

Online Escape Room for Intergenerational Play

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Abstract : Despite the 'silver Tsunami' that is occurring worldwide, ageism is still a problem in modern society. As well, families are becoming increasingly separated geographically. This paper will discuss these issues and one potential solution - an online escape room game that is played by two players over the internet while talking to each other. The players can be two seniors or one senior and one youth, e.g., a grandchild. Each player sees a different view of the game environment and players must collaborate in order to solve the puzzles presented and escape from the three rooms, all connected by a maze. The game was developed by Masters students at the Centre for Digital Media in Vancouver, BC in collaboration with a team of post-doctoral scholar, graduate students and faculty member, as well as 10 seniors who assisted. This paper will describe the game, development process and results of our pilot studies. The research study conducted comprises several stages: 1. several formative evaluation sessions with seniors to obtain feedback to assist further design, and 2. field testing of the game. Preliminary results have been extremely positive and results of our field tests will be presented in this paper.

Keywords : digital game, online escape room, intergenerational play, seniors

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