Game and Learn: An Introduction to Educational Gaming
1. What Is A Game?

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Some Definitions
Formal Definition of Play (Salen & Zimmerman)

“Play is free movement within a more rigid structure.”
Vygotsky on Learning

- Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD):
  - Gap between:
    - what a learner can accomplish independently (the Zone of Current Development, ZCD)
    - what they can accomplish with assistance from a “more knowledgeable other” (MKO)
  - “…what a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow.”

- This is an iterative process:
  - The ZCD and ZPD change over time;
  - Independent practice is required to close the loop.

Vygotsky on Play and Learning

“…play creates a zone of proximal development of the child. In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behavior; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself.”
Formal Definition of **Game** (Salen & Zimmerman)

“A game is a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome.”
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Relationship of Videogame Play to General Play

Videogames
Game Play
Ludic Activities
Being Playful
Games and Abstraction

• Some videogames are more like real-life simulations:

• Others are more abstract:

Games and Goals

• Some videogames are driven by real-life type goals:

• The goals in other games are more arbitrary:
Games and Narrative

Example: *Pac-Man*
Example: *Ico*

Exercise: Elements of a Game

- Sample games:
  - *Pac-Man*
  - *Tetris*
  - *Space Invaders*
  - *Breakout*
  - *Donkey Kong*
Some Definitions:

• Photos:
  • *Young Chimps Play*, by Jonny White:
    http://www.flickr.com/photos/jonnyw/282283374/
• Game Videos:
  • PacMan:
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uswzriFlf_k
  • Ico:
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3puAsMp0MI

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