SBC JOURNAL CLUB

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What is your favorite game?
What are games for?
“What games are, in the end, are teachers. Fun is just another word for learning.” Raph Koster
If games are teachers,

1) what do they teach?
2) what is gamification?
3) why use gamification?
“Playing a game is a form of PRACTICE for a real-life challenge.” Raph Koster
GAMES

Games teach survival skills:
Prediction
Strategy
How to examine and map the world around us

“Exploring conceptual spaces is critical to our success in life. Our brains have serious trouble grasping probability. Exploring a probability space is the only way to learn about it.” Raph Koster
Gamification for Behavior Change: Lessons from Developing a Social, Multiuser, Web-Tablet Based Prevention Game for Youths
GAMIFICATION

“The application of game design elements into existing processes and services in order to engage and motivate”

(Deterding, et al. 2011)
“Behavior change is not typically fun, And sometimes not voluntary.”
WHY GAMES FOR (middle school) YOUTH?

Brain and social development
Discovery & experimentation (social/prosocial)
Fun and challenge without unsafe behavior

“There is a growing recognition that the use of electronic media-based prevention programming may be a more efficacious and preferred delivery to reach today’s youths.” (p 199)
WHY GAMES FOR PREVENTION OR BEHAVIOR CHANGE?

Games teach us survival skills (Raph Koster)
Practice for real life
Teach about probability and risk
Allow for experimentation without consequence

Scenarios are typically used in prevention programming
What game design elements?

What are typical?

What was used in this game?
USED IN THIS GAME

A compelling narrative
Points / rewards ($)
Competition (team, rounds, multiple ways to win)
Social network / chat
Continuous feedback

Real-world challenge (interviewing)
ASPECTS OF GAME DESIGN

Content
Rules and gameplay
Storyline and
characters Settings
and guides

“Games require a compelling narrative where rules
and goals are clear and challenging, but
achievable.” (p 202)
DESIGNING A GAME REQUIRES

Process, collaboration, patience, iteration(s)

High quality user-research  Expertise
in visual design  Expertise in writing
(storytelling)

If digital, also requires tech expertise

May also require content area expertise
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

“Gamification is much more than a technical process of applying graphics, colors and animation. Game development involves the application of psycho- logical, social, behavioral, and cognitive science theories and principles from multiple disciplines. The specific theories, concepts, and research on which a behavior change project is based are quantified in the conceptual framework.” (p 206)

Theory of Planned Behavior
Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change
Persuasion Technology
Intrinsic motivators
Perceptual learning
CHALLENGES

Choosing the right framework
Making it fun and challenging
Multidisciplinary team, long development
Usability testing / evaluating efficacy
RESULTS

“Most of our test students preferred the game delivery format to all other prevention formats they had experienced.” (p 213)
DISCUSSION
GAME vs. GAMIFICATION

“A reward structure alone does not a game make.” Raph Koster

HAVE FUN

IMPROVE SKILLS

LEARN

ACHIEVE MASTERY

NON-GAME

ENGAGE

MOTIVATE

ATTRACT

STIMULATE

HAVE FUN
Design and gamification, essential reading

A Theory of Fun for Game Design, Raph Koster

Reality is Broken: Why Games Make us Better and How They Can Change the World, Jane McGonigal

Design for How People Learn, Julie Dirksen
+ Katrina Mitchell, Creative Director

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Thank you!