Section 3
Chapter 11 - Videogames, Apps And Education In The Field Of Pre-Primary And Primary Education

Case Scenario 1

Title: **Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS)**

Description:

http://games.eun.org/upload/gis-full_report_en.pdf

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) is a public body sponsored by the Scottish Government Schools Directorate and is committed to providing world-class teaching and learning experiences for Scotland's children and young people. They offer support and guidance to teachers, early years practitioners, schools and education authorities to help improve achievement for all. They also initiated the exploration of the benefits and the practicalities of using computer games in schools which led to a number of innovative projects happening in schools across Scotland. Many projects involved the use of commercial games available for the Wii, DS, PS2, PS3, PSP and Xbox 360 because the project participants appreciated that many of the games were actually designed around the principles that underpin effective teaching and learning on their point of view:

- Good context for learning (collaborative story, process of enquiry, etc.) which provides a supportive framework with which teachers can build on what learners already know and can do, in order to move them forward and continually bridge the zone of proximal development

- Differentiation, adjusting the learning to suit the abilities and pace of a learner

- Progression and continuity that allows the learner to develop a skill or knowledge set from the position of novice into that of someone with mastery and confidence in what they have been learning.

They worked with many teachers in nursery, primary and secondary classes to adapt commercial off-the shelf games so that it can be used to address their educational needs and aspirations for learning. One of those approaches used the game ‚Nintendogs' for the Nintendo DS.

Nintendogs is a game for the Nintendo DS where you can take ownership of a puppy dog and have to looking after it. You have to ensure that the puppy ist healthy, happy and well exercised. There is also the possiblity to train it and to take competitions. Success in these competitions brings financial rewards which can be spend in the in-game shop on practical things for the puppy.

Two teachers in Scotland used this game in a cross –curricular project where caring for and nurturing the virtual pet was central for the learning of the pupils. The children were put into groups of three so that they could work together. The project involved Art & Design, Drama, Citizenship and ICT.

For improving e.g. their literacy skills the children kept Doggy Diaries – which was voluntary. They could e.g. record how their puppy performed in the Frisbee catching competition. These diaries became an integral part of the day – they involved the children choosing to write. Even boys hat increased levels fo engagement in writing.

Furthermore the book corner was packed with fiction and non-fiction about dogs and was very popular with the children. Many Information about dogs was eagerly consumed by books or by web.

In respect of Design & Technology pupils designed a kennel or a bed for their dog. The learning intention was here to investigate the properties of materials.

The project members want to ensure that school is a place that children want to be and education systems continually need to reflect on the experiences that they present for increasingly tech-savvy and expectant students. They think that they are successfull because children learn in the

context of something where they have ownership, mastery and expertise. Furthermore almost all game consoles have a low technology skills treshold which facilitates the use for teachers who worry about technical difficulties.

Teaching about computer games involves, for example, raising awareness as to the various game types, gender specific games, an analysis of the games played, and then comparisons with other genres such as novels and films, and also student production of games.

Teaching with computer games involves a focus on the games as a starting point for subject based learning processes within the school's range of subjects, concentrating on the specific goals for each subject. In this regard, it may also be the case that a particular game supports the goals of an IT related subject, even where IT is not included as a specific subject in the school, but as an obligatory working area in all subjects, and with its own goals, expressed in the form of the JPCK concept7 (Junior PC – Driver's Licence).

Teaching on the background to computer gaming involves raising awareness, for example, of games production, target groups, marketing, socioeconomic factors, the PEGI (Pan European Games Information) rating system, the risks involved in excessive gaming, the differing opinions expressed in the media regarding computer gaming as a phenomenon, gaming and manipulation, advertising, gaming as an art form and gaming as a cultural phenomenon