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Create a library game in 90 minutes

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Making games for libraries...
at #nextlibrary2015

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Extra #tag for the session- #libraryplay

http://innovativelibraries.org.uk

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What is play?

"Summing up the formal characteristic of play, we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious' but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings that tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress the difference from the common world by disguise or other means."

Huizinga (1955) Homo Ludens

play is *Apparently Purposeless* (done for its own sake); *Voluntary*; has *Inherent Attraction*; *Freedom from time*; *Diminished consciousness of self*; *Improvisational potential;* and *Continuation desire*.

Brown & Vaughan (2010) *Play: How it shapes the brain, opens the imagination, and invigorates the soul*.

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What are games?

Play with rules?

"All games share four defining traits: a goal, rules, a feedback system, and voluntary participation."

McGonigal (2012) *Reality is broken: Why games make us better and how they can change the world.*

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A process for making games...

- Decide on learning objectives
- Consider some constraints
- Decide on game mechanics
- Pick a theme
- Prototype
- playtest and improve
- Write some rules
- Finish the design and print!

Set a learning objective!

What do you want the players of your game to have learnt by the end of it?

Can you build into the game a way of testing that learning? Or will other activities go alongside the game?

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What constraints will be placed on your game?

These are things like:

- The number of players you need it to work for.

- The amount of time that can be taken to play it.

- Aspects of the location it will be played in.

- Whether it will be led by someone, or picked up and played independently.

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Think about some games you've played…

Write down the little elements that make it work.

- Do you need to collect points?

- Progress around a board?

- Roll a dice?

These are "game mechanics".

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Game mechanics

"Game Mechanics are constructs of rules and feedback loops intended to produce enjoyable gameplay. They are the building blocks that can be applied and combined to gamify any non-game context."

From Gamification Wiki - http://gamification.org/wiki/Game_Mechanics

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Game mechanics

- Acting
- Action Point Allowance System
- Area Control / Area Influence
- Area Enclosure
- Area Movement
- Area-Impulse
- Auction/Bidding
- Betting/Wagering
- Campaign / Battle Card Driven
- Card Drafting
- Chit-Pull System
- Co-operative Play
- Commodity Speculation
- Crayon Rail System
- Deck / Pool Building

- Dice Rolling
- Grid Movement
- Hand Management
- Hex-and-Counter
- Line Drawing
- Memory
- Modular Board
- Paper-and-Pencil
- Partnerships
- Pattern Building
- Pattern Recognition
- Pick-up and Deliver
- Point to Point Movement
- Press Your Luck
- Rock-Paper-Scissors
- Role Playing
- Roll / Spin and Move
- Route/Network Building

- Secret Unit Deployment
- Set Collection
- Simulation
- Simultaneous Action Selection
- Singing
- Stock Holding
- Storytelling
- Tile Placement
- Time Track
- Trading
- Trick-taking
- Variable Phase Order
- Variable Player Powers
- Voting
- Worker Placement

From "Board game Geek" http://boardgamegeek.com/

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Pick a theme or "feel" for the game

- This will help "shape" the game as you develop it.
- A good theme will transform a game and make it more engaging.

Image from: https://thewalkingdeadntic.wordpress.com/

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Prototype!

Grab the materials and start to create – don't think for too long before you start, think *while* you make.

Remember, how will you meet your learning outcome(s)?
- What key mechanics will you use?
- What are your key constraints?
- Who will play the game?
- How can it fit within your theme?

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Stop! Sabotage!

One person from each group move to the next group along.

I have a job for you ...

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Time to think about Rules!

Stop developing the game for now… and sketch out the rules:

- How many players (min & max)?

- What equipment is needed?

- How do you know who the winner is?

- What happens each turn?

Can you make them clear enough for someone else to follow?

You've just:

- Decided on learning objectives

- Considered some constraints

- Decided on game mechanics

- Picked a theme

- Prototyped

- (if more time – playtested and improved)

- Wrote some rules

- Final step would be to finish the design and print!

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More from me...

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