Appendix 01 - BBC on games in the classroom

Video games have 'role in school'

Video games could have a serious role to play in the classroom, a survey of teachers and students suggests.

The Teaching with Games report was commissioned by games giant Electronic Arts (EA) and carried out by FutureLab.

It surveyed almost 1,000 teachers and more than 2,300 primary and secondary school students in the UK.

The survey found 59% of teachers would consider using of-the-shelf games in the classroom while 62% of students wanted to use games at school.

Jules Clarkson, international marketing director at Electronic Arts, said: "EA has recognised for a long time the potential for computer games to stimulate teachers and students.

Evidence of concern

"We now have the evidence."

The report, which was also backed by Microsoft, Take Two, as well as the Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE), found evidence of concern from both teachers and students about the impact of games on players.

More than 70% of the surveyed teachers felt that playing games could lead to anti-social behaviour while 30% of students believed that playing games could lead to increased violence and aggression.

The report is released on the first day of the London Games Festival, a week-long programme of events including a developers’ conference, the Balfa videogame awards and a showcase of new titles for consumers.

Mr Clarkson said: ‘We had three key objectives with the report - to understand teachers’ and students’ use of computer games in the classroom.
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"Successful partnerships"

"To explore how they can be successfully used in a school environment. And to make the most successful partnerships with educators."

The report authors also followed 12 teachers at four schools in the UK and looked at ways they could use commercial software in the classroom.

The authors concluded that there was "still a generational divide between teachers and students in respect of computer games play".

More than 70% of teachers never play games outside school while 82% of children said they played video games at least once a fortnight.

"It should be noted that 37% of teachers and 22% of students think that computer games should not be used in the classroom," said the report.

Mr Clarkson denied the report was an attempt to be "taken seriously" by the educational establishment.

"Taken seriously"

He said: "We are already taken seriously and we take our responsibilities as a leader in the industry very seriously.

"There is an opportunity for us to explore with educational establishments where there are ways computer games can be used."

But Mr Clarkson said EA was not going to change the way it makes software off the back of the report.

"I do not imagine we are suddenly going to get into educational software markets but it does give us ideas about how to work with educational establishments."

Fred Hasson, chief executive of games developer association Tiga, one of the backers of the London Games Festival, said the event reflected the vibrancy of the UK industry.

"The UK is not only the third largest market for video games it is also the third largest producer of games in the world."

He said the industry was in good shape following several years of consolidation.

"In 2000 there were about 400 UK development studios while now there are about 150.

"But I don't think there are any fewer numbers of people working in the industry overall."

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/5398230.stm
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'Wake up'

"With the handheld consoles, the current hardware and next generation hardware on the horizon, there has never been as much work around as there is now."

Rob Cooper, managing director of Ubisoft UK and chairman of the festival said: "Now more than ever people are starting to wake up to the importance of video games; culturally, artistically and economically.

"The London Games Festival is an important stage, one which allows our industry to show every aspect of itself."

He added: "From students wanting to forge a career in gaming, to budding developers who want to share ideas for future games. There will be events of interest to so many groups of people."