POWER-UPS, LEVEL UPS, AND PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING: GAMIFYING TO ENGAGE AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY LECTURE COURSE

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INTRODUCTION

Educational Psychology for Young Learners is a three credit, face-to-face, undergraduate lecture course that meets twice a week. All pre-service teachers (referred to as students henceforth) in the Elementary Education or Early Childhood Education program tracks are required to successfully pass this course with a grade of C or above, and successfully complete the e-portfolio artifact they create in the course, prior to being accepted into their teacher licensure programs. The course has been offered at Iowa State University for years, but there are efforts to redesign the course and make it more student-directed and engaging. This is not easily accomplished in a lecture course, particularly with the yearly increasing enrollment at the university. Although I now teach at another university, I was the instructor of this course for three years and was/am involved in the discussions of its redesign.

This course has traditionally been taught with lectures and tests. As a foundational Educational Psychology course, it introduces students to historic and contemporary theories, concepts, research, and trends, including: learning theories, language, development, behavior, motivation, instruction, assessment, and research. However, it directly addresses two departmental Teacher Education standards: Learning and Assessment. These standards are derived from the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC standards), which are requirements for the state accreditation and licensure board teacher certification. By graduation, the students are expected to understand the complexities of student learning, and how that learning can be assessed formatively and summatively in their future classrooms. An e-portfolio artifact, in the form of a unit assessment plan, must be created to address the Assessment standard.

This syllabus is a redesign of the traditional lecture-based format. While lecture-based teaching can be interactive and generate student collaboration and shared learning, the context of large student numbers, limited time, extensive content, and a single instructor make that a challenge for many instructors. This course design gives students choices, allows for self-directed, exploratory learning, technology use, performance-based assessments, and opportunities to be successful learners, for those who may struggle to express their learning on traditional assessments, such as tests. To accomplish these factors, the new course uses problem-based learning (PBL) and an optional, but highly encouraged, game-based component.
COURSE DESIGN

The course is taught in units, or Worlds, to represent the three course components: Development, Learning, and Motivation and Assessment. The game language emerged from my own history as a console gamer, and Worlds were blocks of levels at the end of which a boss must be fought to move onto the next World. Grouping these three Worlds is not meant to imply that there are not elements that intersect (such as learning and motivation), but they are grouped by related content to help guide students through understanding the complex theoretical, social, and political forces within these concepts. The course employs student-generated PBL, in which students interview a teacher in the field to bring to light authentic teaching problems. The students collaborate to research about and propose solutions to the problems they find. At the end of the PBL process, they create a research poster with their findings and solutions and present them to the class.

Additionally, there is an optional game-based component of this course. Students have the option of completing tasks to move up levels. Each time they move up a level, they are rewarded in the form of bonus points, notes they can use on a test, or a “free” 100% score for the third exam. By the time they have completed the required tasks to reach the top level and get a 100% score on the exam, they will have done significantly more to learn about assessment, and in a more deep and meaningful way, than they would have by studying for a test. The design of reaching this level also requires that they must attend class consistently. Students cannot reach the top level and earn 100% without being present in class during discussion and activities. Their attendance and participation would help ensure they grapple with assessment concepts and earn the understanding reflected in their 100% grade.

The game tasks include doing a case study of a school district’s assessment types and results (presenting their findings on a class wiki), interviewing a teacher about their classroom and district assessments (and posting their results on a class blog), performing in-depth research about a student-centered assessment type (and creating a video about it for their classmates), creating blog entries about journal articles they read about learning and assessment, doing self-check quizzes available from their textbook, and showing up to class to collect “coins” and “power-ups” that are given only to those who attend. None of the tasks are graded, and purposefully so. First, I want students to do learning for learning’s sake. However, the tasks can lead to delayed rewards. Second, I can easily track their progress, even with a large amount of students. All tasks are uploaded online, or done through the textbook’s online interface.

Due to the high number of women in the course (typically 90% or higher female), I designed the levels of the game to represent strong feminine figures, although the men in the course would also benefit from having strong feminine role models. The first level is (Rosie the) Riveter, followed by (Florence) Nightingale, (Marie) Curie, (Harriet) Tubman, and Malala (Yousafzai). I wanted to ensure that my students were striving to reach levels associated with strong female figures. The level order was not created to imply a value hierarchy, but to understand that each level is its own distinct accomplishment with its own rewards. For an education course, I believed it was appropriate to have Malala Yousafzai as the highest level of accomplishment. She is the world’s youngest Nobel Prize laureate, an educational activist, and, at the time this syllabus will be given to students, she will be 18 years old, which is approximately the same age as most of the students in the course.
In addition to the four exams, a required piece of the assessment structure, the PBL assignment, will give students an opportunity to learn and display their learning in an engaging, performance-based way. There is a call for more performance-based assessments in higher education, and this is one way to accomplish it in a large lecture course. Throughout the PBL process, students will complete five reflection sheets in which they indicate their confidence in performing tasks. They fill out the front before they do the task (pre-) and the back after they do the task (post-). I can then enter the pre- and post-reflection data in a spreadsheet to obtain a more empirical view of the growth they made through doing PBL to track their growth in problem-solving skills.

Students’ artifacts are also part of the assessment structure, and are scored as a pass/fail (full points or no points). This has been the tradition of the artifact in this course, and it works well if students are given explicit expectations, rubrics, and examples. In the artifact, students create a unit assessment plan, as described in the syllabus. A grade of pass indicates students have achieved an acceptable level of understanding of the Assessment standard, although, later in their program, they create another artifact that reflects their growth in their understanding of the standard.

I feel students must be given some choice in their learning. Students have the choice of whether or not play the optional course game, although they most likely will, because of the opportunities for bonus points, notes to use on a test, and a 100% grade on an exam. If they choose to play the game, they have many choices about how to go about completing the tasks. They can choose: 1) self-checks, 2) articles of interest to read and reflect on as one task, 3) teachers to interview, 4) a district’s assessment results to research and analyze, 5) an authentic assessment to research in-depth and present as a video, and 6) the format of their video. Even if students choose not to play the game, they will have opportunities for choice and collaboration through the PBL assignment, and choice in their design of the unit assessment plan. With those factors in mind, I believe this syllabus represents a new direction of a traditional lecture course, one that promotes self-directed learning, collaboration, engagement, and even some representation of feminine accomplishments in a class largely composed of women.

There are potential shortfalls to the design of this course. First, since the game is optional, some students will likely not take part in the opportunities for deeper learning it offers. There is also an added burden to the instructor to monitor the progress of various learning experiences in the game, from wikis to journal article reflections. Finally, although the course redesign is meant to foster self-directed learning, there is always an extrinsic reward of a grade, which can always undermine student-driven learning.

This course is designed around four principles: performance-based assessment, engagement, problem solving, and self-directed learning. These represent current calls in higher education (Beetham & Sharpe, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2010). Focusing on these principles allows instructors to more authentically assess students’ learning and better prepare them for skills needed in career fields beyond the university. It is particularly true in Teacher Education, as current experts in the field are advocating shifts to programmatic authentic assessments (Bohlin, Durwin, & Reese-Weber, 2012), and particularly performance-based assessments (Darling-Hammond, 2012) that allow students to display their learning in ways beyond simple quizzes or tests. Students in this course will have one required performance assessment; they will engage in research and create a poster of their findings around an authentic problem, and present their findings to classmates. Additionally, students have optional opportunities for authentic, performance-based assessments in the game-based course component, including blog entries, wiki entries, teacher interviews, district assessment data result research, and digital video creation.
Students will engage with primary data both in and out of the classroom. They will talk to teachers in the field, read current research articles about teaching and learning, create videos, posters, writings, and online entries about their findings, and collaborate with classmates. Engagement and collaboration are key principles of constructivism (Savery & Duffy, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978). Most, if not all, schools of education operate under constructivist beliefs, since research is clear that deep learning does not typically occur through lecturing, listening, and note-taking. It occurs through sensory and cognitive engagement with materials and peers. I must note that although students will be immersed in a social learning environment in some of the course activities, I operate under the assumption that students are enterprising agents in their own self-development, and that their own motivation, needs, and learning capacities come from within (Martin & McLellan, 2013). I feel instructors should strike a balance between social and personal drives in collaborative practices that both retain students’ collectivist goals and their individualism (as a form of retrospective, historical, political, and psychological functions; Martin & McLellan, 2013).

Problem-based learning has been researched extensively in teacher education. In general terms, PBL is a teaching and learning model in which students are presented with an ill-structured problem (one that is complex and has more than one potential solution). Students collaborate to identify what they know and need to know to solve the problem, perform research, reflect upon their learning, propose solutions informed by their newfound knowledge, and present their findings (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980). Benefits of PBL include collaborative learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004), experience with research and technology (Hmelo-Silver, Derry, Bitterman, & Hatrak, 2009), and skill and disposition developments of teacher education students (Hung & Holen, 2011). It can be accomplished in lecture courses and still maintain these outcomes, but implementation issues arise with larger numbers of students and groups (Derby & Williams, 2010). Research has shown, however, that PBL is a more effective instructional strategy than lecture courses for helping students learn about complex concepts (Loyens, Jones, Mikkers, & van Gog, 2015).

Developing self-directed strategies is a learned process; students must set goals, develop plans, and evaluate the outcomes of their plan (Robertson, 2011). Instructors are needed to facilitate that progression. Adults often learn best when they are given choices in assignment tasks and opportunities to use self-directed learning to accomplish tasks (Knowles, 1984). Research indicates that self-directed learners may develop higher levels of creativity, inquiry, and life satisfaction (Edmondson, Boyer, & Artis, 2012). One of the underlying purposes of this redesigned course is to help students become more self-directed in their learning. Employing PBL as an instructional and assessment strategy is one way of accomplishing this, but students also get the opportunity to set goals, learn independently, and monitor and reach their goals through the game-based component.
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY OF YOUNG LEARNERS, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

SYLLABUS, POLICIES, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Course Description
This course explores psychological theories relevant to classroom learning, cognition, motivation, classroom management and assessment for children in early childhood and elementary educational settings. It provides implications of theory for teaching children and for assessing learning in educational settings with young and grade school aged children. The primary focus will be on the application of psychological research and theory to academic learning, classroom instruction, and student assessment in the classroom.

Course Goals
To help aspiring early childhood and elementary teachers to better understand the differences and intersections between instruction and learning, and how classroom assessment is used to determine the effectiveness of either instruction or learning. This will be accomplished within the context of the current educational reform that is currently underway in Iowa as well as the nation.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Define and explain relevant models and theories of child development related to instruction and assessment.
- Examine differences in learners, and how those differences may affect learning.
- Describe how learners construct, embed, and retrieve information.
- Understand and apply principles of child development in educational planning.
- Compare and contrast types and purposes of learning assessments.
- Design a unit plan using appropriate instructional and assessment approaches.

Playing the Game
This course has a game component, if you wish to play. You will be given the opportunity to complete some tasks (described later in the syllabus). If you are successful, and attend class regularly, you can level up, which gives you powers (such as bonus points, notes to use on tests, etc.). However, your choice to play the game is completely up to you, and controlled entirely by you. You can choose not to play, and proceed through the calendar and assignments as they are written, and your grade will not be affected – positively or negatively – in any way. However, if you have the bravery to attempt the tasks, your grade will be affected positively, and, more importantly, you will learn a lot of important information and skills to help you in your future career as an educator! The directions, rules, and rewards for playing the game are described at the end of the syllabus.

Required Resources
Blackboard: Syllabus and handouts (course materials).

Optional Readings (for the game)


Course Policies

Students are expected to attend class and read assignments when indicated. Make-up exams will not be allowed unless you have a legitimate excuse (university excused, military, professional conference, accident, medical) and notify the instructor at least one full day in advance. No cell phones are to be used during class. Set them to silent.

Academic Dishonesty Statement

We hold high expectations for teacher candidates, and any incidents of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, using information from books, journals, or the World Wide Web without giving proper credit (reference); unauthorized use of information in taking an examination; or handing in a project as your own that was based on another person's project whether from current or previous semesters and even if the original project is substantially changed. Academic dishonesty also includes assisting another student in academic dishonesty (e.g., giving someone your project to use as a template). All incidents will be addressed according to the university policy.
ASSIGNMENTS

EXAMS

There are four learning examinations this semester. The first three exams will include chapters from the three Worlds (units) you’ll explore: Development, Learning, and Motivation and Assessment. The final examination will be a comprehensive assessment of the “big concepts” from the course. These will be topics that you should certainly take away from the course with an understanding of their meaning and implementation (topics such as constructivism, behaviorism, scaffolding, and so on). The exams are worth 185 total points.

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Your Problem-Based Learning (PBL) assignment is a self-directed, collaborative research assignment. This assessment will include interviewing a teacher, posting your findings to a blog, working in and out of class in groups, filling out reflection sheets, researching a problem, developing a solution, creating a poster, presenting poster to pods of groups, and uploading a video of your presentation to the class Blackboard site. Each aspect is briefly described below, and more specific details and rubrics will be provided in class. The PBL assignment is worth 40 points.

- **Interviewing a Teacher**: Each student is responsible for identifying a teacher and leading either a phone or in-person interview, prior to Class 5. You will ask the teacher about their instructional philosophies and problems they see in the field of teaching, and post three of the problems they identify on a classroom blog. We will discuss the interview process in class. These problems will be used to group you into collaborative teams, based upon similarities of the problems you found. This will count toward 10 points of your final grade (10/40).

- **Reflection Sheets**: You are responsible for filling out the survey and open-ended question on each reflection sheet. The due dates for submitting them are listed on the course calendar. In class, you will have time to fill out the “pre” section, asking you to rate your confidence at each step and provide a reflective narrative about your confidence. Before you turn it in, you must fill out the “post” section. These will be used to see what, if any, change occurred before and after each step of the PBL process. The steps are: problem identification, researching, problem solving, group work, and whole-group communication. Each of these will count toward one point of your PBL grade (5/40).

- **Creating a Poster**: After assigning tasks to your group members, researching and bringing your research to class, and developing potential solutions to your problems, you will create a poster. The poster must include: problem case, research question, background, potential solutions, best solution, and resources. We will further discuss each of these sections in class. The instructor will provide you with poster board; you are responsible for making your poster academic and informative, but not boring or overwhelming. You will see some examples in class. The poster will count toward 12 points of your final grade (12/40).

- **Presentation**: During Class 16, you will present your poster to other groups (pods) around the lecture hall. You are responsible for assigning presentation parts, and making them equitable in scope and information. While notecards are allowed, they are discouraged because of the overreliance of their use. The rubric for this assignment will be provided in class. Also, one of the other group members must video record your presentation, which will be uploaded to the Blackboard course site. The presentation will count toward 13 points of your final grade (13/40).

ARTIFACT

Your e-portfolio artifact is an artifact related to Standard VIII: Assessment. You will create a unit assessment plan, and, if completed successfully, upload a cover page and scan of your artifact to your e-portfolio, with the
instructor’s comments. The artifact will include the following sections, with a complete description of the assignment, expectations, and rubrics available on Blackboard. The artifact is worth 25 points and is due in class during Class 31.

- **Introduction**: The introduction of your artifact will include the unit title, content taught in the unit, required materials, prerequisite knowledge and skills required by the students, and the context of the unit (including where it falls in the year, and what units precede and follow it).

- **Case Study**: You will research a community and school at which you are interested in teaching. This may be your hometown, or your dream school (if they’re not the same). You need to find out everything that could impact students’ learning and experiences within the school. This includes access to technology, health care, demographics, SES, recreational or after-school programs, school assessments results, and so on. Then, you will reflect on how the students in that town and school may learn differently because of their context, and how you will adapt your instruction and assessment in that unit for those specific learners. For example, if the school is near the ocean, you may be able to create connections between your content and the water. If it is a school in a high needs area, you will need to rethink what technology your students may have access to at home.

- **Learning Objectives**: You will identify 10 state or early learning standards/benchmarks and create 10 learning objectives that will be addressed in your unit, and provide a reflection in which you talk through why you feel the learning objectives relate to what is being asked in the standards.

- **Assessment Table**: You will map out your unit, weekly, according to the types of assessments you will be using to monitor students’ learning. You will also identify which learning objective each assessment is addressing. Finally, you will use the table to identify the type of each assessment (formative, summative, or diagnostic) and the materials you and the students will need to create each assessment.

- **Performance Assessment**: You will design a performance assessment that will be a summative assessment in your unit. You must describe the assessment, including its purpose and relevance to your unit, its details, timeline, and assessment. You will be using a rubric (which you design) to assess the end product, but what formative assessments are you gathering? How will you document and analyze evidence of student learning?

- **Performance Assessment Rubric**: You will create a 50-point rubric for your performance assessment (or, for ECE/Primary, a checklist-style mastery rubric).

- **Reflection**: In this reflection, you will discuss why the assessments you chose are the best assessments to measure learning for this type of unit. You should explain how you will gather student learning data from the unit (from formal and informal assessments), how that will influence your instructional decisions, and how student differences may be taken into consideration in your instructional and assessment processes. You should also explain why your unit is developmentally appropriate for the grade of students you chose. The textbook must be used and cited throughout to help validate your claims.

Your artifact is graded as a pass/fail. A grading checklist (18 criteria) will be provided in class. If you receive 16 or more “yes” checks, you pass. If you receive 13-15 “yes” checks, you will receive your artifact back to fix and resubmit. If you receive 11 or fewer “yes” checks, you will not pass the artifact (which not only loses you points, but the passed artifact is necessary for admittance to the education program).

**Grading**

Your grade for this course will be determined by your performance on exams, a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) project, and the e-portfolio artifact. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3 exams + Final)</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBL</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Artifact = 35
Total Points Possible = 260

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>SCORE - %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>100-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>AAA-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3RD</td>
<td>BBB+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4TH</td>
<td>BBB</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5TH</td>
<td>BBB-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6TH</td>
<td>CCC+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7TH</td>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8TH</td>
<td>CCC-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9TH</td>
<td>DDD+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10TH</td>
<td>DDD</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11TH</td>
<td>DDD-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12TH</td>
<td>FFF</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# CALENDAR OF READINGS AND COURSE ASSIGNMENTS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to Teaching and Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Problem Based Learning Interviewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cognitive Development</td>
<td>Reflection Sheet 1</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Problem Based Learning, research, PBL problem development</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Self, Social, and Moral Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Learner Differences and Learning Needs</td>
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<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Language Development</td>
<td>Reflection Sheet 2</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>Boss Battle:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam 1 - 50 points</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Culture and Diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Behaviorism</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>In-Class PBL Work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Cognitive Views of Learning</td>
<td>Reflection Sheet 3</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Complex Cognitive Processes</td>
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<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>PBL In-Class Group Work</td>
<td>Reflection Sheet 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>PBL Presentations &amp; Posters</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Reflection Sheet 5</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td><strong>Boss Battle:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam 2 - 40 points</td>
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*World 1: Development*

*World 2: Learning*

*World 3: Motivation and Assessment*
| Class 20 | Social Cognitive Views of Motivation | Chapter 11 |
| Class 21 | Motivation in Action | Chapter 12 |
| Class 22 | Learning Environments | Chapter 13 |
| Class 23 | Individualized Instruction | Chapter 14 |
| Class 24 | Classroom Assessment | Chapter 15 |
| Class 25 | Classroom Grading | |
| Class 26 | Standardized Assessments | |
| Class 27 | Boss Battle: Exam 3 - 40 points | |

**Final World: Artifact**

| Class 28 | Worksheet 1 Bring your learning objectives for peer review | BB Handout |
| Class 29 | Artifact Overview, Bring your unit idea and benchmarks to class | BB Handout |
| Class 30 | Artifact Classwork, Bring your final copy for peer review | BB Handout |
| Class 31 | Final Exam Review | Artifact |
| Class 32 | **Final Boss Battle:** Final Exam - 55 points | |

*The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. Maintain flexibility if necessary, as the education profession requires one to do.*
Getting Ready to Play

- Make sure your brain is connected to your work
- Be sure that you have plugged your best work into the jack at the front of the semester

Using Controls

- **Your Mind**: Use it as much as possible. The more you press it, the better your chance of winning.
- **Your Effort**: Use it to make your character run. The control is completely up to you
- **Your Attitude**: Use it to avoid barrels or fireballs. It’s up to you whether you run into an obstacle or grab a hammer and smash it

Here’s How to Play

**Step 1: Get Started**

You have already inserted credits and joined as player one.

**Step 2: Making it to the Top**

You have joined the game as a riveter. Congratulations. However, if you collect enough coins and earn bonuses, you will level up. Each time you level up, you earn new powers. Once you use your power, that’s it – you can only use them once at each level.

If you choose to hammer away without collecting bonuses and coins, you can still beat this game. The choice is yours.

**Step 3: Coins and Bonuses**

Three power-ups are located on the syllabus. Also, coins will appear in class. Make sure to grab one for yourself. You must be there to get one.

**Step 5: Using Your Powers**

When you wish to use one of your powers, you must let Dr. Genareo know at least 24 hours ahead of time – weekdays only. **You can only use one power at a time.**

**Step 6: Hurrah!**
Your credit has bought you 16 weeks of playtime. When the game is complete, your leaderboard status will be posted. Here’s hoping for AAA! Remember, just because the game is over doesn’t mean the action is. Your game of learning will continue as long as you wish.

Leveling up

Thank you for playing, riveter. If you want to level up, you must perform tasks. Do these at your own learning risk – tasks are not graded. This may result in you learning without a grade. However, if you complete them, the powers and rewards you earn will be great.

All pictures are open source and retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Level One - Riveter

Earning Level One

- You have joined the game a riveter

Powers

- Read
- Attend lectures
- Complete assignments
- Learn

Level Two - Nightingale

Earning Level Two

- Complete 5 online self-quizzes with 80%+
- Collect 1 coin
- Collect 1 power-up

Powers

- 5 bonus points can be added to any test
Level Three - Curie

Earning Level Three
- Choose 5 journal articles on Blackboard
- Read and write 1 blog entry per article
- Complete 10 online self-quizzes with 80%+
- Collect 5 coins
- Collect 2 power-ups

Powers
- Hand-write 1 notecard of notes used during a test

Level Four - Tubman

Earning Level Four
- Interview a teacher about assessment strategies
- Create a 5-page written report about findings
- Upload paper to blog
- Collect 10 coins
- Complete 15 online self-quizzes with 80%+

Powers
- Print 1 page of notes used during a test

Level Five - Malala

Earning Level Five
- Create a 15-minute assessment video on the blog
- Create a wiki entry - District Case Study
- Complete 15 online self-quizzes with 80%
- Collect 15 coins
- Collect all 3 power-ups

Powers
- Your exam 3 grade will be 100%
GAME CHALLENGES

- **Coins**: Coins can be collected only during class. Your coin will reveal one item from an upcoming test—only the question, not the choices or answers. Collect coins to help you level up.

- **Power-Ups**: Power-ups can be collected only during class. Your power-up gives you a special power—the opportunity to take a 5-point bonus quiz that is added to your grade. Power-ups have individual codes that allow you to log into your quiz. If you are not there to collect your power-up, it will disappear. Player 2 will not be able to collect one for you. Quizzes are available on the Blackboard course site.

- **Online Self-Quizzes**: These self-quizzes will test your power of learning self-reliance. These are available in your Pearson online interface. Each chapter will have several opportunities for you to check your learning through self-quizzes. You may retry them as many times as necessary (but be careful—questions may change!). Your goal is to get 80% on a self-quiz to beat it.

- **Journal Articles**: These journal articles will test your power of learning endurance. You will choose journal articles to read (references provided in the syllabus and available on Blackboard) and write a blog entry to the journal article blog on the Blackboard course site. Each entry must be at least 12 sentences long, and be cited thoroughly. You are describing not only what the thesis and findings of the article, but you are describing what it means for your future practice. Make sure to choose readings that interest you. You must get the instructor’s written blog reply to beat it. Your goal is to beat five of these journal articles (but read more, for learning’s sake).

- **Teacher Assessment Interview**: This interview will test your powers of leadership and synthesis. You will interview a teacher about the assessments they use, the data they gather, and how the data are used to inform their policy and practice. Make sure you discuss classroom-level and building/district-level assessments. Your job is to investigate everything you can about how assessments are used and what they’re used for. You will then write a 5-page paper about your findings and post a digital copy on the interview blog on the Blackboard course site. You must get the instructors' written blog reply to beat it.

- **Assessment Video**: This video will test your powers of gathering and technology. You will create a video that describes a student-centered assessment strategy. You must do a lot of research to become an “expert” in that assessment type. These may include project-based assessment, social media-based assessment, differentiated instruction, case-based learning, experimental learning, experiential learning, and so on. You cannot use problem-based learning, since we used it so much in class. Your video should discuss where the assessment was originally developed, who the “big names” are in that field, how the assessment is designed and implemented, the benefits of the assessment, obstacles for its implementation, and how you could use it in your future classroom (including subjects it may be best in and ages it may be best with). You will then post the video to the video blog on the Blackboard course site. You must get the instructors' written blog reply to beat it.

- **Case Study Wiki Entry**: This entry will test your power of sight beyond sight. You will research the most recent student achievement data of a district in Iowa. You must figure out what tests students took, when they took them (beginning of year, pre/post, etc.), what was assessed, if the district reached the required proficiency levels, what subjects were not met (if any), and what subgroups did not meet proficiency in certain subjects (if any). You will then post the results on the district wiki on the Blackboard course site. Be careful—people will get bored if you post too many numbers. Focus on describing the district’s assessments results in a way that clearly paints the picture for the reader, and add your own thoughts about what the results mean, and why you believe they came out the way they did. You must get the instructors’ written wiki reply to beat it.
WORKS CITED


