Computer Games for Learning: An Evidence-Based Approach (MIT Press)

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Many strong claims are made for the educational value of computer games, but there is a need for systematic examination of the research evidence that might support such claims. This book fills that need by providing, a comprehensive and up-to-date investigation of what research shows about learning with computer games.

Computer Games for Learning describes three genres of game research: the value-added approach, which compares the learning outcomes of students who learn with a base version of a game to those of students who learn with the base version plus an additional feature; the cognitive consequences approach, which compares learning outcomes of students who play an off-the-shelf computer game for extended periods to those of students who do not; and the media comparative approach, which compares the learning outcomes of students who learn material by playing a game to those of students who learn the same material using conventional media.

After introductory chapters that describe the rationale and goals of learning game research as well as the relevance of cognitive science to learning with games, the book offers examples of research in all three genres conducted by the author and his colleagues at the University of California, Santa Barbara; meta-analyses of published research; and suggestions for future research in the field. The book is essential reading for researchers and students of educational games, instructional designers, learning-game developers, and anyone who wants to know what the research has to say about the educational effectiveness of computer games.

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Editorial Review

Review

Mayer's research on computer games is exemplary in a field where there are many 'one shot' studies. His research program is dynamic, theoretically guided, and builds carefully from one study to the next. It is described in this book which should be read by anyone interested in using computer games for instruction.

(Sigmund Tobias, Eminent Research Professor, Division of Educational Psychology and Methodology, University at Albany, SUNY)

Among the enthusiastic calls for game-based learning, Richard Mayer has balanced the hype with a readable, unbiased look at what research tells us about gamification. From training manager to course developer, workforce learning practitioners should digest the guidelines in this book to inform their decisions about when and how to best use games for learning.

(Ruth Colvin Clark, author of *Evidence-Based Training Methods*)

" *Computer Games for Learning* is an indispensable read for anyone interested in the field of games and learning. Richard E. Mayer applied his thoughtful, systematic, and rigorous approach to the review of empirical research to this area to produce what will become the standard work on this topic.

(Jan L. Plass, Paulette Goddard Chair in Digital Media and Learning Sciences, New York University; Co-Director, Games for Learning Institute)

About the Author

Richard E. Mayer is Professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the author or editor of more than twenty-five books, including *Applying the Science of Learning* and *Multimedia Learning*.

Users Review

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