TeacherQuest
Leadership and Professional Development

For more information, contact us at pd@instituteofplay.org
As the skills and knowledge required for our children to succeed in the 21st century become increasingly complex, there is a profound shift underway that changes the way teachers need to teach and leaders need to lead, and raises the critical questions:

How do we empower students to thrive in our connected, increasingly digital world? and
How do we prepare teachers and leaders to create this possibility for young people?

TeacherQuest tackles these important challenges in education today with the innovative Quest Learning Model, created by Institute of Play and currently in action at the New York City public school Quest to Learn and its sister school ChicagoQuest.

Through a new set of professional development tools and experiences from Institute of Play, TeacherQuest develops a learning community of teachers and school leaders who collaborate, share, problem-solve, celebrate, and innovate across sites. In TeacherQuest, collaboration and community are the keys to supporting and sustaining innovation.

A driving force in the STEM to STEAM movement, Institute of Play places design at the center of teaching and learning. Our approach is based on a belief that games, game design and the principles that underlie them have vital roles to play in engaging 21st century audiences, as well as in building critical skills like systems thinking, creative problem solving, collaboration, empathy and innovation. We believe that games and game design have unique relevance as social tools to rebuild the foundations of engaged citizenship. These beliefs are grounded in recent educational research and supported by experts, as well as by important thinkers throughout the ages.
About TeacherQuest

TeacherQuest’s long-term goal is to build a vibrant learning community of teachers and school leaders dedicated to innovation. We are developing a multi-level sequence for educator learning and leadership development, designed to spark changes in practice and support a lasting impact.

See TeacherQuest in Action: vimeo.com/instituteofplay/teacherquest

“Best class I’ve ever taken (and I’ve been teaching over 20 years so that says a lot)!”

Workshops

We believe that as a teacher, you should engage in the types of learning experiences that you want to bring to your students. That’s why we put hands-on inquiry at the center of our approach, to situate learning in a meaningful and practical context. Our workshops use:

- **Hands-on design challenges** for you to learn by doing
- **An embedded, practical approach** that ensures you will leave with materials and practices that you can use in your classroom
- **An online community hub** and practice space to support continued learning
- **Curriculum that is highly adaptable** to different contexts, which means that we can tailor it to fit your needs

Resources

TeacherQuest workshops are based on resources that have been developed and tested in collaboration with teachers and students at Quest to Learn and ChicagoQuest. By participating in TeacherQuest workshops, you will have access to resources that are proven to support the effective integration of game-like learning, design thinking, and systems thinking. These resources include:

- Tools and materials that you can use in your classroom
- Structures and practices to deploy in your work with students and with other educators
- Skilled facilitators who lead professional development at Quest schools as well as other schools and programs nationwide
We offer three strands of TeacherQuest workshops. We recommend beginning with Strands 1 and 2 as a 4.5 day-long set of workshops. However, we can tailor a workshop to run as short as one 3-hour session. Please get in touch to discuss your needs and goals, and we will be happy to propose a customized option for your team.

Strand 1: Introduction to Game Design & Learning Games

Explore how games, game design and game-like learning can change your practice, by designing your own non-digital games.

Game design has unique relevance to teaching and learning. In the Introduction to Game Design & Learning Games strand, you will develop an understanding of game design by creating and modifying learning games for your own classroom. This strand focuses on designing non-digital games for learning, in order to introduce you to the core practices of the design process and game-like learning.

Through a series of workshops and design challenges, you will apply design thinking skills and practice collaboration through design. Facilitator-led sessions focus on practical methods that can be implemented in any classroom, including how to identify “game worthy” learning goals; how to align learning goals and game mechanics; and how to “explode” a game into a larger set of classroom experiences that maximize the learning opportunities.

You will leave this strand with modified and original games that you can use in your classroom. Modified games include a range of easily-available games, including games from Institute of Play’s classroom games library.

“This was an amazing class that will help you embolden your students, increase their interest, and keep them engaged and excited about learning.”
Strand 2: Digital Games & Tools in the Classroom

Create design challenges to engage students in inquiry, discovery, and play using games and technology

Technology has the power to create engaging spaces where students can test ideas, build worlds, and explore complex problems. But it is often a challenge to integrate technology in the classroom effectively. The Digital Games & Tools in the Classroom strand will focus on one meaningful way to integrate technology in the classroom: creating spaces for students to make, tinker and play.

This strand will focus on how to create design challenges in which students learn through inquiry, play, iteration and reflection. You will create your own original or modified design challenges that you can bring back to your classroom.

We will explore digital games like Dragino and Minecraft, as well as other tools, which may include: Vernier science probeware; user-friendly programming platforms like Processing; robotic toys like LEGO Mindstorms, Sphero, and Little Bits; the Algodoo gravity simulator; and the Google suite.

It is recommended that educators who are new to games and learning begin with our Introduction to Game Design & Learning Games strand.

Strand 3: Game-like Unit Design

Practice a new approach to curriculum design by creating game-like units, where students solve complex problems through a series of challenges.

Game-like learning means that every classroom experience achieves what games do best, and creates inquiry-based problem spaces where learning, iteration, feedback and reflection happen naturally. In the Game-like Unit Design strand, you will learn how to design curriculum in which every unit feels like a game, using the Quest Learning Model's game-like learning approach.

This strand will focus on how to create project-based, challenge-based curriculum that engages students with a powerful need-to-know, as well as how to use Quest tools and resources to apply game-like learning to your curriculum design process. Through a series of workshops and design challenges, you will design game-like units for your own classroom.

This strand integrates the tools and practices from the previous strands; Strands 1 and 2 are prerequisite.

TeacherQuest Mentorship Program

A critical piece in the TeacherQuest mission and vision, the Mentorship Program builds capacity in school leaders and educators to support talent development within the TeacherQuest community as well as in other communities – such as their own schools or professional learning networks. Based on the work we have done to develop leaders at the Quest Schools, this program builds on the other workshop strands to support educators in becoming mentors in the area of games and learning.

If you participate in any of our workshops, you may be eligible for the Mentorship Program.

“I approached this class with the hope of walking away with a few games that would work in the middle school setting. But now I know that practically any game can be used with ‘mods’... there are no limitations!”

“In the past, I used games mostly to review some required vocabulary or concepts. Now, I know how I can use games to drive learning, not just review what should have been learned.”

“The instructors were dynamic, engaging, and their enthusiasm contagious. My fellow classmates were an exceptional group of individuals. With everyone’s support, I have no doubt that I will continue learning and developing as a teacher.”
The Quest Learning Model brings together established learning research and the principles of game design to create a powerful, practical model for teaching and learning. In the Quest model, games and game design provide an organizing framework for an approach called game-like learning.

Developed by Institute of Play, the Quest model was first developed at New York City’s Quest to Learn, a 6th – 12th grade public school that opened to its first 6th grade class in 2009 and will operate as a full middle and high school in 2015. The model was then applied to the creation of ChicagoQuest, a school in the Chicago International Charter School portfolio. ChicagoQuest opened in Fall 2011 with both a 6th and 7th grade, and serves a diverse population of students from across Chicago.

Learn More
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www.chicagoquest.org
Watch ‘Quest Learning in Action’
www.vimeo.com/channels/qla
Read ‘Developing Quest to Learn’
www.instituteofplay.org/work/projects/developing-quest-to-learn/
Explore ‘Q Design Packs’
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Visit us on Edutopia
www.edutopia.org/made-with-play-game-based-learning-resources
About Institute of Play

Institute of Play is a not-for-profit design studio that pioneers new models of learning and engagement. At the core of the experiences we create are games, play and the principles that underlie them. Using these principles, we design experiences that make learning irresistible, and unlock the transformative power of people – as seekers and solvers of complex problems, risk takers, inventors and visionaries.

Founded in 2007, our first project was the design and implementation of the New York City public school, Quest to Learn, which opened in 2009. Since then, we have created successful institutions, games, programs, events, digital platforms and products.

In 2012, the Institute became a founding partner in the launch of GlassLab, a working game development studio in San Francisco. GlassLab is exploring the potential for digital games to serve both as potent learning environments and reliable real-time assessments of student learning. GlassLab represents an innovative partnership between Institute of Play, EA, the Entertainment Software Association, Educational Testing Service, and Pearson's Center for Digital Data, Analytics & Adaptive Learning.

The Institute also supports ChicagoQuest, a Title 1 school in Chicago.

For more information about Institute of Play projects, programs, and resources, visit us at www.instituteofplay.org.