

Megaconference Jr.

An Event For and By Students of the World

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is Megaconference Jr.?

Megaconference Jr. is an international project designed to give students in elementary and secondary schools around the world the opportunity to communicate, collaborate and contribute to each other's learning in real time, using advanced multi-point videoconferencing technology. Now in its third year, Megaconference Jr. brings together students from countries all around the world for 12 hours of interactive presentations, cafes, and forums. Megaconference Jr. will take place on May 18, 2006. For more information go to <http://www.megaconferencejr.org/>.

2) What do I need to participate?

Connected sites need H.323 videoconferencing capabilities and access to a national research and education network such as Abilene (Internet2) in the United State, CA*net 4 in Canada, or Gèant in Europe. Numerous other state and regional networks and GigaPoPs (ie: OARnet, MAGPI, SURF, SOX, NOX, IHETs, MERIT, CENIC, MAX, NYSERNet) are available. If you are not sure whether you are connected to such a network, you can download the Internet2 Detective (<http://detective.internet2.edu/>), ask your local network person, or contact us at (megajr@sccresa.org).

3) Do I have to be on Internet2 to participate?

No. Any good, high-speed Internet connection can work.

4) Do I have to go to a university to participate?

No. You can participate through a local university or other organization, but you can also participate from your own office or classroom if your Internet connection is sufficient. We can work with you to determine if your connection will work.

5) How much bandwidth do I need to participate?

The preferred connection speed for the event is 384 kbps, but we will work with sites connecting at 192, 512, or 768 kbps. If you do not have access to Internet2, your local university may have a site you can use. We can work with you to arrange a site if needed. Cable modem service usually works.

6) Why isn't the commercial Internet good for Megaconference Jr.?

The commercial Internet (i.e. Yahoo, AOL, Netscape), is generally too slow and too unstable to support the high-quality interactive video and audio that takes place during Megaconference events. And ISDN videoconferencing is too expensive for multi-site international interactive videoconferencing events. However, if you have a good quality Internet connection with sufficient bandwidth, we can work with you so that you can participate in Megaconference Jr.



7) How can so many sites be connected simultaneously around the world?

The Internet2 Commons (jointly operated by The Ohio State University and the Ohio Supercomputer Center), makes this possible by connecting sites through its remote collaboration service. You can learn more about the Internet2 Commons at <http://commons.internet2.edu/>.

8) What kinds of presentations/activities will my students see?

Presenters design and conduct videoconference-based presentations and activities focused on academic, cultural, scientific, social and a host of other issues. Participants will be able to ask questions of presenters and to collaborate with geographically diverse peers in collaborative learning activities, thus building international cultural awareness. Examples of previous presentations include: "Being Australian"; "Hurricane Houses"; "Hatching Chicks and Birds of Prey"; "Commonality, Connection, and Conversation Across the Continents"; "Bums on Drums"; "Flamenco Dancing and Walking Around Barcelona"; "Open Forum on Bullying"; "Reenactment of the Oklahoma Land Run"; "Robotics"; "Native American Comanche Tribal Dancing"; and an interactive quiz game between students in Taiwan, Ohio and Australia.

9) How much does it cost to participate?

Participation is free and open to everyone. The Megaconference Jr. event is a volunteer effort made possible through the dedication of students, teachers and technologists around the world. We only ask for your active engagement in helping to make Megaconference Jr. a fantastic event for all!

10) How can we participate in other Internet videoconferencing events?

People enjoy Megaconference Jr. so much that they often want to participate in similar events. In addition to Megaconference Jr., there is also the annual Megaconference event, on which Megaconference Jr. was modeled. The Megaconference, now in its 8th year, is open to K-12 schools as well. Megaconference Jr. was designed to help foster collaborations among schools worldwide, so we encourage you to start your own Megaconference-type events locally. Many have already been created including state-wide mini-Megaconference Jrs. such as "Texas Connects: A Statewide Videoconference for Texas Elementary Students" and a "Holiday Megaconference Jr." event. For more information go to <http://digitalunion.osu.edu/megaconference/index.html>.

11) Do I need to register if I connect through a local organization?

Yes, or else you will not be listed as a participant, and you will not be called in the roll call, or be eligible for door prizes.

12) Do I have to be there for the whole 15 hours of the event?

No, most people do not participate for the entire 15 hours.

Please see the Megaconference Jr. home page for important dates and deadlines, www.megaconferencejr.com.

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