

The page features a light blue background with pixel art illustrations of Minecraft characters. On the left, a character in a black suit and red tie is partially visible. At the top center, a character with a green hat and brown beard is shown. On the right, a character in a blue and red plaid shirt is visible. At the bottom right, a character in a red shirt is shown. The background is decorated with vertical bookshelves filled with colorful books. The title 'PIXEL PUSHERS' is written in a large, blue, pixelated font at the top left.

PIXEL PUSHERS

May 11, 2012

**NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 14**

FINAL PRESENTATION

We presented our final presentation to the ETC faculty, fellow students, and guests on Monday. We were well-received – we had done a lot this semester, and managed to convey that well within 15 minutes.

Specifically, the faculty was impressed with the amount of playtesting we'd done this semester, as well as the insights we pulled out of that: that Minecraft functions as a toy more than a game, and that the more valuable question for us to answer was how Minecraft can teach, rather than what it can teach.

HANDOFF TO MINECRAFTEDU

We're in the process of handing off our tools to MinecraftEdu – specifically, the code for the Lesson Review Tool and the Quiz Block. With both elements feature-complete, MinecraftEdu plans to release them in a future update of their software, and is free to iterate or improve on the foundation we built.

Further, we're also handing them all of our code and research documentation. The former should be a boon to further modding the base Minecraft game. Especially in our development of the Quiz Block, we tackled some interesting problems when working with Minecraft's code. The latter will be a boon to any educators looking to teach with Minecraft – the very people that would be interested in using MinecraftEdu in the classroom.

PROJECT LEGACY

We're publishing all of our research documents to our own site:

<http://www.etc.cmu.edu/projects/minecraft>

As well as to:

<http://www.workingexamples.org>

In addition, we'll be submitting papers to Meaningful Play, the Digital Media and Learning Conference, and the Serious Games Summit at the Game Developers' Conference. As it shook out, our research especially tackled the issues of starting to teach with Minecraft. In our communication with the Institute of Play and Quest 2 Learn, they were about to start using Minecraft and MinecraftEdu to teach structured lessons, and were wrestling with the same questions as we were. However, because we're a graduate student project and not running our own education program, we were able to experiment more freely. As such, they were especially interested in our findings, and we hope the rest of the game-based learning community can find some value in our work this semester.

We all enjoyed the chance to work on this project this semester, and walked away with a new appreciation for the challenges and potential for game-based learning. We would especially like to thank MinecraftEdu for being such a gracious client and for the opportunity to work with them, and the Elizabeth Forward School District for being so willing and helpful in playtesting and providing feedback for our project.