



Recreational digital games, 21st Century Literacies, and LIS Education: Are future librarians and information professionals prepared for a gamified century?

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Resources (Take Me to the Games!)

Scan the QR code to visit our interactive Twine game:



- View digital literacies in the contexts of specific games
- Game-making tools that foster 21st Century Literacies
- Additional resources, research literature, references

Method

Purposes: Exploration & Description

Research Question

- Are MLIS programs preparing librarians and information professionals to work with games? If so, how?

Watch these gameplay videos!

Introduction

- Games are information rich environments that include interactive information objects in a variety of formats that requires learners to take an active role during their encounter (Neuman, 2011).
- Play in good games can develop “embodied empathy for complex systems, ‘grit’ (passion + persistence); playfulness that leads to innovation; design thinking; collaborations in which groups are smarter than the smartest person in the group; and real understanding that leads to problem solving and not just test passing” (Gee, 2009, p. 4).
- Online games create informal and organic environments in which play supports incidental learning of 21st Century skills (Galarneau & Zibit, 2011).

The Framework of 21st Century Learning includes the skills below:

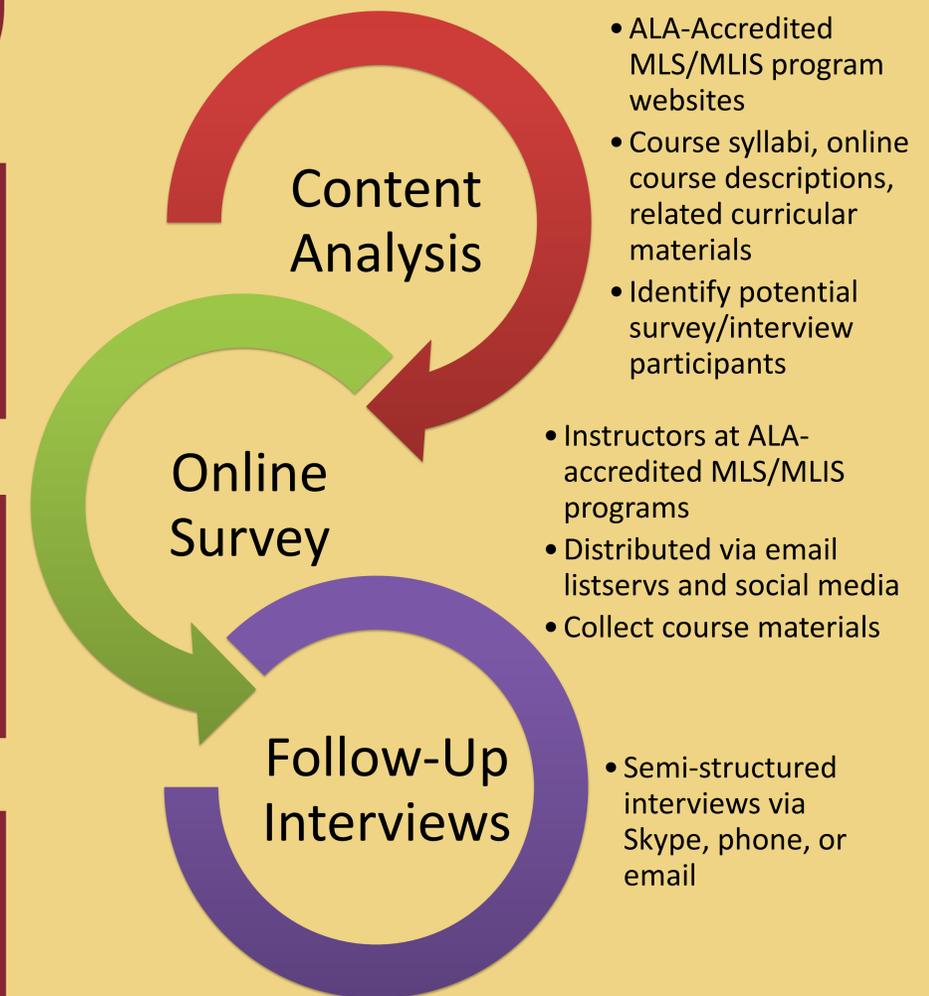
- **Life & Career Skills** – ability to adapt, self-motivate, take initiative, work effectively in diverse social environments, be responsible and accountable, understand leadership roles, and respect others
- **Learning & Innovation Skills** – problem solving abilities, creative and critical thinking, and clearly communicate and collaborate with others
- **Information, Media, Technology Skills** – effective and ethical use of information, media, and technology to research, organize, evaluate, create, manage, and communicate information

Recreational Games and 21st Century Literacies

- The mix of learning and play create an environment where learners can engage in the creation and analysis of messages; skills may be transferred to the real-world by participating in online communities (Hobbs & Rowe, 2011).
- Used properly, gamification can increase motivation and engagement, though there are concerns that a focus on extrinsic rewards can decrease motivation (Spina, 2013); technologies are tools, and that good or bad effects result from how they are used (Gee, 2011).
- MMOs encourage gamers to work collaboratively in developing teams, think scientifically to develop strategies and theories, and even develop literacies and tools to facilitate play (Gee, 2012; Steinkuehler, 2007).

Games, Libraries, and Learning

- Libraries use games to teach students about inquiry, use of information sources, participation in knowledge-based collaboration, and other critical thinking skills; gaming and technology are great vehicles to promote a life-long love of learning and reading (Mashriqi, 2011).
- Children who are socioeconomically disadvantaged are falling behind in 21st Century digital media skills because they do not have the access they need; school libraries should provide access and the mentoring necessary to fully engage with it (Gee, 2012).
- More documentation about how gaming is implemented in library programs is necessary to facilitate the inclusion of gaming in other library programs by giving librarians evidence to justify their choices to administrators (Nicholson, 2008).



Limitations

- Survey response and interview participation rates may be low
- Purposive sampling of only ALA-accredited MLIS programs is not fully representative or generalizable of all MLS/MLIS programs

Implications

- Findings of the proposed study will help to better understand where LIS education and digital games stand, where it shines and where it needs improvement in order to demonstrate and increase the entrepreneurial advantage of and potential for an LIS degree in a gamified century.