



Game Design Merit Badge at Lake Fairfax Park

Welcome to the Game Design Merit Badge program at Lake Fairfax Park. The program is held at the Lake Fairfax Main Office located at 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive in Reston unless otherwise indicated by park staff.

Important Merit Badge information for parents:

- Please be familiar with the requirements of the program your scout has selected. Some badges take considerable time and planning to complete. Some badges may not be appropriate for younger scouts.
- Blue cards must be signed by the troop leader before attending the merit badge program. Lake Fairfax Park does not have blue cards.
- Most merit badges are not designed to be completed in a single session. Every badge requires some independent work by your scout. All requirements, including prework, the program, and postwork, must be completed before park staff can sign the merit badge card. Note: Not all badges will have postwork.
- Please be prepared for the possibility that you may have to stay for the program and not just drop off your scout. We encourage that one or more adults remain. There is no fee for adults and you are sure to learn something. This will allow the instructor to concentrate more fully on the difficult task of imparting all the required information and assisting the boys individually if necessary. Additionally, adults may help keep the atmosphere calm and productive. It is also in keeping with the scouting guidelines for youth protection.

What to bring to the program:

- Bring your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can bring completed homework in at a later date for sign-off.
- Come prepared to discuss and present your homework. As we move from one topic to the next during class scouts will be asked to present homework elements completed. It will be more important to prove that you have understood a requirement orally rather than just presenting written information.
- Bring your blue card signed by your scout master. (Lake Fairfax does not have blue cards.)
- Please wear comfortable and appropriate clothing. Uniforms are not required.
- Bring a pencil and pen.
- Bring a snack and drink.

We recommend that you download the merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.org and bring these worksheets to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

During the program, the merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs of your scout doing the element and a picture of the completed requirement will be sufficient evidence, unless otherwise stated below.

If your scout has a strong understanding of the requirement, he is welcome to complete this requirement at any time. Remember to document work and completion via digital pictures.

ALL OF THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL BE REVIEWED AND ASSESSED DURING THE COURSE

Requirements to be demonstrated, practiced and assessed during the class:

We will be reviewing recommended homework to ensure a thorough understanding and will also be covering the following requirements during the class:

1. Do the following:
 - a) Analyze four games you have played, each from a different medium. Identify the medium, player format, objectives, rules, resources, and theme (if relevant). Discuss with your counselor the play experience, what you enjoy in each game, and what you dislike. Make a chart to compare and contrast the games.
 - b) Describe four types of play value and provide an example of a game built around each concept. Discuss with your counselor other reasons people play games.
2. Show that you know at least 5 of the following 17 game design terms and how each relates to a specific game.

Thematic game elements: *story, setting, characters*
Gameplay elements: *play sequence, level design, interface design*
Game analysis: *difficulty, balance, depth, pace, replay value, age appropriateness*
Related terms: *single player vs. multiplayer, cooperative vs. competitive, turn-based vs. real-time, strategy vs. reflex vs. chance, abstract vs. thematic*
3. Describe the term *intellectual property*. Describe the types of intellectual property associated with the game design industry. Discuss how intellectual property is protected, and why protection is necessary. Define and give an example of licensed property
4. Do the following:
 - a) Pick a game where the players can change the rules or objectives (examples: basketball, hearts, chess, kickball). Briefly summarize the standard rules and objectives and play through the game normally.

- b) Describe changes you would make to several rules or objectives and share how each change will affect gameplay.
 - c) Play the game with one rule or objective changed and observe how the players' actions and emotional experiences are affected by the rule change. Repeat this process with two other changes.
 - d) Describe how the changes affected the actions and experience of the players. Discuss the accuracy of your predictions.
5. Design a new game. Any game medium or combination of mediums is acceptable. Record your work in a game design notebook.
- a) Describe the vision statement for your game by identifying the medium, player format, objectives, and theme of the game. Include the setting, story, and characters if necessary.
 - b) Describe the play value.
 - c) Make a list of the rules of the game and define the resources.
 - d) Draw the game elements.
7. Blind test your game. Do the following:
- a) Write an instruction sheet that includes all of the information needed to play the game. Clearly describe how to set up the game, play the game, and end the game. List the game objectives.
8. Do the following:
- b) List three career opportunities in game development. Pick one and find out about the education, training, and experience required for the profession. Discuss this with your counselor. Explain why this profession might interest you.

Homework to be completed after the program:

6. Do the following:
- a) Prototype your game from requirement 5. If applicable, demonstrate to your counselor that you have addressed player safety through the rules and equipment. Record your work in your game design notebook.
 - b) Test your prototype with as many other people as you need to meet the player format. Compare the player experience to your description from requirement 5b. Correct unclear rules, holes in the rules, dead ends, and obvious rule exploits. Change at least one rule, mechanic, or objective from your first version of the game, and describe why you are making the change. Play the game again. Record in your game design notebook whether or not your change had the expected effect.
 - c) Repeat 6b at least two more times and record the results in your game design notebook.
7. Blind test your game. Do the following:
- b) Share your prototype from requirement 6 with a group of players that has not played it or witnessed a previous playtest. Provide them with your instruction sheet(s) and any

physical components. Watch them play the game, but do not provide them with instruction. Record their feedback in your game design notebook.

- c) Share your game design notebook and discuss the player reactions to your project and what you learned about the game design process. Based on your testing, determine what you like most about your game and suggest one or more changes.

Work completed after the program:

Once the prework, class work and postwork are completed, all elements of the merit badge will be complete.

If your scout needs a blue card sign-off after the class date, please call 703-471-5415 ex.15 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor.

We're looking forward to working with your scout.

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