

## ***IGNITE AND PLAY – THINKING IN A GAMING HABIT OF MIND***

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### **Henry Jenkin's Skills for Participatory Culture**

The new skills include:

- **Play** — the capacity to experiment with one's surroundings as a form of problem-solving
- **Performance** — the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery
- **Simulation** — the ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real-world processes
- **Appropriation** — the ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content
- **Multitasking** — the ability to scan one's environment and shift focus as needed to salient details.
- **Distributed Cognition** — the ability to interact meaningfully with tools that expand mental capacities
- **Collective Intelligence** — the ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal
- **Judgment** — the ability to evaluate the reliability and credibility of different information sources
- **Transmedia Navigation** — the ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities
- **Networking** — the ability to search for, synthesize, and disseminate information
- **Negotiation** — the ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives

## Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing

### Executive Summary

The concept of “college readiness” is increasingly important in discussions about students’ preparation for postsecondary education.

This Framework describes the rhetorical and twenty-first-century skills as well as habits of mind and experiences that are critical for college success. Based in current research in writing and writing pedagogy, the Framework was written and reviewed by two- and four-year college and high school writing faculty nationwide and is endorsed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project.

**Habits of mind** refers to ways of approaching learning that are both intellectual and practical and that will support students’ success in a variety of fields and disciplines. The Framework identifies eight habits of mind essential for success in college writing:

- **Curiosity** – the desire to know more about the world.
- **Openness** – the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world.
- **Engagement** – a sense of investment and involvement in learning.
- **Creativity** – the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.
- **Persistence** – the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects.
- **Responsibility** – the ability to take ownership of one’s actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others.
- **Flexibility** – the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands.
- **Metacognition** – the ability to reflect on one’s own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes used to structure knowledge.

The Framework then explains how teachers can foster these habits of mind through **writing, reading, and critical analysis** experiences. These experiences aim to develop students’

- Rhetorical knowledge – the ability to analyze and act on understandings of audiences, purposes, and contexts in creating and comprehending texts;
- Critical thinking – the ability to analyze a situation or text and make thoughtful decisions based on that analysis, through writing, reading, and research;
- Writing processes – multiple strategies to approach and undertake writing and research;
- Knowledge of conventions – the formal and informal guidelines that define what is considered to be correct and appropriate, or incorrect and inappropriate, in a piece of writing; and
- Abilities to compose in multiple environments – from using traditional pen and paper to electronic technologies.

**"The RPG Commandments"** taken from *"Remodeling RPGs for the New Millennium"* published in the February 1999 issue of *Game Developer*

1. **Each player's path through the story must be unique.** This -doesn't mean a branching-tree structure with winning and losing paths but, rather, that players will have the freedom to decide how they'll overcome game obstacles. A world simulation must be deep enough so that each game problem is open to a variety of solution strategies, from the most thoughtful and low-key to the most obvious and violent. And the solution you choose to any given problem must have clear consequences, both immediate (killing a guard sets off an alarm, attracting more guards) and long-term (killing a guard may result in "wanted" posters being posted, causing civilians to fear you and be less cooperative).
2. **Players must always have clear goals.** Though free to stray from the storyline at will, players must know what they're supposed to be doing, minute to minute and, if appropriate, mission to mission. The fun of the game is in overcoming obstacles and solving problems; the fun is in how you solve a problem, not in guessing what problem you're supposed to solve.
3. **The level of interactivity must be high,** with NPCs about whom you really care and with a densely populated, object-rich world that looks and behaves like the real world (or, at least, a believable, internally consistent world of your own creation). A big, empty world is boring. Players must be free to explore a cool and instantly understandable world.
4. **The central character must grow and change in ways that matter** to players in an obvious and personal way. During the course of play, you'll become more powerful, acquire more items, and develop new skills, of course. However, you'll also make unique friends and enemies, accomplish tasks and missions differently, overhear different conversations, and see different events unfold. By game's end, each player must control an alter ego that is distinct from that of all other players.
5. **The game must be about something more than killing things, solving puzzles, and maxing out a character's statistics.** Remember all those hours you spent in school analyzing the underlying meaning of novels, poems, and movies? Guess what: RPGs lend themselves to the same kind of analysis. Games can and must have an impact on players. That impact may be the simple adrenaline rush of DIABLO, fleeting and soon forgotten (nothing wrong with that), or it may be the never-to-be-forgotten (and, in some cases, life-changing) experience of becoming the Avatar in ULTIMA IV. If all you're doing is throwing wave after wave of monsters at players so that they can kill lots of stuff so that they can increase some arbitrary statistics so that they can feel powerful, you're doing yourself, your players and your medium a disservice.

*Warren Spector runs Ion Storm's Austin, Texas, office. He has produced such RPGs as Ultima VI, Ultima VII, Part 2: Serpent Isle, Underworld 1, Underworld 2, System Shock, Dues Ex for Ion Storm and Epic Mickey for Disney Interactive.*

## Suggested Readings

Bissell, Tom. *Extra Lives: Why Video Games Matter*. New York: Vintage, 2011. Print.

Bogost, Ian. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.

Web (available for digital download)

Gee, James Paul. *The Anti-Education Era: Creating Smarter Students Through Digital Learning*. New York:

Palgrave MacMillan, 2013. Print.

---. *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy. Second Edition*. New York:

Palgrave MacMillan, 2007. Print.

---. *New Digital Media and Learning as an Emerging Area and "Worked Example" as One Way Forward*.

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2007. Web (available digital download).

Jenkins, Henry. *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009.

Web (available for digital download).

McGonigal, Jane. *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and how they can Change the World*.

New York: Penguin Books, 2011. Print.

Murray, Janet H. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: MIT

Press, 1997.

*Ignite and Play – Thinking in a Gaming Habit of Mind*

or WPA Framework: The Video Game!

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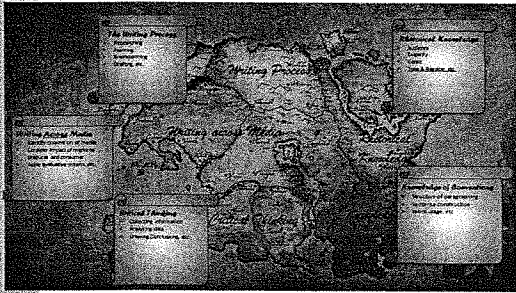
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The Gameworld for  
*FrameworkGamified*



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Welcome to Participatory Culture

2009 report *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture*, Henry Jenkins notes

- At that time already nearly 60% of teens are producers as well as consumers of participatory media, which includes the creation of web pages, blogs, YouTube videos, etc.
- Forward 4 years and throw in Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Instagram and Yik Yak, the numbers go higher.

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### What is Participatory Culture?

- **Low barriers** to artistic expression and civic engagement
- **Strong support** for creating and sharing creations
- **Informal mentorship** whereby experienced participants pass along knowledge to novices.
- **A belief that contributions matter** and some degree of social connection.

--Jenkins

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### Benefits of a Participatory Culture

- Opportunities for peer-to-peer learning
- Changed attitude toward intellectual property
- Diversification of cultural expression
- Development of digital and communication skills valued in higher education and the workplace
- A more empowered conception of citizenship

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### The New Digital/Participatory Divide

Jenkins notes a new digital divide based not solely on income, that the divide comes less in technology and more in the social skills. He defines three new gaps:

- **Participation gap** – unequal access to opportunities and experiences that encourage experimentation.

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### New Digital/Participatory Divide

- **Transparency problem**— the need to be taught, as both consumers and creators, to recognize the way media shapes perceptions

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### New Digital/Participatory Divide

- **The ethics challenge**—the breakdown of traditional ways of preparing people to engage in public discourse through their role as media makers.

Educators must envision ourselves as mentors in participatory culture, which for most of us means getting out of our process-era boxes.

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### Play: a new Skill for the Age of Participatory Culture

- Jenkins lists 12 (on handout)
- Play: "Capacity to experiment with the surroundings as a form of problem solving"

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### James Paul Gee

- "A game is nothing but a set of problems to solve"
- Notions of learning—Classroom v. Games
  - Short attention v. Long attention spans
  - "Chunking"/Scaffolding v. Complexity
  - Bubble-wrapped curriculum v. Learning from failure

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### McGonigal's Definition of Game

- Games are goal-driven
- Games contain feedback systems
- Games operate under a rules
- Participation in games is **voluntary**.

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### The Problem with Educational Gamification

Designers focus more on the goal than the game.



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### Warren Spector's RPG Commandments

- Each player's path through the story must be unique.
- Players must always have clear goals.
- The level of interactivity must be high,
- The central character must grow and change in ways that matter to players in an obvious and personal way.
- The game must be about something more than killing things, solving puzzles, and maxing out a character's statistics.

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### How is Game Design Different than Assignment Design?

This exercise is about

- Creating a world that encourages exploration.
- De-emphasizing linear process
- Making failure—particularly spectacular failure—part of the learning process
- Cultivating habits of learning

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### Challenge: Contribute to the Hypothetic Video Game *FRAMEWORK GAMIFIED*

Three elements our designs have to have:

- **A Landscape**—a location or gameworld where we can send students to explore, interact, experiment and fail.
- **Quests** – tasks to be completed by traversing the gameworld and practicing their skills to accomplish small and large goals
- **Weapons, Abilities & Skills**—talents they can develop, hone, and use collaboratively to solve the problems we give them.

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### Criteria for Habit Badges

- Measurable
  - Submit work
  - Quiz scores
  - Project completions
  - Approvals from professors, librarians, partners, tutors, etc.
- Goals across assignments or even courses
- Must encourage autonomy—sandbox play not path-driven

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### Sample—The Persistence Badge

- Complete all first drafts by target dates
- No more than 3 absences
- Revise all papers
- Revise your weakest paper multiple times
- Ask a question at least once a week
- Be prepared for peer review
- Stick with the original topic you pick for the research paper
- Respond to peer review letters
- Survey people about your paper topics for multiple points of view. Research all of them.
- Locate *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos* type evidence for all major points



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### Set Criteria for A Habits of Mind Badge

- Select one of the habits of mind and create a list of 8-10 tasks or challenges that must be completed *over the course of the semester* to earn this badge.
- |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| • Curiosity  | • Persistence    |
| • Openness   | • Responsibility |
| • Engagement | • Flexibility    |
| • Creativity | • Metacognition  |

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worktime

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### Badge Movement

Badges are microcredentials used to certify skills and abilities not recognized by traditional institutions and employers

- Purdue Passport
  - <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/studio/passport/>
- Mozilla Open Badge <http://openbadges.org/>
  - With Blackboard <https://badges.coursesites.com/>
  - Look for them on Facebook, et. al.
- Credly: <https://credly.com/>

To learn, build and play

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### Questions?

Post your badge criteria or quest specifications to <https://sites.google.com/a/stumail.jccc.edu/frameworkgamified/>

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