

**Video Game Academy**

# **How Games Secretly Improve School**

**Worksheet**



**HackingHighSchool.net**

How can your video game give you confidence in your academic work?

How quickly can you play your games? Move your fingers over your controllers? Access menus and sidebars? How can you apply that to your academic subjects?

## How your brain works

What successful school situations can you imagine (or “simulate”), in the same way that your video game is a simulation of the world, a practice run, as it were?

Look at all the information you take on at once in your game. Can you find a way to remember that in school when you start to feel overwhelmed by the amount of information?

Can you emphasize the role of your homework assignments and lessons as preparation for the “boss”?

How does having a “hypertext” mind help you in school?



What kind of experts could help you in what you're studying right now?  
(Scientists, writers, etc.?)

Can you add an element of active learning to a single aspect of your school day? Where you're *doing* something, not just listening or reading the information?

Who is a specific expert that could help?

What kinds of payoffs motivate you in your video games?

How can you contact that person?

Can you emulate those payoffs in school?

Are there any forums or websites to ask your questions at?



# Education Design

Look at your education as if it were a game to be won:

## Basic Game Design

What are the rules of your education?

What are your objectives?

Long-term (4 years) objectives?

Medium term (this year) objectives?

Short term (this week) objectives?

How do you get feedback?

Do you need more or different feedback?

What can you do in order to get the feedback you need?



Can you create “levels” for yourself, based on your goals?

Where’s the challenge or competition?

If your long-term goal is Level 20, what does that look like?

What problems does your education solve for you?

What would level 10 look like? You’d have completed about half the requirements at that point.

Is there anything in school that has ever given you a rush or targeted your adrenaline, even just a smidge?

What would level 1 look like?

How do you interact with others?

What can you do to start leveling up today?

With your teacher (or parents)?



With kids your age?

How do you interact with the information you receive?

With experts in the topics you're learning about?

Is that really the best way?

Can you interact with experts more often?

What is the "story" of your education? In other words, what is your education about?

How can you contact experts to ask them your questions?

### **Advanced Game Design Principles**

Can you become an active producer in your education, not just a passive consumer?

What experts will you contact first?



Change your education to be what you want. What DO you want out of it?

How can you make that harder?

Can you take on the identity of others in school, the same way you take on the identity of a character in your game? A mathematician, an artist?

What is too hard for you right now?

Some people, when taking on identities, have a symbolic object, like a silly writer's hat or a lab coat, to serve as a reminder of their new, temporary identity. What sorts of objects would you use in the identities you take on?

How can you make that a little easier?

In your video games, you practice skills, like beating minions, over and over until you're an expert and it's automatic. Can you think of your education in the same way?

### **Flow**

What is too easy for you right now?



Can you create a sandbox environment for your education? Maybe spend the summer before you take US History just exploring the subject on your own: playing online US history games, finding out who US history experts are, maybe even connecting with them, visit historical sites or museums near you. Just play with the subject. It will be far more valuable than you might think.

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?

How does your gaming help you learn how to analyze?

## Skills for Success

How does your gaming help you learn how to think critically?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?

How does your gaming help you learn how to think like a scientist?

How does your gaming help you learn how to complete tasks?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?





How does your gaming help you learn how to understand the world in terms of scenarios?

How does your gaming help you learn why you should care about data?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?

How does your gaming help you learn how to research, especially through connections with others?

How does your gaming help you learn how to think about relationships and make connections?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?

How can you apply that to your education needs, right now?



# School secretly improves your game

How have you focused on something academic this week?

How can you apply that to your gaming?

How have you managed yourself this week?

How can you apply that to your gaming?

How have you minimized distractions in your school work?

How can you apply that to your gaming?

How have you been productive or produced results this week?

How can you apply that to your gaming?

How do you get yourself to complete tasks and produce results?



How can you apply that to your game, especially areas where you're stuck?

What have you learned in school about filtering through information?

How do you think critically in academics? What benefit does it give you?

How does that apply to your research for your game?

How can you apply that to your gaming?

What other academic skills and topics help improve your game?

How do you research for school?

How can you apply that to your gaming?



**When applying academics to gaming, here are three general questions to always ask yourself:**

1. How does this help me understand how the world works? Does that apply in my video game world?

2. How does this show how people think? Are my fellow gamers thinking that way? How can I use that information to beat them (or support them, if they're my allies) in the game?

3. Is there any situation like this in my game? How are the situation and game similar? What useful information can I transfer from the situation to my game?

**Specific questions (the general questions, applied to more specific situations)**

Can I use this information as a strategy in my game?

If math: can I use this information or skill to analyze my gaming?

Once I've analyzed it, how can I use this information to improve my game?

When can I use this information or skill to make fairly accurate estimates?



If English: does this information about communicating help me communicate better in my game?

How does this piece of literature show how people think?

Communicate to other players?

Are my fellow gamers thinking that way?

Communicate to my parents about how much I enjoy the game so they'll let me play more?

How can I use that information to beat them (or support them, if they're my allies) in the game?

Communicate to the gaming community on forums and websites?

How do you organize your thoughts in academics? How can you apply that to your game?



What do you learn about effectively communicating in school? How can you apply that to your game?

If history: how is this information relevant to me today?

Does knowing the background/history of my video game world improve my gaming in a similar way?

Can I apply the strategy from this war in my game? If not, could I alter it to make it applicable?

