

GAME DESIGN COMPETITION 2016

SUPPORTS CLASSROOM

LEARNING IN YEARS 7-13

education.nzta.govt.nz

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During Terms 1 & 2, 2016, students can apply their curriculum strengths to make compelling designs for games about road safety.

The competition is for students in Years 7 to 13 in New Zealand schools. Teams must be three or more students. The deadline is 5pm, Friday 1 July 2016.

There are two competition categories:

GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT

Students create an idea for a great game, and use words and imagery to explain how it works, who it is aimed at and what it looks like. They'll need to show how they tested and shared their ideas with others.

PLAYABLE GAME + GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT

Students develop a game, document the design, test ideas with others, and code or construct a prototype. They then share their game within their school community. They submit a design document and a link to a playable game or a video of the game in action.

Games can be any format: a digital game (desktop, browser, tablet or phone) or a board game, card game, simulation/drama game or physical activity.

Suggested topics include speed, distractions, tired drivers, young drivers and urban cycling.

The competition website maps out how teachers can apply game-based learning outcomes to existing curriculum resources across several learning areas. These provide a straight-forward way to add game design activities to existing curriculum delivery in your classroom.

Full details and support for teachers and students will be here: education.nzta.govt.nz/gamecompetition

'NetSafe supports schools that face safety and security challenges related to digital technology. NetSafe is a 'safety partner' by providing online safety advice to schools and young people if required during their participation in the competition.'

netsafe
www.netsafe.org.nz

THE PRIZES



One winning team in each category gets:

- **\$5000** of vouchers for the school
- **\$1500** of vouchers for the students
- **\$1000** of vouchers for the supervising teacher.



One of the two category winners will be judged the overall winner.

The prize: an additional **\$5000** of vouchers for the school.

All entries which meet competition requirements go into a lucky draw for 1 of **5 x \$2000** vouchers for their schools.

Giving game design a go in your classroom

'Start to test and play with your creation as soon as you can. Test your design with other people and then refine your ideas.'

RACHEL BOLSTAD, COMPETITION JUDGE



Rachel

Start from what students know, says Rachel Bolstad, a senior researcher at NZCER and one of the Game Design Competition judges.

Teachers can start from what they and their students know about games and take it from there.

'You don't have to start with advanced skills,' says Rachel Bolstad, an education researcher and judge in the Game Design Competition.

'Everybody is familiar with games of some kind. You could start by picking apart a familiar game and thinking about what makes that tick, what hooks people. Then your students can think about how to apply some of those concepts to the problems we're trying to address around safe road use.'

TAPPING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

By doing this, teachers tap into student 'game literacy'. The class may bring considerable depth, expertise, and knowledge acquired through their own experiences which teachers can surface and direct towards a purposeful outcome.

Rachel says student groups don't need to map out an entire game design project in advance. They may have the rough outline of a game and then go through cycles of improvement.

'Start to test and play with your creation as soon as you can. Test your design with other people and then refine your ideas. Prototyping and testing helps you to figure out what does work and how to improve on the core game mechanic you've developed. You may cycle through several ideas that don't quite work as you expect, but this is just part of the process of getting from a good idea to a great game.'

THINK OF THE END USER

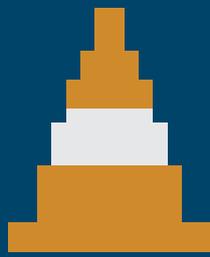
Students will need to think about the people who would play their game, and how their design would engage and motivate these people, says Rachel.

'You should think about your audience when you're creating any kind of text and that is especially true with the interactive nature of games. The story in the game will only reveal itself to players once they are actually playing the game.'

'As a designer you should ask yourself, what is the story you are trying to tell through your game? How will players experience that through the interactions they have in the game?'

Students and teachers entering a playable game can test their prototypes with actual players while teams submitting the game design document should also seek feedback and find out how their ideas stack up from someone else's point of view.

'Game designers frequently have to pitch their ideas to someone else, such as a funder, at an early stage. So learning how to pitch confidently and seek constructive feedback is an important skill for a budding game designer. You can practice pitching your ideas to anyone in your life - friends, peers, teachers, family members. If they don't 'get' your idea, think about what you could change or refine, and try again!'



GAME DESIGN COMPETITION: STUDENT AND TEACHER GUIDES ONLINE

Everything is here: education.nzta.govt.nz/gamecompetition

This website provides practical advice and links to resources which unpack the game design process and link it to curriculum-based learning.

The website also contains:

- a template for students which outlines the key information and ideas they'll need to provide in their game design document
- judging criteria to clarify what makes a good entry
- links to game building platforms, advice on game design and other useful stuff for students
- research highlights about game design as a mode of classroom learning
- five suggested road safety topics with questions to prompt student thinking. Entrants can design their game to address one of these or come up with their own topic. The five are: speed, distractions, tired drivers, young drivers and urban cycling.

The website brings together the NZ Transport Agency's curriculum resources to support teaching content knowledge for the game design competition. Links are provided by learning area to New Zealand Curriculum-aligned resources created and trialled by New Zealand teachers and educators. Some are at curriculum levels 4-5 and others are aligned to NCEA standards. Included are suggested game design tasks to help teachers select and reframe learning activities from each resource.

Competition entries will be submitted via an online form on education.nzta.govt.nz/gamecompetition. The form will be live in 2016. More support and ideas are in the works so expect regular updates during Terms 1 & 2, 2016.

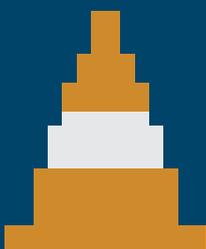
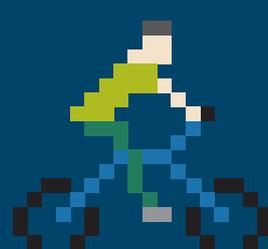
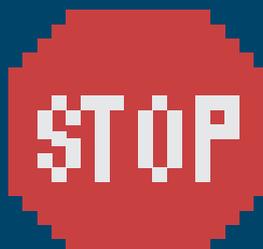
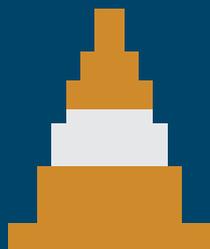
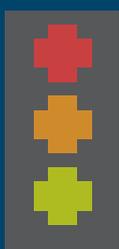
KEY COMPETENCIES IN CONTEXT

Collaborating on an authentic task like game design enables students to develop key competencies within a knowledge context, says Rachel Bolstad, senior researcher at NZCER and competition judge.

'It's an opportunity to get deep into thinking about what 'participating and contributing' and 'relating to others' means in the context of road safety. What's our part to play in contributing to a safe road system? What are the cognitive and behavioural factors that contribute to how people use our roads? How can a game influence the way people think about these things? These are the kinds of big questions students can explore as part of their game design process.'

Rachel's research on games for learning: www.nzcer.org.nz/research/games-learning.

Teachers on Google+ can join search for: Games + The Future of Learning (NZCER)



THE PEOPLE PICKING THE WINNERS

Here are the members of the Game Design Competition judging panel. They'll share more ideas about games for learning and road safety in upcoming articles. And in July 2016, they'll select the winners based on judging criteria found on the competition website.

BEN KENOBI

Ben Kenobi teaches in the Bachelor and Masters of Creative Technologies programmes at Colab and the Game and Play Design Minors in Art and Design at the Auckland University of Technology. He has a background in architecture and game design. He is the current director of the PIGsty: Play and Games Lab at AUT, a board member of the NZGDA (NZ Game Developers Association) and is an active member of the NZ commercial and indie game scene.

'Tell me and I will forget - show me and I will remember - let me play and I will understand. All games teach us and this competition is an opportunity for you to rise to the challenge and make a real difference on NZ roads'.



Ben

RACHEL PRINCE

Rachel manages New Zealand's road safety ad campaigns, working on notable ads such as Ghost Chips (Legend), Blazed and Mistakes. She's held this role at the NZ Transport Agency since 2002. Rachel says the ads are based on evidence about how people use our roads, and are driven by research about the target audience.

'An effective game about road safety will take the same approach - find people such as friends, classmates or family and test your ideas every step of the way'.



Rachel

MARTIN LANGHOFF

Martin is a programmer and systems architect. He was 9 years old when his dad brought home a computer - and Martin discovered that the best game was to write new games with his friend. To this day, he has never formally studied computer science. Former CTO of One Laptop Per Child, founder of Catalyst's e-learning technology team, a Moodle developer, former development lead on a project to roll out Moodle to the NZ tertiary sector, and former lead developer for TKI.

'Build your game with a friend, build it for others to enjoy and don't forget to enjoy it yourself'.



Martin

RACHEL BOLSTAD

A senior researcher at NZCER, Rachel describes her work as driven by an endless curiosity about the world and a commitment to better educational experiences and outcomes for all learners. She leads Games for Learning, a project investigating the role of games to support transformative learning opportunities for diverse learners in diverse New Zealand schools.

'Game design pushes and stretches your thinking. It requires lateral thinking and creativity but also lots of testing and refining of ideas to make them playable'.



Rachel

INSPECTOR PAULA HOLT

Paula is Community Services Manager at the National Prevention Centre at Police National Headquarters, and mum to a busy eight and ten year old. She oversees community police and school community policing. Over 100 dedicated school community officers work with schools across the country and this includes a focus on road safety that enables students to travel safely in their community and build a safety consciousness around roads.

'This competition will be a great way for students to take action and contribute to a safe road system. It enables them to demonstrate active citizenship, with the power to create a safer future world they will live in'.



Paula

NEIL MELHUIH

Neil works at NetSafe, the organisation that promotes confident, safe, and responsible use of online technologies. His focus is on strategic policy, support for schools and pondering the role of digital technology in the lives of young people, family and whānau. He spent many years on the ground teaching science and computing before moving into educational policy.

'I am really looking forward to seeing how students get to grips with creating a compelling gaming experience while also conveying meaningful ideas about road safety'.



Neil

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