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## Games for Learning: Are Schools Ready for What's to Come?

Becker, Katrin; Jacobsen, Michelle

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Katrin Becker & Michele Jacobsen, Games for Learning: Are Schools Ready for What's to Come? DiGRA 2005 2nd International Conference, "Changing Views: Worlds in Play" Vancouver, B.C. June 16-20, 2005.

<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/46705>

conference proceedings

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# Games for Learning

Are Schools Ready for  
What's to Come?

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# A Study with Teachers

How are teachers using technology in school?

Who is using games in school?

What's stopping them?

What's helping them?



# Demographics of Study

- Calgary, Alberta (Canada) & surrounding area.
- 4 Public School Districts (~80% urban : 20% rural).
- Online \*only\*.
- K-12 = kindergarten(ECS) - grade 12 (~ages 5-18).



# Response

- 109 respondents
- Mostly full-time teachers. (89%)
- 5-10 years' teaching 34%
- >20 years teaching 23%
- Class size: 20-35: 80%
- N students: 25-50 18%,  
>100 46%



# Computer use

- By teachers:
  - 5-10 hr/week 25%
  - 10-25 hr/week 44%
- In class:
  - Simulations & games: 70%
  - Games for learning: 53%



# Willingness to try

- Educational downloads: 73%
- Sims: 69%
- Edutainment: 51%
- COTS: 37%
- Custom Games: 38%



# Facilitators for use of games:

1. Students (55%)
2. Self (55%)
3. Professional Development: (53%)
4. Colleague (49%)
5. IT Specialist (46%)
6. Outside friend (43%)





# Top 10 Barriers

1. Lack of time (81%)
2. Access to computers (72%)
3. Have no games (72%)
4. Not a priority for school (70%)
5. Lack of knowledge to integrate (68%)
6. Not in curriculum documents (67%)
7. Lack of teacher training (66%)
8. Access to computers for students (62%)
9. Lack of technical support (59%)
10. Arranging access to training (55%)



# \*NOT\* connected:

- Teachers' own gaming habits
  - Access to computers
- & willingness to try games in class.



# Was it Worth it?

- Pilot study.
- Identified potential stumbling blocks to adoption & acceptance.
- Need more studies, here & elsewhere.
- Include paper surveys.
- Include incentives to respond.



# What did we learn?

- Primary barriers:
- Access
- Support
- Time  
(not really a surprise, but now there's data)



# What do we need?

- Make it easy for teachers to try games.
- Willingness to try does seem linked to having tried.



# Games as Apparatus

Would we hand these items to teachers with no further explanations, guidance or support?

- Beaker, baking soda, vinegar, salt
- Flat tray, scalpel, pin, frog



# Games as Learning Spaces

- Is it reasonable to send a teacher & his (her) kids on a trip into the woods/park/city with no explanation, guidance or support?



# The Final Barrier

"As a parent I object to having my child "play" on the computer when he has completed some piece of work. I want my kids working at school....My students come to school to learn not to be entertained.

Would you want your university profs. entertaining you?"





**YES!!**

**But not exclusively.**

**Thank You**

