

JEST FOR DUMMIES: CREATE YOUR OWN COMPUTER-BASED LEARNING MODULES

Raymond D. Mosteller, PhD

Associate Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA

Introduction: JEST (Javascript Enabled Self Test) software was designed to allow anyone with a computer having minimal software (text editor, web browser) and an Internet connection to develop their own computer-based learning modules (quizzes or formative assessments, tutorials, case presentations, flash cards). The resulting JEST learning modules can run on any computer, memory device or web server.

Objective: The goal of JEST software is to enable individual instructors or students to create their own computer-based learning modules without knowing any HTML code or computer programming language and to share these modules with other learners.

Methods: The JEST software and complete documentation are located on the internet (<http://biomed.usc.edu/jest>). The documentation includes a simple 5-step "How to Create a JEST Quiz" section and sample files illustrating the basic JEST format using 3 simple keywords (Question, Feedback, Correct Answer). The documentation also provides descriptions of the advanced options including attachments, branching, flash cards and various modes (random, sequential and case modes) as well as frequently asked questions and a trouble-shooting guide. Users create their own modules as a plain text file and submit them on the internet using a web form (the JESTER program).

Results: Numerous JEST learning modules have already been created at the Keck School of Medicine at USC and are currently available to our students on our educational web server (<http://medweb.usc.edu>).

Discussion: Individual faculty, staff, students and non-profit organizations can create their own JEST learning modules for free and may distribute them to others by any means. The JEST website is completely open to the world. No registration is required.

Email: rmostell@usc.edu

Tel: 323-442-0210

Fax: 323-442-2318

Website: <http://biomed.usc.edu/jest>

Acknowledgements: Slice of Life, Knowledge Weavers and CRIME as well as the Rubber Chicken inspired the development of JEST.