

Interactive comment on “Computer-supported games and role plays in teaching water management” by A. Y. Hoekstra

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Received and published: 7 March 2012

The River-Basin game appears to be an effective way to teach people about the reality of water use at a watershed level, and this paper offers important insights for a teacher to run the game effectively in a classroom setting. Your commentary on your experiences running the game ranges from essential, like the information about running time and advice on modifications based on the number of players, to useful, like the observation that students generally need a few rounds of trial and to determine a sustainable water abstraction rate “by bitter experience” (p. 1866, l. 21–22, great description!).

In general, the paper is very well written. There are some places where word usage could be improved:

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* “Play” as a noun by itself (not paired with another word as in “role play”) generally refers to a scripted theater production. Substitute “play sessions” or a synonymous phrase where it is used to make your ideas clear (p. 1860, l. 13; p. 1862, l. 8; p. 1863, l. 7).

* “Much” is a large amount of an unquantified substance or quality). Substitute “many” where you are describing a large number (p. 1863, l. 6 & 27).

* “Abstraction” is a mass noun on p. 1863, l. 28 and shouldn’t be pluralized; leave it singular.

* I think that you mean “seek their fortunes” on p. 1866, l. 13–14. It’s a common figure of speech. “Seek their benefit” is vague.

* “Full knowledge is a utopia anyhow” is a bit confusing and should be reworded (p. 1869, l. 12).

* “Water resources management” can be tightened up into “water-resource management” (p. 1870, l. 19).

* “Play in parallel worlds” is going to be difficult for some people to understand. Perhaps “run multiple versions of the game at different tables” or something to that effect would be easier for readers to understand (p. 1871, l. 2).

* “Feedbacks” as an engineering/scientific term is not what you want here. You are describing your players’ comments with another mass noun: “feedback” (p. 1873, l. 11)

* “An interesting case is when we” is an awkward beginning. Rewrite this sentence in the active rather than the passive voice, and it will come out more clearly (p. 1873, l. 24).

* “Good” is an adjective. Use the adverb “well” instead.

Other issues to address are:

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* It's reasonable to stress that Table 1 is a collection of examples. You don't have to point out that they are arbitrary. (p. 1862, l. 8)

* You should put the link to the game files (Hoekstra, 2007) into the text of your paper, in case people don't understand that they can dig it out of the reference list. You could add a sentence or a paragraph early in section 2 about the relevant resources available at waterfootprint.org. Or if you wanted to add an in-text link and a table, you could take your sentence to p. 1866, l. 5, where it says that the game is "freely available online", add "at" and the link. The table could list the files and their purposes so that the readers will see how easy it would be for them to run the game in their classrooms.

* Is the international version of the game available to other instructors, and if so, how can they obtain it (section 3)?

* The style guide for this journal will give some advice as to how a book title should be indicated, whether it should be underlined, italicized, or otherwise marked (p. 1870, l. 16).

* On p. 1871, l. 3, there should be a comma between "Head of State" and "who coordinates".

* Put quote marks around the players' responses to the game (p. 1873, l. 11).

I checked the in-text (and Table 1) citations against the reference list and they match up. I could give you better feedback if I had been able to run the game this term, but unfortunately I couldn't fit it into the curriculum. I'll have a different course next term and will try it out then.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 9, 1859, 2012.