



OLTD 508 - Reflection on my Inquiry Project

For my second piece of evidence for this course, I chose my inquiry project. As a topic, I decided to continue exploring the idea of using a MMORPG as the structure for a course; this project addresses the second critical challenge question, **can game based learning inform and benefit my teaching practices while offering alternative learning experiences for students?**

I have also added a link to the screencast I created about World of Warcraft in education, which was the beginning of this whole exploration.

These two pieces of evidence address the learning outcomes ***“Develop practical and technical skills in all phases of concept, development, design, implementation, etc. within mobile learning and gaming environments”*** as well as ***“develop and design intentional learning activities suitable for the appropriate mobile learning and gaming environments and the learner i.e. incorporation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and selection of strategies and resources appropriate for environment, learners and learning outcomes.***

I had the opportunity to work through and learn about a gamified learning environment, Rezzly. This experience reminded me of working with Canvas, except that it incorporated experience points, badges and achievements. This makes for such a fun experience for the student! I had a chance of being on the other side of the coin a couple of courses ago, when our professor used Rezzly to organize the course; the experience of being the creator of the environment this time around was very rewarding. I found the quest creation interface similar to the old Wordpress blog interface, and very intuitive. It is easy to set quests to become available only when other quests are completed, creating problems that are organized in a sequential manner. From a teacher's perspective, this is a great tool; however, an adventure is not made by one quest alone. Unfortunately, due

to time constraints, I was unable to finish creating the whole adventure; I am in the process of organizing the branches of quests and figuring out who goes where. But this process gave me an even bigger appreciation for courses like Peggy Sheehy's, and the effort it took to create such a course.

These gamified learning environments using a game as a base, such as the one I am creating for Istaria, or the one for World of Warcraft, adhere to Universal Design principles by allowing for customization in all areas. There is always more than one way to solve a problem, providing for multiple means of engagement, and choices you make in that world influence the outcome of your adventure; but the adventure itself should provide quests that are unique and different, bringing multiple means of expression of learning. As I continue developing this course, I will keep in mind the flavour of my quests, so that I include all kinds of learners in these quests, and keep everyone motivated.

To finalize my reflection, I want to bring a section of my second evidence's conclusion, which explains my favourite thing about games:

Games teach children that you may get there, but you will probably die miserably many times before you do. It teaches you that true victories feel so good because they take so much hard work. In real life, when a child fails and is able to rise again, and finally succeeds, there is no better feeling. Athletes everywhere know this; even if they believe they have what it takes to win a marathon, they may still lose. However, if they don't believe they can, they will most likely never win.

Currently, the New Curriculum in the province of B.C. is trying hard to change education's focus towards creativity and critical thinking. They are working towards fostering children who have the tools to become entrepreneurs, and inventors, and world-shakers. A properly designed game experience can bring all these necessary elements together, and in a subtle way, build resilience in our children, as well as minds that are able to mold themselves around different situations.