

**TOWN AND  
COUNTRY  
LEARNING  
CENTER  
WINTER 2009**

**Computer Games**

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**Fieldnote**

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**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Javier Gonzalez](#) <jjgonzal@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 06 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 06 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (om; no taskcard)

**General:**

Minus Mission (in Gamequarium)

SpongeBob: Reef Rumble

**Narrative:**

From working with a number of these kids on their math homework, I've noticed that many of them have problems subtracting. Minus Mission in Gamequarium seems like a great subtraction game because it makes you think and act quickly. It really pushes the student to apply their subtraction skills. However, although it's a great game, I think that it may still be too hard for most of the kids who still have to use their fingers and other slower methods to help them subtract. I still think this game could keep them sharp and prove to be beneficial in the long run.

On the other hand, SpongeBob: Reef Rumble in the Nick games website is as far away from an educational game as you can get. Unfortunately, it's a pretty fun game and most of the kids love it because all you do is constantly click the mouse or push buttons to beat opponents up. I'm not sure how we can really make this game seem educational.

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

Minus Mission is a great game to help kids keep their subtracting abilities sharp once they already have a certain foundation in subtraction. Although it may seem advanced for some, you can still make adjustments to the speed and difficulty, so I'm sure it can be compatible/beneficial for everyone.

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It seems really difficult to make the SpongeBob game educational. But since a lot of the children love it, maybe you could have them play one round or something like that, then have them move on to another, more productive game.

**Other Conferences**

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- (0) [Tech Problems](#)
- (2) [Comp/Game Info](#)
- (4) [FINAL PROJECT PLAN](#)

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](#) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 07 February 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

Sounds like minus mission would be better for older kids to review subtraction rather than the kids still struggling with it?

Hmm good note about Spongebob, I'm wondering if the other games on Nick are like it.

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](#) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 09 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 16 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

**General:**

Playing with Ashia on the computers at Town and Country, I have noticed that she prefers to go on the Nick Jr. website. She also wants to play Dora games, so I decided to check some of the Dora-themed games.

**Narrative:**

Dora and the Lost Valentine

Dora's goal is to pass through 2 levels within a Valentine's Day themed forest in order to find a missing Valentine's Day card for her sidekick, Boots. This game encourages children to discover patterns within a set group of colors at the first level: Be Mine Vines. When one of the colors is missing, the child figures which color would be next in order for Dora to swing through to the next set of Vines. Level 2: Think Pink Lake challenges the child to count the number of frogs on a lily pad and choose the correct number for the amount of frogs the child sees. When the correct answer is given, Dora jumps to the next lily pad, leading to the last level of the game. In the last level, a bunch of flying hearts of different sizes flutter across the screen. The child must distinguish the Valentine's Day card intended for Boots amongst the flying hearts, similar to a "Where's Waldo?" activity.

This game is ideal for children who are 5 years of age or younger. The

tasks are fairly simple and provide exercises for children who are learning the basics of colors and numbers. While the main character, Dora, attracts more of a female crowd, her sidekick, Boots, does give some attention to male participants.

#### Swiper the Explorer

In this game, Swiper the Explorer's robot butterflies and caterpillars have stolen toys at three different locations. The object of the game is to collect the toys throughout the levels and obtain the remote control (found at the end of the level) to turn off the robots.

To play the game, you could either use the cursor or the left, right, and spacebar keys. I found that using the keys works better (and faster) than the cursor (which sometimes lags or doesn't catch on to where you are going). Basically, you look through the levels and collect all the toys by touching them with Swiper's body. (Think Mario Brothers games where they collect coins.) There are lots of toys to collect, and you have to jump up branches, etc. to get the ones high up. You also have to look carefully because you may miss some, but no matter how many toys you collect, you will get the remote once you reach the end of a level.

This game is ideal for children who are 5 years old or younger. It isn't a very challenging game and could get really boring unless the child is set on getting to the end of the game. The only thing that a child will get out of this game is how to use the keys (right, left, and spacebar), but other than that, there isn't much educational value. This game is definitely for entertainment purposes.

#### **Game-task Level Summary:**

#### **Reflection:**

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Mona Lisa Manio](#) <mmanio@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 09 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 21 February 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

#### **Kids:**

#### **Activities:**

computer games (120m; no taskcard)

#### **General:**

#### **Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

Since I missed last week, I did two hours of computer games. I went on Interactive Websites, which is for K-12 grade. Under social science, I looked through Archiving Early America. This section had stories about the people who have been vital in American history, such as Ben Franklin, George Washington, and Pual Revere. They had videos of their life history, as well as providing links to read in more depth on their autobiography and why/how they are important individuals. Afterward, there are quizzes that cover things like The Colonial Period, Revolutionary War, and the Constitution. It even had documents like the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence available to read.

This site is great for the kids especially when they have a history tests to refer back to. They could use this site to either add to what they already learned in class or to help clarify something they did not understand. I think having the videos, quizzes, and copies of the important documents in American history make it more interesting for the kids, when history could sometimes be considered as boring or "old."

The next hour, I went to the science section of the Interactive Website. Under Zoom: Kitchen Chemistry, the site provided experiments kids could try. For example, one experiment was called Cabbage Juice Indicator. Also, the site had a virtual kitchen, which you are given a challenge then go to the kitchen and look for the clues to help you solve the challenge. Other than the experiments they gave so that kids could try at home, the virtual kitchen was not educational at all. I did not understand the point to the challenge and looking for the clues and understanding what to do after you found the clues was a bit confusing.

**Reflection:**

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](mailto:rcody@weber.ucsd.edu) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 24 February 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

So perhaps pairing the history game with relevant homework in addition to review. Was it for K-12? Or would you say it was aimed at a certain age group -i.e. would kindergarteners be as interested as a fifth grader?

A resource called Kitchen Chemistry!

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](mailto:rchavez@ucsd.edu) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 11 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 16 February 2009

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**Kids:****Activities:****General:**

This game caught my interest immediately because I wanted to find more information about the eye catching title. I have heard the controversy about Pluto no longer being a planet in our solar system, but I didn't know the facts as to how this phenomenon came about. This game encourages children to play two characters dressed in space suits who explore the planets in our solar system. Throughout their journey, the characters uncover interesting facts and information that explore the marvel of why Pluto is no longer considered a planet in our solar system.

**Narrative:**

The game starts off on planet earth when they teach you the basic moves of how to control the characters. The keys are simple: left, right and up arrows control the characters movements. The A and Z keys control the gravitation of blocks the characters overcome during their journey. The blocks sometimes create puzzles that must be configured in particular variations in order to proceed to the next level. The game takes on a clever relation to the gravitation of the blocks with how gravity on earth affects different objects and people. For example, before a new skill is taught such as how to control the gravitation of the blocks, a fact bubble teaches the child basic information about gravity and how it corresponds differently to various things on earth. It was interesting to see how the correlation between the fact bubbles, teaching the movements and learning an interesting space fact all come together while playing this game.

After completing planet Earth, you move on to a different planet such as Mercury, Venus and so forth. Before going to the next planet, the game provides different hypotheses you must challenge as possible reasons why Pluto is no longer a planet. For example, one hypothesis was Pluto does not have an atmosphere and uncovering that Mercury does not have an atmosphere but is still considered a planet proves that particular hypothesis false.

**Game-task Level Summary:****Reflection:**

I would recommend this game for children at the center who are 8 years of age and older. It does take particular hand and eye coordination to control the character using the various keys. Some keys must be used simultaneously that made it even difficult for me at times. The character can be switched from a boy astronaut with a monkey to a girl astronaut that would attract both male and female players. I did find that the jobs to be a bit sexist, as some of them were specific to the gender of the

astronaut. The boy astronaut was given the ability to move blocks, but the girl astronaut was not. You had to switch between the characters to proceed to the next level.

I definitely want to try and play this game with Damage so that he could learn more information/facts about the solar system and its planets, especially the intriguing Pluto.

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](#) <[rchavez@ucsd.edu](mailto:rchavez@ucsd.edu)>

**Date of Visit:** 13 March 2009

**Date Filed:** 16 March 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Nickalodeon games (60m; no taskcard)

Internet Games (60m; no taskcard)

**General:**

\*I played four games to total the amount of time for Weeks 9 and 10.

**Funschool: Mad Moves**

For this game, you get to choose a dancer that you want to be. From there, there are arrows that are moving down on the right-hand side to an area that is highlighted. When the arrows reach the highlighted area, you have to press the arrow key that is associated with it (up, down, left, right). This makes your dancer do various moves.

Once you have completed the game, you are given a score from three judges, like American Idol. You get a score out of a thousand points, and you move on to the next round.

This game would be entertaining for children ages 6 to 8. However, they would probably get bored easily since you just press the arrow keys. There is nothing educational to this game, except learning how to familiarize oneself with the arrow keys. The graphics to the game are fairly appealing, and the dance moves are interesting, which probably would make the kids laugh.

**Narrative:**

Nickelodeon Games: True Jackson: Fashionista Fix

In this game, you are helping True Jackson with her fashion line. She has to ask her colleagues to bring her items that she needs to get her fashion line done on time. You have to look at the items that she wants and

match it with her colleague that is wearing the color she is asking for. Then you need to find the item that she wants, which is hidden in the background of the game.

I think this game is fun and an attention holder. You have to get ten outfits made, and I played this game a couple of times to keep getting eight out of ten outfits. Since the game is called Fashionista Fix, this game would appeal to more girls than boys. The game is also challenging and entertaining because there is a time limit and you can play with friends to see who gets the higher score.

I think this game would be fun for children ages 7 to 10. This game is just a scavenger hunt, and after you find an item that she needs, everything gets moved around so you can't simply remember where everything is and you have to keep looking. This will probably keep the kids from getting bored of the game and makes it more exciting. However, there is nothing educational to the game except for associating colors and being quick to find items.

If you want to play the game again so you can move on to the next level, there is a thousand point penalty. This might make the children disinterested in the game because you lose points if you don't do well. However, the penalty could also allow kids to work together to pass a level and move on with the game. I think the kids would have more fun playing this game with a friend because they can learn how to work in a group.

Perhaps Dalejah and some of the other Ladybugs would like to play this game. I remember Dalejah wrote that she wanted to be a fashion designer in a game that asked you to list occupations that you wanted to be for you dream life (I think this was a Bratz game).

### **Game-task Level Summary:**

Nickelodeon Games: iCarly: Pak Rat

This game is like Pac Man. You are a mouse and you have to eat all the cheese in the maze. However, there are cats chasing you, and if the cats get to you, it is game over. You have four chances to get all the cheese from the maze. When you eat the large cheese, all the cats turn white and then you can go through them so that you won't lose a turn. This is also a two-player game so the children can play with one another.

This game would be great for children ages 7 to 10. This game was entertaining, and the kids would probably not get bored playing it. However, there is nothing educational to this game, especially since you are just using the arrow keys. I guess if the kids would like a break from their homework, they could play a quick game of this as a distraction.

**Reflection:**

Nick Junior Games: La Casa de Dora

In this game you are exploring Dora's house. Just like the show, it is in Spanish and English. When you go into her house, she tells you about each room and what you can play in there. When you click on items in the room, they move and she discusses some of the items. For instance, with a picture of her friend, Dora states their name and something about them.

First is the living room where her mom is sitting at the computer, and if you click on her, she says, "Hi!" There is also a box of musical instruments. When you click on the box, a screen will pop out and six instruments show up. Under each instrument there is numbers 1 through 4 which determines the speed of the instrument and you can make you own music. If you stay in the room and do nothing, there are little stars that pop out from the chair and the pictures. If you click on the star, Dora will say, "Good star catching!"

In Dora's room you can play bingo, dress up, and counting. Bingo is on her table and you get a card and she picks cards with pictures on it out of a box and with matches it with your card. There are two different games, but they are all single player so the kids can't play bingo together. When you click on her closet, you can play dress up with her. You change her clothes, shoes, and accessories. She has ten outfits she can change into. When you are happy with her outfit, you click "Done", and a camera pops out and you can take a picture of it and print it out. There is also star catching in her room.

In the kitchen you meet her dad, and if you click on him, you can help him cook. A cookbook pops out, and there are 10 recipes you can pick from to make. When you have picked the recipe you want to make, you have to get all the ingredients you need to make your recipe. There are things in the counter, pantry, and refrigerator. Once you have everything, her dad bakes it. The only activities you can do in the kitchen are cook and catch stars.

In the garden, Dora's puppy joins her and you can plant in the garden. You can pick from twelve different seeds to put in six different pots. Then you have to water them and put "magic growing dust" on the six pots to grow the six seeds that you planted. When the fruit or flower grows out, you have finished the game and you can take a picture and print it. The garden does not have star catching.

This game is appropriate for children ages 3 to 5. I think Ashia and Jatoria might like this game, especially since Ashia loves Dora. It is educational because they can learn some Spanish words. This game will keep them occupied for sometime because there is so much to do in each room. If you get bored in one room, you can always move on to the next room. I thought this was an entertaining game to play because there

were lots to do and it definitely kept my attention. You can try on all the clothes, play all the instruments, make all the recipes, and plant all the flowers. The games are similar to the show since it says words in Spanish, which the children might enjoy.

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](#) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 18 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 22 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Where in the USA is Carmen San Diego? (60m; no taskcard)

**General:**

I have played this game with Nunnie before and a few past instances, but I wanted to play it again to refresh my memory on the game and to see if there were any tips or tricks I have missed.

**Narrative:**

For each case that you play, you basically ask various characters how a suspect looks, where they went, and then say “thank you”. Then based on what they say, you travel to the state to proceed and speak to other characters. Also, from the descriptions of the suspect (gender, height, weight, article they are wearing), you must create a warrant so once you get to the state where the suspect is at, you can arrest him/her. After you capture the suspect, you can solve more cases to move up levels, such as Rookie to Investigators.

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

I think this game is intended for Nunnie’s age with the help of a buddy, but I think it would also be good for 9-year-olds and older. An atlas/map of the United States would definitely be helpful when playing this game. After playing it again, I didn’t find any tips/tricks that I didn’t already know about. I found it helpful to save the descriptions characters give you on your notepad just in case you do need it for later. I also enjoyed playing the infostations (television sets with an “I” on it) as it provided interesting facts about various states. I’m not sure what you win for getting these correct, but the real question is how to get the children to answer these questions. When I played this with Nunnie, she skipped through them and I suggested that we answer them, but she didn’t want

to. I enjoyed playing this game, and hopefully, some of the kids will want to play it soon.

Perhaps we could also provide a blank map to the child so they could fill in the states they visit. Maybe once they visit all 50 states and capture a certain number of suspects, they can earn a fun prize. This could create an incentive for more children to play these educational games.

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Mona Lisa Manio](#) <mmanio@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 19 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 21 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (40m; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

I went to Discovery Education. The site had tabs for elementary and middle school students. Both stressed science related topics and labs. One example that was given was a virtual lab where you are given a scenario (i.e. fishes in a pond are dying, but in a near by pond, the fishes remain healthy even though both ponds receive the same rain and are the same size). The mission is to figure out why or how this is the case by looking at the pH levels or alkaline levels to see if it is too acidic or basic. They provide a pH reader and you drag it to the water solution taken from both ponds and test it out. This is great for kids 7-11 years old.

They could have offered more topics other than solely scientific research base. I thought since this was a Discovery website, it would have other topics, such as information of different animal kingdoms to offer choices for the kids.

**Reflection:**

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Javier Gonzalez](#) <jjgonzal@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 20 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 20 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Typing (om; no taskcard)

**General:**

I just wanted to suggest the possible addition of another typing game that I used to enjoy playing in elementary school. I've noticed that many of the kids enjoy Nintendo, and Super Mario in particular. Even though it's kind of an old game, Mario Teaches Typing is a fun and very fundamental game that could keep the children entertained while teaching them to type properly. I think this game could attract and hold more attention than Mavis Beacon.

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Kathryn Green](#) <kegreen@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 21 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 21 January 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Zoombinis (30m; no taskcard)

Learning Upgrade (30m; no taskcard)

**General:**

I worked on Learning Upgrade today for 30 minutes. It's really easy to use. Once you log in, you can go as either the student or the teacher. If you log in as the teacher, you can adjust the level of the student when you click on "edit". Prof Mike said that you should just do a level (if they're not set on one already) and then go from there. So if it's really easy for them, maybe go up like 5 levels, but if it's a little too hard, go down a level or two. It's a very animated program. It also takes a while to get to the interactive part because they explain the basics of the math or reading concepts you're about to do. Hopefully you can keep their attention long enough to keep them seated. Maybe ask them what they're learning in school.

I played Zoombinis for the other 30 minutes. I used to play that game when I was a lot younger, so it brought back some fond memories. It's still challenging! It requires the use of logic. You have to use the process of elimination. It's a very fun game though. I recommend trying it out at least once. There are no levels. You just go through an animated board game. I think it gets a little harder as you go.  
 A little tip: Make two of each Zoombini (twins) when you're creating them. It eliminates half the guessing later.

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](mailto:rcody@weber.ucsd.edu) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 23 January 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

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Great note and advice on the games! From what I hear, there is a box of "Task cards" near the computers in the conference room. There should be a task card for zoombinis that give a sense of "beginning, good, advanced" levels the kids can aim for.

Thanks for the note - some great advice in there!

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Mona Lisa Manio](mailto:mmanio@ucsd.edu) <mmanio@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 22 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 26 January 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (40m; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

I went on the PBS Kids site where I played Power Words Story. In this game, you choose a cartoon character, which will then tell a story. Once you choose the character, an announcer tells you a story through a short movie clip. The clip shows a situation the character(s) are in (for example, wonderwoman is stuck in the mouse trap) and then it gives a

list of vocabulary words, which you choose from to help the character get out of the situation (for example, if wonderwoman is stuck in the mouse trap, what action do you need to do to free her? You are given words like release, drop, or clamp). You choose from one of the options (the correct answer is release the mouse trap to free wonderwoman). After choosing the correct word, the clip shows her being released.

**Reflection:**

I think this game is suited for four to six-year-olds. It was very interactive, entertaining (with the short movie clip), and educational especially for young kids just beginning to learn vocabulary. If you place the mouse on a word from the list of words they give you, the announcer actually pronounces it for you. I think this is a great way for the kids to correctly learn how to say certain words rather than trying to pronounce it and thinking they are right. However, if it was possible, I would like to have the definition available for the kids. For example, if the mouse was placed on the word, it would open a small window to the side and give a definition of the word.

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](mailto:rcody@weber.ucsd.edu) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 07 February 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

Sounds like a really fun game for the younger kids. Maybe even up into the 7 year olds depending on their reading ability.

Good suggestion about the game, maybe we can make up for the lack by having a website open next to it where we search for the words!

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](mailto:rchavez@ucsd.edu) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 23 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 28 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Internet Games (om; no taskcard)

**General:**

Baby Animal Memory

The object of this game is to quickly match picture cards of drawn baby animals. You have to find 6 pairs in 60 seconds. It is a memory game. Once you beat the game, the screen shows “Good job! Way to go! You’ve got a great animal memory,” as the reward for finding all the pairs. The game is easy to play as you click on the card to flip over and match with

others. Once the card has been matched, it stays with the animal side up.

This game is appropriate for three to five-year-olds. The drawn animals would appeal to girls more so than it would to boys. The game is intriguing because you want to see the pictures of the animals, especially since the koala when you enter the game is adorable. If the child plays again, the same kinds of cards are used but in a different order. Because of this, the child would then find the game boring and become disinterested.

**Narrative:**

Crittercam: Africa Adventure

For this game, you have to record video data of lions on the plateaus of northern Kenya with a Crittercam on a vehicle. To control the vehicle (speed and direction), you use the arrow keys. You are also given a fuel and damage meter. If you run out of fuel, the game is over. In addition, if the damage meter reaches its capacity, then it is game over. Lastly, you are given a VHF radio signal to detect if lions are nearby. Once you have detected a lion, you must carefully approach the lion and record a video sequence by hitting the video station button. The goal is to tape 9 video sequences before fuel runs out and the vehicle is not too damaged.

This game is intended for eight to twelve-year-old girls and boys. However, I think the game would appeal to boys more so than girls because of the kind of vehicle that is used. Even when you click to play the game, a silhouette of a male “Indiana Jones” is shown which would more likely appeal to boys.

Using the arrow keys, the vehicle is difficult to maneuver, especially since there are many bushes and blocks along the way to finding the lions. I played multiple times, but I couldn’t seem to control the vehicle well and could not find/get to the lions, even with the help of the VHF radio signal. I kept getting a game over because I reached the damage meter capacity and did not even get a chance to record a video sequence in the time that I played this game. I think the difficulty in maneuvering the vehicle through the terrain could discourage the children from playing. However, the goal to record video sequences of lions may also counteract their discouragement and make them want to play and discover what happens. I definitely kept trying, but after many attempts, I got frustrated with the way I could not control the vehicle and get to the lions.

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Hannah Brace-Thompson](#) <hbraceth@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 23 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 23 January 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (om; no taskcard)

**General:**

I focused on the multiplication games today, including: Math Models, Flight of the Knight, Egg Static, Disco Dino, and Beach Rush.

Math Models was fun. I think that only the younger girls, maybe into middle school, would respond to it. It goes quickly enough to not be boring and then you get to dress up the models after you answer questions.

Flight of the Knight was ok. The timer to answer the questions was only five seconds, which i think is way too fast for the younger kids and then it went too slowly after you got the question correct: the knight was flung over to the castle then has to raise the flag and then leave, and it was the same each time so it got kind of boring. Also, you had to answer 50 questions to finish and there was no game after you answered the questions.

Egg Static went way to fast. It was hard to read the numbers on the falling eggs, much less process whether they were the numbers you were looking for. this would be a game for older kids. It was fun that you got to control the person catching the eggs with the arrow keys but the eggs dropped too fast and I felt like there was definitely not enough time to catch them all. I didn't like this game.

Disco Dino was fun and seems appropriate for younger kids. It went fast enough, there was no timer, it was colorful and had cute music. i think the kids would really like the fact that you get to make the dinosaur dance at the end, he even does some break-dance moves.

Beach Rush was my favorite and would probably be really good for late elementary/early middle school boys because it was very similar to the original super mario brothers game. There were just enough questions so

they wouldn't get bored and then you got to play the game. You can even type in your name for the high score. I'll definitely use this game at the site!

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](mailto:rcody@weber.ucsd.edu) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 23 January 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

Great notes! Could you add a sentence or two about what each game was about? I really like that you've gone into what age group would benefit from the games the most. I'm kind of confused on what kind of math is covered though in each. Is models involving characters or something that the kids create?

Maybe we can use the faster games for the kids who are reviewing those math topics rather than learning them.

Thank you for the note!

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](mailto:rchavez@ucsd.edu) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 24 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 25 January 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Internet Games (60m; no taskcard)

**General:**

Addition, Subtraction, Division: Dino Disco (Addition)

When you start Disco Dino, you can choose the level you want to play (0-9), or you can choose to move through levels (1-4, 2-7, or 2-9). After, you click the sum of the addition problem shown at the top of the page. Once you have completed a series of problems, the Disco Dino shows you a dance move that you have "earned", such as "The Kick Off" and "The Jump Up".

The music is pretty cheesy, and the graphics are not exciting. This game is meant for those just starting addition problems. I don't think the children will like this game as the dance moves that are revealed are not exciting since Disco Dino simply kicks his foot up or jumps up and down.

**Addition, Subtraction, Division: Jungle Jim and the Division Fish (Division)**

When you begin this game, you choose what fact you want to practice. When the game starts, the division problem is on the bottom right-hand corner and fish as the possible answers swim quickly by. You basically click on the correct answer.

This game is for those in elementary who are starting to learn division. However, I do not think the children will enjoy this game either because the game ends by saying, "Great Job! Choose another fact to practice."

**True Jackson V.P. Jewel Jumble**

For this game, you can choose "Classic" or "Enhanced". I chose "Classic". For this game, you have to align three jewels of the same color to make them disappear and receive points as well as increase the time you have to play the game. To align the jewels, you have to click on the jewels you want to switch. The more points you earn, you move up a level. If you shuffle the jewels and have over 1000 points, you lose 1000 points. This game was really fun. It reminds me of Tetris. I think this game is suitable for middle school girls and the fourth/fifth grade girls. I think the girls would be the only one to play this since you have to match jewels to help True Jackson make bracelets. Also, this game is fun because it has recent pop/rock music playing in the background. Lastly, this game would be fun for the girls because it unlocks secret SpongeBob SquarePants mini games. There is also the possibility for you to earn the highest score and have your name displayed on the website.

I was addicted to this game that I didn't want to leave. I think this will be a great game for the girls, but I also think it can lead to problems as it isn't a good game to work in pairs since there is only one mouse to click with and the time is clicking away.

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](mailto:rchavez@ucsd.edu) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 25 January 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

My Date of Visit is actually 23 January 2009.

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Mona Lisa Manio](mailto:mmanio@ucsd.edu) <mmanio@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 26 February 2009

**Date Filed:** 04 March 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Computer Activities (0m; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

Professor Mike asked me to look up free algebra I and II math games online for the kids at site, especially the middle age kids. I sent him an email with a brief summary of what I found.

In total, I found two sites that I think will keep their attention and that they would enjoy.

1) mathbits.com

On this site, you are given a question. You have to answer each question before you can go on to the next. After you've solved all the problems, you can print out a certificate that says you've finished the task.

-positive: being able to print out a certificate to show you've accomplished the task will help their self-esteem and make them feel like they did something.

-negative: if they don't know how to solve one question, then they can't go on to the next, so they may feel frustrated and not want to continue.

2) coolmath.com

Jeff suggested this to me. What I like about this site is that before you are given a set of questions, there is a one-page summary of the topic, which will help you refresh your memory and answer the question.

**Reflection:**

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Ronelyn Chavez](#) <rchavez@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 26 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 02 February 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

Internet Games (60m; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

iCarly: Sushi Madness

The object of this game is to make as many sushi rolls as you can for Carly, Sam, and Freddie to earn points. First, an order is placed by one of the characters, usually an egg sushi, then the text disappears as you must remember who ordered what. From there, you basically follow the directions on screen (prepare the main filling, prepare the vegetables, place the algae, place the rice, place the main filling, pour the sauce, and roll and cut the sushi, etc.). To cut the vegetables, the main filling, and the sushi, you click on the red highlighted circles. To place the rice and the main filling and pour the sauce, you click and trace the arrow that is shown. Once you have made the sushi, you must serve it to the correct person. There is a time limit, so you have to be quick or it skips to the next order.

I found this game a bit difficult, especially for a child, because you have to be fast. This game might be fun for the older elementary school kids, but I don't think there is any educational value to this game. You simply have to click on things and trace arrows, so if the child is trying to hone his/her computer mouse skills, this game might be useful. Other than that, the game was kind of fun because you want to see what other sushi you can make or how much sushi you can make in a couple of minutes. Another thing that I like about this game is that it gives you recipes to make sushi at home.

iCarly: Cafeteria Recyclo-Rama

For this game, you simply match the colored tray with trash on it to its matching recycling bin to earn points. You press the spacebar to dump the trash into the bin. Then you release the spacebar to return the empty tray to Carly's classmate. You can move the up/down/right/left keys to move and speed Carly up as time is ticking. If you fail to return an empty tray to your classmate or drop trash, you lose a life (you get three lives).

This game is fun as you are racing against the clock to recycle and earn as many points as you can. This game is educational in a sense that it provides interesting facts about the importance of recycling. Other than that, there isn't anything else that is educational about the game. I think the younger elementary school children would enjoy this game. However, the game can be frustrating because sometimes it doesn't return the tray even though you have let go of the spacebar so you lose a life. The game, of course, does get progressively harder, but it shouldn't be too bad for the children.

Overall, I think the kids would enjoy these games because they are based on their favorite show, iCarly. Also, the graphics on the Nickelodeon website are colorful, fun, and entertaining. One of the UCSD buddies told me that Selena played Sushi Madness and said that it was a difficult

game but enjoyed Cafeteria Recyclo-Rama. From my observations on computer games at Town and Country, a lot of the kids go on Nickelodeon, and I think they go to this site because of the graphics of the games and to explore their favorite shows.

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Mona Lisa Manio](#) <mmanio@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 27 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 07 February 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (om; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

I played WhyVille. I think this game is more suited for 4-6-year-olds. I played two games. The first was, Recycling, which had different trash items on the floor and the character you create has to sort the trash and put it in the right container for recycling (i.e, a container for Plastic, Glass, Paper, Trash). The second game I played was Why Eat Challenge. You select different nutritional issues (for example, not enough calories, too much fat, not enough calcium or iron) which result in having poor diets or too much food. You enter your age, weight, sex, height and how active (low, moderate, high) you are. Then, the game is to adjust an unhealthy menu into a healthier one by replacing fattening and low in vitamin foods.

**Reflection:**

I think WhyVille is great for younger kids and older kids, yet I think the older kids will find it immature to play with a program probably designed for 4 to 6-year olds. The games on WhyVille are a great way to teach them how to recycle and to have proper/healthy diets based on their weight, hieght, age, sex, and current physical activity. I think the BOD Squad could really use this on the kids they help out, especially with the Why Eat Challenge!

I missed going last week, so I will make that up this coming week.

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](#) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 24 February 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

The nutritional issues sounds really interesting for maybe some of the older kids too (7-9 year olds), or was it very young in how it was presented?

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Hannah Brace-Thompson](#) <hbraceth@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 30 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 30 January 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

**Kids:**

**Activities:**

**General:**

Whyville is basically a different version of Sims, where you have a character and can go around the Whyville island. You can also chat with other players, which I don't like, I'm not a big fan of chat rooms/games like that. this would definitely be an older kid game, like 7th grade or older. I probably won't use this game.

ArtEdventures is a cute site that teaches kids about art. I found some of the games they had a little confusing, like when you had to make colors but both of the tint buttons were the same color. it also has tutorials that focus on learning something about drawing/painting/etc. then gives the player tips for how to do the newly learned art concept. So if you go to this website, you should probably have a piece of paper and pencil ready for if the kid wants to try the new art skill. this site would be good if you wanted to do an art project with the kids and teach them art skills before you start the project. You could do this with all ages.

Funbrain is a good website, the games are very fast and interesting with cool graphics. each game has it's own set of rules though, so if you want to use this web page at the site, you should probably look at it before hand. They have levels ranging from 1st grade to 8th grade in math, reading and a couple other categories.

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

**Reflection:**

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**Name:** [Rachel Cody](mailto:rcody@weber.ucsd.edu) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 03 February 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

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I've heard lots of praise from kids at site about FunBrain, particularly Selena, Javier, and Dalejah. So it's good it has a variety of activities for all ability levels!

Whyville sounds interesting, I'm wondering if the kids will recognize that they're talking to other people? This has been an interesting phenomenon in WoW; a lot of kids just can't grasp that it's real people on the other end.

Great notes! I'd have to say I want to try out ArtEdventures :)

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**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Javier Gonzalez](mailto:jjgonzal@ucsd.edu) <jjgonzal@ucsd.edu>

**Date of Visit:** 30 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 30 January 2009

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**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (45m; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

I played Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? Compared to the USA version, this game is much more loaded with information and facts. This game can take forever to play and solve just one case because at every stop you hit, there are sections/clues that provide various general and cultural facts about different countries. The delivery of this information tends to create a much slower pace than that of the USA version. Although all the information given is extremely educational and beneficial for the children to know, I think that they could quickly lose interest and patience in this game due to the long pauses and readings you have to do.

**Game-task Level Summary:**

I think you can keep the children interested throughout this game through various methods. You could print out a map of the globe with all the countries outlined and have the player find and label each country they visit. In addition, each time you visit a country, ask the player to write down some of the facts that stood out for them and that they thought were the most interesting from that location. By doing this, the

children can learn loads about the cultural customs and geographies of numerous locations around the globe. They can also use the database from the male detective to learn even more information about countries. Afterwards, you can have them write a letter to the Wizard about specific things they learned. Maybe they can choose to write about the most interesting country they learned about.

**Reflection:**

**Name:** [Rachel Cody](mailto:rcody@weber.ucsd.edu) <rcody@weber.ucsd.edu>

**Date:** 03 February 2009

**Subject:** Re: Computer Games fieldnote

Really great information about the game, it's benefits and negatives. Did you find a task card with it (I see you reference teh Wizard)? Was it helpful at all?

I think printing out a world map and talking about the cultural elements would make it a lot more fun, too. Maybe we could also add looking up a YouTube video of a dance from that country?

**Course:** [Town and Country Learning Center](#)

**Conference:** [Computer Games](#)

**Name:** [Stephanie Wu](mailto:mos.steph@gmail.com) <mos.steph@gmail.com>

**Date of Visit:** 31 January 2009

**Date Filed:** 31 January 2009

**Tools:** [Top](#) | [Reply](#) | [Print Version](#) | [Site Comment](#)

**Kids:**

**Activities:**

computer games (50m; no taskcard)

**General:**

**Narrative:**

**Game-task Level Summary:**

I played a few of the Addition games:

Jungle Jim and the monkeys: pick which numbers you want to practice addition with (0-9), and choose the right answer on the targets the monkeys are holding.

Jungle Jim and the drums: same as above, except the answers are on drums.

Jungle Jim and the Quest: same as above, but this time you're on a quest, so there's a level with monkeys, drums, etc. but it's all just a bunch of simple addition problems.

The Flight of the Knight: gotta choose the right answer to propel the

knight over the castle wall.

The Knight and the Princess: same as above, except you get the knight over the wall to be with the princess.

Patty's Paints: choose the right answers, and then you get to paint your own cars after each level you complete. At the very end, you get to race a car around a track.

I also played a few games on the Scholastic website:

Building Language for Literacy games included Nina the Naming Newt - focused on vocabulary. You pick a place (restaurant, zoo, garden, firehouse, etc.), and you have to pick the words that are relevant to the location.

Leo the Letter-Loving Lobster: pick a location, and you're given words that pertain to that place. Task is to pick the letters (upper and lower case) that each word starts with.

Reggie the Rhyming Rhino: pick the words that rhyme with each other.

The Scholastic site also has Maggie's Earth Adventures that has a bunch of language arts games (grammar, punctuation, suffixes), as well as math and science games, even games to practice in Spanish!

### **Reflection:**

The various addition games have simple and fun concepts and graphics. I think these games are good for the younger kids, probably grades 1-3, or just for any of the kids that are lacking that basic foundation in addition. The games are good for learning and practicing those basics because they're very repetitive. I think it's a more fun way for kids to learn their addition tables by heart instead of doing a worksheet. Still, the repetitive nature can get old and boring pretty fast, especially when there's no reward at the end. I liked the Patty's Paints game because you'd have something to look forward to: after you completed a certain number of problems, you got to color your own car, and at the very very end you get to race a car.

There's a whole bunch of games on the Scholastic website, divided by grade level. The Literacy games were simple games that could be good for the younger kids. I liked how the games would teach you how to pronounce the words. I wasn't too impressed with Maggie's games, though. I thought they were kind of boring.

The Scholastic website has a lot of resources though, including lots of social studies and science lessons/information. I also liked how under the language arts section, they had interactive games based off of books kids might have read at that grade level, such as Charlotte's Web, or Holes. I think these games would be good for those who have read and

are familiar with those stories..which brings to mind, do any of the kids like to read? are there books buddies can read with the kids? maybe like a story time or something, to encourage them to like reading?

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