



It's no longer a question of "Do games have a place in schools?" Now it's "How would you like to use them?"

Some time ago award-winning teacher Tim Rylands showed how an adventure game like *Myst* could be used to stimulate writing, particularly for reluctant boys. And a trip to Dawn Hallybone's Year 6 classroom in Oakdale Junior School in east London shows how Nintendo handheld gaming consoles can be brought in as powerful tools for learning (

[full feature on Futurelab website](#)

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This particular revolution might have been started in Scotland by teachers working with Learning and Teaching Scotland's Consolarium project, but it's spreading quickly as other teachers and school leaders are quick to see that it works. And at this year's Games Based Learning conference in London it was the teachers, along with Derek Robertson, who shared the most interesting insights into games technology and learning.

Derek Robertson's Consolarium project is also featured in the new European Schoolnet report,

[Games in Schools: How are digital games being used in schools?](#)

, which broadly welcomes games based learning. The report also focused on work being carried out at Højby School (Denmark), Farm Frenzy (France), the DANT/IPRASE project (Italy), the Games Atelier (Netherlands), Zoo Tycoon 2 (Austria).

This is the Schoolnet report's conclusion: "Research into using games for learning carried out over the past 20 years, but with very mixed results, shows that skills, knowledge and attitudes

can be improved by means of Game-Based Learning (GBL), given the right environment. However, the choice of game along with the environment in which it is situated and the teacher's role as moderator are vital if the desired learning outcomes are to be achieved. Video games can supplement traditional learning but not replace it. But the majority of today's teachers willing to incorporate GBL into their lesson plans lack the knowledge and level of skill required to implement this technology successfully.

"The practices analysed confirm the positive impact of the classroom use of digital games. They nevertheless remain small in number, and more in-depth analysis, including cases where the use of digital games did not match the teacher's expectations, would be required for a more precise evaluation. In order for this potential to be fully realised, several recommendations are put forward: to develop the evaluation of practices, to (re)consider games in the light of recent research on cognitive processes, to make games eligible in the mechanisms for supporting the modernisation of education systems, to develop co-operation between the games industry and education around ambitious projects, and to envisage the European territory as an experimental laboratory."

The "more in-depth analysis" this report calls for would not take long at Oakdale School. The work with Nintendos is at the heart of the curriculum and is extremely effective. Anyone needing further proof should just read the Ofsted report.(links and pics below), or read the full feature, "[The revolution will be Tweeted](#)" on the Futurelab website.





## Games consoles for learning reaching critical mass?

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## More information

Twitter

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[Oakdale Junior's Ofsted report 2009](#)

[Handheld Learning 2008 presentation](#)

[Dawn Hallybone's Games Based Learning 09 presentation](#)

[SS Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary School Nintendo Project Report \(supported by Dawn Hallybone\)](#)

[Consolarium – Learning and Teaching Scotland](#)

[Derek Robertson's blog](#)

[Handheld Learning](#)

[Games Based Learning](#)

[Games in Schools: How are digital games being used in schools?](#)