Introduction to Gaming

This issue of *Root & STEM* explores the role games play in our lives. What do games teach us about the world around us—and why does representation in gaming matter? These are the kinds of questions our contributors explore in this issue. Through these insights, we gain a deeper understanding of how games not only reflect our world, but also shape our perceptions of it, including drawing on Indigenous practices that emphasize storytelling, community, and the interconnectedness of all things.

The lessons in this issue are located at an intersection of Inuit and Western knowledge and perspectives. *Etuaptmumk* is the Mi'kmaq word for Two-Eyed Seeing – an Indigenous epistemology that teaches us how to incorporate both Indigenous and Western knowledge in our learning practices. This approach is exemplified by the work of individuals such as Thomassie Mangiok, Connor Alexander, who has been developing educational games surrounding Indigenous practices, culture, and/or beliefs.

The lesson plans included in this issue are designed to introduce the learners to the impact of gaming and the role it plays in our lives. These are designed to provide the learners with hands-on opportunities to learn and explore games effectively. Educators can reinforce IQ principles within various games and activities played throughout the year and create consolidation assignments in relation to the knowledge gained from participating.

Providing Support for Integrating IQ Principles

IQ Principles	Description of IQ and How They Are Connected with the Resource
Aajiiqatigiingniq	**Consensus Decision-Making, Communication Shared Understanding & Respecting Other Perspectives & Worldviews:** The concept of consensus decision-making relies on strong communication skills and a strong belief in shared goals. Developing effective games to help our communities to thrive takes collaboration, and an understanding of other views.
Pilimmaksarniq	**Concept of Skills and Knowledge Acquisition:** To develop effective games, we must understand the steps it takes to create one, and use our knowledge to develop an asset that is profound to the learning process.
Qanuqtuurungnarniq	**Concept of Being Resourceful to Solve Problems:** It is important that learners cultivate the skills of problem-solving resourcefulness, resource innovation and creativity, and adaptability and flexibility in the face of a quickly changing environment. Technology can

	change and advance often, as well as our way of living. It's important to be able to pay attention and follow these patterns and reflect it in our work so as to not be left behind.
Piliriqatigiinniq	**Concept of Collaborative Relationship or Working Together for a Common Purpose:** This core Inuit value prioritizes the collective well-being over individual success. In the context of game based learning, this principle encourages a focus on collaboration, shared responsibility, and community building within educational games, thus creating learning experiences that not only teach academic concepts, but also emphasize the importance of contributing to the greater good.

Aligning Curriculum Standards with the New K-6 Nunavut Curriculum

Subject	Grades	Learning Strands	Descriptions
PE/Health and Wellness	1-6	"Physical Literacy"	This strand explores developing the fundamental movement skills, body awareness, and motivation learners need to live an active life.
Arts	1-6	"Experimenting and Creating"	This strand explores a variety of artistic processes and techniques to generate and develop creative works.
Arts	1-6	"Connecting and Reflecting"	This strand explores creative practises and investigates the role art can play in building learners' identities and maintaining their well-being.
Inuktitut and English First Language	1-6	"Reading"	This strand explores processes, understandings, and strategies necessary to read and make meaning from text as well as begin to develop lifelong reading habits and attitudes toward reading.

Fostering Cross-Curriculum Learning

In order to help learners draw links between disciplines and get a deeper comprehension of the subject matter, cross-curricular teaching entails combining several subject areas into coherent, integrated learning experiences.

Cross-curricular teaching is a great way for teachers to incorporate different disciplines in education into one lesson. The different subjects can be considered as pieces of the puzzle that we provide for the learners to put together and create a “big picture” learning. As the learners learn about games and their effectiveness, they will also be learning the essential vocabulary related to the theme and learning how to apply it to their own understanding as well.

In other words, what learners learn in mathematics can be applied to languages, science, social studies, and arts in some capacity. To create a cross-curricular theme, teachers work collaboratively with other subject teachers. One way to do it is to decide on a theme with colleagues and explore learning opportunities that apply to learners’ skills and interests. Co-teaching, project-based learning (PBL), and thematic units are all tactics that can support this kind of learning and allow learners to use what they have learned in a comprehensive, real-world manner.

For example, in gaming, educators can take a thematic unit approach, where learners explore a different traditional Inuit game each day, and reflect on their experiences throughout the theme (what they learned and how it made them feel). Upon the end of the unit, students can creatively come up with their own game and verbalize the skills/learning behind it. This allows the teachers to bring cross-curricular collaboration, such as physical education, art education, and language, all in one holistic learning experience. Engaging in games and support also allows the teachers to introduce social-emotional learning to the learners from a younger age.