ZOOMBINIS:

A *Visionary Blend* of *Creativity* and *Technology* in *Educational Gaming*

Long before *"computational thinking"* became a cornerstone of STEM education, a group of little blue creatures were training young minds in logic, pattern recognition, and problem-solving. Inspired by 1990s research on data literacy and visual exploration tools, Broderbund and TERC developed Logical Journey of the Zoombinis—a game that wasn't just fun but also established the foundations of algorithmic reasoning.

Released in 1996, Zoombinis was a breakout hit in the edutainment space, selling over half a million copies and spawning sequels. But its true legacy goes beyond sales numbers. Many fans recognize the game for igniting their passion for coding, AI, and data science, while educators—some even keeping outdated computers running just to preserve access—recognized its unique ability to teach logic through play.


Fast forward to the 21st century: as demand for computational thinking boomed,the Zoombinis were revived. TERC partnered with FableVision Studios and Learning Games Network to reimagine the game for modern platforms in 2015. Now, in collaboration with FableVision Games, Zoombinis is making its way into classrooms, backed by research proving its effectiveness as a teaching tool.

At a time when game-play is reshaping learning, Zoombinis remains a powerful example of how play and problem-solving can intersect—years ahead of its time and still shaping the future.

About the Partners Behind the Revival
TERC is a nonprofit made up of teams of math and science education, and research experts dedicated to innovation and creative problem-solving. At the forefront of theory and practice, TERC's work encompasses research, content and curriculum development, technology innovation, professional development, and program evaluation. Passionate about social justice, TERC strives to create level playing fields for all learners, reaching more than three million students every year. To learn more, visit *www.terc.edu.*

FableVision Studios creates award-winning games, animated films, museum kiosks, apps, websites, and more—helping to shape a more innovative and compassionate world.
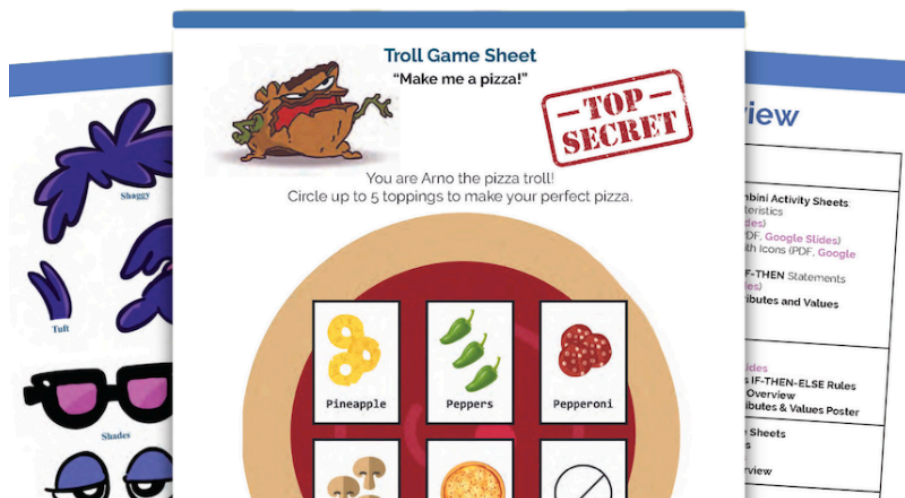
Their signature blend of positive messaging, storytelling, and interactive technologies is sought after by leading publishers, broadcasters, educational organizations, nonprofits, museums, and healthcare organizations. To learn more, visit *www.fablevisionstudios.com.*

By identifying and partnering with organizations that create, research, and distribute game-based learning tools, the Learning Games Network amplifies the impact of educational games and broadens access for learners of all ages. To learn more, visit *www.learninggamesnetwork.org.*

Zoombinis in the Classroom

Zoombinis, an educational game featuring twelve math-based logic puzzles with four levels of difficulty, serving as an engaging tool for developing essential computational thinking skills. By guiding the adorable blue beings through a series of challenges, students practice problem decomposition—breaking down complex tasks into manageable parts—as well as automation, where they predict and sequence order steps for efficient solutions. The game reinforces algorithmic thinking by encouraging players to search out and apply structured sets of instructions, while also honing their ability to interpret and utilize various forms of data representation. Additionally, Zoombinis fosters abstraction and formulation, helping students recognize patterns and develop generalizable problem-solving strategies. By encouraging learners to apply common algorithms across diverse scenarios, the game nurtures a strong foundation in logical reasoning, making it an innovative and effective resource for the modern classroom.

Zoombinis Clubs: Engaging After-School Learning Through Play

Zoombinis Clubs offer an exciting opportunity for after-school programs, informal learning spaces, and out-of-school-time initiatives to bring computational thinking to life. Designed to complement the beloved, research-based Zoombinis game, these clubs provide hands-on, offline activities that promote collaboration and problem-solving in a fun, engaging way.

With 10 hours of structured in-person programming alongside online gameplay, Zoombinis Clubs empower students in grades 3-7 to strengthen their math and logic skills while enjoying the game's timeless appeal.

The interactive activities include:
- **Make Your Own Zoombini** – Creative character design
- **Allergic Cliffs: Act It Out** – Understanding logical relationships
- **Pizza Pass: Organizing Data** – Sorting and categorization
- **Fleens: What's My Rule?** – Identifying patterns and rules
- **Captain Cajun's Ferryboat: Act It Out** – Sequencing and decision-making

Each club kit comes with a facilitator's guide, printable PDF resources, Google Slides presentations, and adaptable modifications for both small and large groups. Whether enhancing an existing program or launching a new learning initiative, Zoombinis Clubs provide a dynamic way to inspire curiosity, critical thinking, and collaboration in young learners.

For those interested in the educational impact of Zoombinis, several online platforms provide valuable insights, resources, and community engagement. The official TikTok Zoombinis page (*@zoombinisgame*) features gameplay tips, behind-the-scenes content, and creative ways to incorporate the game into learning. On Facebook (*@ZoombinisGame*) and Instagram (*@zoombinis_game*), educators, parents, and fans can stay connected, share experiences, and discover new ways to use Zoombinis for building computational thinking skills. The TERC Zoombinis website (*terc.edu/zoombinis/*)offers in-depth research, educator resources, and guidance for integrating the game into classrooms and after-school programs. Whether you're a longtime fan or new to the world of Zoombinis, these platforms offer fresh ideas, expert insights, and a vibrant community dedicated to learning through play.