

“We don’t math. But, we do play.”
Teaching game design for Journalism

Juli James, Lecturer
University of North Texas

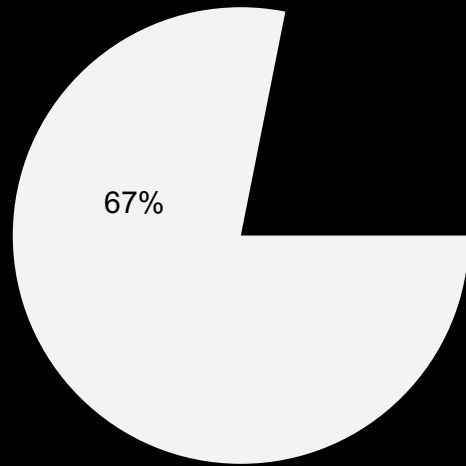




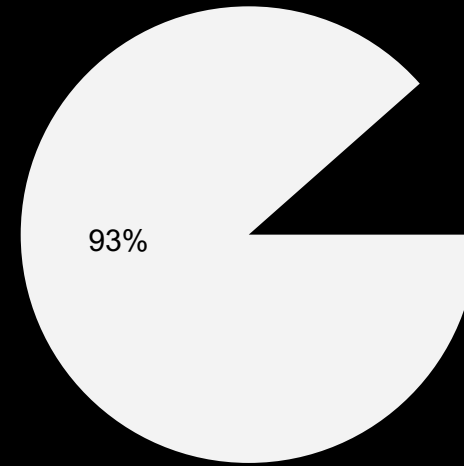


**Half of Americans
play mobile games.**

Who Plays?



US Adults



US Teens

“The overwhelming majority of adults play games on their smartphones” - *Statista*

**games are an
effective way to
communicate an
idea.**

**“Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me and I may remember.
Involve me and I learn.” - *Ben Franklin***

**make
games,
not code**



Easy

Engaging

Interactive

Mobile

**engage our
audience where
they are**



game 180 DAYS LEFT

housing
physical health
mental health
claims
work and education
social

However, you aren't the only one requesting help. 804,427 veterans are currently waiting for help from one of the 58 VA regional offices.

WAIT TIME MAY 27/13

WHO WE ARE ABOUT SOURCES DONATE

NEWS 21
backHOME THE FAILURES THE WOUNDED THE WOMEN THE COMMUNITY THE FUTURE ABOUT BREAKING NEWS

Can You Get What You Need from the VA?
by News21 Staff | News21 Published Aug. 24, 2013

180 days left

Click to play

VA CAN YOU MAKE IT IN THE VA?

f
twitter
+ RELATED

THE FAILURES THE WOUNDED THE WOMEN

back HOME

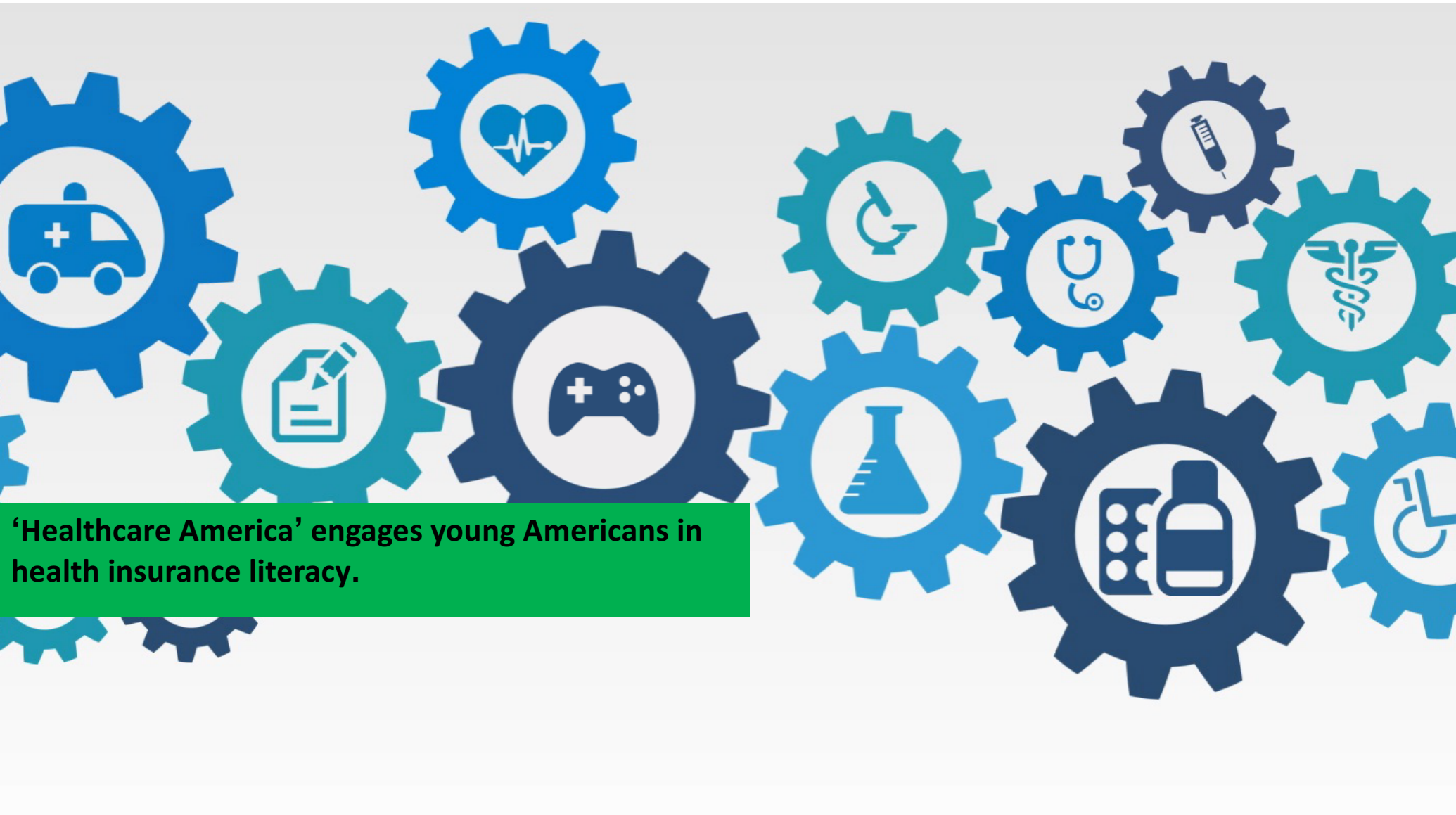
THE ENDURING BATTLES FACING POST-9/11 VETERANS

READ MORE

Public Insight Network®
AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA™

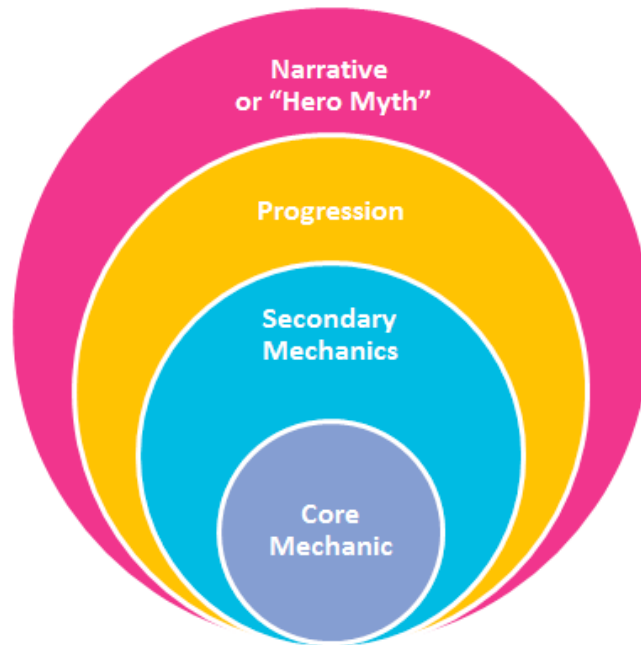


'Can You Make it in the VA?' puts player in the shoes of a returning veteran trying to access VA benefits with limited time and money.



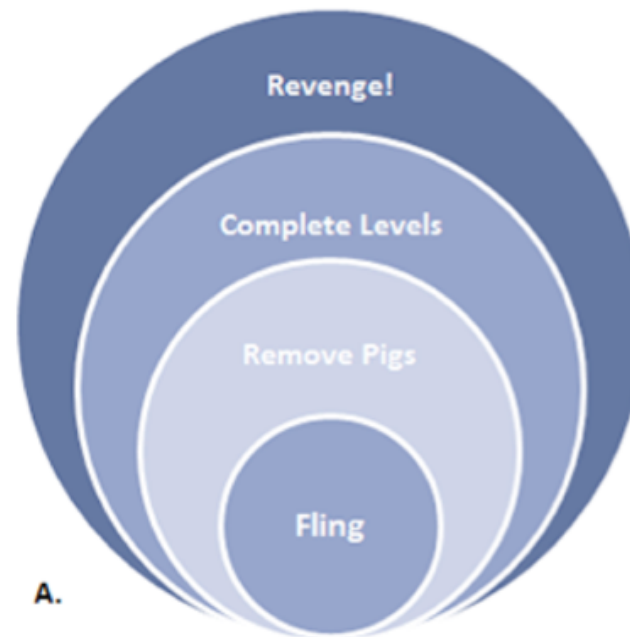
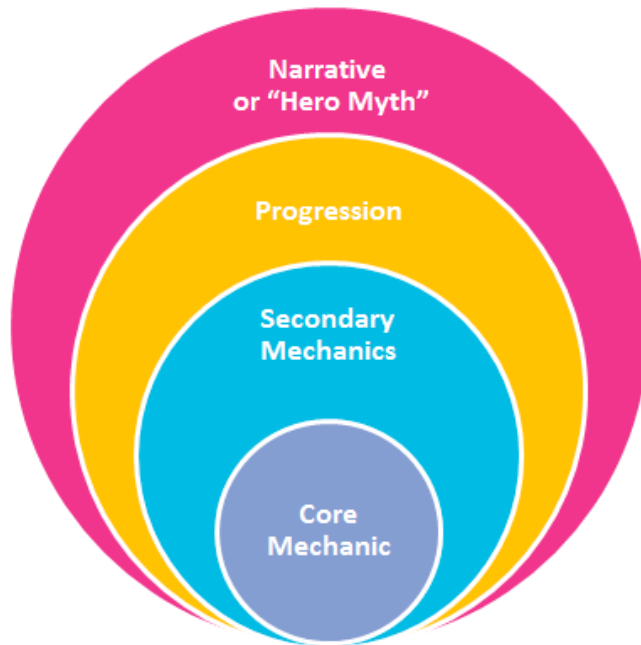
'Healthcare America' engages young Americans in health insurance literacy.

A Game Design Tool for Journalism



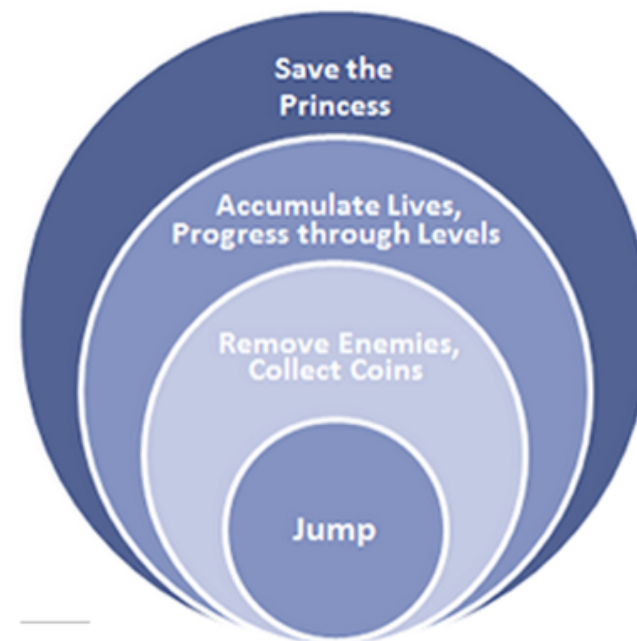
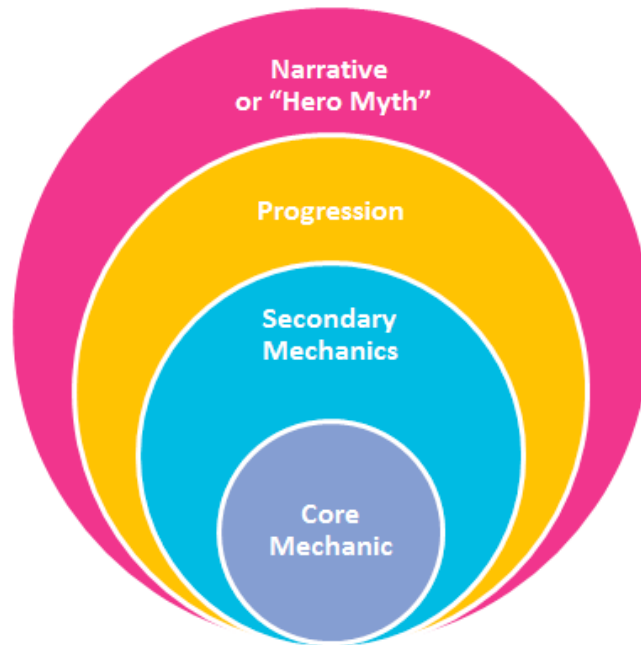
- Subject/Theme/Narrative:
 - What is the game about?
- Rules:
 - What happens? When? How?
- Mechanics:
 - What does the player do?
- Message/Impact:
 - What does it mean to the player, for the story, for the world?

A Game Design Tool

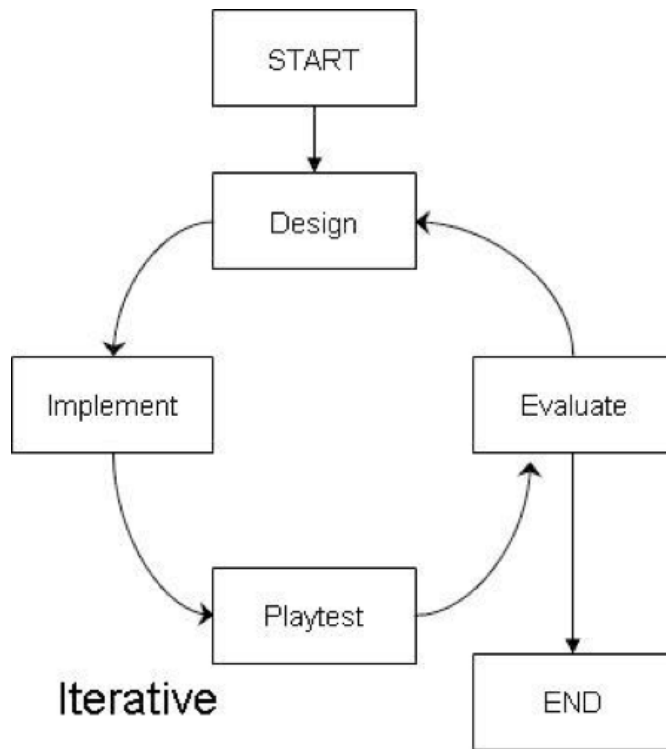


A.

A Game Design Tool



The Basic Game Design Cycle



Begin the cycle

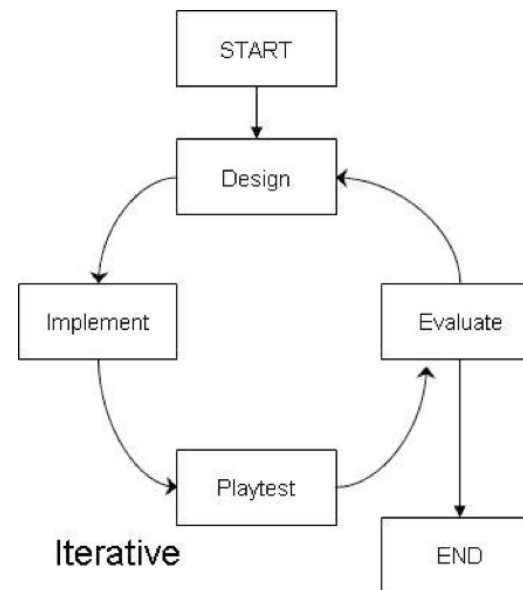
- 1) Start: Imagine the World
 - 2) Design: Create the World
 - 3) Implement: Open the World
 - 4) Playtest: Explore the World
- Repeat steps 2-4 as needed

Iterate as you go

- A design will “speak” to you through iterations.
- Pay attention to what it says!
- Is it getting the gameplay clear?
- Is it improving?
- What is working, and what isn't?

Workshop Exercise

- Work in Groups
- Roll for Inspiration
- Use the Game Design Cycle
 - Design: Imagine the Game
 - Implement/Playtest: Create
 - Evaluate: Refine
 - Implement/Playtest: Replay



Play, Design, Share

Game Design Exercise Example

Elements:

Topic: Sustainability

Verbs: Run, Bluff

Themes: Ninjas, Aliens

Adjectives: Angry, Old



How do you take your idea and make it playable?

How is it a news game?

Activities/Assignments

- Game Design Challenge: Getting started with game design
- DOPESTRONG: The mechanic is the message activity
- Table top game prototype
- Digital game prototype

Visual Engines for Game Design

- Twine <https://twinery.org/>
- Story Builder <https://app.playablemedia.org>
- RenPy <https://www.renpy.org/>
- Scratch <https://scratch.mit.edu/>
- Flowlab <http://flowlab.io/>

Games/Resources

- Spent <https://playspent.org>
- Fiscal Ship <https://fiscalship.org>
- Explorable Explanations <http://ncase.me/>
- Games for Change <http://www.gamesforchange.org/play/>
- JoLT Newsgame Resource <https://edspace.american.edu/jolt/>