HELPING ADOLESCENTS DEVELOP POSITIVE IDENTITIES AND SELF-ESTEEM

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By

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To my loved ones, thank you for being a constant source of inspiration in my life.
Dedication

I dedicate this to my parents, Patrick and Marilyn Loebs.
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ABSTRACT

HELPING ADOLESCENTS DEVELOP POSITIVE IDENTITIES AND SELF-ESTEEM

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Recent statistics show an increase in suicidal ideations among American youth, indicating a need to address ways to build adolescent identities and self-esteem. Current research shows that adolescents respond positively to games as instructional tools, often achieving more effective results in learning when compared to traditional lecture. The purpose of this project is to create a motivational board game that teaches adolescents the skills necessary to develop positive identities and self-esteem. Details covered within this project include the rationale for the game, its supportive literature review, the game’s design and development process, professional evaluations of the product, and a conclusion discussion on the game and its future uses.
Chapter One- Introduction

Adolescents who struggle to build positive identities and self-esteem are at an increased risk for developing such detrimental outcomes as depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideations. Meeus, van de Schoot, Keijsers, and Branje (2012) found that adolescents who struggle with identity formation tend to experience increases in depression, delinquency, and poor psychosocial adjustment. In addition, low self-esteem in adolescence has been associated with mental health problems, physical health problems, criminal convictions, and poor economic prospects during adulthood (Trzesniewski, Donnellan, Moffitt, Robins, Poulton, & Caspi, 2006). Risk factors associated with poor identity formation and low self-esteem during adolescence have also been linked to suicidal behavior. According to Rutter and Behrendt (2004), adolescents who experience negative self-concepts, feelings of hopelessness, and social isolation are at an increased risk for suicide. Recent statistics indicate that suicidal behavior among American youth is a growing national problem. Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) of 2011 indicates that adolescent suicidal ideations have increased over the last few years (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). Researchers believe that poor identity formation may result from not engaging in self-exploration and decision-making during adolescence (Marcia, 1966; Meeus et al., 2012). According to Berzonsky and Kuk (2000), adolescents who do not actively explore and evaluate their problems, decisions, and information associated with identity formation, are more likely to experience adverse effects in life-management skills. Failure to create positive peer relationships during adolescence has also been linked to poor adjustment. In addition, research indicates that social isolation from peers increases the probability of low self-
esteem, depression, and suicide attempts in adolescence (Hall-Lande, Eisenberg, Christenson, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007). As risk factors associated with poor identity formation and low self-esteem continues to be an apparent problem among today’s youth, the need for instructional and motivational methods and activities that teach adolescents the skills necessary to build positive identities and self-esteem is crucial. Therefore, in order to help reduce the risks associated with poor identity formation and low self-esteem during adolescence, teens must have tools and activities available to them that promote and encourage engagement in personal exploration and social interaction among peers.

Statement of Need/Problem

It is evident that adolescents are not learning the skills needed to build positive identities and self-esteem; traditional instruction used to teach adolescents is neither engaging nor effective. An alarming statistic from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) indicates that suicide is the third leading cause of death among youth ages 10-24. With suicide being 100% preventable, skills necessary to prevent suicide risk factors from surfacing in adolescents must be reinforced. Teaching adolescents the skills needed to build positive identities and self-esteem through relatable instructional means may help to reduce adolescent risk factors. However, research shows that traditional instruction, such as lecture, is becoming less effective in reaching the adolescent population (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, & Shernoff, 2003). According to a study conducted by Nilsen, Green, Tomes, Thompson, and Grimley (2011), the most common emotion evoked from lecture activities was that of boredom. In compliance with this finding, research indicates that instruction is less effective when activities do not promote adolescent engagement (Shernoff et al., 2003).
Research shows that instruction must incorporate certain components in order for adolescents to find the material appealing. According to a study conducted by Shernoff et al. (2003), adolescents are more likely to be engaged in learning when instruction is relevant to their interests, require high levels of challenge and skill, and when it allows for elements of control. In addition, Shernoff et al. (2003) found that social interaction among peers during instructional activities increases student concentration, interest, enjoyment, motivation, esteem, mood, and academic intensity. Instructional methods that induce adolescent engagement by incorporating the above-mentioned elements, such as games, are ideal tools to make learning more fun and effective. Nilsen et al. (2011) found that students felt more alert, active, involved, perceived the activity as more challenging, and performed better on class exams when instruction was game-based as opposed to traditional lecture. Results from this study indicate that instructional games can be highly effective in producing engagement and learning. According to Petsche (2011), games make learning an enjoyable experience because of their ability to engage, captivate, and motivate players.

Creating an instructional tool that promotes engagement in building positive identities and self-esteem will help to reduce adolescent risk factors. Instructional games effectively motivate adolescents to learn through various means of engagement. According to Dev (1997), uninteresting tasks are less likely to motivate students, whereas those that promote interest and curiosity will. Identity formation occurs when adolescents explore their interests, beliefs, values, and goals (Marcia, 1966; Meeus et al., 2012; Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000). A game that promotes self-exploration would naturally increase adolescent engagement and encourage identity development. In addition,
engagement is increased during instruction when adolescents are allowed to socially interact with their peers (Shernoff et al., 2003). Adolescent adjustment and well-being is significantly related to building positive peer relationships (Hall-Lande et al., 2007; Woodhouse, Dykas, & Cassidy, 2012). According to a study conducted by Woodhouse et al. (2012), adolescents who lacked prosocial skills necessary to build positive peer relationships were more likely to report feeling shy and lonely. A game that encourages social interaction would engage adolescents and promote the use of prosocial skills to build positive peer relationships.

**Purpose of Graduate Project**

The purpose of this project is to create a motivational board game that teaches adolescents the skills necessary to develop positive identities and self-esteem. The game will be a valuable resource for parents and adolescents to use in home environments, for teachers to implement in classrooms, and for psychologists/counselors to use in professional settings. The game will effectively teach adolescents how to develop positive identities and self-esteem through engagement in fun and relatable activities.

The theme of the game is self-exploration and discovery. Players develop positive identities and self-esteem by engaging in self-exploration and social interactions. The game includes 150 statement cards and 50 challenge cards covering topics relevant to adolescent interests, beliefs, values, and goals. Players use positive self-reflection skills to respond to statement and challenge cards. Prosocial skills are also encouraged throughout the game via social interactions. The content and activities that are displayed within the game, such as rolling a letter die and timed responses, induce adolescent engagement by incorporating elements of challenge, relevancy, control, skill, and social
interaction. To move forward in the game, players take turns answering statement and challenge cards; the first player to reach the last square on the board wins the game.

**Terminology**

This section provides definitions for the terms most commonly used throughout this project. Definitions presented are based on scholarly research and literature.

**Adolescence:** A transitional stage in development between childhood and adulthood characterized by dynamic changes in physical, emotional, and behavioral domains (American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, 2010).

**Identity Formation:** Development of a cohesive sense of roles, values, and purpose in life through personal exploration and commitment (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966; La Guardia, 2009).

**Self-Esteem:** The self-evaluation of one’s own capabilities, significance, success, and worthiness (Coopersmith, 1967).

**Self-Reflection:** A tendency to reflect on oneself (Johnson and Stapel, 2011).

**Prosocial Behavior:** Conduct that is volunteer-based, cooperative, and helpful (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005).

**Engagement:** Displays of concentrated attention, involvement, and commitment (Newmann, Wehlage, & Lamborn, 1992).

**Transition to Next Chapter**

The chapters that follow present supporting research and detailed descriptions of the design and development of the board game, *Role Play*. Chapter Two consists of a literature review on topics relevant to the board game: developing positive identities and self-esteem through self-exploration, fostering peer relationships through prosocial
activities, and the effectiveness of games as instructional tools. Chapter Three addresses
the development of the board game, its intended audience and personal qualifications, the
environment in which it is to be used, and a description of the product contents and
activities. Chapter Four provides a summary, evaluation, and discussion of the future
plans for the project. Lastly, the Appendix contains images the JIP evaluation form, the
Game Evaluation Survey, and the board game.
Chapter Two- Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter is composed of a literature review on issues relevant to the design and development of a motivational board game for developing positive adolescent identities and self-esteem. The reviewed research focuses on the following topic areas: developing positive identities and self-esteem through self-exploration, fostering peer relationships through prosocial activities, and the effectiveness of games as instructional methods. The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the reviewed literature, along with a discussion supporting the development of the board game Role Play.

Developing Positive Identities and Self-Esteem through Self-Exploration

Ever since Erik Erikson (1950) first postulated identity formation in his stage theory of psychosocial development, researchers have been fascinated with the ways in which positive identity formation is achieved. According to Erikson (1968), adolescents go through an identity crisis that is characterized by discovering the self. Adolescents emerge successfully from this crisis if they achieve a cohesive sense of roles, values, and purpose in life (La Guardia, 2009). There are many theories regarding the development of positive adolescent identities and self-esteem; studies have shown that encouraging exploration through means of self-reflection has many benefits.

One of the most influential researchers on adolescent identity formation, James Marcia (1966), conducted an experiment on ego identity status based on differences in exploration and commitment. The experiment was composed of 86 male students from Hiram College, a small American private school located in Ohio. Subjects were engaged in a semi-structured interview in order to establish what identity status they belonged to.
This was determined by the amount of exploration and commitment subjects experienced in areas regarding occupation and ideology. Statuses were organized into four categories: identity diffusion (may or may not have made commitments or explored), foreclosure (made a commitment without exploration), moratorium (actively exploring, but has not yet made a commitment), and identity achievement (completed exploration and has made a commitment). In addition to this assessment, subjects were required to complete a 20-item self-esteem questionnaire concerning self-confidence and worthiness, as well as take a stress-induced test prompted by the experimenter. To assess the relationship between overall ego identity, an analysis of variance among the four identity statuses, and $t$ tests among the individual statuses, were performed. Compared to the other identity statuses, participants in the identity achievement status group attained the highest score of ego identity, performed the best on the stress-induced exam, showed less vulnerability to negative information, and were least likely to subscribe to authoritarian values.

According to Marcia, adolescents attain identity achievement if they have experienced a crisis and are committed to an occupation and ideology after having explored their identity. Though Marcia’s research on identity formation was significant, there are certain limitations to his work that need to be addressed. For one, the lack of female participants raises a concern about whether Marcia’s model of identity status can be generalized to both genders. Secondly, identity formation in early and middle adolescence was not assessed. And thirdly, the participants were from a small private college, hence the results may not transcend to the populace. Marcia’s findings, though limited to certain populations and stages, support the premise of Role Play, which is to develop positive adolescent identities through self-exploration.
Meeus, van de Schoot, Keijsers, and Branje (2012) conducted a more current study on identity formation. They tested Marcia’s (1966) original identity status theory of achievement, moratorium, early closure (previously labeled foreclosure), and diffusion in order to determine if they can be considered identity status trajectories. Additionally, three other research topics were studied: whether the prevalence of achievement was higher in middle-to-late adolescence than early-to-middle adolescence (and if diffusion was lower); whether there were gender differences in identity status trajectories; and whether there were stable, over-time differences in adjustment within the identity status trajectories. Researchers conducted a five-wave longitudinal study composed of data from a Dutch research project consisting of 923 early-to-middle adolescents (49.3% female), and 390 middle-to-late adolescents (56.7% female); participants were between the ages of 12-20. During annual assessment periods, participants completed questionnaires on topics regarding identity formation (commitment, in-depth exploration, and reconsideration), depression, and delinquency. Data were assessed using latent class growth analysis and repeated measures general linear models. Results indicated that Marcia’s original identity statuses are indeed status trajectories, demonstrating that identity formation is a stable, over-time process. In addition, findings indicated that the prevalence of achievement status was higher (and that of diffusion status was lower) in middle-to-late than in early-to-middle adolescence, that females tended to be higher in achievement and early closure statuses than males, that depression and delinquency was lower in achievement and early closure statuses, and that achievement and early closure statuses displayed higher levels of adjustment than did moratorium and diffusion identity statuses. The results of this study indicate that adolescents who acquire identity
achievement statuses are less likely to experience risks associated with depression and
delinquency. Positive identity formation occurs when adolescents explore their beliefs,
interests, values, and goals, and when commitments are made in relation to these
experiences. Because identity formation is a stable process occurring over time, it is
important to equip adolescents with the skills necessary to build positive identities and
self-esteem throughout the journey of development. Though the results of this study can
contribute greatly to the design and development of Role Play, it is also important to note
its limitations. Because most of the participants identified themselves as Dutch, the study
lacked ethnic diversity. When designing a game, it is vital to take into consideration
ethnic diversity in order to maintain widespread relevancy. Role Play will acknowledge
ethnic diversity by incorporating topics within the game that can be related to various
cultures and perspectives. For example, statement and challenge cards may ask players to
reflect on topics regarding traditions, hobbies, and political values. Responses to these
topics may be a reflection of one’s own culture and perspectives, or perhaps several
cultures and perspectives that have been of influence during one’s lifetime.

Overall, the study conducted by Meeus et al. supports the design and development
of a motivational board game that builds positive adolescent identities and self-esteem.
Role Play will promote both male and female participation in all stages of development.
Considerations of interests related to gender will be implemented throughout the design
of the game. For example, there will be a wide range of topics featured in the statement
and challenge cards that both genders will relate to, such as questions regarding food,
music, and goals. The overall design of the board game itself, both aesthetically and
functionally, will also take into consideration male and female players. For instance, the
color scheme that will be used within the design of the game will be gender mutual colors. One of the greatest aspects of Role Play is that it will be designed for adolescents in all stages of development (early, middle, and late stages).

The ways in which adolescents process information to formulate identities may have an impact on adjustment later in life. Berzonsky (1988, 1990) proposed that adolescents use social-cognitive processes to help formulate identities. Three identity processing styles were established based on how adolescents solve problems, make decisions, and process identity-relevant information: informational (actively explores and evaluates), normative (conforms to others), and diffuse/avoidant (reluctant to make decisions and confront problems). Berzonsky and Kuk (2000) investigated whether differences in identity status and identity processing style were directly related to how adolescents adjusted to college. Additionally, whether identity style mediated student adaptation and identity status was also studied. Participants included 363 freshman students from a medium-sized college in upstate New York (242 female and 121 male). Students from the sample were mostly White (over 90%) with a mean age of 18.15. Participants were given three self-report inventories that measured identity status, identity processing style, and university adaptation. The inventory on university adaptation measured the development of academic autonomy, mature interpersonal relationships, and educational purpose. Several regression analyses models were performed to assess the data. Results indicated that students who engaged in self-exploration (high achievement and moratorium statuses) showed better adjustment in university contexts. The more participants self-explored, the more mature, autonomous, and self-directed they became. In addition, the use of an informational processing style was positively related to
academic autonomy, educational involvement, and maturity of interpersonal relationships, whereas negative associations were found with the use of a diffuse/avoidant processing style. The findings of this study demonstrate that mediating qualities of identity processing style can be seen in the relationships between identity status and student adaptation. Furthermore, participants with high informational processing styles reported having more life-management skills related to student adjustment, possessed emotional autonomy, were more tolerant and accepting of others, and had well-defined educational and career goals. *Role Play* will encourage players to use the informational processing style to formulate identities high in achievement status. Players will actively explore and evaluate personal decisions, problems, and information. In addition, *Role Play* will support tolerance and openness to others in order to encourage social relationships. This will be fostered within the design of the statement and challenge cards, as well as within the rules of the game. Using self-exploration techniques that encourage the informational processing style will also promote adolescent school adjustment later on in life.

Personal exploration through methods of self-reflection can have many benefits. Johnson and Stapel (2011) conducted two studies on motivational methods used to boost self-esteem and performance. They focused on two different techniques: reflection (reflecting on someone else) and self-reflection (reflecting on oneself). In order to determine which of the two activities delivered the most benefits, researchers measured boosts in performance, self-liking, and self-competence. Participants included 45 Dutch university students in the first study, and 76 Dutch university students in the second study. Demographics observed to be representative of the overall participant pool, which
consisted of 60% females with a mean age of 19. In the first study, participants were randomly selected to either read a story about a successful college student (reflection), or write about one’s own positive attributes (self-reflection). The control group was asked to briefly write about nature, as it was an unrelated topic. Afterward, participants completed a brief questionnaire on self-esteem, along with a 20-item measure on performance. Using an ANOVA to assess the results, researchers found that self-reflection boosted self-esteem and performance, while reflection showed boosts in self-esteem but negative effects in performance. The second study examined differences in self-liking, self-competence, and temporal comparisons between reflection and self-reflection. Four groups were randomly assigned and asked to complete one of four tasks. Two of the groups completed the same tasks in the first study, and an additional group was asked to complete another form of self-reflection (temporal comparison) by writing about how they have changed in a positive manner from previous years. The control group was asked to write about the local environment as a neutral task. After participants completed their assigned task, they were asked to complete a questionnaire on self-competence and self-liking, along with a 20-item measure on performance. Using a factorial ANOVA to assess the results of the second study, researchers found that self-reflection increased self-liking and self-competence, whereas reflection only showed an increase in self-liking. Findings further indicated that participant performance improved when self-enhancement occurred via methods of self-reflection, yet when reflection was used it was harmed. This study solidifies the use of self-reflection as a motivational technique that should be used in Role Play to build positive adolescent identities and to enhance self-esteem. As mentioned in previous study reviews, incorporating ethnic diversity within the
design and development of a game is significant to its success. Though this study lacked ethnic diversity, its literature on self-reflection skills will be a fundamental contribution to the design of *Role Play*. In order to achieve boosts in self-enhancement and performance, players will be encouraged to use self-reflection skills to explore statement and challenge card content. For instance, some statement cards will ask players to reflect on their own positive qualities. Examples of this are asking players to name reasons why they believe they are fun, unique, or special. Players will also use self-reflection skills in order to respond to questions presented in the challenge cards. For example, one challenge card might ask players to name a goal they want to accomplish in life, and to explain why.

**Fostering Peer Relationships through Prosocial Activities**

Many researchers have recognized the importance of establishing positive peer relationships during adolescence. By engaging in activities that promote prosocial behaviors, such as cooperation, sharing, and acknowledging different opinions, adolescents will create positive peer relationships and ultimately build upon identity formation and self-esteem.

Healthy adolescent development is often associated with the relationships one builds with peers. Hall-Lande, Eisenberg, Christenson, and Neumark-Sztainer (2007) conducted a study on the relationships between feelings of social isolation among peers and psychological health risks during adolescence (depression, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts). In addition, protective factors including family connectedness, school connectedness, and academic achievement were studied as mediating influences. Data were gathered during the 1998-1999 school year, and
consisted of 4,746 students (50.2% male) in grades 7-12. Participants were from a large Midwestern metropolitan area and consisted of a socioeconomically and ethnically diverse group. Students responded to 221 self-report survey questions on topics regarding peer relationships, psychological health, and the above-mentioned protective factors. Status variables were gender, race, body mass index, socioeconomic status (SES), and grade level. After conducting several statistical regression models, Hall-Lande et al. found that students who reported feeling socially isolated from peers had a greater probability of suicide attempts, experienced more symptoms of depression, and expressed lower levels of self-esteem than did non-isolated adolescents. In addition to these findings, social isolation from peers remained significantly associated with depression and low self-esteem even after adjusting for protective factors. When status variables were included in the analysis, significant relationships remained between social isolation and self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and suicide attempts for both male and female participants. Moreover, results indicated that family connectedness was the strongest protective factor against suicide attempts in socially isolated adolescents. These results suggest that it is important for Role Play to encourage positive peer and family relationships in order to support healthy adolescent development. The information presented in this study is important to the development of Role Play, which will be designed to build positive adolescent identities and self-esteem. In order to achieve this, Role Play must support and encourage positive peer interaction among the players.

Prosocial behaviors promote positive interactions that can help to establish peer relationships. Woodhouse, Dykas, and Cassidy (2012) examined loneliness during adolescence within the context of peer relationships. Participants included 2091 11th
grade students (61% female) between the ages of 16-17. Racial/ethnic distribution reported in the study was: White (65%), Black/African American (15%), Asian (15%), and Hispanic (4%). Students were from seven public schools representing a large suburban area of the United States. In relation to SES, six of the seven schools reported 10% or less of their students receiving free or reduced lunch. One school reported 32% of their students receiving free or reduced lunch. Students participated in two data collection sessions during which they were given questionnaire packets during regular school hours. Packets included measures on loneliness, social behavior and victimization, peer acceptance, romantic relationship history, sociometric status, and reciprocal liking. Prosocial behaviors, as assessed in the questionnaire, were described as being cooperative, helpful, and kind to others (doing nice things). Data were analyzed using various statistical methods, including zero-order correlational analyses, \( t \) tests, and ANOVAs. Results indicated that adolescents who exhibited prosocial behaviors were less lonely, whereas those who reported being shy or victimized tended to be lonelier. However, when the researchers controlled for social acceptance, only shy behavior exclusively related to loneliness. In addition to these findings, students were also less likely to be lonely if they experienced positive peer relationships. According to these results, prosocial behaviors may help to reduce shyness and loneliness during adolescence, in addition to promoting the development of positive peer relationships. Though this study lacked pronounced diversity in terms race and SES, its results on prosocial behaviors can be a significant contribution to the design and development of \textit{Role Play}. Positive interaction among players will be encouraged through prosocial behaviors. This will be achieved by encouraging players to be cooperative, helpful, and
kind to one another throughout the game. For instance, creating an information sheet that asks players to be cooperative of the game’s rules, and with each other, may help to create a friendly environment. Challenge cards that encourage peers to help one another will also promote peer interactions. It is apparent from the results of this study that prosocial behaviors positively influence the development of peer relationships. A game that embraces positive peer interactions will be beneficial to adolescent adjustment.

Greitemeyer and Osswald (2011) conducted a study on the effects of prosocial video games in relation to the occurrence of future prosocial behaviors. Of the 47 participants included in the study, 24 were female and 23 were male; ages ranged from 17-61. Participants were asked to play one of two games, a prosocial video game or a neutral video game. The games were tested and matched on affective and arousal dimensions, insuring that any effects from playing the games were not due to variances in general mood or arousal. After playing the games, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire on prosocial content and enjoyment of the games. Next, participants were asked to complete a decision task on word recognition between words and non-words. This 32-trial test included recognizing prosocial words and words without prosocial content (neutral words) as quickly as possible. Data were assessed using a mixed-model ANOVA. Results indicated that participants who played the prosocial game responded faster to prosocial words, rather than neutral words or non-words, on the word recognition task. Likewise, participants who played the neutral game responded faster to neutral words when compared to their recognition of prosocial words and non-words. Further results showed that the content of the prosocial game was rated more prosocial than was the content of the neutral game. These findings suggest that engagement in
prosocial activities foster cognitive associations in prosocial behaviors. Such associations may lead to future participation in prosocial behaviors or actions. Although some of the participants included in this study were beyond the adolescent age range, it is interesting to see how prosocial activities affect people of various ages. Since identity formation is an over-time process, the prosocial behaviors that will be practiced in *Role Play* may foster the occurrence of similar behaviors beyond adolescence and into the various stages of development throughout life.

**The Effectiveness of Games as Instructional Methods**

Educators must embrace new instructional techniques in order to effectively facilitate learning in today’s youth. Adolescents are finding traditional methods of instruction, such as lecture, less engaging. Instructional games, on the other hand, foster engagement and learning through methods adolescents find challenging, relevant, and enjoyable.

Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, and Shernoff (2003) conducted a study on student engagement in high school classrooms. In relation to the perspective of flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), Shernoff et al. were interested in studying how adolescents spent their time in school and under what conditions did they experience levels of concentration, interest, and enjoyment. Data for this research was from a national longitudinal study conducted in three waves, spanning from 1991 to 1997. Data were collected from multiple site locations representing a wide geographical area, and was ethnically and socioeconomically diverse. Included in the study were 526 students (62% female) from 10th and 12th grade. During a 7-day week period, participants completed a reliable and valid self-report measure eight times daily whenever a pre-
programmed wristwatch beeped. The self-report measure, which consisted of 45-items, asked participants to write in their location and the activity they were engaged in when the wristwatch alerted them. Student engagement, attention, and quality of experience (mood, esteem, academic intensity, and intrinsic motivation) were assessed as dependent measures using the self-report survey. Independent measures were: classroom activities and school subject, challenge and skill, and instructional relevance and control. One-way ANOVAs were used as the primary statistical method to examine data, in addition to using Duncan’s Multiple Range Test, t-tests, and chi-square for additional analyses. Results indicated that the majority of instructional time was spent doing non-interactive activities, such as individual work (23%) and listening to lectures (21%). Students reported higher levels of engagement measured by concentration, interest, and enjoyment during group work activities rather than during lecture activities. Instructional methods that supported group work, as opposed to lecture, demonstrated higher qualities of experience with increases in student motivation, esteem, mood, and academic intensity. As related to flow theory, students reported more engagement and attention to instruction when challenge and skill levels were high. In addition, students reported feeling more engaged and had higher esteem and mood when they experienced more control over an activity. Engagement also increased when students perceived instruction to be high in relevancy. It is apparent that traditional instruction involving lecture activities is becoming less effective in reaching today’s youth. Activities that spark engagement, such as those that are challenging and relevant to students, enhance the overall learning experience. The design of Role Play will feature many of these characteristics that will make it an effective instructional tool for developing positive adolescent identities and
self-esteem. This will be accomplished by incorporating elements in the game that adolescents will find relevant, challenging, interactive, fun, and require a certain level of skill and control. For these reasons, I believe that games such as *Role Play* are ideal instructional tools for reaching the adolescent population.

Nilsen, Green, Tomes, Thompson, and Grimley (2011) conducted a study on the experience of computer games as an instructional technique compared to that of the traditional lecture approach. Participants included 31 undergraduate students (21 males, 10 females) enrolled in a first-year Bachelor of Arts Education course on computer games and education. Over 93% of the students were under the age of 25, and 41.9% were from New Zealand European backgrounds; other ethnicities included East Asian (29%), Pacific Islander (9.7%), South Asian (3.2%), European (3.2%), and Other (12.9%). Demographics on participant socioeconomic statuses were not included in the study. The study took place during a semester course on computer games and education. During the first half of the term, participants were taught course material either through traditional lectures or through computer game sessions. In addition, participants attended a weekly lab session where they learned how to use a computer game toolset to build customized computer game modules. At the end of the first term, a formal assessment was conducted via an examination that tested recall and understanding of the content learned. Comparisons of exam attainment for questions based on lecture and games were made. During the second term lab assignment, participants were asked to design, build, and evaluate a game module comprised of educational content that was taught in the first part of the course. Lectures continued in the second term, covering topics relating to game design and theory. In all, the educational psychology content taught was split
between traditional lecture and custom-built computer game modules. During each course session, participants completed a form using a 10-point Likert-scale that recorded their experiences (mood, thoughts, and general feelings) and measures of flow. Assessment of flow was based on the different modes of instruction. Data were assessed using t-test scores to determine overall differences in experience between methods of instruction using lectures and games. Results indicated that participants were more alert, more active, felt more involved, and perceived the activity as more challenging when the game was used as the instructional tool. Findings from participants in various flow states concluded that boredom was the most prevalent state during traditional lectures, whereas anxiety, followed closely by flow, was the most common state during game experiences. However, it was noted that anxiety might not be a negative effect in these circumstances because it is often accompanied with the arousal level flow produces. In addition, participants performed better on the exam when instruction was game-based, rather than traditional lecture. Results from this study indicate that using games as instructional tools, especially for younger generations, can be highly effective in learning and engagement. Instruction must retain its relevancy in order for effective learning to take place. As an instructional game geared toward adolescents, the design of Role Play will embody challenging, relevant, and interactive characteristics that will make learning fun and effective. One of the greatest benefits for using a game as an instructional tool are the positive emotions that arise from doing something one perceives as enjoyable.

Fredrickson and Joiner (2002) investigated whether positive emotions triggered more positive emotions, creating upward spirals of enhanced well-being. In addition, the idea that positive emotions broaden attention and cognition was also proposed.
Fredrickson’s (1998) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions was used as a foundation for this study. According to Fredrickson’s theory, positive emotions broaden people’s thought-action repertoires, encouraging the development of new thoughts and actions. In return, these new thoughts and actions build upon personal resources (physical, intellectual, social, and psychological). Researchers examined whether positive affect and broad-minded coping reciprocally influenced one another and improved emotional well-being. Participants included 138 mostly Caucasian (71%) undergraduate students (54% female with a mean age of 20) in an introductory psychology course. Participants completed measures of affect and coping during one time period, and then again five weeks later. Positive and negative affect were measured by using a 20-item survey that recorded the extent to which participants felt each feeling or emotion during two weeks prior to the assessment. In addition, participants completed an inventory on the most important problem they faced during the past year, and reported coping strategies used to deal with it. Cognitive analysis was used as a subscale during this measurement to assess broad-minded coping. Regression analyses were used to assess the data. Results indicated that positive affect enhanced broad-minded coping, and broad-minded coping significantly increased positive affect. In general, these findings suggest that positive emotions do indeed lead to upward spirals of positive emotions, which is linked to broadened thinking. This study supports the development of Role Play, which will build positive identities and self-esteem. The game will require adolescents to use positive self-reflection skills to answer statement and challenge cards, which will lead to positive affect. Positive words (such as enjoy, fun, like, and favorite) will be used in the descriptions of the statement and challenge cards to encourage players to engage in
positive self-reflection. According to this study, if players achieve positive emotions about themselves, then they are more likely to experience positive emotions about themselves in the future.

**Synthesis**

The research presented in this literature review supports the design and development of the board game, *Role Play*. In order for *Role Play* to be successful in teaching adolescents the skills needed to build positive identities and self-esteem, it must incorporate certain features and elements that were identified throughout the literature review. Research suggests that identity formation during adolescence is best achieved through self-exploration. By promoting self-exploration via methods of positive self-reflection, adolescents will develop a secure sense of identity and self-esteem. Statement and challenge cards will prompt players to engage in positive self-reflection by exploring their beliefs, interests, values, and goals. In order to progress in the game, players will make decisions based on these self-reflections and will respond accordingly to the cards. Players will formulate identities and build self-esteem by exploring the diverse topics presented in the design of the statement and challenge cards. Some statement and challenge cards may ask players to self-reflect on topics regarding social values, character attributes, and career choices. For example, one challenge card might ask players to name a world leader who has inspired them, and to explain why. Encouraging social interaction among peers is also essential to adolescent well-being and adjustment. Prosocial behaviors such as cooperation, helpfulness, and kindness will be implemented throughout the game in order to promote peer relationships. Cooperation of the rules of the game, including maintaining a respectful environment, will help to foster prosocial
behaviors. Activities that promote prosocial behavior and peer interaction, such as teamwork, will also be included in the design of the game. For example, some challenge cards may ask players to help each other complete a task by taking turns answering a question. Engagement in the game is encouraged by incorporating activities that adolescents will find relevant, challenging, interactive, fun, and require a certain level of skill and control. This will be achieved by integrating material in the game that adolescents can relate to, such as asking players to reflect on personal opinions and views. For example, some statement cards may ask players to name things that they find enjoyable, such as different foods, musical artists, and movies. Including elements of challenge throughout the game will also induce engagement. For instance, requiring players to roll a letter die before reading statement cards, and asking them to respond to the cards using words that begin with the letter rolled, will make the game more challenging. Encouraging players to have unique responses, in addition to incorporating difficulty options on challenge cards, will support elements of control. One of the greatest benefits in using games as instructional tools is the amount of pleasure players experience while they are engaged. Making sure Role Play is fun and interactive will be a top priority in its design and development. Because positive affect creates an upward spiral of positive emotions, adolescents will feel good after playing Role Play because of the enjoyment it will naturally produce.

By incorporating elements in the game that promote positive self-reflection, peer relationships, and engagement, adolescents will enthusiastically partake in a pivotal period of their development. The literature reviewed supports the development of the
board game *Role Play*, which will teach adolescents the skills needed to build positive identities and self-esteem in a fun and effective way.
Chapter Three- Audience and Implementation Factors

Introduction

There is a critical need for an instructional tool that teaches adolescents the skills needed to develop positive identities and self-esteem, which is why I developed the board game Role Play. As indicated in Chapter One, risk factors associated with poor identity formation and low self-esteem during adolescence are becoming more prevalent in the United States. The literature review in Chapter Two demonstrated how traditional instruction commonly used to teach adolescents is becoming less engaging and therefore may be less effective. Role Play was created as an effective tool to teach adolescents the skills necessary to build positive identities and self-esteem. The information presented in this chapter addresses the development of the board game, its intended audience and personal qualifications, the environment in which it is to be used, and a description of the product.

Development of Product

The design and development of Role Play was assisted through the use of an instructional systems design model introduced to me during a graduate course in instructional design. The ADDIE model was used to organize the developmental processes of the product. The model is best known for its flexibility, and can be used in diverse instructional settings. The most beneficial feature of the model is that it allows for constant assessment of the product. The ADDIE model is organized into five phases: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The Analysis phase includes identifying the problem and possible source of the problem, as well as developing a solution with instructional goals and learning objectives. The Design phase
includes a plan for instruction regarding how to meet the goals and objectives. The Development phase consists of building the instructional product according to the instructional design. During the Implementation phase the product is tested in the designated field and on the intended audience. Lastly, the Evaluation phase consists of assessing how well the product met its goals and objectives by determining its efficiency. This phase should be incorporated throughout the design process, including during each phase, following each phase, between phases, and after product implementation. Next, I will go over each of the five phases of the ADDIE model as it was used for the design and development of Role Play.

Analysis Phase. The problem: national statistics show an increase in suicidal ideations among today’s youth (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). Possible sources of the problem: poor identity formation during adolescence increases the risk for developing maladaptive outcomes, including depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideations (Meeus et al., 2012; Trzesniewski et al., 2006; Rutter & Behrendt, 2004). Traditional methods of instruction are not motivating adolescents to learn, and are therefore becoming less effective (Shernoff et al., 2003). Solution to the problem: create a motivational board game that teaches adolescents the skills necessary to build positive identities and self-esteem, such as positive self-reflection and prosocial skills, to help reduce adolescent risk factors. Teaching goals: adolescents who play the game Role Play will practice skills necessary to build positive identities and self-esteem. This will be achieved by engaging in positive self-reflection to explore interests, beliefs, values, and goals, and by practicing prosocial behavior to build positive peer relationships. Parents and teachers will facilitate positive self-exploration and social interactions among their
adolescent children and students who play the game *Role Play*. Performance objectives: when at home, in school, and while socializing with peers, adolescents will engage in positive self-reflection and prosocial behaviors to build upon their identities, self-esteem, and peer relationships. Parents and teachers will encourage their adolescent children and students to engage in positive self-reflection and prosocial behaviors in home, neighborhood, and educational environments. Instructional goals: adolescents will formulate positive identities and self-esteem while they explore their interests, beliefs, values, and goals throughout life. Adolescents will establish positive peer relationships throughout life by exhibiting cooperative, helpful, and kind behavior toward others. Parents and teachers will encourage their adolescent children and students to engage in positive self-exploration and prosocial behaviors throughout their journey of self-discovery.

**Design Phase.** Plan for instruction on how to meet the goals and learning objectives indicated in the Analysis phase: design a motivational board game to effectively teach adolescents how to use self-reflection skills to explore their interests, beliefs, values, and goals. The game must support prosocial behaviors to encourage social interaction and positive peer relationships. Elements of engagement must be incorporated within the content and activities of the game, such as challenge, relevancy, control, and skill, to attract adolescent participation and to promote learning. Various instructional strategies will be integrated into the design of the game, such as attention, comprehension, memory, motivation, and diversity.

To stimulate attention, the game will include learning objectives on the box and on the information sheet. The content of the statement and challenge cards will also
contain elements of humor and relevancy related to adolescent interests. Players will be held accountable for their actions and behavior during the game by including rules and considerations in the information sheet. Social interaction, movement, and the use of auditory, sight, and touch senses will also be included in the game’s design. To induce player comprehension, the game box will include a brief description of the game and a list of its contents, as well as visual demonstrations. Statement and challenge cards will require players to give examples and explanations to their responses. To support memory function, the game will encourage players to practice self-reflection skills and prosocial behavior. In addition, various topic categories will be presented in the statement and challenge cards, such as school subjects, vacation destinations, and character attributes. To motivate player participation, the statement and challenge cards will promote interest and curiosity by asking players engage in various activities, including self-exploration and social interactions. Furthermore, the game will encourage players to give unique and creative responses to statement and challenge cards, allowing for choice and decision-making. The statement and challenge cards will be positive in design to emphasize recognition, praise, and encouragement. The game will encourage diversity through the statement and challenge card activities. Statement and challenge card activities will prompt players to explore their unique cultures and perspectives.

**Development Phase.** Using the plans outlined in the Design phase, create the instructional product: a board game was developed to build positive adolescent identities and self-esteem. Included in the game is a surface to play on (a flat durable board), a pathway that has a start and finish point, six game pieces, an information sheet, and statement and challenge cards. A letter die and a 30-second timer are also included in the
The activities and content in the statement and challenge cards encourage players to use self-reflection skills and prosocial behavior. A more detailed description of the game is included in the Product Description section of this chapter.

**Implementation Phase.** After development is complete, test the product in its designated field and on the intended audience: adolescents will be asked to play the game in various environments. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the game will be conducted after its implementation to the target audience. This will include reviewing feedback collected from adolescents regarding their experiences playing the game. To do this, pretests and posttests will be administered to all players before and after the game. These tests will be in the form of questionnaires regarding the game’s effectiveness. A more detailed explanation of this process is included in Chapter Four.

**Evaluation Phase.** Assess the product’s efficacy in meeting the desired goals and objectives: formative evaluations of the game are conducted throughout the development process, including before, during, and after each of the phases listed above. In addition, a summative evaluation of the whole product takes place after the implementation phase. Assessments include constant examination regarding whether or not the game is meeting its instructional goals and objectives. Professionals in various fields have evaluated *Role Play*. Valuable feedback regarding the product was received from colleagues in a graduate course in instructional design. The suggestions and comments made by my colleagues have helped shape *Role Play* into a more effective game. In addition, three adults (two parents and a teacher) were asked to evaluate *Role Play* and answer a survey regarding its effectiveness. Suggestions and comments made by the three evaluators have
also contributed to the development of the product. Specific details regarding the evaluation of Role Play are included in Chapter Four.

**Evaluation of a Similar Product**

An evaluation of a similar product was conducted after developing the idea for Role Play. Similar products were examined on the market by searching the Internet, as well as visiting stores. After looking through extensive inventories in various stores, including Lakeshore, Education Station, Toys “R” Us, and Target, a product similar to the idea of Role Play was found. The product evaluated is called Scattergories, a creative thinking category-based game. Scattergories is often played in social gathering situations allowing 2-6 adults to participate each time. There are 16 different category lists to choose from, each consisting of 12 diverse category topics. Examples of the topics are: things in a desert, math terms, words with double letters, and kinds of soups/stews. The goal of the game is to fill out the category cards in a given amount of time with answers beginning with the letter rolled from a letter die. There are four challenging aspects to the game: (a) answers must start with the letter rolled in the beginning of each round, (b) players have 1, 2, or 3 minutes to fill out the 12 categories on each card, depending on the amount of time the players agree on; (c) answers must be unique in order to earn points (players may not have the same answer), and (d) answers may not be fictitious. Points are given according to these four standards; whoever has the most points wins the round. The JIP evaluation form developed by Dr. Carolyn Jeffries was used to evaluate Scattergories (to view completed form, see Appendix A). Included in the evaluation were topics regarding the game’s effectiveness, content, activities, and packaging. Through this evaluation, I learned that creating a successful game requires meticulous attention to
detail in all areas of design and development. Scattergories scored well on most of the topics presented in the JIP form. However, it did lack in areas regarding diversity in graphics and usability. The main difference between Scattergories and Role Play is the method of exploration used to respond to cards. Scattergories asks players to reflect upon various categories, whether they are relevant to the players or not. Role Play asks players to self-reflect upon various topics, allowing for relevancy through self-exploration. Similarly to Scattergories, one of the main features in Role Play is the use of a letter die. Not only does the letter die incorporate elements of challenge, but it also allows players to be creative in delivering unique responses.

**Intended Audience**

The game Role Play is specifically designed for early, middle, and late adolescents between the ages of 10-18 years. Adolescents who play the game are from both genders and of all ethnic, racial, SES, and cultural backgrounds. Players are going through rapid physical, psychological, and social changes, prompted by cognitive growth and hormone fluctuations. They are in the process of formulating unique identities and self-concepts fundamental to adolescent adjustment and development. Players know how to speak and read English at the middle school level. They have fair eyesight in order to read the information sheet, statement cards, and challenge cards. Auditory senses are used to hear peer responses to statement and challenge cards, and to participate in the activities that involve social interaction. However, players who have vision and hearing impairments are able to play the game with the help of an assistant. Basic motor skills are used throughout the game to pick up and hold cards, roll the letter die, and to move game pieces about the board. This age group is interested in topics and activities that are highly
engaging, which allows for displays of autonomy, and encourages creativity and social interaction. Some of the topics adolescents are typically interested in are: games, music, the Internet, movies, television, fashion, sports, dancing, shopping, cars, traveling, socializing, reading, crafting, animals, and learning. Players are supportive of diverse cultures and perspectives, and enjoy socially interacting among their peers. Players are familiar with games, and rules associated with such activities. They know how to take turns, follow directions, and act in an appropriate manner.

Parents and teachers are two additional audiences intended for the game. Parents and teachers want to know more about their adolescent children and students. They believe building positive identities and self-esteem is a vital part of adolescent development. They encourage adolescents to explore their interests, beliefs, values, and goals in order for them to formulate their own unique identities. Parents and teachers support adolescents academically, socially, and personally. They know how to speak and read English at the middle school level. Their sight and auditory senses are fair, allowing them to read and hear throughout the game.

**Personal Qualifications**

Professionals using this product should be fluent in English and be able to communicate and interact with adolescents with ease on a personal level. Professionals should be knowledgeable of the experiences associated with adolescent development, such as the formation of identities, self-concepts, and peer relationships. They should be understanding of diverse views and opinions, and should encourage adolescents to engage in positive self-reflection and prosocial behavior. Social interaction among adolescents should also be encouraged. Professionals should observe gameplay from a
distance, as to avoid social desirability. However, a supportive and cooperative environment should be reinforced when necessary. Although prior experience playing board games is not necessary, professionals are recommended to be aware of general guidelines often associated with such activities. These guidelines include knowing how to take turns, following directions, and acting in an appropriate manner.

Environment and Equipment

*Role Play* can be played in nearly any environment that has a flat surface to accommodate the board. Examples of such surfaces include tables, desks, floors, and lawns. Lighting must be sufficient in order for players to see the board and be able to safely read the information sheet, statement cards, and challenge cards. Environments that are relatively quiet with few distractions are recommended. Engagement will be higher if players can easily pay attention to their peers and be able to hear each other’s responses. Also, because *Role Play* encourages players to self-explore and socially interact, environments should be supportive, comfortable, and free of judgment. Environments that support these characteristics may be found in a home, school, park, playground, or in an office, among other places. All equipment needed to play the game will be included in the game box.

Product Description

**Product Components.** The major component of the *Role Play* game is a flat 15.75 x 18.5 inch board that can be folded into a small rectangle. It is black and covered with blue and silver squares that form a pathway. The pathway begins in the center of the board and continues around the board’s perimeter. The end of the pathway is located adjacent to the starting point. There are 18 blue squares on the board that represent
statement card activities. The silver squares are located on the four corners of the board and represent challenge card activities. Statement cards are blue, and challenge cards are silver. When players land on a blue square, they must choose a statement card. When players land on a silver square, they must choose a challenge card. In the middle of the board is a decorative red sparkling square with an image of the letter die used in the game. Also included in the game is a small burgundy colored box with a lid which contains the game materials. Information about the game is included on the top and bottom of the box. A re-sealable zipper bag contains and stores the game pieces: six different-colored cork stoppers, a 30-second sand timer, and a letter die. The information sheet includes a description of the game, age requirements, number of players, objectives, rules and considerations, contents, and directions regarding how to play. Also included on the information sheet will be a website address for parents, teachers, and psychologists/counselors to use a resource. The website is part of the future plans for Role Play, and will include links to additional resources, contact information of other professionals, suggestions on how to prevent social desirability, and a forum for postings on pre and post game play activities. A more detailed discussion of the future plans for the game is included in Chapter Four. To view images of the game, the box, and its contents, please see Appendices C-E.

There are two different types of cards used in Role Play: statement cards and challenge cards. Both statement and challenge cards ask players to explore their interests, beliefs, values, and goals, through the use of self-reflection skills. Simple vocabulary is used on both cards, and directions are clear and easy to understand. Positive wording is used in the description of each card, reassuring that self-exploration remains positive.
Some statement cards, for example, ask players to list things that they enjoy, admire, and like, such as school subjects, character attributes, and music. Some challenge cards ask players to name goals they want to accomplish, professions they are interested in, and destinations they want to travel to.

**Product Game Play.** The activities presented in the statement and challenge cards help adolescent players formulate identities and build self-esteem through the use of positive self-reflection. As players explore their interests, beliefs, values, and goals, they learn more about themselves and about their fellow peers. Prosocial behavior is also encouraged in the game play to promote social interaction and positive peer relationships.

Statement cards are picked when a player lands on a statement square, indicated by the blue coloring. Players start the game on a blue square; therefore the first card picked is a statement card. Statement cards are for individual play only, require players to roll the letter die, and are timed using the 30-second timer. Players are to finish the statement on the card by listing as many responses possible that apply to the statement. The number of responses the player gives is the amount of squares they move up on the board. For example, a player rolls the letter die and it lands on the letter ‘P.’ The player then picks a statement card and reads it aloud. The statement card says, “I am fun because I am … .” The player now has 30 seconds to list as many words as possible that start with the letter ‘P’ indicating reasons they are fun. For example, the player might say they are fun because they are playful, passionate, and pleasant. Because the player gave three responses within the allotted time, and used only words that began with the letter rolled, he/she will move up three squares on the board. Utilization of the letter die during the
statement card activities is a challenging, fun, and creative way to encourage adolescents to self-explore. To see an example of a statement card, please refer to Appendix E.

When a player lands on a challenge square, indicated by the silver coloring, he/she must pick a challenge card. Players do not roll the letter die for the challenge card activities; however, 30-second responses are still a requirement. There are two different types of challenge card activities mixed throughout the deck: buddy challenges and independent challenges.

When a player picks a buddy challenge card, he/she is required to choose a teammate to assist in completing the challenge. This activity supports prosocial behavior because it involves cooperation, helpfulness, and being kind to others. The buddy challenge requires players to take turns answering the card. For instance, one buddy challenge asks players to name 10 cities in the United States they would like to visit. In this example, player #1 may say Boston, player #2 may say San Francisco, player #1 may say Chicago, player #2 may say New York, and so on. Successful completion of the buddy challenge awards both participating players an extra square on the board. To see an example of a buddy challenge card, please refer to Appendix E.

When a player picks an independent challenge card, he/she is required to independently complete the challenge. Players are to choose one challenge to complete on the card: an easy option (worth one extra square), or a more difficult option (worth two extra squares). Options are color coordinated according to difficulty level: a purple star indicates the easy option, and a red star indicates the more difficult option. Once the player picks a challenge card with an independent challenge, he/she must quickly read the two options and choose which one to answer. After a decision is made, the player is given
30 seconds to respond. For example, one independent challenge card asks players to answer one of the following options in 30 seconds: name one world leader who has inspired you (easy option) or name one political topic that you are passionate about and explain why (more difficult option). Successful completion of the independent challenge awards the participating player extra squares on the board (amount depends on the difficulty level chosen).

Transition to Next Chapter

The following chapter consists of a summary of the project and a discussion on the evaluations of the game. In addition, future plans for Role Play will be discussed in a concluding section.
Chapter Four - Conclusion

Summary

As discussed in Chapter One, adolescents who struggle to build positive identities and self-esteem are at an increased risk for developing maladaptive outcomes, such as depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideations (Meeus et al., 2012; Trzesniewski et al., 2006; Rutter & Behrendt, 2004). Recent statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) show an increase in suicidal ideations among American youth, indicating a need to address ways to build adolescent identities and self-esteem.

The purpose of the board game Role Play is to teach adolescents the skills necessary to build positive identities and self-esteem in a fun and effective way. By incorporating elements of engagement, players build positive identities and self-esteem through self-exploration and social interactions. A review of literature in Chapter Two addressed fundamental theories and concepts used to help design and develop the game Role Play.

A detailed description of the game’s development using the ADDIE instructional systems model is included in Chapter Three. Also included is an evaluation of a similar product, as well as descriptions of the intended audience, product components, and game play activities. The information presented in this chapter reviews evaluations of the game and concludes with a discussion on future plans.

Evaluations

**Formative Evaluation.** The first evaluations of Role Play took place in a graduate course in instructional design. Colleagues from various professional fields, such as education, instructional design, and psychology, gave valuable suggestions to improve the game’s design and development. Some of the suggestions included making game play
more socially interactive and the game board more aesthetically appealing to the intended audience. To enhance social interaction among the players, the buddy challenge cards were developed. The buddy challenge cards require players to choose a partner to help them respond to the challenge by taking turns answering the card. In addition, elements of sparkle and glitter were used throughout the design of the game box and board to make the game more aesthetically appealing to adolescents.

After the first evaluations of *Role Play*, three additional people were asked to evaluate the game: parents of an adolescent (Evaluators A and B) and a credentialed teacher who has experience working with adolescents (Evaluator C). All three evaluators were asked to review *Role Play* for its effectiveness by completing a survey. The survey (see Appendix B) consists of eight questions pertaining to the goals and objectives of the game, its content, and user recommendations. Results indicated that all three evaluators believed that *Role Play* met its instructional goals and objectives, and would indeed help to build adolescent identities and self-esteem. They agreed that the content and activities presented in the cards evoke engagement, social interaction, and are relevant to adolescent interests. Recommendation of the game to fellow parents and professionals was also agreed upon. Each evaluator gave valuable feedback regarding the game. Evaluator A suggested including topics concerning technology in the statement and challenge cards as to stay contemporary and relevant. She also felt that statement and challenge cards truly require players to use self-reflection skills to gain a better understanding of who they are and what they like. Evaluator B suggested adding cards that showed a wider range in difficulty level so that elements of challenge can incorporate adolescents in all stages of development. He also stated that he appreciated the diversity
represented in the various card topics, especially the cards relating to cultural views and traditions. Evaluator C suggested adding a note in the rules section that gives players the option of using the Internet to research questionable responses to determine their legitimacy. She also felt that the activities in the game encourage social interaction and prosocial behaviors. She enjoyed the topics presented in the statement and challenge cards, particularly the ones regarding future career goals. In addition, Evaluator C found that the 30-second time limit for responses makes the game fast moving and more engaging.

The feedback received from the evaluators has contributed greatly in making Role Play a more fun and effective product. As suggested by Evaluator A, an effort was made to include topics in the statement and challenge cards that reflect areas in technology. For instance, some card topics include questions regarding websites and social media. Evaluator B suggested that the statement and challenge cards should incorporate a wider range in difficulty level as to reach a more broad adolescent audience. To accommodate for this, changes to the topic categories were made. Some of the statement and challenge card topics are more general than others, making them easier to respond to, whereas some are more specific, making them more difficult to respond to. Lastly, Evaluator C suggested that players should be allowed to research questionable responses on the Internet if there is a disagreement involving factual information. After consideration, an addition to the rules section on the information sheet was added that gives players the option to research questionable responses in order to maintain fairness and cooperation. Through these evaluations, I have learned the invaluableness of diverse opinions and views. Each unique perspective has helped shape Role Play into a more effective game.
**Summative Evaluation.** In the future, I would like to conduct a summative evaluation of *Role Play*. This will be achieved by conducting an experiment using the target audience in real-world environments. Participants will be adolescents from various middle and high schools around the United States. They will be from both genders and from diverse ethnic, racial, SES, and cultural backgrounds. Adolescents with disabilities and impairments will also be included. Participants will be divided into three groups: two control groups and an experimental group. Participants in the first control group will be asked to partake in normal activities during the time of the experiment, such as reading a book or finishing classwork. The second control group will receive traditional lectures and independent worksheets on developing positive identities and self-esteem. Lastly, the experimental group will play the game *Role Play* to develop positive identities and self-esteem. All participants will be given a pretest before the experiment begins. The pretest will be in the form of a questionnaire on topics relating to identity formation and self-esteem. Participants will engage in their assigned activities for approximately 30 minutes, two times a week, during a one-month time period. To reduce the chances of social desirability in the experimental group, teachers will be asked to observe game play from a distance. After the implementation period is over, posttests will be given to all participating adolescents. The posttest will be the same questionnaire as the pretest. Data from the pretests and posttests will be compared and analyzed using statistical methodologies to see if there are any significant differences between the groups in reported levels of identity formation and self-esteem. Results from the summative evaluation will help assess the effectiveness of *Role Play*, and whether or not it meets its instructional goals and objectives.
Future Plans

In the future, I would like to develop a website as a resource for parents, teachers, and psychologists/counselors who want to use *Role Play* to build adolescent identities and self-esteem. The website will include suggestions on how to make learning more effective. For instance, there will be recommendations on ways to prevent social desirability from occurring and yet still maintain a supportive environment. Resources will also include other websites, programs, and professional contacts that can be used for further assistance. In addition, a forum will be available for parents, teachers, and psychologists/counselors to share ideas for pre and post game play activities, such as interactive worksheets and discussion topics. Another goal for *Role Play* is to make the game technologically accessible in various languages through several media formats. By doing so, millions of adolescents from diverse cultures around the world will have access to its use and benefits, including those in early, middle, and late stages of development.
References


Appendix A

JIP Evaluation Form

<table>
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<th>1. GENERAL INFORMATION</th>
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</table>

Brief Product Description:
(general goal, components/sections/topics, sizes/comprehensiveness, type of media, etc.)

Scattergories is a game that builds creative-thinking skills and knowledge. It is often played in social gathering situations allowing 2-6 adults to participate each time. There are 16 different category lists to play from, each consisting of 12 diverse category topics. Examples topics are: things in a desert, math terms, words with double letters, and kinds of soups/stews. The goal of the game is to write down an answer starting with the letter that was rolled, to each of the categories on the card in a given amount of time. There are several challenging aspects to the game: (1) answers must start with the letter rolled (2) players only have 1, 2, or 3 minutes (players' choice) to fill out the 12 categories on each card and, (3) answers must be unique (only one person has that answer), creative (in order to be the only one with that answer) and legitimate (must not be made up by player). Points are given according to these standards; whoever has the most points wins the round. The game comes in a box that includes: 6 folders, 48 category cards, 1 answer pad, 6 pencils, 20-sided die, 6 plastic clip strips, timer, die-rolling board, and instructions/rules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. PACKAGING, INFORMATION SHEET, HOME PAGE</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the target audience's age range or required knowledge/skill level stated?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the audience age range or required knowledge/skill level seem appropriate?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there appropriate product and use warnings/limitations/requirements listed?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the content accurately represented?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the listed awards/endorsements/accolades independently earned?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the educational goals and objectives presented and accurate?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the components/parts/sections listed and accurate?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are graphics present and attractive to the target audience?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the information/packaging appropriate/safe for the target audience?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the art style appropriate and timely for the audience and topic?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Yes Checks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation/Comments: The game covers most of these areas very well. There are no awards listed on the box or even in the information sheet. Scattergories won the Mensa Best Mind Game Award in 1990, so I find it surprising that this award is not advertised somewhere on the packaging. Also, although the graphics on the back of the box show adults playing the game (laughing-obviously having fun), they are not a racially diverse group of people. The two main people pictured are a man and a woman who are both White. The reason why I check off “yes” to the question, “are the graphics present and attractive to the audience,” is because of the facial expressions on the individuals. The first thing you notice about the picture is that they’re having fun, which automatically attracts my interest in the game.

3. CONTENT & PEDAGOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the content accurate?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are topic and audience experts (consultants, editors, authors) cited?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it address and list state/national standards or regulations?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it use appropriate vocabulary for the topic and audience?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it review background knowledge and skills needed for use?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can it be easily integrated into a learning context?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the guides/instructions/activities/content clear, complete, &amp; appropriate?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the instructional goals and objectives clear, appropriate, and realistic?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it present a novel/better way of addressing the topic?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it have individual and multiple user options?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are many modalities and senses addressed/elicited?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it address different genders, cultures, and backgrounds?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it developmentally appropriate?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there multiple and increasing layers of complexity?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the content and activities challenging but not overly difficult?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are the content and activities relevant?  x 
Is it interactive or does it stimulate interactivity?  x 
Does it stimulate curiosity and invite exploration?  x 
Does it promote problem solving, inquiry, and creativity?  x 
Does it instill/model/promote morals and values?  x 
Total Number of Yes Checks  16

Explanation/Comments:
This section really highlighted certain aspects about Scattergories that I love. The beauty of this game is that the individuals who play make up all the answers. So, because people are diverse and come from different backgrounds and cultures, the answers that are given are diverse as well. The game is highly interactive because everyone gets a turn to share their answers with the group. Players must listen to each other’s answers in order to earn points in the game (to see if their responses were unique). Because answers must be unique, the game promotes creativity and exploration of the topics. The game promotes morals and values because players must trust that everyone is playing by the rules and are not cheating.

The game cannot be played individually; 2-6 people can play. There are no references to experts or standards anywhere on the box or on the information sheet.

4. ARTWORK & GRAPHICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the artwork and graphics depict the topic in a realistic, accurate, complete, and/or appropriate manner?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the artwork and graphics clear and do they help explain content?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the artwork and graphics developmentally appropriate and appealing?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the artwork appropriately depict a balanced racial, age, and gender mix?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the artwork and graphics adhere to graphic design principles?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Yes Checks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation/Comments: As I mentioned earlier, the artwork on the back of the box does not appropriately depict racial balance. Gender is balanced in the picture, but age is not (they are all young adults). This is appropriate, however, because the target audiences are adults. The picture implies that the game is fun and it encourages social interaction. There is a section just off of the picture that briefly describes how the game is played. This description is clear and makes the game sound challenging yet exciting. Three other pictures are displayed showing what the contents look like. One picture shows an example of a category list so the audience can get an idea of what to expect. The other two pictures are of the letter die and the timer. The colors that are used on the box are easy on the eyes. White is used as the background color on the back of the box, with blue hues taking over the rest of the space. The front of the box is mostly red, with a picture of a human head with confetti pouring out from the top of it. This picture tells the audience that the game involves thinking skills and creativity.
### 5. USABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the product fill a specific need or set of needs?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the product do what it should and what it advertises?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there an explanation of how to implement/use/navigate the product?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it well-designed/long-lasting/durable?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it easy to access/compact/portable?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it encourage social learning or collaboration?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it environmentally friendly? (avoids all types of pollution, e.g., noise, odor, including wasting energy or paper in order to develop or to use it)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it practical, easy to read, and easy to use/navigate?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the product complete (are content, sections, or physical parts missing)?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it require minimal preparation/background knowledge to use/implement/deliver?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Number of Yes Checks**: 6

**Explanation/Comments**: There are a few negative things relating to the game’s usability. To start, the box is too big and bulky which does not make it very portable. It is not environmentally friendly because you have to write your answers on sheets of paper, which are just thrown out after they’re used. Because the game only comes with one answer pad, players must either replace the answer pad by ordering more through the company, or they must use their own paper as a substitute. This aspect of the game is marked down in terms of long-lasting material. In addition, batteries are not included in the game and are required in order for the timer to operate.

### 6. SECTIONS/COMPONENTS & COST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are all parts/sections included?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the parts/sections appear to be safe/appropriate for the age group?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the parts durable/washable/reusable?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all the parts/links functioning/complete?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it logically sequenced/organized?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is reference and resource information included?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the buyers get value for their money/time?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the cost seem appropriate in comparison to similar products?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it more than an exciting package or fun idea?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is the cost affordable for the target audience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is the cost affordable for the target audience?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Number of Yes Checks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Yes Checks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation/Comments: The game was marked down for not including batteries for the timer and because the answer pad (paper sheets) are not reusable. The information sheet included in the game is very informal and contains answers to all the questions one might have regarding how to play. However, the pros of the game definitely outweigh the cons. The game is so much fun to play and really makes the players think creatively in order to come up with unique answers. The price is relatively affordable for the target audience ($26) and is comparably priced to similar products. Your money is compensated by the game's value and worth when you consider all the fun times you'll have while playing it.

7. FINAL EVALUATION

Fill in the total number of Yes checks from Tables 2 - 6 in the table below. Then add up the values and see where the product falls on the evaluation scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OVERALL RATING</th>
<th>Total Number of Yes Checks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PACKAGING AND/OR INFO SHEET</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTENT &amp; PEDAGOGY</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTWORK &amp; GRAPHICS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USABILITY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTIONS/COMPONENTS &amp; COST</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PRODUCT SCORE</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EVALUATION SCALE:

49 - 55 EXCELLENT  35 - 43 NEEDS EMBELLISHMENT  0 - 29 USER JIPPED!

44 - 48 VERY GOOD  30 - 34 NEEDS MUCH WORK

Summary Explanation/Comments (brief list of strengths, weaknesses, problems, issues, etc.):

Scattergories is a really fun game to play with a group of people. The creative answers are usually funny and make people laugh; the game is definitely a crowd-pleaser. The weaknesses that I contribute to the game are mostly cosmetic: such as the design of the box, the graphics that are displayed on the box, and its overall portability. Having a limited amount of sheets on the answer pad and not including batteries for the timer are more negative features. If these problems can be fixed, the game would be much more successful.
Appendix B

Game Evaluation Survey

Please answer the following questions by checking either yes or no. There is space underneath each item for comments or suggestions. Thank you for your participation in evaluating this product. Your feedback will be used to further assess and improve its future use.

1. By playing Role Play, do you believe adolescents will achieve a better understanding of what their interests, beliefs, values, and goals are?
   _____ Yes _____ No

2. Do you think adolescents will develop more positive self-concepts from playing the game?
   _____ Yes _____ No

3. Do you believe the game supports positive social interactions?
   _____ Yes _____ No

4. Is the content in the statement and challenge cards appropriate for adolescents?
   _____ Yes _____ No

5. Do you think adolescents will find the topics presented in the game interesting and relevant?
   _____ Yes _____ No
6. Do you think the elements of challenge and skill incorporated in the game is appropriate for adolescents? (e.g., rolling a letter die, timed responses, and challenge cards)
   _____Yes  _____No

7. Is the game fun and engaging?
   _____Yes  _____No

8. Would you recommend the game?
   _____Yes  _____No

If you have any further comments or suggestions regarding the game, please write them below:
Appendix C

Game Box and Board
Appendix D

Game Materials

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**Objective**

Take a journey of self-discovery and explore your true identity by answering fun and exciting cards! The first player to enter the "FINISH" square wins the game.

**Game Rules**

- 2–6 players may play at a time.
- Creative answers are OK. Players can challenge questionable answers by taking a vote if the majority dislikes the questionable answer, it will not count.
- If a response is believed to be factually incorrect, players may use the internet to find the answer.
- The first word of the response to statement cards must begin with the key letter. Articles "A," "An," and "The" cannot be used for key letters. First or last names may be used if the answer is a proper name. For Example, if a clue is "AB" Abraham Lincoln would be OK, if L is added, Lincoln Abraham would be OK.

**Materials**

- Game Board
- Information Sheet
- Suggestion Notebook
- Letter Die
- 100 Challenge Cards
- 100 Statement Cards
- 30-second Timer
- 6 Game Pieces

**How to Play**

- Players all choose a game piece.
- All players roll the letter die, whatever rolls closest to "I" starts the game. Play proceeds clockwise from there.
- First player rolls the letter die to determine which letter their responses will begin with.
- The player picks a statement card from the designated deck and reads the statement.
- The player must answer the statement card using as many words as possible that start with the letter rolled on the letter die.
- However, only responses the player gives to the statement card indicate the amount of squares they move up on the board.
- When a player lands on a challenge square, they must take the challenge immediately following their turn.
- The player picks a challenge card from the designated deck and reads the card.
- After the challenge card is read, the player will have 30 seconds to respond. If the letter die is not rolled for challenge cards.
- There are three types of challenges: basic challenge and independent challenge.
  - The bubble challenge requires the player to pick a teammate to help them answer the challenge.
  - The independent challenge requires only the player who landed on the challenge square to answer the challenge. The player will choose to answer only one of the two options presented on the card that day: easy or difficult. If answered incorrectly, the player moves up one extra square for the easy option, or two extra squares for the more difficult option.
- Play continues clockwise with the next person.

**Considerations**

Players should be respectful of diverse opinions and views shared within the game. Responses to statement and challenge cards should reflect the true interests, beliefs, values, and goals of the players. Being kind to others during gameplay will encourage a supportive environment. Cooperation of these considerations will make playing the game more fun!
Appendix E

Game Cards

Statement

I am fun because I am...

Challenge

Buddy Challenge

Choose one person to help you answer the challenge. Take turns giving responses. 1 Square Each Player

Using the 30-second timer, name 10 cities in the United States you would like to visit.