

Video Game Designer Teacher Tips

It probably isn't much of a stretch to assume that you often encounter students who are obsessed with playing video games. This Career Ideas Challenge falls into the "if you can't beat them, join them" category by associating gaming with a high-tech career. It also introduces expanded opportunities as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and other emerging technologies are applied to simulated learning environments used in education, business, the military, and the government.



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DISCUSS

Take a survey of the most popular video games played by your students. Turn the conversation toward the people and professions behind their favorite games. Make a list of the types of careers associated with creating video games.

READ

Students can read the text about video game designers out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

These queries prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal "self to world" connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like "video game designer" "video game developer" or even "artificial intelligence scientist."
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school's career development software platform (such as Career Cruising/Xello) or your state's career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Ask students to identify a specific subject in school that they encountered difficulty mastering by traditional means of textbook and class lectures. Challenge them to come up ideas for presenting that same subject in an interactive game or simulation. Ask them to use the back side of their activity sheets to create storyboards that show how their game would work. Storyboards are graphic organizers that use words and illustrations to flowchart the sequence of action in a game.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

Introduce students to SCRATCH, an online learning community where they can create games, stories and animations. The site is hosted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and can be found at <https://scratch.mit.edu>.

BUILD YOUR CAREER EXPLORATION COLLECTION

Check out the new **Emerging Tech Careers** series produced by Bright Futures Press as a way to introduce cutting-edge tech careers to your middle grade students. Eight titles feature exciting careers in *Artificial Intelligence*, *Drone Technology*, *Nanomedicine*, *Personal Space Travel*, *Robot Technology*, *Self-Driving Car Technology*, *Virtual Reality*, and *Wearable Electronics*. For more information visit www.brightfuturespress.com or contact Diane Lindsey Reeves at dreeves@brightfuturespress.com.