

## Educational Relevancy | SYSTEMS THINKING

# GAMESTAR MECHANIC: PLAYER IMPACT GUIDE

AGE 7+ | 1-2 Hours

*"The enthusiasm with which students embrace these complex concepts, when presented in the context of videogame creation, is truly remarkable. By tapping into the natural passions of today's youth for playing and making games we believe we can help build a great motivation to embrace critical 21st Century and STEM skills."*

--Michael Angst, CEO, E-Line Media



### THEME FOR THIS GUIDE: SYSTEMS THINKING

*Gamestar Mechanic* is a game platform that provides a fun space for players to learn how to play and design games. Tasked with stopping a rogue game designer, *Gamestar Mechanic* invites the player to work through challenges in Factory 7 on a quest to become a master game designer. In order to succeed, the player, as Addison, must master playing, editing, and creating different video games following a narrative-rich storyline. As the game system progresses, Addison must master several games and game tools. Addison also encounters broken games to fix, earning rewards that the player can use to design original games in Game Alley. *Gamestar Mechanic* exposes players to the elements of games as a system and game design in a fun and innovative way. Playing this game can develop skills in systems-thinking, creative problem-solving, art and aesthetics, writing, and storytelling. For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/cgamestar>

<b>WHY USE THIS GUIDE?</b>	<p>In this guide, we invite you to think about <i>Gamestar Mechanic</i> as a model for understanding the components of systems, such as processes, relationships, emergence, and complexity. Reflect on your experiences creating games and why systems thinking is important for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.</p> <p><i>Answer the questions below and add up your points when you are finished!</i></p>
<b>GAME BASICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing a few missions in Episode 1. What is a quest? What are missions? Describe the components for each. [+1]</li> <li>• Unlock the timers for edit mode. How do timers track progress in a level? [+1]</li> <li>• Complete the missions in Episode 1. How are game design ideas introduced? [+2]</li> <li>• What are the relationships between the game design tools and the missions (balance, rules, etc.)? [+2]</li> <li>• Complete <i>Gamestar Mechanic</i> through Episode 3 to unlock the editing missions. What tools do you use to edit levels? What do you like about editing levels? [+3]</li> </ul>
<b>THEME INSIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the components of Addison's quest? How do these components work together? [+1]</li> <li>• When making your own games, how does editing or adding new items to your level change the gameplay. How do these changes impact the level of difficulty? [+2]</li> <li>• How do the interactions between the different components of a game (time, rewards, mechanics, etc.) impact the experience of the games for players? [+3]</li> <li>• How are the game design concepts and tools in <i>Gamestar Mechanic</i> related to systems thinking?</li> </ul>
<b>WORLD CONNECTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the elements of systems thinking in <i>Gamestar Mechanic</i>, such as planning, creating, and interdependence, apply in the real world? [+2]</li> <li>• How are systems thinking and creative problem solving relevant to everyday life? Describe a system you encounter in everyday. [+2]</li> <li>• What systems and relationships are you more aware of in the real world after playing the game? [+3]</li> <li>• What are elements of a system in your life? Think about a part of a system you would change. How does this impact the system as a whole? [+3]</li> </ul>

**Bonus Challenge:** Using *Gamestar Mechanic*, create a game that you feel best represents one or more of the game design principles introduced in the quests (perspective, balance, etc.). Upload your game to the Game Alley to share with others. Post it to YouTube, and share the link on the Center for Games & Impact Facebook page at <http://facebook.com/gamesandimpact>.