Learning Through Play, the Old School Way

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Learning Through Play, the Old School Way

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In Fall 2013 the author created a game to help students learn about information ethics based on the board game Candy Land. The purpose of the game was to make the topic more relatable and accessible to students. The game was designed to be fun, competitive, and encourage discussion. Elements of humor and sarcasm were included in the scenarios and questions to keep students engaged and entertained.

Case Study: Background

Old Dominion University (ODU) is a mid-size university, enrolling just under 25,000 students. As part of the general education requirements for undergraduate, ODU students are required to take an information literacy course. The information literacy courses are designed and offered by individual departments. In the College of Education, students often have multiple sections of STEM 251G (Computer Literacy: Communication & Information) to fulfill the requirement, and the Education Reference Librarian assists with the classes.

The Library component of the STEM 251G class includes two library instruction sessions for each section, one addressing information retrieval and resource evaluation, and the other addressing information ethics.

The Pilot

During the Fall of 2013 students were given extra credit for attendance at the information ethics workshop. If 2 sections of STEM 251G classes. The workshop was offered twice, on two different days and times. The students were divided into two sessions. Students played in groups of four or five. The author observed that students were very willing to discuss the scenarios with their group members and were passionate about sharing their thoughts. Students were engaged in the scenarios, asking questions about specific scenarios and expressing empathy at some of the answers.

The Second Episode

During the Spring of 2014, instructors required students in the five sections of the course to come to the information ethics workshop. A total of 101 students attended. The format of the game remained the same with some slight tweaking to specific questions and scenarios. Assessment was done by informal observation and by asking students to write down one thing that they learned about information ethics to be turned in at the end of class. The author observed that students were willing to talk openly about the issues. The immediate feedback provided through the game encouraged the students to engage in conversation with their instructor and with each other.

It’s Really Nothing New

Games hold much promise for teaching students how to conduct research and develop info lit skills (Kapp, et al., 2006, p. 396).

Students who are involved in the game tend to be engaged, more interactive, and more interested.

How Do We Compare? We Don’t!

Early literature does not have the time, skills or resources to create digital games that can compete with the games that Millennials play in their everyday lives. Non-digital games are more cost effective, are easier to implement and will address most of the learning outcomes of Millennials.

Millennials are the “ultimate consumers” (Stuck & Kovacs, 2005, p. 11).

Millennials are used to playing highly social, digital games created by companies (Barker, Glenn & Shell, 2013).

Time For Games!

• Games don’t have to take up a lot of time. Incorporating a short activity into a multiday lecture can help to keep students engaged.

2TE: Requiring students to play a game is a great way to address different learning styles and regain attention.

Time For Games!

• Education has been using games in the classroom for years, as many elements of games are based on well-established research in educational psychology (Kapp, 2012).

Smith (2007) created a two-minute educational, puzzle about Bruce.

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Lanterns at the University of Michigan redesigned their in-game course to include games with a student-centered approach (Alredick, 2010). For example, they gave students identifying from the beginning of class and had them write down questions about the topic. At the end of class, students were asked to answer the questions.

What Did Students Think?

• Filled the game format, it made it more interactive and encouraged social interaction. I love my group mates.

• It was fun to learn while playing. I liked it, even though some might think it’s childish.

• The game was a creative way to get the information across effectively, while keeping everyone’s attention.

• I thought the game format was very effective.

• Games were better in regards to interaction but made me feel like a preschool kid.

• More interesting than sitting through a lecture or slide show.

• I thought it made it more fun and made everyone be involved and interact. I liked it.

• Delightfully thought this was a good way to do this. It was a good reminder of what is right and wrong.

• I actually liked the game.

• It was a fun way to learn and interact with other classmates.

• Filled the game. It made learning fun and you can also collaborate with other people in your group.

What Did Students Learn?

• How to cite class notes

• Basics of paper

• Necessity of citation

• Copyright

• Ask for advice and information

• Many people don’t know copyright

• Copyright license

• About intellectual property

• You should have a copy of your paper to The Writing Center

• Can’t put copyrighted music to YouTube videos

• Don’t plagiarize.

• Copyright

• Borrowing knowledge is common

• Don’t use intellectual property

• I found out I’m not very ethical

• Perry Library has four floors

• I cannot freely use all the images I found in Google Images

• It is possible to cite a tattoo

• Happy Birthday is copyrighted

• It is hard to attack when friends are involved

• It’s illegal to use videos or images without the permission of the original author

References


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