

Guidelines for eSquirrel Authors

as of 15th April 2019



Dear authors,

We are pleased to welcome you to our eSquirrel author team. This document will provide you with some guidelines for eSquirrel courses.

eSquirrel courses should comprise enough quests and tasks to **emulate** a conventional **exercise book** for students. In addition to conveying the necessary **basic knowledge** about a topic it should also give students the opportunity to put more focus on a certain part of the course by providing extra quests for it. The structure of the course should be similar to the structure of any school or exercise book.

eSquirrel quests should be **entertaining** and **motivating**. Students should be able to finish a quest within a couple of minutes (25 answers or 10 minutes at most). The quests should primarily **help to revise knowledge** that has already been acquired during school lessons. They can, however, provide students with some extra facts and exercises. All quests should only contain questions that can be linked to the quest title.

eSquirrel questions and answers should be **concise** and straight to the point. Keep in mind that the space on a **smartphone display** is limited. Students should also be able to answer the questions **without the help of any additional aids** such as calculators or internet access. However, if students do need such tools, the respective questions should be collected in a special quest and tagged accordingly.

For **content-related** questions, please contact your editor. For **software-related** questions, please contact help@esquirrel.at

We hope you will enjoy creating digital teaching content and we are looking forward to reading from you.

With kind regards,

your eSquirrel team



GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITING eSquirrel COURSES

- Chapter names as well as quest titles should be consistent. They should, like a list of contents of a book, inform the user about the content of a quest.

Example 1. The periodic system – metals 2. non-metals 3. The metalloids 4. Supplements	Better 1. Nonmetals 2. Metalloids 3. Metals 4. Noble gases
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If you want to write a quest at the end of a chapter containing questions about different topics, tag them as round-up/summary/master quest etc.

QUESTIONS

- Avoid the words “I” and “We” in questions.

Example Why are we usually about 2cm shorter in the evening?	Better Why are people generally a bit shorter in the evening?
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- Avoid negative questions as they – more often than not – confuse the user.

Example Which of the following foods were not eaten during the Stone Age? - fungi - meat - roots - cow’s milk (correct)	Better Which of the following foods were eaten during the Stone Age? - fungi (correct) - meat (correct) - roots (correct) - cow’s milk
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If you cannot avoid negative questions, highlight the negation by using capital letters for NOT.

- In order to avoid key stimuli (key words, question formats) try to use any used question format (e.g. yes/no questions) or key word at least twice in a quest.
- When writing the questions, choose the level of formality and complexity according to the age of the users. Still, keep a certain level of formality, even when the intended users are children.

Example Animals can do many things . What do call the thing when they make babies? - reproduction - running away - reactions - stimuli	Better Which property of life describes the ability to produce offspring? - reproduction - sensitivity to stimuli - growth - regulation
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6. Question format “elimination” can sometimes cause confusion among app users. In order to minimise confusion, add “Eliminate wrong answers.” after the question.

ANSWERS

7. Answers should match the questions grammatically.

<p>Example</p> <p>In the stomach of a deer biomass gets digested and metabolised. What is the biomass needed for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is saved as energy - needed to grow an embryo - to build bones and muscles 	<p>Better</p> <p>In the stomach of a deer biomass gets digested and metabolised. What is the biomass needed for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to save it as energy reserves - to feed a growing embryo - to build bones and muscles
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8. Always use correctly spelled terms as answer options. If you want to test the spelling of a term, use the question format “open question”.

<p>Example</p> <p>In which process carbon dioxide and water is turned into sugar?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - photosynthesis - photosintesis 	<p>Better</p> <p>In which process carbon dioxide and water is turned into sugar?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - photosynthesis - cell respiration
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9. If possible, all answers to any one question should be consistent in word class and length.

<p>Example</p> <p>What are the properties of life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to grow - to reproduce - metabolism - no metabolism in autumn and winter 	<p>Better</p> <p>What are the properties of life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - growth - reproduction - metabolism - photosynthesis
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- Ideally, all answers are from the same word class (nouns, adjectives, ...)
- If the answers are nouns, either all of them have an article, or none.
- Either the different options are words only or sentences.



10. The different answer options should be concisely formulated, not too long and easy to distinguish from one another.

<p>Example: Format: multiple choice</p> <p>The English scientist Dalton estimated,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that all matter consists of small, uniform and solid balls. (correct) - that all matter consists of small, diverse and solid balls. - that all matter consists of small, diverse and transparent balls. - that all matter consists of small, uniform and shining balls. 	<p>Better: Format: double gap</p> <p>The English scientist Dalton estimated that all matter consists of small, [gap1] and [gap2] balls.</p> <p>Gap1 options: uniform/diverse Gap2 options: solid/transparent</p>
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11. Answers should always exclude each other. Avoid answers such as “all answers are correct” or “no answer is correct”.

<p>Example</p> <p>What are properties of mammals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hair - warm-bloodedness - scales - hair and warm-bloodedness (correct) 	<p>Better</p> <p>What are properties of mammals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hair (correct) - warm-bloodedness (correct) - scales - cold-bloodedness
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