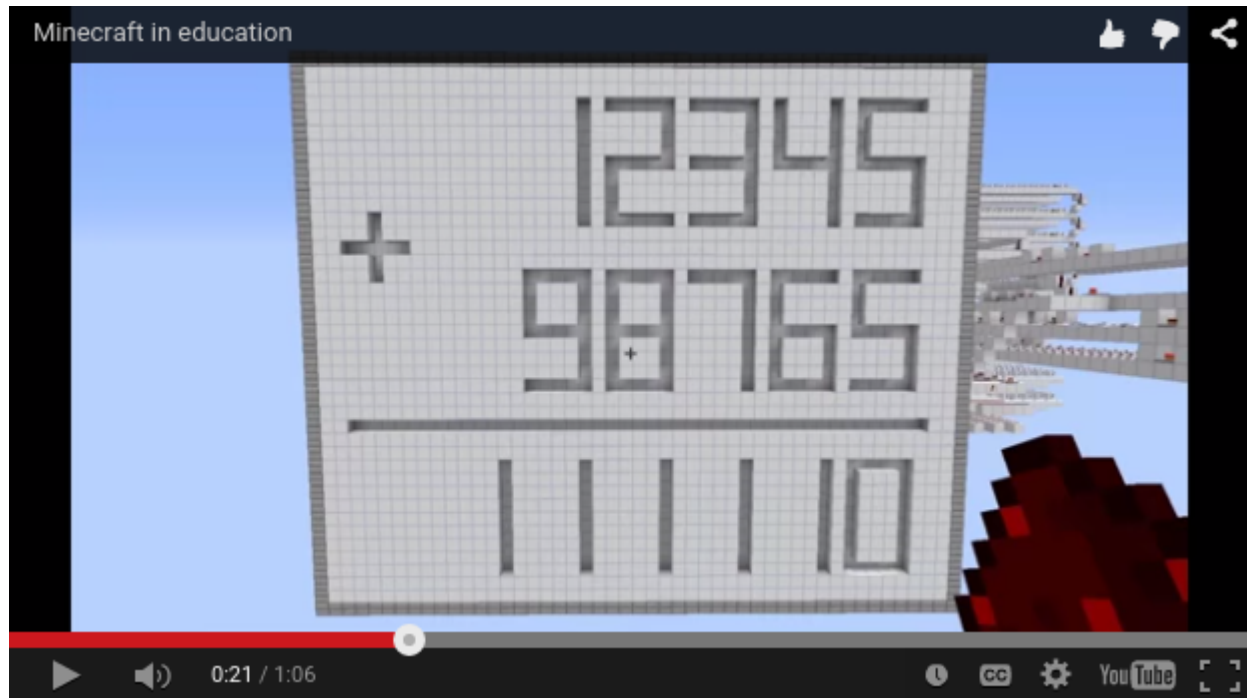


Microsoft launches site for teachers taking Minecraft into the classroom

Stuart Dredge, July 2, 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/jul/02/microsoft-teachers-minecraft-classroom-education>



Millions of children are already playing Minecraft at home, whether on computers, consoles or mobile devices. Now the game's parent company, Microsoft, wants to encourage more teachers to use it in the classroom.

Microsoft, which bought the game's developer Mojang for \$2.5bn in 2014, has launched a new site aimed at teachers, aiming to foster a community of educators swapping lesson plans and other tips based on Minecraft.

The new site was announced by Microsoft's vice president of worldwide education Anthony Salcito, complete with a list of some of the ways schools are already incorporating Minecraft into their lessons.

"Elementary students in Seattle are learning foundational math skills by calculating perimeter, area and volume in Minecraft during a Saturday math program. Middle school students in Los Angeles are learning about

major world religions as part of their humanities class. They are visiting sacred sites in their city, researching international sites and then building them in Minecraft.

Alfriston College students in New Zealand are partnering with Auckland War Memorial Museum to learn the history of the New Zealand people who served in the 1915 Gallipoli campaign by re-creating the landscape in Minecraft, block by block. Middle schoolers are learning the building blocks of computer science in an online Minecraft coding camp. Elementary students in Scotland are learning about city planning and engineering by reimagining, redesigning and then building in Minecraft what they think Dundee waterfront should look like.”

Mojang has sold more than 70m copies of Minecraft across all platforms since the game’s launch in 2009, with the game becoming a firm favourite among children as well as the adult gamers it was originally aimed at.

Minecraft has also spawned a thriving network of YouTube channels, including one – run by British creator Joseph “Stampy” Garrett – that recently launched an educational show called Wonder Quest filmed within the game.

Other educational projects involving Minecraft include MinecraftEdu, a separate version of Minecraft with features designed for schools, and its own community of educators swapping tips on how to use it.

US company ThoughtSTEM has launched an add-on for Minecraft called LearnToMod, which aims to teach children programming skills through making their own modifications (“mods”) for the game.

In 2013, Google worked with MinecraftEdu and Caltech’s Institute for Quantum Information and Matter to launch a mod called qCraft that used Minecraft to teach children about quantum computing. Meanwhile, a project announced in March 2015 will see MinecraftEdu supplied to every secondary school in Northern Ireland.

Microsoft’s launch of the Minecraft in Education site comes days before Minecon, Mojang’s annual conference for all things Minecraft. Microsoft will be one of the exhibitors at the two-day event in London, where several panel sessions will focus on Minecraft’s role in schools.

