# OLTD 508 ePortfolio Reflection #2

OLTD Program Learning Outcome(s):
- Become familiar with common terms, definitions and elements related to online environments
- Critically assess and evaluate resources for best practice in online learning
- Develop skills to optimize learning experiences through personalization
- ***Can game-based learning inform and benefit my teaching practices while offering alternative learning experiences for students?***

Evidence:
Literature Review of Gamification and Game-Based Learning
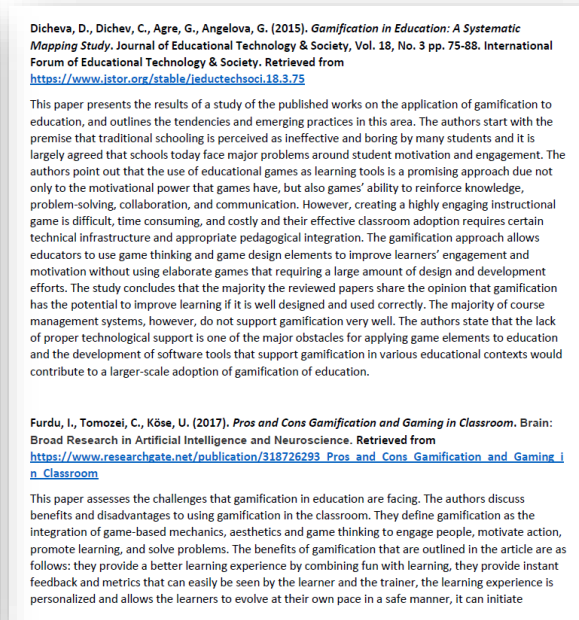
Reflection:

The piece of evidence I have chosen to support the above learning outcomes and second critical challenge question for OLTD 508 is the annotated bibliography literature review that I completed as my major inquiry project for the course. I completed this literature review from October 5th to 12th 2018. I used the VIU Library database and web searches to find 16 articles on various aspects of the topics of game-based learning and gamification of education. My goal was to learn as much as possible about these subjects from a variety of different sources so that any future utilization of these learning strategies would be well informed.

In completing this assignment, I learned a great deal about both game-based learning and gamification of education. A few of the main benefits to incorporating games into your curriculum and lessons that the research shows are: It can increase levels of student engagement and motivation, assessment can be improved as they can provide immediate feedback and metrics for both the student and the instructor, and the retention of information into long-term memory can be improved due to the increase in levels of dopamine in the brain that it causes. I also learned that good video games incorporate many aspects of good learning such as empowering learners by allowing them to develop a sense of identity and co-create their learning experience. Games order problems in such a way that leaners are required to master a skill or topic then build upon their knowledge to master the next level of the problem. Games can also provide a pleasantly frustrating level of challenge to learners which can be conductive to experiencing a state of "flow". Completing this project also allowed me to learn about strategies for incorporating games into my teaching and some of the drawbacks and challenges of game-based learning. I believe that the strength of this piece of evidence is that it shows that I have considered game-based learning and gamification from a number of different perspectives and have a strong foundation of knowledge on this topic that I can use going forward.

I believe that understanding the critical challenge question about game-based learning and gamification informing and benefiting teaching practices is very important to me as an educator. A lot of teachers, including myself prior to completing this course, avoid using games in the classroom because they are influenced by the factually unsupported notion that video games are a distraction and encourage unsavory thoughts and behaviours in children. Teachers should be aware of the multitude of benefits that games can provide to the learning experience and learn how they can utilize these strengths in their teaching. Much like mobile technologies, video games are an area of strength for a lot of students that educators would be wise to allow them to transfer into the classroom. As James Paul Gee and others extensively describe in their research, video games can be in many ways an excellent solution to many issues the current education system faces around student engagement and motivation. When people play video games they are not just being mindlessly distracted, they are actually deeply engaged in a learning experience that is in many ways far superior to what they get at school in traditional classrooms. From the perspective of an online educator, implementing gamification into an online course is an excellent potential solution to the well documented disengagement and motivations problems that some online courses have. I feel that my attitudes towards and confidence in using video games in my teaching has changed as a result of this project and course and I am a more well-rounded educator as a result.