Lesson 10: Playtesting and Feedback

In this lesson, students will learn about the importance of playtesting in board game design and how to provide effective feedback. They will understand that playtesting is a crucial step in the design process, as it allows designers to gather feedback from players to improve the game and validate assumptions. Students will learn the characteristics of good feedback, such as being goal-centric, identifying problems, and analyzing their causes. They will also learn to differentiate between good and bad feedback and understand the importance of identifying the underlying problems in order to find effective solutions. Through guided and independent practice, students will playtest board games and provide feedback, and then present their findings to the class. This lesson aims to develop students' critical thinking and communication skills while emphasizing the significance of playtesting and feedback in improving board games.

Objectives:

- Students will understand the importance of playtesting in board game design.

- Students will learn how to provide effective feedback that is goal-centric and identifies problems and their causes.

- Students will differentiate between good feedback and bad feedback in the context of board game design.

Materials:

- Board games (preferably ones designed by students)

- Feedback forms or worksheets

- Writing materials (pens, pencils, etc.)

Bell-Ringer Activity (5 minutes):

- Display a board game on the board or projector.

- Ask students to brainstorm reasons why playtesting is important in board game design.

- Allow a few students to share their ideas with the class.

Introduction (10 minutes):

- Explain to students that playtesting is a crucial step in the board game design process.

- Discuss the purpose of playtesting, which is to gather feedback from players to improve the game and validate assumptions.

- Emphasize that feedback plays a significant role in this process.

- Share examples of successful board games that have gone through extensive playtesting and how it has contributed to their success.

Direct Instruction (20 minutes):

- Explain the characteristics of good feedback in the context of board game design:

- Goal-centric: Feedback should focus on whether the game achieves its intended goals or objectives.

- Problem identification: Feedback should clearly identify problems or issues within the game.

- Cause identification: Feedback should analyze and identify the causes of the problems.

- Discuss the characteristics of bad feedback in the context of board game design:

- Lack of reasoning: Feedback that lacks reasoning or explanation is not helpful in improving the game.

- Solution-oriented: Feedback that proposes solutions without identifying the underlying problems is not effective.

- Provide examples of good and bad feedback to further illustrate the concepts.

Guided Practice (30 minutes):

- Divide students into small groups.

- Distribute board games designed by students to each group.

- Instruct each group to playtest the game and provide feedback using the feedback forms or worksheets provided.

- Encourage students to focus on goal-centric feedback, problem identification, and cause identification.

- Circulate among the groups to provide guidance and support as needed.

Independent Practice (20 minutes):

- Ask each group to select one member to present their game and the feedback they received to the class.

- Each group member should take turns sharing their feedback and explaining why it is considered good or bad.

- Encourage the class to ask questions and provide additional feedback to the presenting group.

Exit Ticket (5 minutes):

- Distribute exit tickets to each student.

- Ask students to write down one thing they learned about playtesting and providing feedback in board game design.

Closure (5 minutes):

- Review the objectives of the lesson and ask students to reflect on their understanding of playtesting and feedback in board game design.

- Emphasize the importance of playtesting and effective feedback in improving board games.

- Encourage students to continue applying these concepts in their own board game designs.

Common Core Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.