

## “Scribblenauts”: Imagination Sensation

Written by Luke Hamilton

Wednesday, 07 October 2009 08:57

---

- [99.95\\$ Apple Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard Server cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Cheap Maxon Cinema 4D R11 Studio Bundle MAC](#)
- [Buy Cheap Altova SchemaAgent 2009](#)
- [Buy Cheap Infinite Skills - Learning FileMaker Pro 12](#)
- [Buy Cheap Adobe Creative Suite 6 Production Premium Student and Teacher Edition](#)

### MAC

- [Download Altova StyleVision Enterprise 2009](#)
- [Download Autodesk Alias Automotive 2012](#)
- [Buy OEM One Periodic Hand Off! 2](#)
- [Buy Cheap Macware Logo Design Studio Pro 1.5 MAC](#)
- [Buy OEM Hazel 3](#)
- [Discount - Autodesk Maya 2013 \(32-bit\)](#)



*Scribblenauts* for the Nintendo DS is a rare breed of game that can accurately be labeled "innovative." Most games set in stone the way you play and solve them, but *Scribblenauts* allows players to employ a tool that kids of all ages know how to use: imagination.

*Scribblenauts* is a puzzle game with more than 200 challenges based on the goal of capturing a trophy called a "starite." Some puzzles test logic -- such as helping a farmer pick animals for his barn -- while others are action-based, such as finding a way over a shark-filled lake. Type in words to create the items with which you want to solve the puzzle. The game's slogan is concise: "Write anything, solve everything."

Executing the idea of players dreaming up their own solutions to these puzzles would seem like a daunting task for a video game, especially with the Nintendo DS's smaller amount of storage space, but *Scribblenauts* surprises with more than 20,000 words in its vocabulary.

You don't need to worry about kids being naughty with the game, as vulgar language (such as George Carlin's "seven dirty words") and proper names (no Hitler appearances) don't work, and words are excluded that could be controversial.

## “Scribblenauts”: Imagination Sensation

Written by Luke Hamilton

Wednesday, 07 October 2009 08:57

---

Beyond that, items, people, and creatures react the way you would expect them to: Fire will melt ice; dropping a toaster into water electrifies everything in it; and vampires will run away from garlic. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

An early puzzle has a starite stuck in a tree. The first time I type in "ladder"; a ladder appears, and I place it in front of the tree, climb up, and grab the starite. The second time, "rock"; I pick it up and throw it at the starite, knocking it to the ground. "Beaver": The animal shows up and cuts down the tree. Curiosity made me put in "nuclear bomb," and a bomb appeared that destroyed everything. You type it, and it shows up in your game to be used or abused however you see fit. Every puzzle has dozens of ways that it can be solved, and the game rewards you for coming up with new solutions.

A spell-check feature will provide several options for what might be intended if words are misspelled. For words with multiple associations, the separate uses appear as well. (As it turns out, "dragon" could mean either the creature or a weapon.) Of course, some objects will appear with multiple words, such as "sword" and "Excalibur" bringing out identical blades. A minor personal gripe, but the overall concept in action is still amazing.

The ironic thing is that with so many options, I found it harder to come up with solutions from time to time. There are a fair number of times you'll find yourself using the same tricks over, such as using a jet pack, or typing "God" to summon a little man in white to save you from enemies.

A puzzle creator also allows players to build their own challenges that can be shared online, but it's time-consuming and tedious. To make a decent puzzle, you'll have to worry about every minor detail, such as where land is located, navigating switches, if you want item limits, etc. It's functional, but I would only recommend it to someone with lots of time.



The one nagging issue is controlling your character during gameplay. Everything is done by placing the stylus on the touch screen: Tap an item to use it, tap an enemy to attack it, and hold the stylus on one side of the screen to move left or right, with jumping being automatic.

## “Scribblenauts”: Imagination Sensation

Written by Luke Hamilton

Wednesday, 07 October 2009 08:57

---

The problem is that it's poorly done. Movement speed doesn't vary; it's nonstop dashing that can result in unintentional falls or running straight into an enemy and dying. Clustered spots of items turn disastrous when trying to sort through them. It's by no means a fault of the DS itself; stylus-only controls can work with games, as *Legend of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass* and the four *Ace Attorney* games have proved. This poor handling mars a game that is otherwise fantastic.

That aside, I've never played anything like this before, and I mean that in a good way. It's staggering to think that I'm playing a game where I can truly decide how it's played, and reshape it as I desire. I've spent hours just on the opening screen, typing words that pop to mind and seeing if they appear and what they do, whether it's an imaginary fight between a dragon and a knight, or trying relatively obscure words such as "guillotine" and "iron maiden" and watching in shock as they appear. The gameplay may frustrate, but the unstoppable power of imagination makes *Scribblenauts* worth so much more.

*Scribblenauts is available on Nintendo DS for \$29.95. For this review, the author played through a few dozen puzzles and worked with the puzzle-creator functions.*

*Luke Hamilton is a buyer, creative designer, and online coordinator for Video Games Etc. He can be reached at [ssj\\_4luke@hotmail.com](mailto:ssj_4luke@hotmail.com).*