Becoming Entwined: Text based games as a literacy practice

Becky Parry, Frances Howard, Louisa Penfold

Centre for the Study of Creativity, Arts and Literacy, School of Education, University of Nottingham

This presentation will present data from Storysmash, a project initiated by Nottingham Libraries to enhance young people's opportunities to creatively engage with text-based games. The project is a partnership between Nottingham: Libraries, The National Video Arcade and UNESCO City of Literature and is funded by Arts Council England. The Centre for Research in Creativity, Arts and Literacy based within The University of Nottingham's School of Education are the research and evaluation partner. The paper will focus on the way in which text-based games, such as Twine, enable the player / creators to draw on all their cultural resources in the creation of a multi-layered story, designed to be played by others. We will share examples of Twine 'gamestories', offering an insight into the way the rules, conventions and modes of narratives in different media are designed and redesigned (Kress, 2003) in newly transformed stories. In doing so the authors examine the extent to which Twine offers opportunities for playful engagement with narrative structure, coding and popular culture and, in particular, a tool which enables individuals to share and explore those film, television, games, websites and print texts which are significant and pleasurable to them. Finally, we reflect on the extent to which the use of games in libraries might provide much needed imaginative spaces to support children and young people in the creation of their own stories and games and developing their attitudes to reading and writing.

References

Kress, G. (2003). *Literacy in the new media age*. Psychology Press.

Keywords: Text-Based Games; Young People; Narrative; Games; Stories; Popular Culture; Design; Coding; Play.