



Teacher's Guide

Version 2.0

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A Note from the Creators

Paul and I are excited to welcome you to QwertyTown! As educators, we wanted a new kind of keyboarding program; one that teaches keyboarding fluency in a safe, teacher-controlled environment where students can communicate with their classmates, teachers, and friends. Since that program did not exist, we decided to make it ourselves.

Now that we have our ideal keyboarding program, Paul and I are using QwertyTown with our own students. Through our experiences teaching with QwertyTown, we have found that certain lessons and teaching practices maximize the success of our students. This Teacher's Guide is a collection of lessons and practices that may prove useful when introducing your own class to QwertyTown.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for this Teacher's Guide, use the Contact Form on the site and let us know. Thank you, and welcome to QwertyTown!

-David Grammerstorf and Paul Garofano,
Creators of QwertyTown

A Brief Overview of Lessons



The Basics

QwertyTown has six levels, each focusing on a different set of keys. Each level contains three types of lessons: Standard lessons where new keys are introduced, Time Trials, and Level Challenges (an end-of-level assessment).

When students earn Bronze, Silver, or Gold medals on lessons, they are awarded QwertyCoins. These coins may be used to purchase items to customize Avatars.

How are lessons structured?

Each lesson is scaffolded. There are three stages to a lesson: Modeling, Guided Practice, and Independent. In the Modeling stage, students are shown how to reach for the new keys. Then students try each new key themselves.

In the Guided Practice stage of the lesson, students type patterns with the new keys. They are given help when they press incorrect keys.

In the Independent stage, students are assessed on their Speed (WPM) and Accuracy. Students type patterns with new and previously learned keys mixed together. Students try to earn a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal.

LESSON	ACCURACY	WPM	ACHIEVEMENT
Lesson 1 a ; and spacebar	98	75	GOLD
Lesson 2 Time Trial a ;	100	70	GOLD
Lesson 3 s and l	94	27	BRONZE
Lesson 4 Time Trial s l			?
Lesson 5 d and k			?

What is a Time Trial?

In the Time Trial, students are assessed on their Speed (WPM) and Accuracy. Students type all keys they've learned thus far. These keys are typed in the context of real words. In later levels, students type whole sentences and paragraphs. Students try to earn a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal.

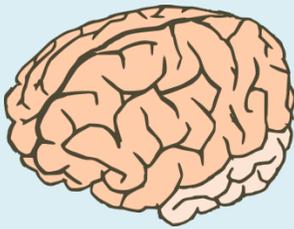
**For more information, see our Benchmarks and Curriculum page:
<http://qwertytown.com/about/benchmarks-curriculum>

Lesson Starter: Why Learn Keyboarding?

Rationale:

As teachers, we strive to deliver new content or skills in ways that makes sense to our students. We address students' varied learning styles and intelligences. We scaffold. We differentiate. We do whatever we can to ensure that students are going to remember new content and skills for the long term.

However, teaching lessons that “make sense” is not enough. Current brain research* confirms what master teachers have known for a long time: It is equally important that we help students understand WHY they should bother learning new content or skills in the first place. When teachers make learning personally relevant to our students, we truly succeed.



**To read what brain experts say on the subject, we recommend How the Brain Learns by David A. Sousa, and Brain Matters: Translating Research into Classroom Practice by Patricia Wolfe.*

Activity:

Before using QwertyTown with your students, begin by asking your students (in small groups perhaps?) to brainstorm reasons why they should learn keyboarding in the first place. When might students use keyboarding skills, both in and out of school? There are many reasons students may come up with, both academic and personal. Here are a few:

- Writing assignments
- Research
- Class projects
- Collaborating online
- Sending emails
- Creating websites
- Online chats (instant messaging, etc)
- Social media (Twitter, Facebook)

Students should walk away understanding that keyboarding is a fundamental component of literacy in the 21st century. Just as you use your mouth to speak, and a pen to write, you must use a keyboard to communicate.

Lesson Starter: QwertyTown, Day One

Rationale:

The first time you have your students try QwertyTown, you should acclimate them to the Dashboard. You should also set expectations for their performance during lessons.

Activity:

Follow these steps to walk your students through QwertyTown and set them up for success:

1. Intro Movie

Once your students are logged in, they will be greeted with an Intro Movie. The Intro Movie gives a quick tour of QwertyTown and offers tips for proper fingering and posture.

2. Customize Avatar

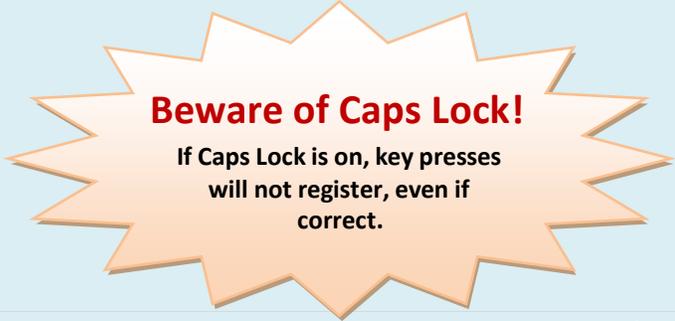
After the Intro Movie your students will be in the Dashboard. Have your students click the “Customize Your Avatar” button in the Avatar Widget. Setting up their avatars will help them see the potential Avatar Items they can buy once they start earning Qwerty Coins in the lessons.

3. Start a Lesson

Have students begin Lesson 1: a ; and Spacebar. Remind students that good keyboarding takes practice. At first, it may take a few tries to earn a Bronze Medal at the end of a lesson. However, with a bit of practice, students will get used to the proper fingering and posture required for successful keyboarding. As they progress, Silver and Gold medals will feel more attainable.

Medals	Speed Benchmark	Accuracy Benchmark
Bronze	20 WPM	92%
Silver	30 WPM	95%
Gold	40 WPM	95%

Be sure to read about Customizing QwertyTown later in this guide. That section of the guide will show you how you can set the Achievement Levels for individual students or your whole class. You can read more about these benchmarks by clicking “Learn More” from the home page, then clicking “Benchmarks and Curriculum.”



Beware of Caps Lock!

If Caps Lock is on, key presses will not register, even if correct.

Teacher Tip: Monitoring Proper Fingering and Posture

As the teacher facilitating QwertyTown, one of your most important jobs is to oversee proper fingering and posture among your students. Using correct fingering while typing increases students' speed and stamina. Proper posture helps students avoid backaches and fatigue when typing for more than a few minutes at a time. Here is what you should be looking for:

Fingering

- When students type, their fingers should always rest on Home Row, as seen in the picture to the right.
- Their arms should hang loosely at their sides.
- When reaching for keys above or below Home Row, students should try to move only the finger that needs to reach for that key, keeping all other fingers anchored on Home Row. This helps students return their fingers to Home Row without having to look down at the keyboard.



Posture

- Students should keep their feet flat on the floor and sit up straight in their chairs.
- Monitors should be positioned so that students look slightly down at the screen.
- Their eyes should stay on their screens, not glancing down at their hands.
- Students should sit centered in front of their keyboards (G and H are at the center)
- It is important that students stay relaxed and loose.



Teacher Tip: Customizing QwertyTown

When you log in with your teacher account, you will notice that your Dashboard differs from those of your students. Teachers are given a variety of tools that allow them to track their students' progress and customize their experience in QwertyTown. This section of the Teacher's Guide lists the tools that are currently available. We will continually add new features for teacher accounts, so keep your eyes peeled!

Achievement Levels:

The Speed (Words Per Minute) and Accuracy (% Correct) scores required to earn Bronze, Silver, and Gold Medals are fully customizable. Your District Admin can change the default values for the entire district. Your School Admin can set the default values for your entire school. You have the ability to change the Achievement Levels for your whole class, or even individual students!

Why might you change Achievement Levels? This is valuable if you would like to raise your expectations for students with prior keyboarding experience. You may wish to adjust expectations for a student with fine motor difficulties. Adjustable benchmarks allow you to differentiate as you see fit.

In our experience, the recommended benchmarks listed below have served our students well.

Recommended Achievement Levels

Grade and Age Range	WPM			Accuracy		
	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Bronze	Silver	Gold
2 nd Grade and below (up to 8)*	10	15	20	90%	90%	92%
3 rd Grade (8-9)	15	25	35	92%	95%	95%
4 th Grade and up (10+)**	20	30	40	92%	95%	95%

* Default benchmarks for 30-Day Trial accounts

** Default benchmarks for Subscriber accounts

Chatterbox Features

By default, a variety of Chatterbox features and awards can be earned by completing Level Challenges:

Level Challenge	Unlocked Feature
1: Home Row	Friends List
2: Upper Row	QwertyCoins bonus
3: Lower Row	Sending Qmail
4: Reach Keys	Chat Feature
5: Number Keys	Multi-Chat
6: Punctuation and Symbols	QwertyCoins bonus

Some teachers enjoy using the Chatterbox for class communication during class or at home. You may find it useful to unlock some features of the Chatterbox for your students instead of waiting until they are unlocked by your students. By clicking “Edit Class” from your Dashboard, you can toggle Features.

Find the feature you’d like to enable for your class and select “Enable regardless of lesson progress.” Likewise, you can restrict access to Chatterbox Features by selecting “Disable regardless of lesson progress.”

Friends Range

By default, your students can earn the ability to communicate with anyone in your school. However, you can change the Friends Range for your class. Setting the range to “class” allows your students to communicate only with classmates. Selecting “District” allows communication between schools. “Everyone” allows communication with the QwertyTown community at large. The “N/A” setting relies on the default set by your School Administrator.

Performance Reports

You can check in on the progress of your entire class by opening the Class Reports for each level. You can also access a more detailed progress report for each student by clicking Manage Students and looking the Stats/Reports for that student. Find out which Level and Lesson a student has reached, what medals the student has earned in each Lesson, and the number of attempts the student has made at defeating a Lesson.

Chatterbox Logs

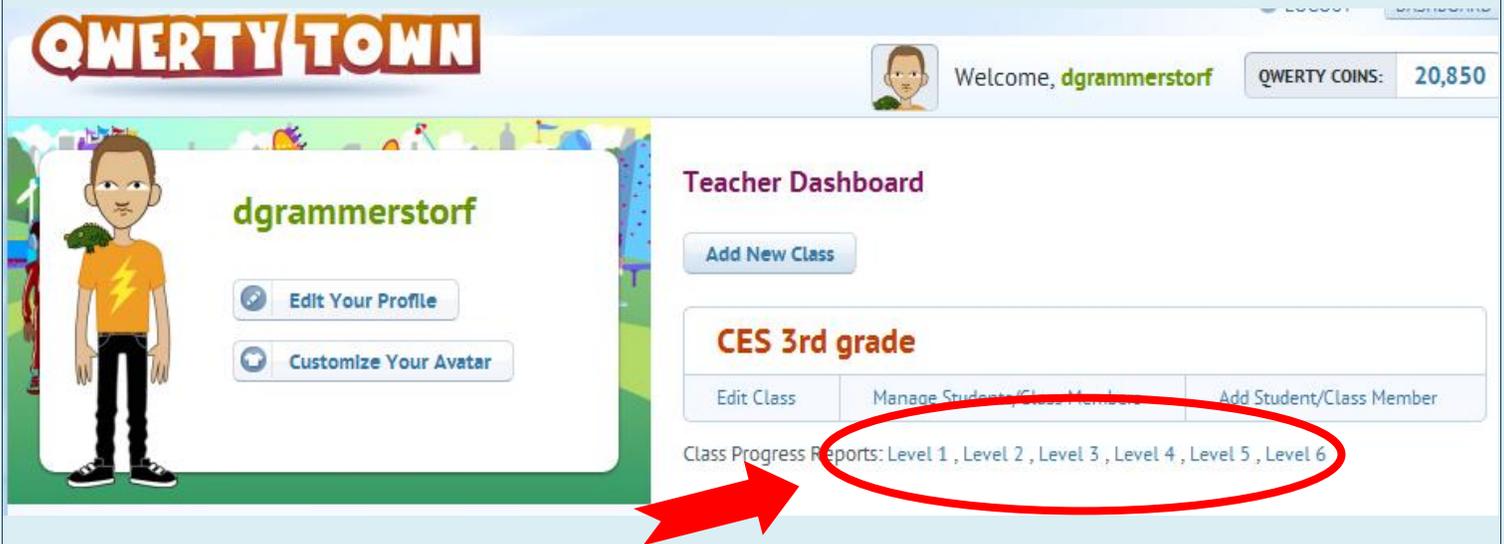
Looking at a student’s Chatterbox Logs shows you all of their Qmail messages and Chats. This tool is useful in maintaining appropriate, respectful communications between students. I use this tool very

infrequently with my students; I find that my students are on their best behavior in QwertyTown when I simply remind them periodically that I have the ability to read any communication I wish.

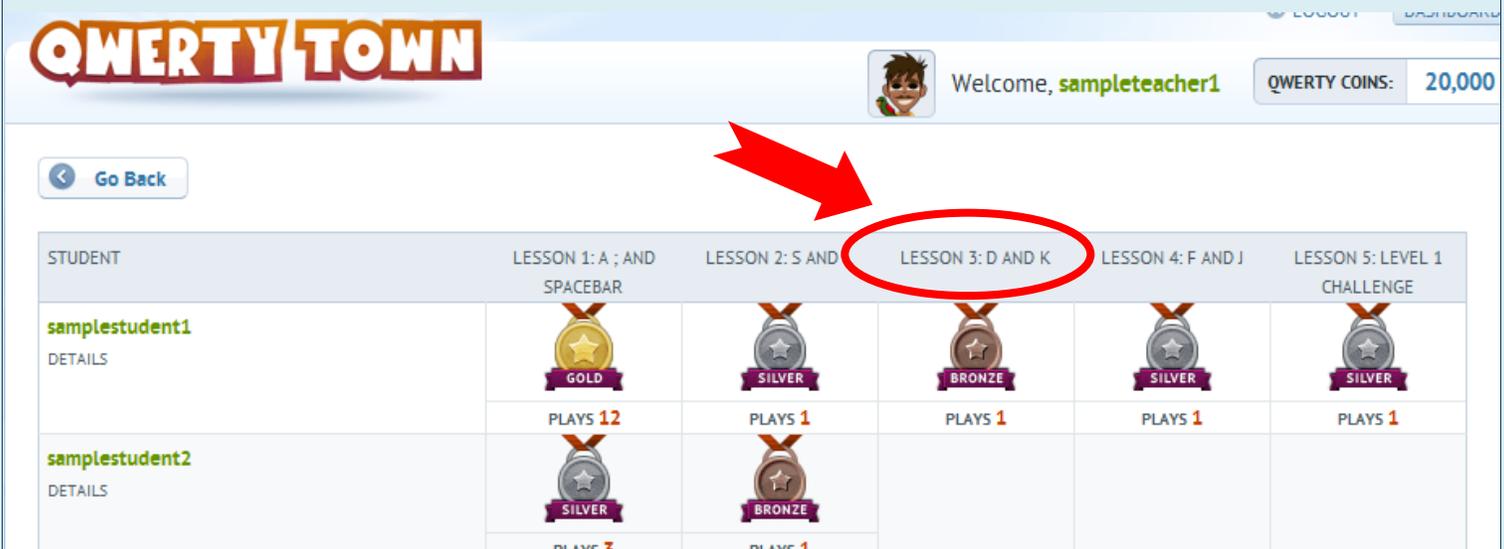
Play the Lessons Yourself

Teachers can try out the lessons themselves. Follow these steps:

1. From the teacher dashboard, click on a Class Progress Report.



2. Click on the name of the lesson you wish to play. Good luck!

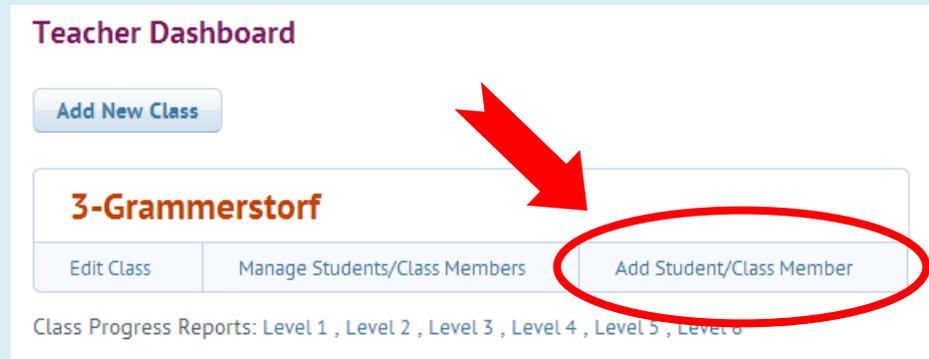


Teacher Tip: Managing Your Class Roster

Your School Admin has the ability to set up teachers, classes, and students for your school. As a classroom teacher, you may need to add a new student, remove a student from your class, or delete a student altogether. Below is a brief overview; you can also watch a video tutorial on our YouTube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/QwertyTownSNL>

Add New Students

Simply click “Add Student/Class Member” from your Teacher Dashboard to create a new student accounts.



Remove or Delete Students

Deleting a student erases the account entirely. This might be used when a student moves away, or if you want to recreate a student’s account so he or she starts over in QwertyTown.

Removing a student from your class keeps that student account active. By removing a student, he or she can be reassigned to another teacher’s class by your School Admin.

To delete or remove students, click “Manage Students/Class Members.” Check the box next to the desired students’ names, then use the dropdown menu to complete the desired action.

