Playing Games in School: Video Games and Simulations for Primary and Secondary Education

Citation metadata
Authors: Albert D. Ritzhaupt, Chris Frey, Nate Poling and Margeaux C. Johnson
Date: Apr. 2012
Publisher: IGI Global
Document Type: Book review
Length: 2,487 words

Main content

Article Preview:

Author(s): Albert D. Ritzhaupt, University of Florida, USA, Chris Frey, University of Florida, USA, Nate Poling, University of Florida, USA, Margeaux C. Johnson, University of Florida, USA
Playing Games in School: Video Games and Simulations for Primary and Secondary Education
Atsusi Hirumi
© 2011 by International Society for Technology in Education
450 pp.
$39.95
ISBN 978-1564842718

INTRODUCTION
Playing Games in School: Video Games and Simulations for Primary and Secondary Education (hence forth referred to as Playing Games in School) is an edited book by Atsusi Hirumi, an associate professor at the University of Central Florida. The book has four sections with 18 chapter contributions from 23 education professionals ranging from college professors to educational game designers. As the text is organized into four sections, this book review will focus on each section.

WHY PLAY GAMES?

Playing Games in School starts with a book chapter written by Marc Prensky on the topic of why games are helpful tools for educating 21st century students. According to Prensky, we are developing students for an industrial world, one that no longer exists. He concludes his chapter by providing recommendations to game designers on how to develop complex and engaging games for our students.

Written by Anothony Betrus and Luca Botturi, Chapter 2 changes the direction of the dialog by providing sound reasons why games should be integrated into the fabric of our educational enterprises. In particular, the chapter touts the advantages of increased motivation, complex understanding, reflective learning, and feedback and self-regulation. In contrast, the disadvantages include subversion of rules, games taking time, loss of teacher control, traditional learning may now seem dull, and learners may be accustomed to professional game media.

Tom Atkinson and Atsusi Hirumi provide an interesting and different take on games in Chapter 3, which focuses on describing the learning process as a function of brain activity. Though the chapter seems a little out of place, it places a special emphasis on how interacting with games stimulates the brain or what Atkinson and Hirumi call the neuroscience of game-based learning. Key concepts are outlined and discussed, including repetition, emotion, and attention.

The final Chapter in Why Play Games? is the shortest, but perhaps, the most relevant chapter of this section. Chapter 4, written by J. V. Bolkan, focuses on connecting the National Educational Technology Standards for Students to principles of game play. The chapter embraces teaching strategies and tips that can be employed to integrate games in formal educational settings. For instance, to engender Communication and Collaboration, Bolkan suggests grouping students based on ability levels to help share game strategies. A follow up activity would be asking the students to report on strategies that their group used to beat the game in an effort to articulate complex subject-matter.

The first section of Playing Games in School sets the stage for the remainder of the text. Prensky does a great job of making the case for games in schools and rightly deserves the first chapter. Betrus and Botturi provide some general advantages and disadvantages...
Games and simulations can create local contexts that can similarly engage learners, whether at home, in school, or in after-school programs. At the same time, however, research has shown that the surrounding context can significantly shape how a learner interacts with a simulation or game and the extent to which this interaction supports science learning (Linn et al., 2010). Perhaps the most important psychological difference between using a simulation or game at school or college and using it informally is motivation. 

Share Cite. Suggested Citation:“3 Simulations and Games in the CI Game: Split students into small groups and ask them to note down the categories on their pieces of paper. Choose a letter (A-Z) at random and give students 1-2 minutes (depending on how many categories) to think of a word for each category, beginning with that letter. Once the time is up, allocate points for unique answers, i.e. if two teams write down the same word for a category then neither get any points. Alternative: With small classes you could play in one large group, however shy students may find this intimidating because of the pressure to give correct answers. 8. Pictionary. Try out these exciting classroom games with your students and encourage them to apply their knowledge in new ways. These simple but effective group games are a great addition to any lesson plan. Using video games to teach children promises a meaningful advance in education according to UCF experts, but many schools aren't embracing the technology. Here's why. But she's considering making educational games in the future to touch kids' lives and change their attitudes toward school. “I have a 13-year-old brother, and I know the struggle of getting him to learn something,” she says. “Every time I ask him, he's doing video games, not doing his homework.” “There’s no doubt in my mind we have to make education more engaging,” says Hirumi. “Hollywood is going to continue, and the gaming industry is going to continue, and those are competitors for our children's time.” video games have a pernicious influence on players, there is no scientific evidence to human psyche, and had begun to examine links between playing video games and the complex socializing processes that, in contemporary societies, young people engage in. So video games, like any other technological device, are simply media through which. This page includes some history of video games being used as an additional or alternative method to traditional education. This page presents why using video games are beneficial to use for educational purposes in the classroom as well as the limitations. This page additionally discusses how learning from video games outside the classroom is possible as well.