

OLTD 508 – Reflection of Assignment 3 entitled “Shall We Play a Game?” I chose this piece of evidence to reflect my understanding of the OLTD Learning Outcome – ***Understand the relationship between “good learning” and video games as outlined by James Paul Gee.***

I went all in for this assignment. I was excited that part of the assignment was literally, playing a game, and after spending quite a bit of time searching for a game that could be used with elementary-aged students, I was anxious to find out if I would find success with it as I don’t consider myself a ‘seasoned gamer.’ I decided on a game called *Lost in Play* and then had to assess if the game was appropriate and if it had the potential for being leveraged in a learning environment.

Thanks to James Paul Gee, I was able to put a name to so many of the gaming elements and scenarios I was put in as the player. As I worked my way through the game, I was able to notice when there was a ‘fish tank’ scenario, or when I came across a ‘pleasantly frustrating’ puzzle, and even when I was problem-solving and those problems were ‘Well-Ordered.’ For example, the fish tank principle made an appearance in the form of an entertaining, cleverly hidden tutorial at the beginning of the game. Without letting me know that I was in a fish tank, the game slowly introduced me to the mechanics required, in order for me to successfully engage with and navigate the world of *Lost in Play*. The game taught me how to do something (engage with and navigate the world) without my realizing that I was learning- I was too busy playing. Good Games = Good Learning.

At least 1 of James Paul Gee’s 13 learning principles for good learning can be found in just about every video game out there. Through this course, I’ve seen the potential for great learning in the K-12 system by taking advantage of good gaming. Understanding ***the relationship between “good learning” and video games*** means exploring more options for online learning through video games by taking advantage of the versatility, engaging and entertaining elements that video games provide. The final eureka moment in this project came to me when writing this reflection and going back to Gee’s principles and his description of fish tanks. He states that video games are a simplified, diversely entertaining, and consequence-free form of learning, and although video games often have fish tanks in them - I’m left wondering if video games themselves aren’t the real fish tanks. Gee says “fish tanks are good for learning”, and if this is true, then so are video games.