

# Emerging Citizens Game and Curriculum



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## Part 1

### Executive Summary

The Emerging Citizens Game (ECG) is a collaborative team-based game where students use media literacy skills to explore and address pressing community issues, such as bullying, safety, or freedom of expression. By incorporating empowering mechanics that let players with unique skills and abilities thrive and giving kids the adult responsibility of evaluating quality in a playful space, ECG frames media literacy through a fun, competitive game system in order to increase enthusiasm and self-efficacy. ECG is supported by a media literacy curriculum that enhances the game's focus on collaborative inquiry, problem-solving, community engagement, and strategic use of evidence.

## Part 2

### Objectives and Goals

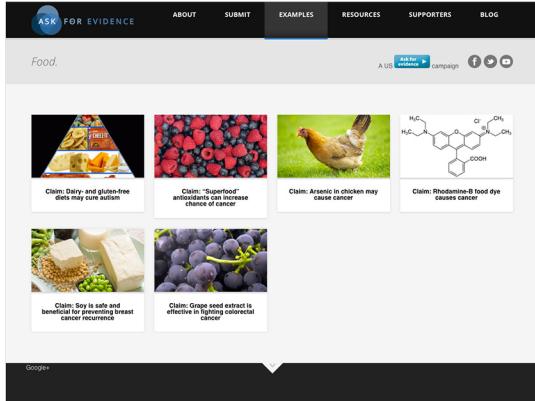
This project is motivated by the changing media landscape and the value of new media for facilitating education and broad participation in public life. Students are increasingly using social media to create and share information, pursue social relationships, engage in leisure activities, and make important decisions about personal privacy.

This curriculum and game are designed for educators to help students build the competencies to navigate this landscape: critically evaluating new media; participating creatively and responsibly; and educating, organizing, and mobilizing to address pressing community needs. The curricular emphasis is on "new media" -- on-demand access to content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, and real-time user creation of new content. Through the ECG game, students use these concepts, information, and competencies to

explore and address real challenges and opportunities in their own communities.

The ECG game and supporting curricular activities help students develop a range of skills and habits of mind that weave together Common Core English Language Arts and Mathematics standards, as well as the Next Generation Science Standards' Science and Engineering Practices. To understand the game, students need to internalize a clearly articulated set of rules and narrative structure. Play includes analyzing writing and images, communicating clearly, collaborating successfully, and thinking creatively. Students identify and define problems, plan and carry out investigations, interpret data to identify

patterns in their environments, and produce new insights that can be put to good use only through deliberation, reasoned arguments, and local planning.



This curriculum and ECG game are part of the Boston pilot of Ask for Evidence, a public information project that helps people evaluate the

evidence behind news stories, marketing claims, and public policies. Ask for Evidence was launched by Voices of Young Scientists, a grassroots network of early career researchers, and funded by Sense About Science, an international nonprofit that funds work to help people make sense of science and promote use of evidence in public life. The curriculum integrates this focus on analysis and use of evidence into the framework of media literacy, and the ECG game uses these skills to support community problem-solving, help people make sense of science and promote use of evidence in public life. The curriculum integrates this focus on evidence into the framework of media literacy, and the ECG game uses these skills to support community problem-solving.

## Part 3

### Features of the game-curriculum hybrid

#### Curricular session integrated into game play

Lessons onboard players with the hands-on skills they will need to complete game round challenges. The activities also help to frontload content-specific information about the issues, problems, and campaigns that students are pursuing.

#### Modular implementation for teacher modification

Facilitators are able to customize every element of the game and curriculum to meet the needs of their classroom. Game sessions can be lengthened or shortened, and supporting lessons can be used or cut. This allows teachers to adjust for time constraints, class size, interests, and accessibility.

#### Game that scaffolds real-world action

Using games for classroom learning is not a new practice, but ECG and the supporting curriculum expand upon that concept by using game play to scaffold real-world action in the form of student media products, pitches, and local campaigns.

#### Builds skillsets across multiple disciplines

ECG allows students to learn research skills, create content in multiple modalities, and practice the act of posing questions and evaluating responses -- all skills that transfer across subjects and disciplines.

## Part 4

### Curriculum Structure

The curriculum is divided into six stages, which address the elements of media literacy and map onto the process of the ECG game. In each stage, students complete lessons to build their understanding of social media's role in helping us engage with the chosen question or problem. Students then complete one round of the ECG game. For example, in the curriculum's third stage, the lessons focus on students' access to diverse sources of information online and awareness of the perspectives and agendas embedded in these sources. In the corresponding "Outside Sources" game stage, students challenge each other to seek information about their chosen local issue, such as online bullying.

This curriculum spirals through a number of complementary inquiry processes. First, students choose a game topic of local interest and pursue it through each stage of the game, from empathetic exploration to pitching a plan for local action. This consistent focus represents a spiraling around the chosen topic across the entire curriculum. In addition, students experience the aspects of media literacy in complementary ways: Students learn about media literacy not only through focused lessons but also through the stages of game play, which echo the elements of media literacy. This structure allows students to spiral through a deepening understanding of their local issue and media literacy in a playful manner. See the chart below for a picture of how these parts fit together.

## Part 5

### How it Works

#### Game Overview

ECG is a game that asks students to combine their own creativity with foundational media literacy skills in order to investigate and explore problems or issues in their contemporary moment. Teams challenge each other to investigate, research, and empathize with the community problems using media literacy skills. The team who works best collaboratively and rigorously earns the most points, coming out victorious.

Before players are split into teams, there is a set of activities to help students explore current challenges facing their communities and decide what single problem, issue, or claim the game and supporting lessons will address. This works best when the students agree on a topic that is easily accessible through social media and has strong local connections, and when students frame their choice as a question to be resolved. For example: "Does social media help us or hurt us?" or "What are the causes of online bullying among young people?" or "How can social media help or hurt the cause of human rights?"



By providing a competitive, round-based, rapid-fire game structure for the research process, the game puts pressure on teams to work not just quickly but effectively. The process allows all content created to be filtered into a final portfolio or product page, (like the Ask for Evidence profile model or teacher classroom websites) regardless of which team wins.

The ECG is based off common party game structures, where the motivation to do well is tied to not only winning points and coming out victorious but also coming up with creative solutions and products to show off to other teams. Taking a cue from games like Cranium or Apples to Apples, the fun comes from the performative/creative answers aimed at impressing other players, while still maintaining a competitive point allocation system for clear achievement progress.



In addition, the mini-game challenges slotted into each mission provide another layer of fun for participants while contributing to the overall system in an organic way. For example, one minigame is called Jenga Challenge and tasks teams to build jenga towers collaboratively within a time limit. The team with the highest tower at the end of the time will choose which challenge their team completes. These games not only add fun and excitement to the experience, but they also function as team-building exercises.

## Instructions and Gameplay Flow

Before the game starts, the teacher decides on the problem or issue the class will be investigating. Then the class splits into four approximately even teams (for purposes of this document A, B, C, and D); each team names itself. These teams then progress through four missions, each with its own objective. Each Mission should take roughly 1-2 hours, depending on how much time the teacher allocates for content creation. At certain moments in the experience, teams will be awarded points, which carry over from mission to mission, for achievements (see scoring, below). After all four missions are complete, the team with the highest point score is the winner.

In this version, there are currently four sequential missions, and each consists of a different type of challenge category (empathy, outside sources/discourse, making connections, and actionable pitch). These categories determine each mission's learning objective.

## Mission Objectives:

Mission 1	Empathy	This challenge gets players to think through the problem / issue from a different perspective.
Mission 2	Outside Sources	This challenge asks players to identify discourse around the topic and learn/present what other experts or community members are saying. It requires players to seek out sources and use forms of annotation to present their findings in different formats.
Mission 3	Making Connections	This challenge constructs an argument, using outside sources, that comes to conclusions about your chosen topic, issue, or problem.
Mission 4	Actionable Pitch	Now that players have knowledge about the problem, how will they transform their conclusions into actionable impact? This challenge asks players to use the "quick pitch" genre to present a conceivable plan of action that they can implement in their community.

## Mission Stages

These are collaborative, time-constrained activity sessions that allow teams to move through a formal process. They are completed in the following order:

**1. Create challenges for other teams:** Each team brainstorms and pitches a challenge that addresses the ECG issue. These challenges are framed by the challenge card prompts, giving each team a goal in their creation. These challenges are then passed on to the other teams. A and B make challenges for C and D and vice versa.

**2. Choose a challenge through playing mini-games:** Teams will receive two possible challenge options from other teams. Internally as a team, they discuss the options. Then their team will work together to play a mini-game challenge, currently a variant of the classic game Jenga, against a competing team. The winning side chooses which of the two challenges their team tackles, and the other team is assigned the same challenge for consistency during the evaluation stage. The winning team also receives a bonus point that adds to their team score. [See Jenga Game rules in appendix 2.](#)

**3. Produce creative content in multiple modalities:** Once teams know the challenge to which they will respond, they are given a random modality card. The modality cards tell the team in what mode they must create their response (storyboarding, persuasive letter, media remix, etc.). Teams then use their developing media literacy competencies to create the best possible response to the given challenge question. After this solution is created, that modality card is no longer accessible to that team, ensuring that teams use all modalities throughout the game.

**4. Evaluate peer contributions:** Teams present their work back to the teams who posed their challenge questions, for final evaluation. A and B would each evaluate the work of C and D, and vice versa, by answering the questions on their evaluation cards and

awarding a point to the team whose response they think best addresses this question.

**5. Receive results:** Facilitators and team score keepers calculate points and update teams on who is leading the game.

### Scoring

Each of these activity sessions can net points for each team depending on how well its members work together and create content. Teams earn points in the following ways:

(This table is based on four teams playing.)

	<b>Scoring</b>	<b>Point Allocation</b>	<b>Point Potential</b>
<b>Challenge Selection Round</b>	If a team's pitched challenge is accepted by another team, the team who pitched the challenge receives 1 point.	1 point per team who picks	0-1
<b>Evaluation Round</b>	If a team's response is more successful than competitors, the team who presented the response receives 1 point.	1 point for winning, 0 for not winning	0-1
<b>End of Mission Bonus</b>	Award one bonus point for the team who won the Mini Game.	1 point goes to each winning team on each side.	0-1

## Part 6

### Materials

This section details what materials come with the game and what is needed to play. These are organized into PDF packets split up by Module. Each team should have a new packet in each mission. Numbers therefore refer to how many cards each team needs during each mission, not the overall game.

***Mission Card:*** 1 per team

These cards help you understand the overall goal of this Mission.

***Challenge card:*** 1 per team

These cards allow teams to write down the challenge they created, which is then passed to the other teams to complete.

***Mission Response Evaluation Rubrics:*** 1 per team

These help students evaluate team responses by presenting a list of the particular elements of media literacy relevant to each mission.

***Modality cards:*** 1 card drawn per team (deck held by facilitator)

These allow teams to present their work in different media and forms. Each team receives one card that isn't revealed until they undertake the challenge, adding suspense to the game. Together, the group of four teams receive a different modality card in each mission, shaking up the presentation process and providing students with the ability to use multiple forms of media to create content. See modality card types in appendix 1.

***Score Card:*** 1 per team

These allow teams to keep track of their points, making the facilitator's job easier.

## Part 7

# Appendix 1: Modality Card Types

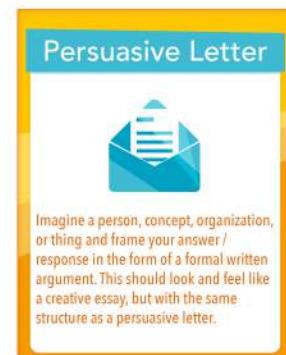
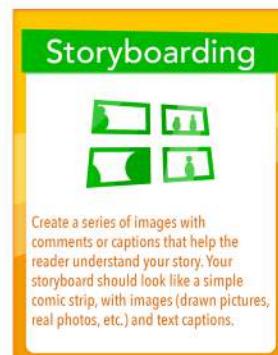
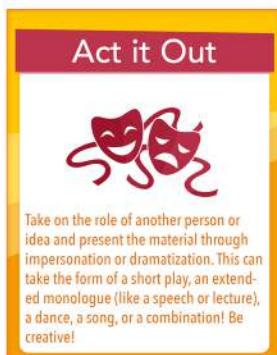
### Modality card types:

**Media Remix:** Curate, remix, and comment on existing content to create your response. You are free to cut up magazines and newspaper articles to create a physical collage, or if you have access to technology, mash up photos, tweets, videos, etc. to create a digital collage.

**Act it Out:** Take on the role of another person or idea and present the material through impersonation or dramatization. This can take the form of a short play, an extended monologue (like a speech or lecture), a dance, a song, or a combination! Be creative!

**Storyboarding:** Create a series of images with comments/captions that help the reader understand your story. Your storyboard should look like a simple comic strip, with images (drawn pictures, real photos, etc.) and text captions.

**Persuasive Letter:** Imagine a person, concept, organization, or thing and frame your answer/response in the form of a formal written argument. This should look and feel like a creative essay, but with the same structure as a persuasive letter.



## Part 7

## Appendix 2: Mini Game Challenges

This appendix contains rules and setup for the mini-game that teams play before selecting a challenge.

### Jenga Challenge!

#### **Setup:**

1. Each team receives a Jenga set.
2. Jenga blocks should be scattered in a pile in front of the players.

**Goal:** Players need to build the highest tower they can by following traditional Jenga rules, with the exception that their team is working together on one tower, competing against other teams. The team with the highest tower at the end of five minutes wins. In addition, the team with the highest tower is awarded one bonus point for their team.

#### **Directions:**

1. Players will have 5 minutes to do the following:
  - a. First, build the Jenga tower out of the blocks that are in front of them.
  - b. Second, play Jenga. If the tower falls and the time has not run out, they can rebuild it.
  - c. At the end of 5 minutes all players stop and measure the tower.
  - d. If the two towers are the same height, the tiebreaker is the most blocks at each successive level. For example, both towers are 12 levels high. However, one tower has two blocks on its top level, whereas the other only has 1 block. The tower with two blocks would win. If the blocks on the top are the same continue down the tower until they differ.

# Emerging Citizens Curriculum Map

Modules	Media and Us	Empathy	Outside Sources	Making Connections	Pitch	Implementation
Emerging Citizens Game		Empathy Mission	Outside Sources Mission	Making Connections Mission	Pitch Mission	
The Five A's of Media Literacy	Access	Access	Awareness and Assessment	Appreciation	Action	Action
Supporting Lessons for Each Stage	1. Social Media in Our Lives  2. Online Relationships Interview	Choose Your Topic	Critical Questions: Part 1	Critical Questions: Part 2	Taking Action in Your Networks	Implementing Your Plan

# How the game works:

The two processes below take place simultaneously.

Teams **A** and **B** each create a challenge.

Teams **C** and **D** each create a challenge.

Teams **C** and **D** each choose a challenge to complete.

Teams **A** and **B** each choose a challenge to complete.

Teams **A** and **B** each evaluate both answers supplied by **C** and **D**.

Teams **C** and **D** each evaluate both answers supplied by **A** and **B**.

Teams pick the best answer based on rubrics.

**Points are awarded!**

