

The Narrative Syllabus

Challenge: Identify and Sequence Instructional Goals

Summary:

Origin: Ask Pete (Capstone Project). This artifact is the 'quests.json' data file from the Daydream engine. This artifact demonstrates the identification and sequencing of instructional goals within the Daydream engine. It maps the 'Hero's Journey' narrative arc directly to specific performance outcomes, creating a dependency graph where one competency must precede the next.

Reflection:

I addressed the challenge to Identify and Sequence Instructional Goals by decomposing the complex competency of 'Metacognitive Reflection' into discrete, actionable behaviors. Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide, I sequenced these goals from lower-order thinking skills (Observation/Recall) to higher-order skills (Analysis/Synthesis). For example, in the 'Faulty Fountain' quest, the learner must first 'Analyze' the disorder (Step 1) before they can 'Synthesize' a repair plan (Step 4). This sequencing ensures that the learner possesses the prerequisite knowledge before attempting the terminal performance. I operationalized this sequence through the 'Quest Engine' architecture. Instead of a linear syllabus, I engineered a 'Dependency Graph' where instructional goals are represented as 'Quest Steps' (e.g., STEP_02_IDENTIFY_PARTS). The code strictly enforces this sequence; the 'Repair' interaction is mechanically locked until the 'Analyze' flag is set to true. This transforms the instructional sequence from a passive suggestion into an active rule of the environment, ensuring that 'skipping ahead' and thus cognitive overload is impossible. This approach to sequencing aligns with the project's 'Hero's Journey' narrative framework. By mapping instructional goals to plot points (e.g., The Call to Adventure = Problem Identification), I ensured that the pedagogical progression mirrors the emotional progression of the story. This 'Narrative-Pedagogical Alignment' reduces the friction often found in gamified learning, where the game and the learning feel disconnected. Here, the act of learning is the mechanism for advancing the story, creating a seamless and motivating user experience.

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