Release Notes: HabWorlds (December 2018)

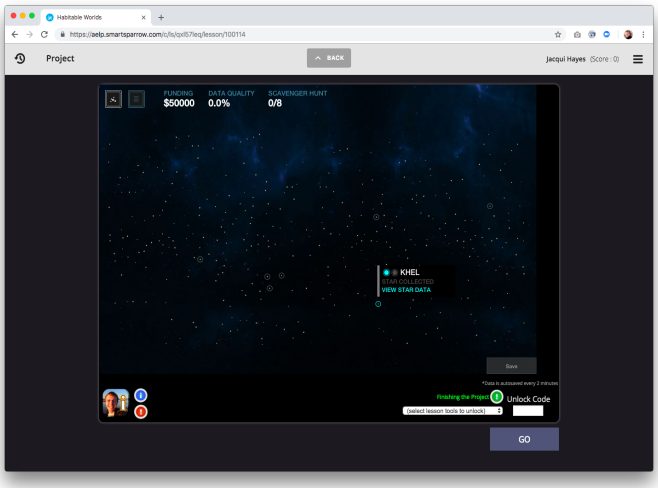
The team behind HabWorlds – Arizona State University's Prof. Ariel Anbar and his team at the Center for Education through eXploration (ETX) – have been working hard for nearly a year to improve the course.

This work will result in a series of releases throughout 2019, with a few major goals:

1. To make it significantly easier to use by rebuilding all simulations in HTML5, removing any Flash technology.
2. To refresh and update the visual design and user interface of lessons and interactive simulations.
3. To redesign, modify, and improve how students are learning.

We're excited to release the first part of this work for deployments beginning January 2019. Below is a list of what you can expect from the first release. You can read more about what is happening and why by checking out Prof. Ariel Anbar's blog post.

Major Update: The Star Project



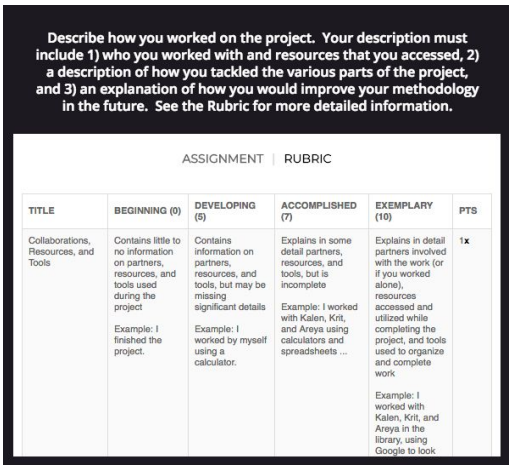
No more Flash!

The Star Project pulls together everything a student has learned in the course by asking them to apply that knowledge to find a Habitable Planet within a starfield.

Good news – it is no longer in Flash! This will make it significantly easier to use with your students.

We are also looking into making it easier to only use sections of the Star Project. If this is something you would like to do, please let us know.

Student Rubric



As well as the search for a habitable planet, there are three questions with long-form written answers. Students are asked to describe the methodology they used to find a Habitable World, to write a press release and to construct a message to send to the world they found.

From now on, students will see a rubric as they write the assignment (see screenshot of where the Rubric appears).

Manual Grading

These answers can now also be easily graded by you, though the Manual Grading section of the Smart Sparrow Workspace. Student will see the grade you assign from within the Leanspace.

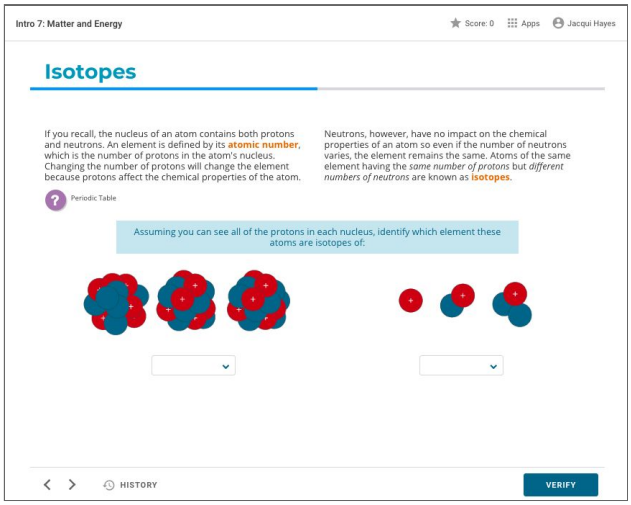
You can read more about how to do this in our Instructors Guide (bottom of the page).

New Version of Unit 1 Introduction

Comparison of previous and new unit structure

Previous Lessons	New Lessons	Key highlights
Science Literacy		Removed lesson. Content is found throughout other lessons in this unit.
Intro 1: Preconceptions	Intro 1: Preconceptions	Small modifications
Intro 2: Mindscapes	Intro 2: Mindscapes	Small modifications
Intro 5: Scientific Process	Intro 3: Science	Revised and renamed. Moved from the 7th lesson to be the 3rd in the sequence.
--	Intro 4: Tools of the Trade	New Lesson
Intro 3: Space	Intro 5: Space	Small modifications
Intro 4: Time	Intro 6: Time	Small modifications New Timeline Sim
--	Intro 7: Matter and Energy	New Lesson
Intro 6: Drake Conjecture	Intro 8: Astrobiology	Revised and renamed. New Timeline Sim New Drake Equation Sim

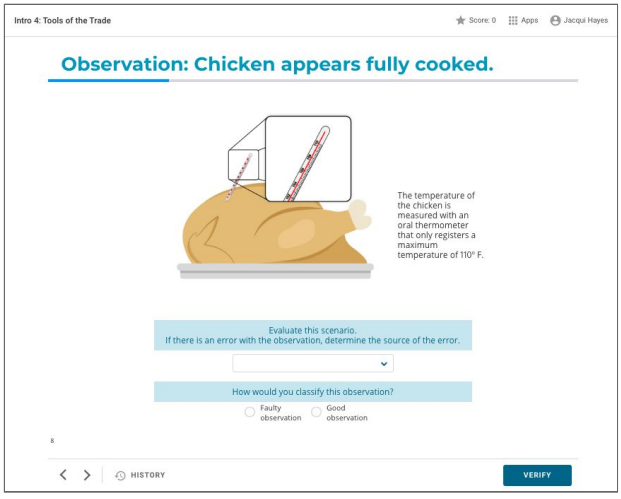
New Lesson: Matter and Energy



There is a new lesson, with the following objectives:

- Describe the parts of an atom including their charges and locations.
- Distinguish between atoms, elements, ions, isotopes, and molecules.
- Explain that light is a form of energy that can be depicted as a wave or photon.

New Lesson: Tools of the Trade

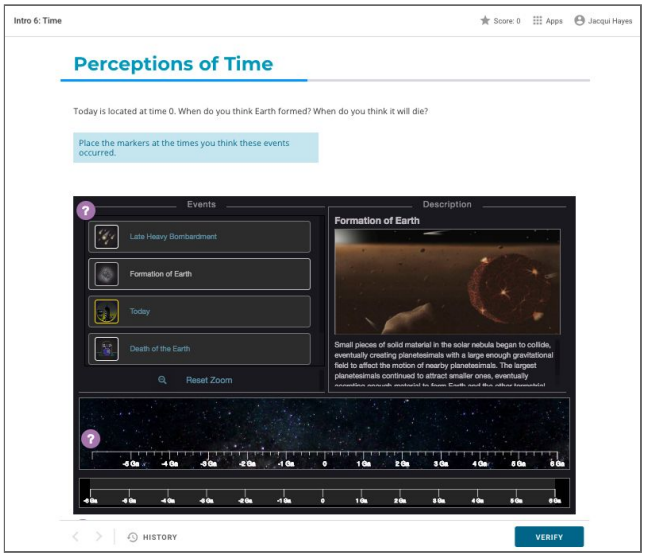


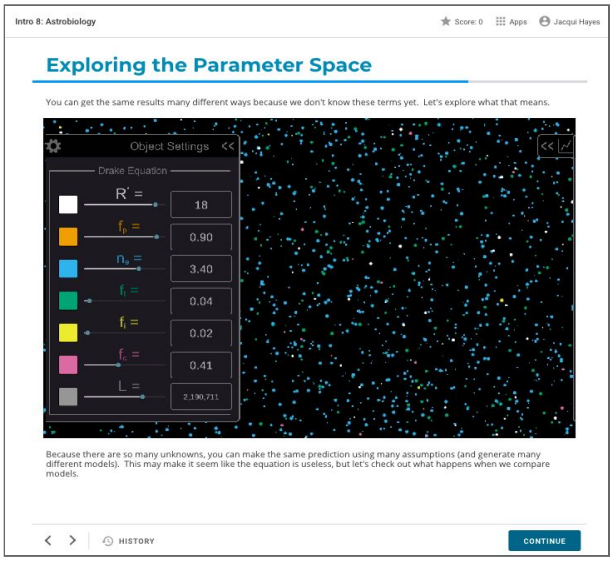
There is a new lesson, with the following objectives:

- Analyze observation tools and their usage to distinguish between faulty observations and good observations.
- Utilize appropriate tools to aid in mathematical calculations.
- Evaluate whether or not calculated values are plausible

New Simulations

Two Simulations (the Timeline Simulation and the Drake Equation) have been re-designed and rebuilt in HTML5, improving the student experience.





Thank you!

Every semester we receive suggestions on how we could improve our questions, text, images, feedback, etc. This release contains a small flock of fixes suggested by you. Please let us know when you see something that you think could be improved. Contact us at: team@inspark.education