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Report Submitted to TRC for TSSA Award in 2008-2009 (Fall 2008)
By
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I received a TSSA award to attend the international conference of Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) held November 3-8, 2008 at Orlando, Florida. At the conference, I focused on strategies of integrating games into instruction. A presenter categorized games into "Design for," "Design with," and "Design by." "Design for" refers to games that are designed and developed by adults who assume that they know what and how students learn. "Design with" refers to games that are designed/developed by adults and pupil together. "Design by" refers to games that are completely designed/developed by students.

Using games to promote student learning has been an emerging trend in education. I was surprised that there are considerable amount of games available, and many of them are online and currently free of charge. One of the presenters at the conference shared a list of games that she has been using with her pre-service teachers. The games target P-8 students. She provided a CD with all of her games classified with grade level and subject areas. In the near future, I plan to develop a course in which students apply software evaluation principles to evaluate educational games. Having students develop lesson plan or unit plan integrating games into instruction would be one of the course objectives as well.

A presenter provided guidelines of creating simulations/games: (1) Select a topic or multiple topics which can be connected by themes; (2) Define supported learning objectives; (3) Analyze intended learning environment, learner attributes, and design environment; (4) Define rules of context and overall structure of game, including story, goals, objects, supported actions, feedback, learner roles, and embedded values; (5) Promote desired learning opportunities; (6) Design specific implementation guidelines and artifacts; (7) Focus on engagement with the topic; (8) Design and develop the game through an iterative process.