

GET IN THE GAME!

LEVEL UP YOUR CLASSROOM PRACTICE WITH  
GAMIFIED INSTRUCTION

Jonathan M. Cassie, Ed.D.

Director of Curriculum and Innovation, TVT Community Day School

Game Level Learn

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# THESIS

Industrial-age instructional techniques leave many Information-age students in the dust. Gamified instruction is one method (among many) that teachers might embrace to leverage the Millennial mindset and the unique power of games to build flow, sustain interest, empower responsibility and build productive risk-taking and determination.



SORTING OUT SOME TERMS



# GAMIFICATION



# GAME-BASED LEARNING



# GAMIFIED LEARNING

QUESTIONS?

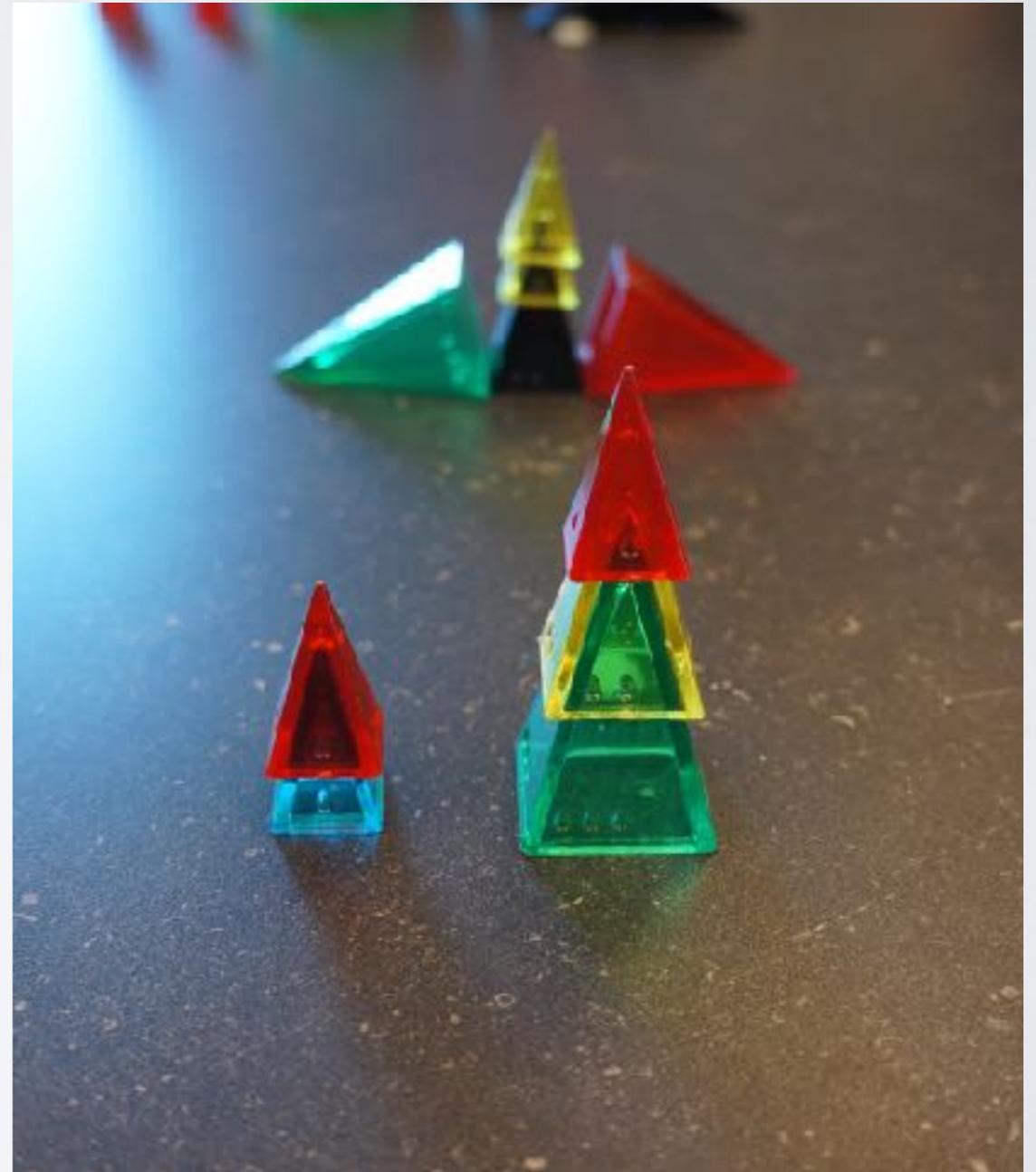
# GAMIFIED LEARNING

- Games Have Rules



# GAMIFIED LEARNING

- One Game, Many Outcomes



# GAMIFIED LEARNING

- The Magic Circle Constrains Choices, Making the Game Fun



# GAMIFIED LEARNING

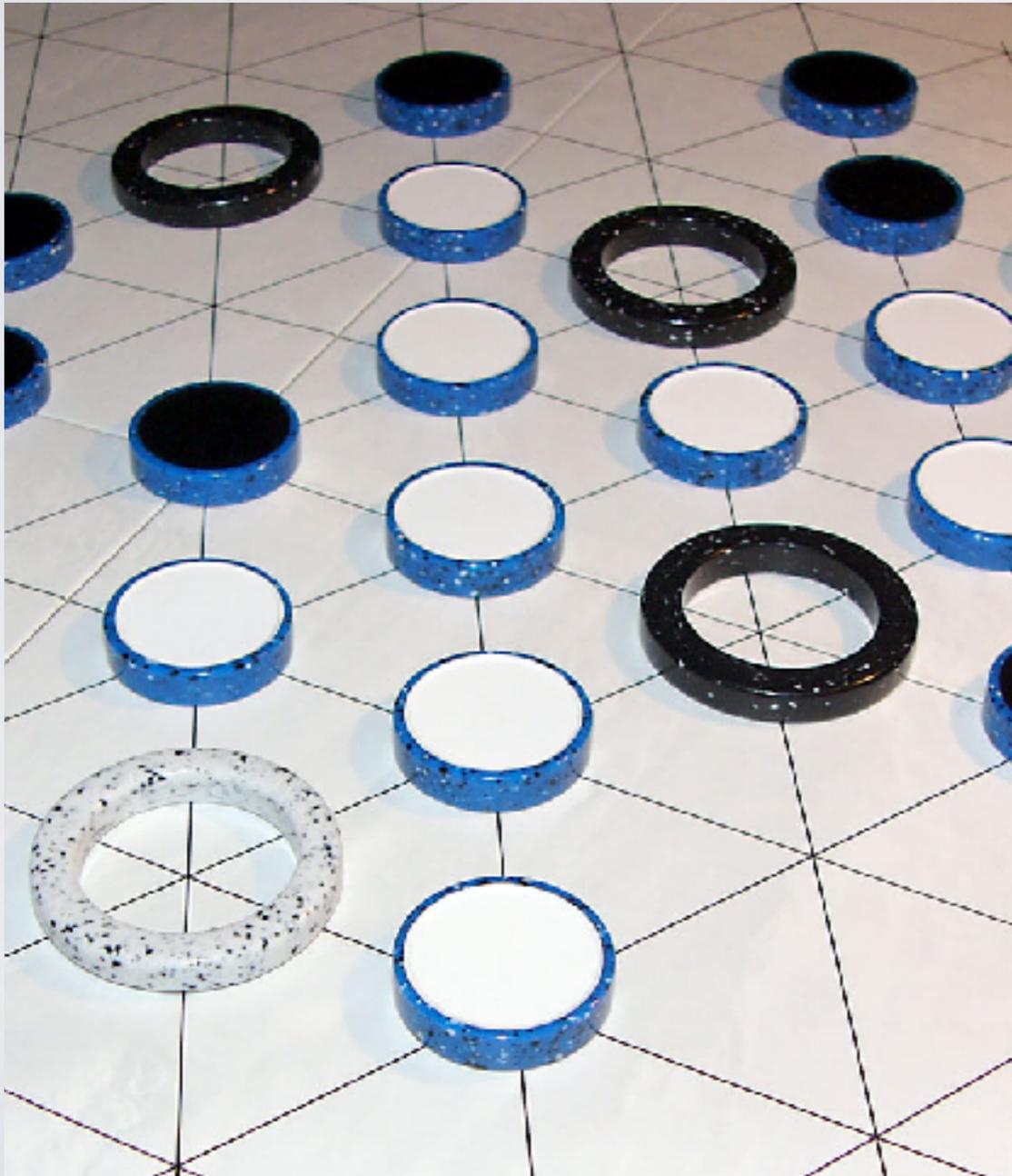
- Games Can Be Won (and Players Want to Win)



# FOUR MECHANICS UNDERPIN GAMIFIED INSTRUCTION

AGON  
ALEA  
MIMICRY  
ILINX

# AGON



- Games of Agon are won or lost on measurements of skill.
- They are adversarial.
- Agon-gamification: action point table, the nature of the game itself

# ALEA



- Games of Alea are won or lost based on luck or chance.
- Their randomness negates personal responsibility.
- Alea-gamification: victory point table, the random selection of questions

# MIMICRY



- Games of Mimicry incorporate a state of being that speaks to a closed or imaginary universe. The player gets to take on a perspective informed by an explicitly different viewpoint.
- Mimicry-gamification: certain 3, 4 and 5 point questions obligate the player to take on the role of a character in the continuing story. “Sextus est puer molestus.”

# ILINX



- Greek for “whirlpool,” Ilinx speaks to the pleasing disorientation that comes from a sudden reversal or advantage or surprise.
- Ilinx-gamification: VP ranges, whether a strong player has missed a question, a player draws a character she’s known for portraying well

# ACTION POINTS IN A LATIN CLASSROOM

- 45 minute review of current grammar anticipating a summative assessment
- Heterogeneous grouping (made by you)
- Objective: Be the first or second team to 50 points. First team to 50 wins a “leap chip,” which they can turn in anytime this year to skip a question on any summative assessment. Second team to 50 wins a “consultation coin,” which they can use anytime this year to ask you a question about a question on a summative assessment that you would normally not answer.

## **Action Points: 5/turn**

1: describe one quality of one word

2: describe two qualities of one word

3: describe all grammatical properties of all nouns and adjectives in one phrase and translate

4: describe all grammatical properties of all nouns and adjectives in one sentence and translate

5: translate an English sentence into proper idiomatic Latin and describe the grammatical properties of all words.

## **Victory Point (VP) Table**

- 1 point questions earn 1 VP
- 2 point questions earn 3 or 4 VP
- 3 point questions earn 7 VP
- 4 point questions earn between 12 and 25 VP
- 5 point questions earn between 25 and 50 VP



THIS ENGINE CAME FROM:

Java (above) and its sister games in the Mask Series:  
Tikal and Mexica

# CARD DRAFTING IN AN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

- Gamify an assessment such that nearly every student's version of the assessment is slightly different
- Each student has their own personalized combination of cards that spells out the nature of their particular assessment
- The Question: Demonstrate your knowledge of the play *Macbeth's* characters, theatrical speech and Aristotelean concepts by means of a dramatic speech. The unique nature of your speech is determined by the cards you will select from a number of different decks.

# CREATE FIVE DECKS

Your Character

(Lady Macbeth,  
The Witches, etc.)

Aristotelean  
Rhetoric

Ethos, Hamartia,  
Pathos

Motif

Ambition, Fate,  
Gender

Type of Speech

Soliloquy,  
Dialogue,  
Monologue

Special Boons

Pick One  
Teacher Writes A  
Line

# FOUR MECHANICS?

AGON

Rhetoric  
Motif

ALEA

The Card Drafting  
Mechanic

MIMICRY

The Character

ILINX

Combinations of Cards  
Effective Use of Boon



THIS ENGINE CAME FROM:

7 Wonders (above) and other card drafting games

# Mechanics Informed By Video Games

Avatars

Questing

Combat

Guilds

Leveling

Bosses

Loot

Leaderboards

Achievements

# AVATARS

- Alternative identities
- Can help students manage their feelings of self-doubt about certain topics
- Key notion: MIMICRY



# DOING AVATARS

- Statistics (base these on the kinds of challenges you are going to build into your gamified approach...and be creative!)
- Skills (align them with the learning skills in your class)
- Equipment (what stuff do these avatars have that give them a unique advantage?)
- Advantages/Disadvantages/Backstory

# QUESTING

- A deliberately designed, thoughtful pathway through content that maximizes player choice in mastering that content.
- Key notion: PATHWAY



# DOING QUESTING

- “Gather 6 pieces of data that inform you about the state of women’s rights in America before 1970.”
- “Gather 10 pieces of data about animals living in the tundra biome.”

# COMBAT

- Abstracted competition between teams that deliberately choose a combat challenge as part of their pathway.
- Key notion: CHOICE



# DOING COMBAT

- Every team in the gamified learning gets this instruction: “submit your best piece of evidence about the state of women in America before 1970 to a teacher other than me by close of school on Friday. That teacher will rank your answers. The two highest ranked answers will win.”

# LEVELING

- Carefully constructed learning process by which the challenge the player faces increases in precise steps towards mastery.
- Key notion: INCREASING DIFFICULTY



# DOING LEVELING

- Gather 6 pieces of data that inform you about...
- Black Americans
- Native Americans
- Mexican Americans
- GLBT Americans

THEN

- Do something with these data that reflects the skills you are trying to impart

# BOSSSES

- In this context - a difficult or rigorous question requiring either:
- ...significant individual time dedicated to integrating many strands of learning  
OR
- ...the work of many people to succeed.



# DOING BOSSES

- SC BOSS WIN: Choose one of the following socially constructed concepts (parenting, family, gender, sexual orientation, adolescence, work) and trace all of the ways in what that concept has changed since America 2.0 began to give way to America 3.0. Trace the development of the change in your chosen concept through each of its major crisis points, how the American people have stimulated and resisted the change and speculate based on reason and sound evidence how you believe your chosen concept might continue to develop over the next ten years.



# GUILDS

Contract-based, output-focused, self-correcting learning teams



# LOOT

Awards that help an avatar prepare for more complex, difficult or sophisticated challenges yet to come

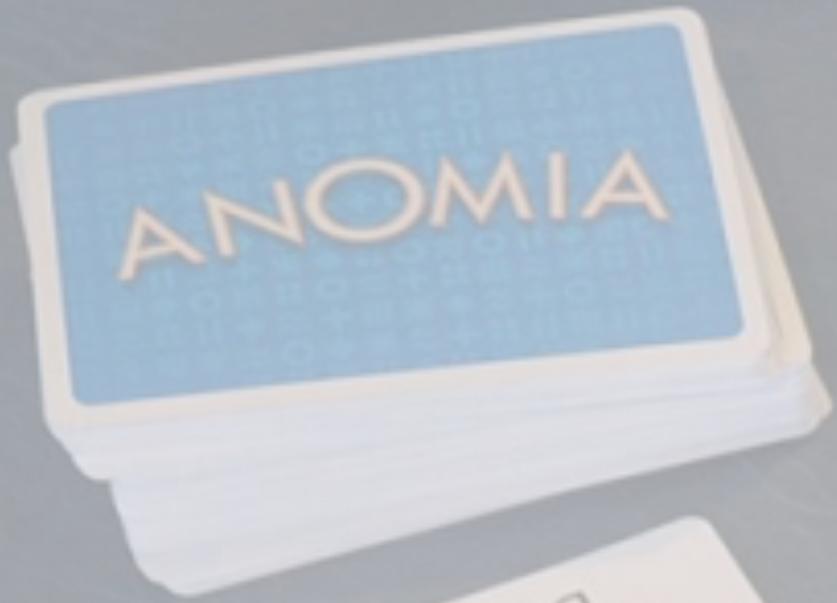
# LEADERBOARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- A compelling, alternative way for students to demonstrate kinds of mastery.
- (Be Mindful - leaderboards can be off putting to some)
- “Be the first student to record a video, put it on YouTube and get a comment from a source outside of school.”
- Gather knowledge from a non-American source.
- Gather knowledge from a source written in a language other than English.



GAME-BASED LEARNING:  
PLAY THESE GAMES OUT OF THE BOX!

# AT THE INTERSECTION OF LANGUAGE ARTS AND MAKERSPACES







# TALKING TO PARENTS

- How will this be graded?
- How will this prepare my child for standardized test x?
- My child already plays too many video games...
- You're the teacher...shouldn't you be teaching?
- My child has the XYZ learning style...

# TALKING TO STUDENTS

- How will this be graded?
- I don't want to do this kind of work; I want you to tell me what I need to know.
- Can't I just take a test?
- I don't like having to do group work.
- I don't like games.

# TALKING TO COLLEAGUES AND ADMINISTRATORS

- How are you grading this?
- Video games are inappropriate tools for classroom learning.
- You aren't doing the same thing your fellow teachers are doing...
- It sure looks like you don't have control of your classroom.
- How do you prepare for this kind of teaching?

# GAME LEVEL LEARN COMMUNITY

- Game Level Learn podcast with two seasons of content (season 3, all about RPGS, launches in April)
- Game Level Learn webpage with dozens of articles
- Facebook group with 1600+ members
- Want to contribute? Email me!



# Let's Connect!

Me

[joncassie@gmail.com](mailto:joncassie@gmail.com)

[www.joncassie.com](http://www.joncassie.com)

Facebook: jonathan.cassie

Twitter @joncassie

Board Game Geek: joncassie

