

# Assessment? #%&!

Why Traditional Assessment Takes the  
Fun out of Game Design

Tracy Fullerton

Associate Professor  
USC School of Cinematic Arts  
Interactive Media Division

Director  
 the **Game** innovation lab™



**JEOPARDY! ONLINE**

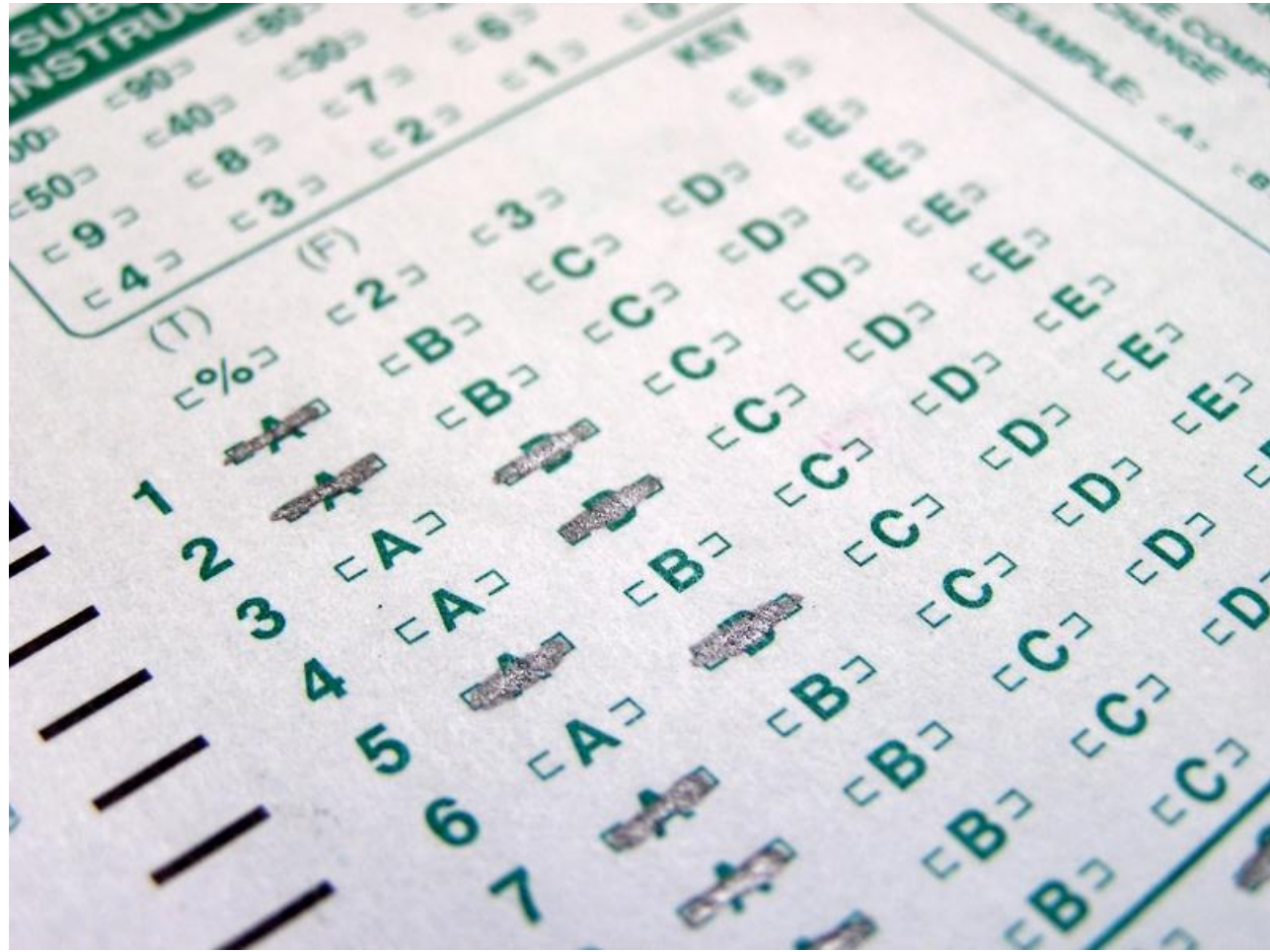
Animals    Business Terms    Pop Music    Bugs of North America and Asia    Odds & Ends    Ends in "X"

\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500

Max answered **CORRECTLY**

send    exit







Classroom photo, 2010.



Classroom photo, 1910.

An ideal assessment should provide **valid, reliable, and actionable information** about students' learning and growth that allows teachers, students, administrators, and parents to utilize the information in meaningful ways.

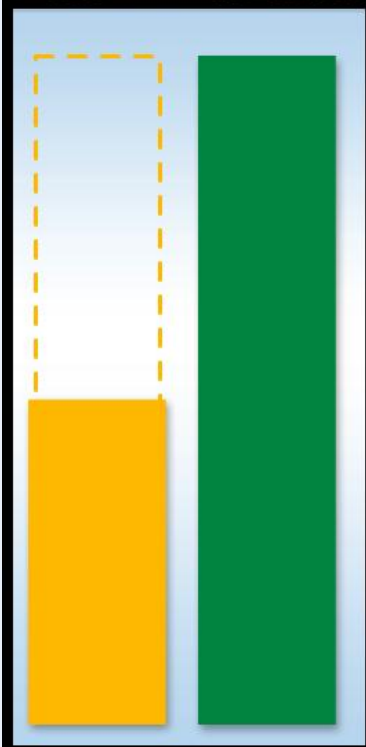
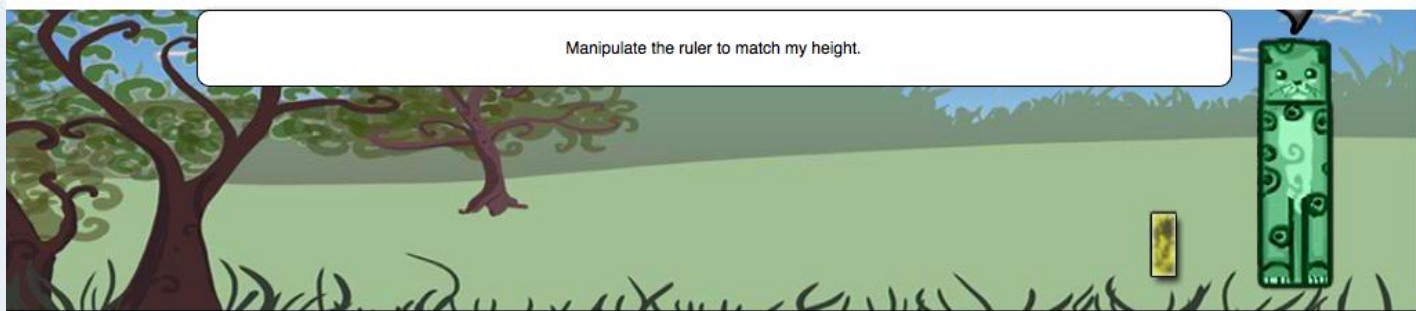
# Reality of Traditional Assessment

- Validity issues
  - Measurements not made in meaningful contexts
- Not keeping pace with needs of a complex world
  - No measurement of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills: problem solving, creative, critical, collaborative and systemic thinking
- Rarely influences instruction or learning
  - Measurement at single point in time
  - No diagnostics, support for deeper learning





Manipulate the ruler to match my height.



$$1 \times 2 = 2$$

$$2 \times 2 = 4$$

X

÷

1

2

5

Yes, and ...



**collegeology**  
games

USEFUL LINKS :

# KnowHow2GO

SEND TO A FRIEND

4 STEPS TO COLLEGE

MIDDLE SCHOOL

FRESHMEN

SOPHOMORES

JUNIORS

SENIORS

MENTORS

MENTORES EN ESPAÑOL

GET TOUGH

the 4 steps to college

# 1234

SKIP

KnowHow2GO *Ambassadors* GO TO THE AMBASSADORS BLOG

Get advice about going to college from people who know all about it!  
Read the tips on their blog – and connect with them through Twitter and Facebook.

ARE YOU READY FOR COLLEGE


TAKE THE TOUR

Check us out here

ARE YOU READY FOR COLLEGE


TAKE THE TOUR

FIND HELP NEAR YOU


Play your way to a better SAT score

# \*SAT Game FOR DUMMIES



CHARACTER

**MISUNDERSTOOD ARTIST**

YOUR WORK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF, REGARDLESS OF THE MEDIUM. FOR YOU, ART IS MORE THAN A HOBBY, IT IS A FORM OF EXPRESSION.

**YOU CAN USE FINE ARTS CARDS IN PLACE OF ACADEMICS CARDS.**

FAMILY FINANCES

\$

SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLD, LESS THAN \$20,000 A YEAR

PRODUCTIVITY  
**FOCUSED!**

YOU'RE GETTING STUFF DONE, CHECKING IT OFF THE LIST.

TAKE 6 ACTIONS

ACTIONS CAN BE USED TO DO THE FOLLOWING THINGS:

- LEVELING CARDS
- PLACING CARDS IN APPLICATION ENVELOPES
- TURNING APPLICATION ENVELOPES INTO THE TIMELINE
- DRAWING NEW CARDS

FAMILY FINANCES

\$\$\$

TWO PARENT HOUSEHOLD, MORE THAN \$60,000 A YEAR

PRODUCTIVITY

**COMPUTER CRASH!**

YOUR FAMILY COMPUTER CRASHED THIS WEEK AND YOU LOST IMPORTANT FILES.

TAKE 3 ACTIONS

ACTIONS CAN BE USED TO DO THE FOLLOWING THINGS:

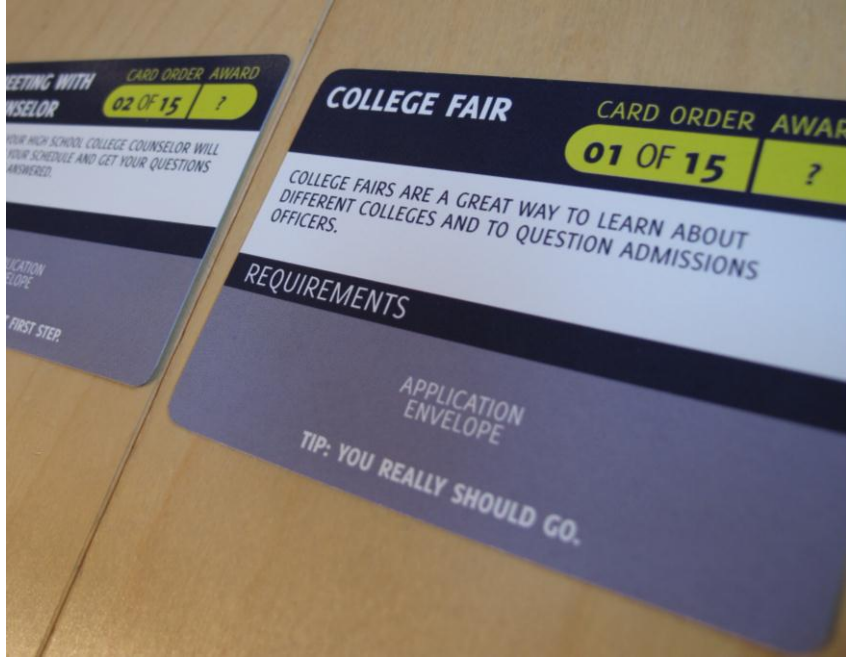
- LEVELING CARDS
- PLACING CARDS IN APPLICATION ENVELOPES
- TURNING APPLICATION ENVELOPES INTO THE TIMELINE
- DRAWING NEW CARDS

CHARACTER

**SUPER JOCK**

YOU'RE THE PERSON WHO SHINES IN ANY ATHLETIC ENDEAVOR. ANY SEASON, ANY POSITION, YOU MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF.

**YOU CAN USE ATHLETICS CARDS IN PLACE OF ACADEMICS CARDS.**

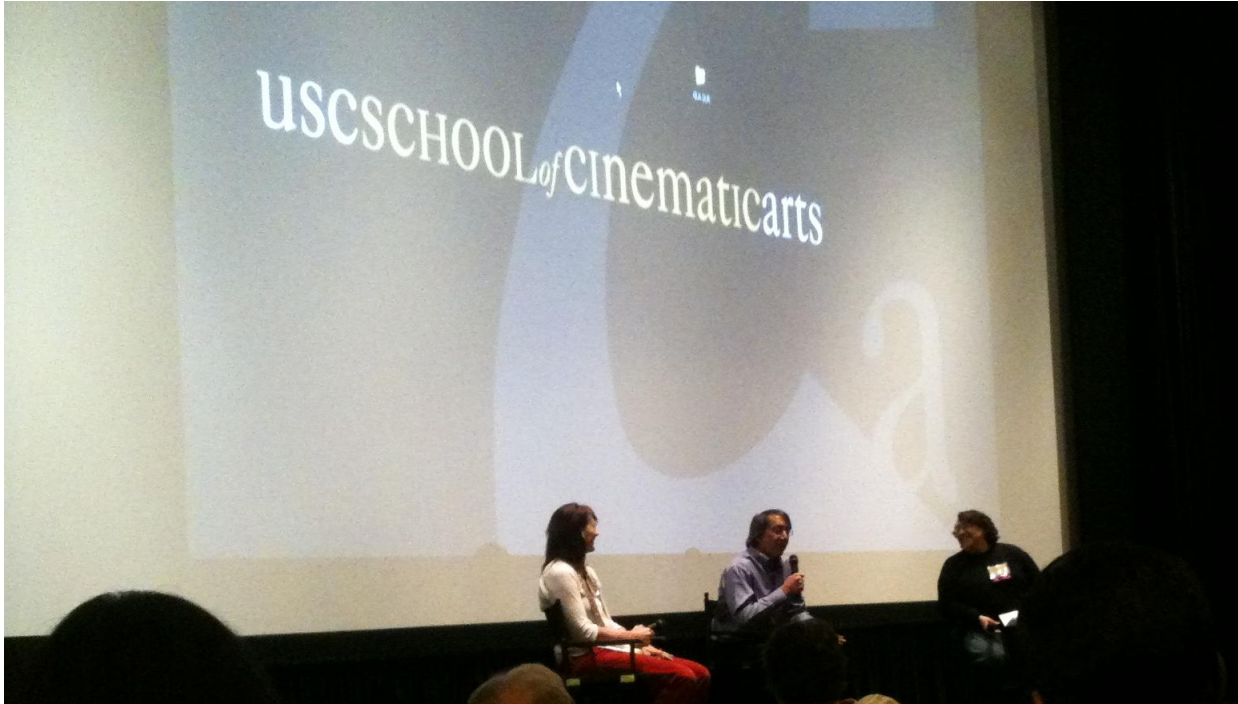




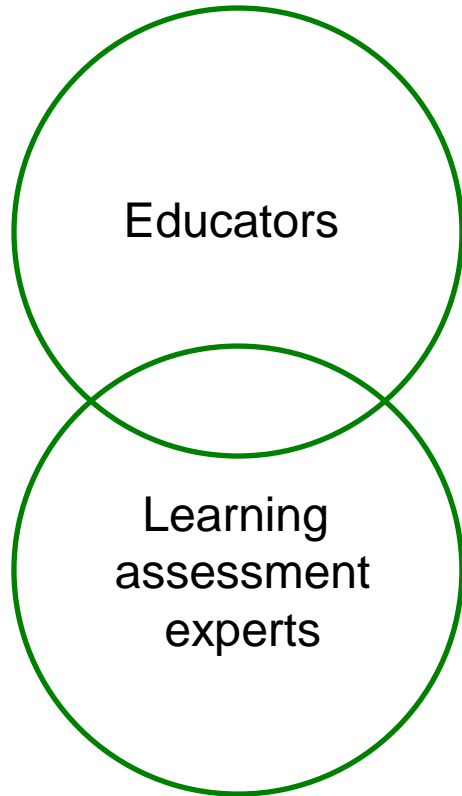
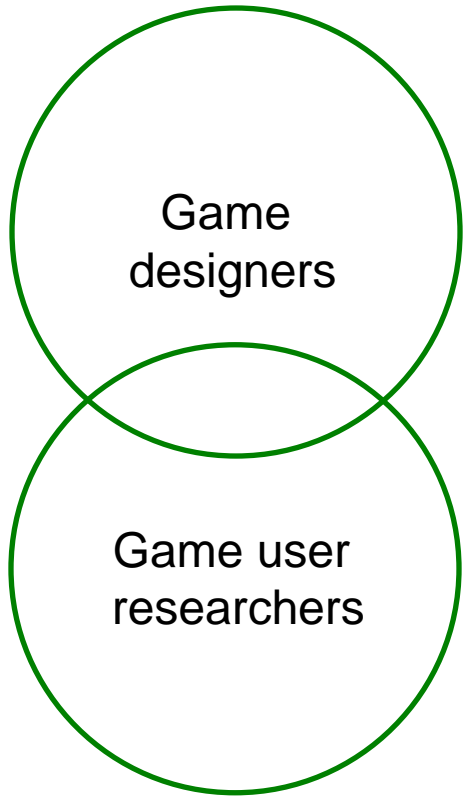
Gates/MacArthur/USC “Games, Learning and Assessment” Workshop, Jan 2011

BILL & MELINDA  
GATES *foundation*

MACARTHUR  
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation







# Games User Researcher

*(Dennis Wixon)*

**Learning**  
*(Jim Gee)*

**Designers**  
*(Jenova Chen)*



## The process: break out groups

- Literacy
- Pre-algebra and Refractions
- Balanced Assessment
- College Knowledge as a Collective Endeavor
- Civics and the Skills of Public Participation
- Systems Thinking
- Creativity
- Digital Literacy
- Choicelets

## The process: exit interviews

"Games are a game-changer for learning ...and ESPECIALLY for assessment!"

"Game design should be required background for anyone seeking to be involved in education. "

"Good game design requires thinking from many different perspectives."

"As a k12 person, I was knocked out by how productive the game-based conversations were. A real problem-solving enterprise!"



We are searching for some kind of harmony between two intangibles: a form which we have not yet designed and a context which we cannot properly describe.

Christopher Alexander,  
*Notes on the Synthesis of Form*

Thank you!