

What's New In Release 8

Of the A+nyWhere Learning System®

New and Improved Functionality

Introducing the A+ State Snapshots Assessment Add-on Module

The new A+ *State Snapshots Assessment* add-on provides schools with the ability to schedule class-wide and grade-wide tests. After creating an adaptive assessment the usual way, administrators can assign the assessment across classes, grades, etc. They can force the assessment to be taken immediately upon student log on (superseding any current assignments) or leave it up to the students when to take it during a specified date range.

For example, a principal can create a mandatory standards-based math assessment to be given on Friday, for all of his or her third graders. The test supersedes any prior assignments, so that by the end of the day on Friday the principal knows exactly how the students perform with specific state math standards.

To create *Snapshot Assessments* you must have the A+LS™ system right to *Add/edit/delete global curriculum*. This is because the Snapshot activity has to be available globally to large groups of students, often in multiple classes.

Add Snapshot Assessment Activity

Name: Snapshot - Grade 3, week 12, Math assessment *

Description: Test grade 3 students with the state math standards

Language: English Depth to test: 1 *

This test will be available to students:

Beginning: October 22, 2004 1:00 PM and Ending: October 22, 2004 3:00 PM

Force students to take test

Standards to be tested:

- 1M-F3.1.: Addition: demonstrate with models (3 questions)
- 1M-F3.2.: Subtraction: demonstrate with models (3 questions)
- 1M-F3.3.: Multiplication: demonstrate with models (3 questions)
- 1M-F3.4.: Division: demonstrate with models (3 questions)
- 1M-F3.5.: Addition and subtraction: to three digit numbers (3 questions)

Total Questions in Test: 32 Edit Standards...

Students to be tested:

Grade: Third, School: George Washington Elementary, District: Mountain Side Edit Students...

* denotes required information

Apply Close Help

To see how an A+ *State Snapshots Assessment* is created:

1. Log on as a teacher or administrator with the global curriculum right (mentioned above), then go to the *Curriculum Authoring Window*.
2. In the left pane, scroll all the way to the bottom to your log-on name.

Aspire.
Act.
Achieve.

- A *Snapshot Assessment* can be added to any subject module. For this review you will create a *Snapshot Assessment* module under your name. If you already have a subject you'd rather add the *Snapshot Assessment* to, skip down to step 6.
3. **Right click** on your log-on name, then select **Add New Subject**.
 4. When *Add Subject* opens, type the name **Snapshot Assessments**, then click **Apply**.
 5. Click **OK** to confirm, then **Close**.
 6. **Right click** on the new subject (or your preferred subject), then from the pop-up menu select **Add New Activity** and **Snapshot Assessment**.
 7. The *Add Snapshot Assessment Activity* dialog opens (see the previous figure), where you enter the **Name** of the assessment (**Description** optional).
 8. Set the **Depth to test** (the higher the number, the longer the test).
 9. Click on the **Beginning** and **Ending** date/time buttons to set when the test will be available to students.
 - Once the test has been created, it can be reassigned later with new *Beginning* and *Ending* times.
 10. Using the checkbox, decide if you want to **Force students to take test**.
 11. Click on the **Edit Standards** button and the *Select Standards to Test* dialog opens.
 12. You use the top four drop boxes to select the standards.
 - The *Available Standards* (top list box) should now list all of the specific standards that can be selected for the test, with the number of available test questions in parentheses.
 13. Highlight each of the standards you want to test over (holding down the **[Ctrl]** key allows you to select multiple standards), then click on the **Add** button to move the standards to *Standards to be tested* (the bottom list box).
 14. You can add additional standards by changing any of the top four drop boxes and repeating the process of adding standards to *Standards to be tested*.
 15. When you've added all of the desired standards, click **OK**.
 16. Back at the *Add Snapshot Assessment Activity* dialog, click on the **Edit Students** button.
 17. With the *Select Students to Test* dialog open, use the top four drop boxes to select the group of students to receive the test.

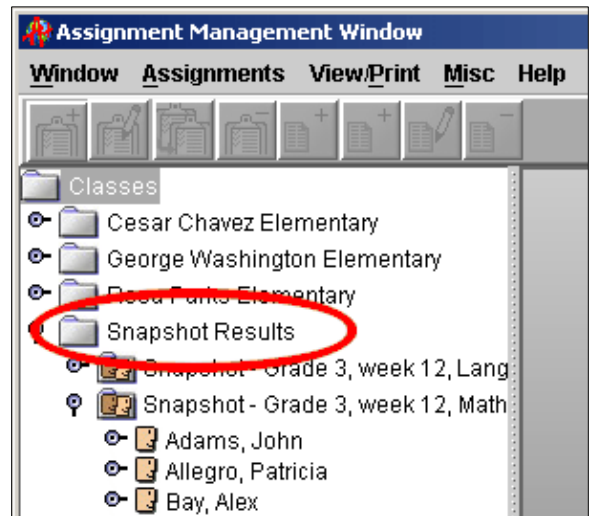
- You don't have to use all four drop boxes. The **X** found to the right of each drop box can be used to clear its value (circled in the figure at right). For example, if you want to test every student in the Third Grade, you'd first

set *District* and *School*, then you'd set *Grade* to "Third". To include every class in the Third Grade for that school, you'd click on the **X** next to *Class*, clearing the *Class* filter. Now, when you click on the **Add** button, all students in the Third Grade will be included, regardless of class.

18. When you have the top four drop boxes set appropriately, click on the **Add** button.
 - Since you could be adding hundreds of student names, the individual names are not listed. Instead you'll find a single line that shows the selection criteria (the settings of the drop boxes).
19. You can select additional students by changing any of the four drop boxes, then clicking **Add** again.
20. With all of your student selections made, click on **OK** to return to the main Snapshot screen, then click on the **Apply** button to assign the *A+ State Snapshots Assessment* to all of the designated students.

Since *Snapshot Assessments* are often used to get an overview of several classes, sometimes from multiple schools, a separate *Snapshot Results* school has been created (circled in the figure at right). Each test's results are treated like a class, with the participating students listed under it. To assign individualized prescriptions to groups of students all you have to do is right click on the *Snapshot Assessment's* name and pick *Prescribe* from the pop-up menu.

Please note that students can only take each *Snapshot Assessment* one time. If you want to retest them over the same standards, you will have to create a new test. But an old test can be assigned to a new group of students. For more information see the *A+ State Snapshots Assessment: A quick reference guide* and each dialog's online help for more information.

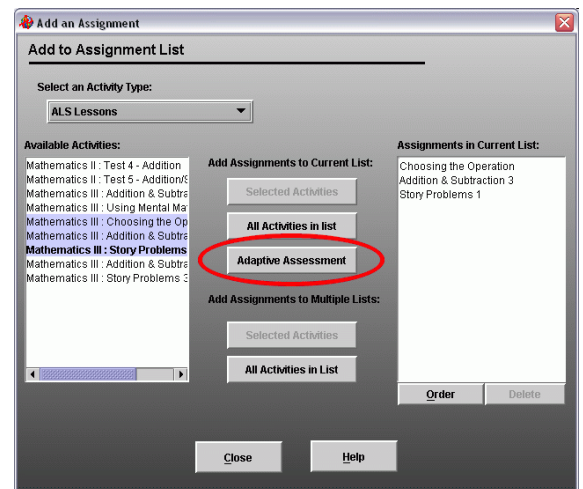


You Can Now Add an Adaptive Assessment When Assigning Activities by Standard

When adding *ALS Lesson* assignments from standards, you now have the option to auto-create an Adaptive Assessment based on those same standards. Placing it in a student's assignment list after the ALS Lessons creates a post-test on just those standards.

To use the new method of assigning an Adaptive Assessment:

1. Log on as a teacher with at least one class, then go to the *Assignment Management Window*.
2. **Right click** on an assignment list (where you'll add activities and the Adaptive Assessment), then select **Add Assignment** and **From Standards**.
3. Select and **Add** standards as you normally do.
4. When the *Add to Assignment List* dialog box opens, add the desired activities to the right column (*Assignments in Current List*) using the top **Selected Activities** button.
5. Accept the default settings for the assignment(s) and click **OK**.
6. Back at *Add to Assignment List*, click on the **Adaptive Assessment** button (circled in the figure at right).
 - The *Settings for Assignment of Adaptive Assessments* opens. Note the options.
7. Accept the default settings and click **OK**
 - As you can see, "Assessment from Standards" was added to the assignment list. This Adaptive Assessment will cover all of the skills from the selected standards.
8. Click **Close** twice to return to the main *Assignment Management Window*.

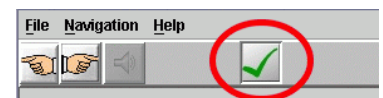


If you want to create standards-based *Adaptive Assessments* for multiple students, you can add *ALS Lesson* activities and the test to a single list, then copy the list to multiple students.

Choose to Show Test Answers and Limit the Number of Mastery Test Attempts

Teachers have two new options to show correct answers:

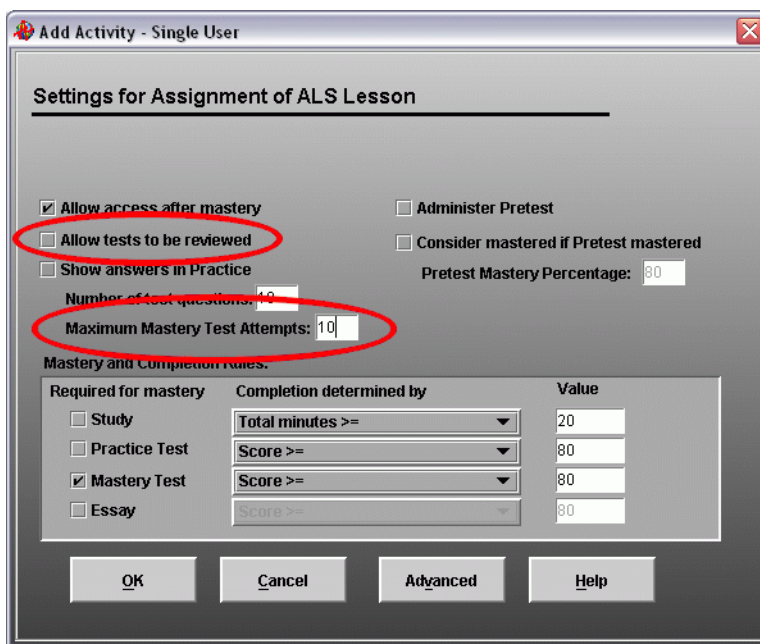
- To the student when exiting *Pretest*, *Practice*, and *Mastery* tests.
- To the student after answering *Practice* test questions. Now the student will have the option to toggle between his or her answer and the correct answer with a toolbar button (circled in the figure at right). The status bar will also display the score for each question.



Also new is the ability to place a limit on the number of times a student can take a *Mastery* test. When the limit is exceeded, the *Mastery* test button will be ghosted and the assignment will be marked completed, but not mastered. This will allow students to proceed with the next assignment when the option to *Force Assignment Lists in order* is enabled.

To review the new test settings:

1. Log on as teacher with at least one class, then go to the *Assignment Management Window*.
2. Locate one of your classes, then **right click** on **_Default Lesson Plan**.
3. From the pop-up menu, select **Create New List**.
4. Name the new list **Testing New Features**, accept the default settings, then click **OK** and **OK** again to confirm.
5. **Right click** on your new list and select **Add Assignment**, then **From Subjects**.
 - The *Add an Assignment* dialog box opens. Please note that the new features are also available when adding assignments from standards.
6. Select any subject, but leave *Select an Activity Type* set to *ALS Lessons*.
7. Highlight one of the activities under *Available Activities* and click on the top **Selected Activities** button.
 - The *Settings for Assignment of ALS Lesson* dialog box opens.
 - The new *Allow tests to be reviewed* checkbox if enabled, would allow your students to review the correct answers after they have completed their *Pretests*, *Practice*, and *Mastery* tests (see the top-circled item in the figure at right).
 - Also note the new *Maximum Mastery test attempts* option (see the lower item circled in the figure at right). When students exceed the maximum number you input here, the *Mastery* test button will be ghosted and disabled. As previously mentioned, the assignment will be marked completed, but not mastered. A zero will allow unlimited attempts.
8. Practice adjusting the settings if you wish, then click **OK**.
9. Back at the *Add an Assignment* dialog, click **Close**.
10. You may inactivate and remove the *Testing New Features* assignment list.



A+LS system administrators can also modify the system defaults for test reviewing and the number of mastery test attempts.

Usage Settings Can Be Changed Globally or by Class

With Release 8, an administrator can set the default usage settings for the whole A+LS system. These usage settings include which assignment lists to show students, bookmarking, and forcing assignment lists to be done in order. Teachers can also change the current usage settings for a whole class via a simple right click command.

Bookmarking, one of the new default and classwide usage settings, allows the A+LS assessment engine to save student test answers. This means that you can easily enable bookmarking for all students, rather than having to set it

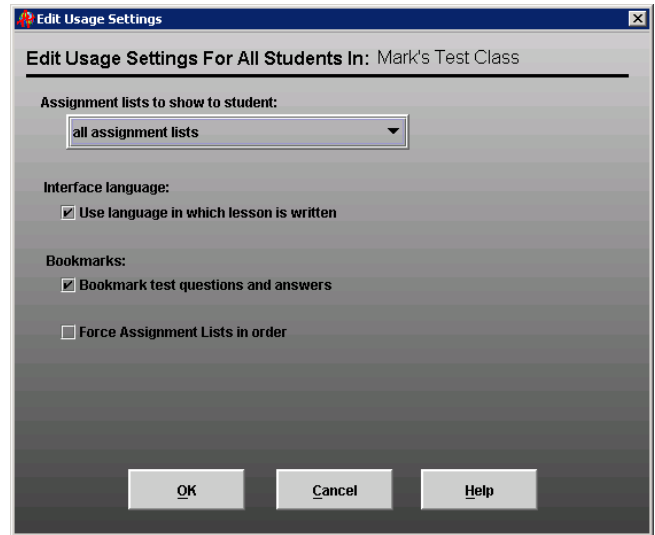
one student at a time as before. Bookmarking lets both you and your students review tests in detail, checking the individual answers to see where there may be conceptual or learning challenges. Please note that this feature is available for *Mastery*, *Practice*, *Pretest*, and *Review* tests, as well as *Course Assessments*. It is not currently available for *Adaptive Assessments*.

To review the new global default usage settings:

1. Log on with an administrative level account, then go to the *Assignment Management Window*.
2. From the menu bar select **Assignments**, then **Edit System Default Settings**, and finally **Usage**.
 - The *Edit System Default Usage Settings* dialog box opens. The *Help* describes the various options.
3. Click **Cancel** to exit without saving.

To review the new class level usage settings:

1. Log on as a teacher with at least one class, then go to the *Assignment Management Window*.
2. **Right click** on a class name in the left pane.
3. From the pop-up menu, select **Change All Usage Settings**.
 - Read the warning message carefully.
4. Click **OK**.
 - The *Edit Usage Settings for All Students...* dialog box opens (see the figure on the right). As you can see, it is easy to change the usage setting for all of the students in a class. For example, if you want to enable bookmarking for all of your students, you no longer have to set it for each individual student.
5. Click **Cancel** to exit without saving.

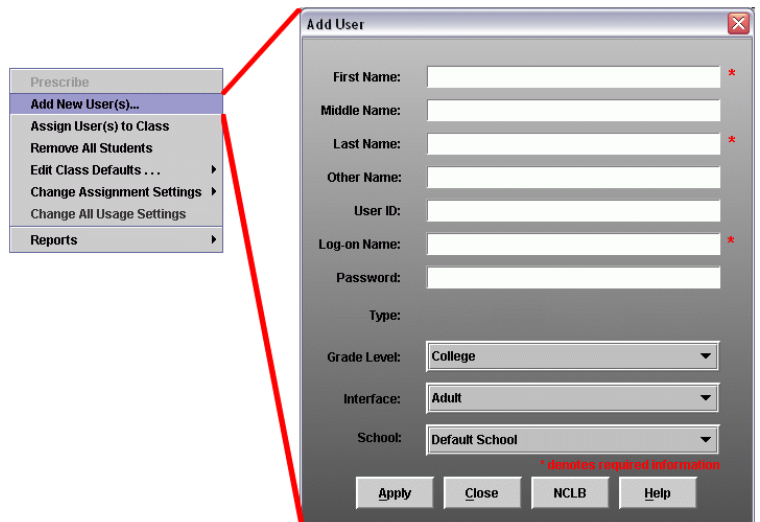


Teachers Can Add and Edit Students from within Assignment Management

Teachers are now able to add and edit students from the *Assignment Management Window*. Adding, editing, and inactivating users are now rights granted to all teachers by default. Added students will be automatically added to the selected class. If you are upgrading to R8, you will need to set the rights for your teachers to include “Add/edit/delete users (excluding rights)” before the following features will be available to them.

To see how you can easily add students to an existing class:

1. Log on as a teacher with at least one class with students, then go to the *Assignment Management Window*.
2. **Right click** on a class name in the left pane.
3. From the pop-up menu, select **Add New User(s)**.
 - The *Add User* dialog box opens (see the figure at right). This is exactly the same dialog box that you would normally open from the *Users Management Window*. When you’ve finished adding students, they will automatically be assigned to the class you right clicked on.
4. Click on **Close** to exit without saving.



Checking and editing student information is just as easy:

1. Still in the *Assignment Management Window*, **right click** on a student's name.
2. Select **Edit User** from the pop-up menu.
 - The *Edit User* dialog box that opens allows you to review and edit the student's information, without having to go into *User Management*.
3. Click on **Cancel** to exit without saving.

Student Name and the Lesson Title Now Appear During Lesson Playback

When students are working through a lesson, their name and the title of the lesson now appear at the top of the screen. This enables teachers to quickly and easily verify that the student who is getting credit for the work is the same student sitting at the computer, doing the work.

Transfer with Records Now the Default

When transferring students to a new class, the default is now to transfer them with all of their progress records.

New Titles and Standards

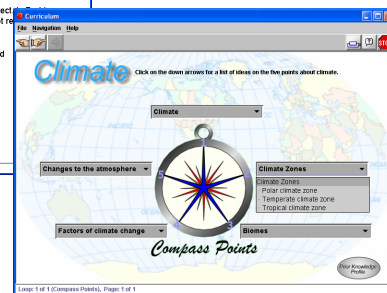
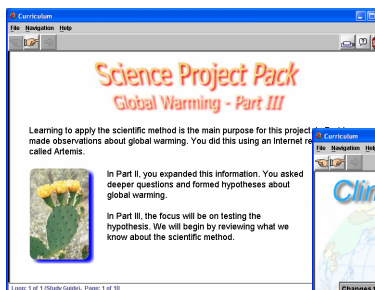
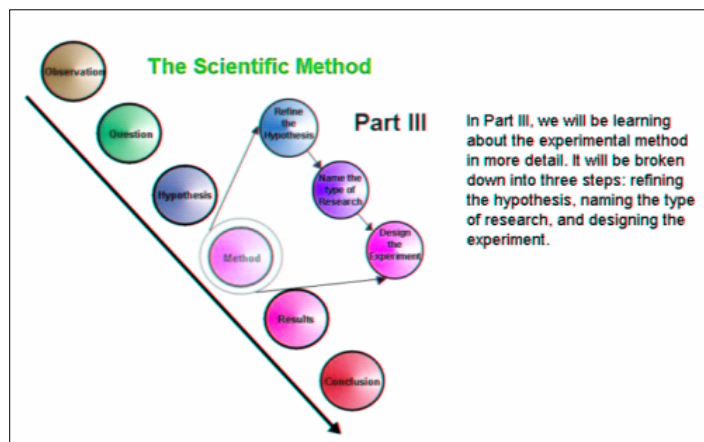
New Science Project Pack - Earth Science

As with the other Science Project Packs, *Science Project Pack - Earth Science* is designed to provide students highly interactive, engaging learning activities in which students learn, apply, and communicate with the scientific method. These lessons represent our continuing emphasis on interactive learning, including the use of research tools that are part of everyday scientific endeavors around the world. *Earth Science* provides approximately 36 hours of online activities and incorporates the ArtemisSM web tool.

The five defining characteristics of each science project are:

- Providing a comprehensive introduction to scientific method.
- Role playing is used to provide a live application of scientific method, where students design and submit research questions to a grant committee. Each project includes formulating scientific questions, formal hypothesis building, and experimental design.
- Using the Internet to do science related research, primarily through Artemis qualified web sites.
- Communicating scientific findings through the many role-playing exercises.
- Use of the extensive *A+LS* library of titles to address state and national science standards.

As part of these new learning experiences, AEC has partnered with GoKnow[®], Inc. to provide Artemis. This learning tool supports K-12 learners as they find and analyze web material during their online inquiries. This partnership provides an expanding, highly engaging, and interactive learning experience.



New and Updated Standard Sets

Release 8 includes the following updated standard sets (since Release 7):

- Alabama Course of Study – Reading Supplement 2004
- Arizona Articulated Standards – Science
- Arizona Articulated Standards – Writing
- Indiana Academic Standards – Integrated Math
- Massachusetts Curriculum Content Frameworks – Math and Language supplement (grades 3,5,7)
- New Mexico – Science 2003
- Tennessee – various updates by grade

Release 8 will also include the following new standard sets (since Release 7):

- Comprehensive Assessment System for Adult Students - CASAS
- Georgia Performance Standards
- Idaho K-12 Achievement Standards (2005)
- Kansas Curriculum Standards (2005)
- Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (2004)
- Maryland State Voluntary Curriculum
- Michigan Grade Level Expectations
- Minnesota Academic Standards (2003)
- South Carolina – Exit Exam
- Utah K-12 Core Curriculum (2003)
- Washington Grade Level Expectations
- West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (2003)
- Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (2003)

Enhanced Titles

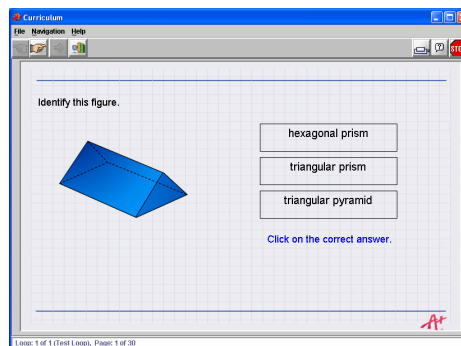
U.S. Geography

This title has been visually enhanced with a wide range of graphics and a new green background. Additional student interaction has been added. For example, when the student is reviewing the page on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, a map of the U.S. is presented, showing the general location of Philadelphia. In the newly enhanced title, the student can click on a button that will open a much more detailed map, providing a better context for the onscreen text.

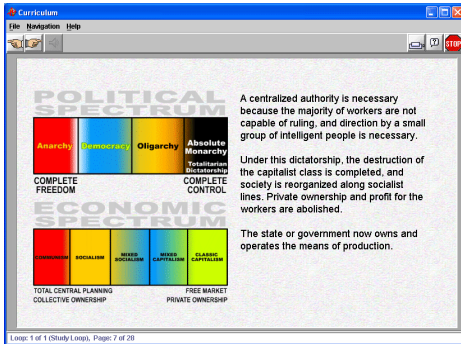
Pre-Algebra, Algebra II Parts 1 & 2, and Mathematics VIII

The four math titles have been upgraded in the following ways:

- All lessons have at least 30 questions, expanding the pool for tests and assessments.
- Special AEC math fonts are no longer required for these titles.
- Equations are handled through an external equation editor that generates graphic images for formulas. Equations used to require special fonts.
- Screen layouts and graphics have been updated and greatly improved.
- Editorial work has been done to enhance the presentation of content.
- All lesson pages are presented in a fixed size (800x600) and are automatically centered. This ensures that formulas will display properly, regardless of the workstation's screen resolution.



Economics



With many of the same enhancements found in the math modules above, the new *Economics* module is more engaging. The new charts and graphics add an additional layer to the content.

Video Clips Added to Existing Titles

Over 10 hours of video, in over 600 clips, have been added to existing Social Science, existing Science, and upcoming Literature lessons. The lessons use the *A+LS* Document Launcher to play the clips using the workstation's default Mpeg viewer. The Mpeg viewer can be one that shipped with the workstation's operating system or a third-party add-on. As long as the workstation can play standard Mpeg files (.MPG or .MPEG), it should play the ones in the *A+LS* lessons.

As with all full motion video, the *A+LS* video clips will run best when workstations are on a high speed local area network. The clips have been designed to be as resource efficient as possible by reducing each to about 4 megabytes. When the content of the video demands long segments, the video is broken into multiple 4 MB clips. This keeps a class full of students from all trying to download a single huge clip all at one time. A good example is the 20 minute segment describing the Periodic Table. That video was broken out into 10 network friendly clips.

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