as you scroll down.

In addition to receiving feedback, you may also give feedback on each question to the game administrator(s) and the author(s) of the question. Click on the feedback bubble at the bottom of the screen. With the “Question” option chosen, the feedback will go to the question owner and the game administrator. The “Game” option sends the feedback to the game administrator only. Key in your comments, and – when you’re done – click on the “send” bar.
5. **Completing a Game**

A game - once started or restarted - consists of a number of questions related to a given topic. The game ends when you have attempted to answer all of the questions in the game, at which point you will be awarded a percentage score for the game.

You may then opt to **PLAY AGAIN**, after which you will be given the same series of questions that you had just attempted. Be aware that the answer options for a question may not be in the same positions as they were in your previous attempt.

Alternatively, you may **EXIT** to the Main Lobby at this point.

6. **Coming back to a Game**

If you wish to interrupt a game before you have completed it – by selecting **EXIT** during the game – you have the opportunity to come back to it at a later time.

When resuming the game from the **My Games**, you can choose to **START OVER**.

With this option, your score for the game will be as you had left it, but you will not necessarily be presented with the same set of questions that had been presented to you in your previous attempt. The levels and the number of questions will the same as for a new game.

You may also **CONTINUE** the game from the point at which you had left it.

Your score for the game has been saved, and the questions you have already answered for this level will not reappear during this game. The balance of levels and the number of questions not attempted - remaining for the game - will be shown on the lower menu/feedback bar.
7. **Scoring**

Your score for a BrainSpan quiz game is cumulative. It will increase with each question that you answer correctly. When you restart a game, your score from all previous attempts is retained, and that is the score on which you may build.

You may also alter your score through the Challenge process, but keep in mind that as much as a correct answer to a challenge will gain you points, an incorrect answer will reduce your score. You take a similar risk when issuing a challenge to another player.

8. **Feedback after the Game**

When you have answered all of the questions in a game, you will be brought to the Game Summary. Your percentage score will be presented, along with a verbal assessment of your performance in the game.

At that point you may wish to PLAY the game AGAIN. Keep in mind that you will not necessarily encounter the same questions when you repeat the game.

The lower menu/feedback bar shows your score after the game. It also shows the number of questions answered correctly, and the number of those answered incorrectly. Your **SCORE POSITION** reveals your ranked position among the number of players who have played the game. **MINUTES PLAYED** shows how much time you've devoted to playing the game.

Your single remaining action is to EXIT to the Main Lobby if you do not wish to play the game again.
9. **Challenges – The Rules**

A feature of **BrainSpan** is that it encourages player interaction through **CHALLENGES**.

In this event a player will present another player with the opportunity to answer a given question. The player issuing the challenge invests a number of points – a number no larger than his/her current point total in a game. In the event that the player responding to the challenge answers the question correctly, that player is awarded the points that the challenger had invested, and the points are deducted from the challenger’s total. Should the responder accept a challenge and fail to answer the question correctly, a number of points equal to what the challenger had invested, will be deducted from the responder’s points total, and those points will be awarded to the challenger, who will also retain the points invested in issuing the challenge.

The total number of points that a **challenger** invests in a game may not exceed the challenger’s current point total. This is the aggregated points the player invests in all challenges to other players, and not the limit placed on a single question. Example: If a player has a total of 15 points, and invests 8 of those in one challenge, then only 7 points remain to be invested in another or other challenges.

The **responder** to a challenge cannot control the number of points invested. If a responder answers a question incorrectly, thereby losing a number of points that exceed his/her current total, the result is a **negative score** – i.e. the player “goes into the hole”. Example: If a player with a total of 15 points accepts a challenge where 20 points are invested, and fails to answer the challenge question correctly, the player will then end up with a score of -5. The consequence of this is that the player can thence not issue challenges to other players until the deficit has been erased, and the only way in which this can be accomplished is by answering game questions or other challenge questions correctly.

10. **Accepting a Challenge**

Upon entering a game, you select **CHALLENGES** to find whether someone has issued you a challenge.
In order to participate in challenges the check box at the bottom of the panel must be marked. Should there be a pending challenge; a list of **Minigame Challenges** will be displayed.

Each selected challenge will show the number of points invested in it. You have the option to **ACCEPT** the challenge, or you may want to **DECLINE** or go **BACK** to the list of challenges. If you **DECLINE** the challenge, it will disappear from the list.
Should you ACCEPT you are presented with the challenge question.

How much is 2+2?

A 12
B 4
C 8

Answer it correctly, and you will be rewarded with the challenger’s invested points.

How much is 2+2?

A 12
B 4
C 8

Congratulations!
You just won 6 points!

Return to Game Menu  Return to Lobby

Fail to answer correctly, and see a different message:

You Lost!
You just lost 6 points.

Return to Game Menu  Return to Lobby
11. Issuing a Challenge

When you answer a question correctly, you are given an opportunity to issue a challenge to one or more of your fellow game participants.

By selecting the CHALLENGE option you are taken to the Minigame Challenge interface. YOUR INVESTMENT POINTS for the challenge will be set to half of your maximum – your current positive score for the game. In our example – on the next page - it has been increased to 26. The plus and minus bars may be used for the adjustment of the investment of points.

You may also key the investment points number into the space.

The next step is to select a name from the PLAYER LIST. That name will then appear in the PLAYER space of the interface. In our example the player being challenged has a score of 24. Should that player accept the challenge, and then answer correctly, the responder’s score will be increased by 26 points to 50. Should the responder fail the challenge, the resultant score will be -2 [= 24 – 26].

Please note that the PLAYER LIST only contains the names of players who have permission to play the current game, have played or attempted the game at least once, and have consented (see the checkbox on the game’s entry interface) to participate in challenges in the game. Once you’ve formulated your challenge you proceed by selecting CONFIRM. To go back to the game, click on the X in the upper-right corner of the interface.

Your challenge will remain effect for a number of days - the default is 3 days - whereafter it will no longer be playable by the challenge. The points that you invested will then be available for other challenges. You can specify the number of days before the challenge expires.
You are given a chance to reconsider sending the challenge by going **BACK** to the **Minigame Challenge** interface.

Selecting the **SEND CHALLENGE** option should produce the following confirmation message if your challenge is delivered successfully:

```
Challenge Sent!
Your challenge has been sent to GroverB.
```

Selecting **CLOSE** takes you back to the game in progress. Before proceeding to the next question in the game you may – on the basis of the current question - repeat the challenge to other players.
Once you’ve issued a challenge, and you have sober, second thoughts about it, you can retract your challenge.

Go to a game and press the **CHALLENGES** bar.

In the next window, select the **ISSUED CHALLENGES** option:

Select a game from the list, view the challenge detail for the game, and – if you wish to retract your challenge, press the **RETRACT** button.
My Messages

BrainSpan allows you to send and receive game-related messages.

You are able to see your list of messages when you enter the Message Center. Some messages may be new – have a status of “unread” or “unopened” as depicted with a closed envelope symbol in the status column. You may read a message by selecting it from the list.

By placing a check mark in the check box rightmost in a message row, you have selected that message as a candidate for deletion. By then pressing the ‘DELETE SELECTED’ button, the message will be erased – removed from your list of messages. Should you select the topmost check box, **ALL** of your messages will be denoted as candidates for deletion. Please use the delete option with caution, as you will be unable to retrieve a deleted message.
When opening a message you will have the opportunity to read it at your leisure. In this example you have been challenged by a player going by the name of G. The game pertaining to the challenge is mentioned in the message.

![Message Example]

After reading the message, you have three options: You may **reply** to G, you may also **delete** his message to you, or you may simply go **back** to the Message Center. Upon your return there, the message – should you have chosen not to delete it – will have had its status changed to “read”.
By **replying** to G, you have effectively created a new message.

![Message Screen](image)

You may then **send** it to G, or you may wish to ponder your response some more by going directly **back** to the Message Center.
While in the Message Center, you may wish to create a new message without the pre-condition of a reply. The appearance will differ slightly from that of the reply message, but back and send options will be the same.
The Leader Boards

Here you will be able to follow and compare scores – your own and those of your peers – for a particular BrainSpan quiz game.

Pick the game from which you wish track the score from the list of active games on the Leader Boards.

The list of players who have participated in the selected game will appear. They will be ranked – best score to lowest score.

Select 'BACK' to return to the Main Lobby.
Changing your Settings

BrainSpan gives you the opportunity to change your current game settings.

At this time the only setting that you can change is your player name or alias. Should you wish to not update your name at this time, click on the ‘X’ in the upper right corner of the box.

Simply type over the name in the box, and press the ‘UPDATE’ button. Upon receiving the update confirmation, click ‘OK’ to return to the Main Lobby.
Your Feedback on BrainSpan

BrainSpan allows two types of feedback: 1) General and 2) Game-specific.

1. **General Feedback**

Enter your message in the box, and press the 'SEND' button. Upon receiving the 'Feedback Sent' confirmation, click 'CLOSE' to return to the Main Lobby.
2. **Game-Specific Feedback**

You have the opportunity to share your impressions or concerns about a particular game or question through the “FEEDBACK” option on a game’s menu bar:

![Player Feedback](image)

Type your thoughts into the message area, and then press “SEND”. Your feedback will be sent to the game creator — in the above example — or to the owner of the question if the “Question” option were chosen.
**Log Out of BrainSpan**

When you wish to end your current BrainSpan session, select the ‘LOG OUT’ button in the main lobby:

![LOG OUT button](image)

Your options will be to proceed with the Log Out, or to continue your BrainSpan session by selecting ‘CANCEL’

![Options to log out or cancel](image)

Upon leaving BrainSpan you will receive a ‘Goodbye’, as well as an option to immediately log back in to a new BrainSpan session.

![Goodbye message](image)