It’s no surprise that the U.S. education system has many flaws that need to be closely evaluated. The game-based learning approach has potential to solve many of these flaws that currently exist within our system. Many of the links such as Quest to Learn suggested that game-based learning will help bridge together old and new literacies. Spires article discusses the idea that game-based learning can bridge the gap between how students live and learn. In turn, students will move into the workplace with their interests in technology transferring with them. Game-based learning can also strengthen parent-school and student-teacher relationships which might be viewed as weak within our current system. Quest to Learn contains a parent-kit section to try to involve parents in the learning process. In the article, Computer Game, Schools, and Young People it states that game-based learning will modernize the education system and “prepare “players” to be successful in an increasingly turbulent economic climate.”

Game-based learning has the capability to provide an abundance of learning goals that no other content can currently achieve. According to the videos on Quest to Learn, game-based learning takes knowledge in one domain and expresses it in another; which is one of the highest order thinking skills. Game-based learning differentiates and scaffolds the learning process for all learners. Williamson mentions in his article that game-based learning also includes a cultural significance. Throughout the Serious Game: Preparing the N Generation article the authors include a variety of skills that game-based learning teaches. Game-based learning teaches situated learning, real world problems, collaboration, strategy and critical thinking skills, flexibility, and analyzing skills. Communication/collaboration is an essential skill that is not currently a heavy focus in the curriculum, however all links this week pointed to it as a huge advantage of game-based learning. With game-based learning students are asked to revise and reflect on their own learning process; which is a skill not currently supported in another content area. Most importantly, game-based learning teaches “systems” and design which is a fundamental literacy of the 21st century. Therefore, game-based learning could be defined as a forward thinking and innovative curriculum that embeds cultural, social, and real world learning in a creative and engaging way.

Many developmental characteristics of a student that is interested in game-based learning programs were apparent from the readings. Game-based learning reaches out to those students who are curious, creative, passionate, social/collaborative, competitive, inspired, persuasive, and task-oriented.

After the readings this week, I am inspired to begin to incorporate games into my classroom! Currently, the only games I use are interactive math and literacy games whole group. Williamson mentions that the key to successful game-based learning is that the teachers need to try them out for themselves. He also mentions that games are the window into young people’s lives; therefore I plan on asking my students about their favorite games and will try to embed some of these into my instruction. He gave a large list of games to try into the classroom that I intend to play around with as well. My main focus will be to try to incorporate games in an independent center so that all the students have a chance to get their hands on them instead of watching whole group.