

Notes on “Apps for Good” Curriculum

Apps for Good Curriculum: <http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/155442535/Educator%20Zone/index.html>

Apps for Good Videos: <http://www.youtube.com/user/AppsForGood>

Notes & Observations about the Apps for Good Material provided:

- **Set for European A4 paper:** Be aware that Most of the resources are set for European A4 paper, not our typical US Letter. For MS Word documents simply change the file’s Page Setup “Paper Size” to “US Letter”, and you will likely need to reformat some of the pages so they keep to one page. When printing PDF’s you will likely want to “Fit to Page” to avoid losing text.
- **Mostly Lesson Plans are in PDF format:** Only the first few Lesson Plan Downloads are in MS Word, the rest are in PDF format only so not easily modified. Some language is in UK spelling of words like “artefacts”
- **Two Expert Visits:** Session 7 has the first Expert visit, to help narrow down which App ideas are implementable. Session 19 has second Expert visit when most material is written to get feedback to improve & perfect it.
- **Setting up Mock Ups Early:** Session 9 has students doing early mock ups of a couple screens to see how App could function. Could be App Inventor or Balsmiq – could match with doing Wire Frames for a Website.
- **Project Checklist:** There appears to be many more items in the “Project [Checklist](#)” (See Intro) than are in the competition assignments. i.e. Pitch Presentation (slide show) in the course but only the elevator pitch video. We should edit that list for our summer class as well a for fall. Checklist Link:
<http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/155442535/Educator%20Zone/attachments/1573030/1704588.docx>

Challenges/Observations from Summer SEEP Apps Class at Garfield:

(The SEEP class was started before my involvement and is being run by two teachers. I have been assisting the classes and this is my observations so far)

- **Classroom Guidelines need to be Well Established:** for example, it has been challenging to keep students off cell phones – established strict policy around their use as part of class agreement. Advise to use the Apps for Good “Co-founder Team Agreement” and more clearly use our standard Garfield Computer Science Classroom Guidelines (<http://www.garfieldcs.com/wordpress/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Computer-Science-Classroom-Guidelines.pdf>), which I typically review for first few weeks of every one of my class; especially for a team/project based classes these are very important to have in place.
- **Participation of all Students:** Some students not contributing, yet team succeeding - nature of group work can allow some students to not contribute. Need to implement ways to ensure all students are participating in their own way. Suggestions periodic individual assignments for all students (reflections, see assessments below), formal assignments of tasks to students, peer evaluation of team members (like we do in Project in CS class), team earns points that they distribute among the participants – up to team to decide who gets “paid” what salary.
- **How do we Assess groups and individual students as part of the class?** This will be my major inquiry during our STEM Project Based Learning & Leadership+Design trainings. Each team will be faced by different abilities (team members) and possible unknown challenges based on the selection of their app. How do we level the evaluation

process and make it accountable while allowing freedom to explore challenging areas while accommodating the variety of results?

- **Enhance S10 Research Assignment:** The material states, “Experts stress the importance of the research phase, and past educators have said that students often don't spend enough time here, so our recommendation is that you invest good time in the research element.” The activities need to be better defined along with expectations to insure that this is done thoroughly.
- **Rubrics for Assignments:** Need to find and/or create solid rubrics for each of the assignments from the final checklist. Students work best when they have a formal checklist of expectations and these need to be available. I suspect that there are some within the Apps for Good material but we need to find & refine them.

Suggestions for SEEP Class (created 7th July, 2013)

My initial Suggestions on how to Proceed with the Summer SEEP Apps Class lessons:

Key lessons to consider for the next few weeks of Summer trial:

S5 - Finding the Story – helps identify several of the key items from the checklist and has an “I assume” exercise to help get at the details of the problem (note: In the full course, students brainstorm several ideas and then select their App in Session 8 after exercises like this.)

S10 - Research - The material states, “Experts stress the importance of the research phase, and past educators have said that students often don't spend enough time here, so our recommendation is that you invest good time in the research element.” Although the other activities are likely more interesting to students. This research could fit in with creating the personas by surveying/interviewing others to get ideas for the other items like personas...

3 Key Lessons to get to the Paper Prototype & Balsamiq version (hopefully):

S14 - Personas and User Needs – identifying the different kind of users for your App, these are required to then create the Scenario Maps

S15 - Scenario Mapping – Map of Steps that your App will need to perform capturing: Steps, Comments, Questions, & Ideas on post-its (or cards) to help develop your User Experience

S18 - Designing User Experience – creating the Wire Frame as a Blueprint of your App

(<http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/155442535/Mobile%20Course%20-%20Learning%20Zone/Laying%20out%20the%20flow%20of%20your%20app.html>) using Balsamiq or paper.

[Note there is **S9 - Early Idea in App Inventor or Balsamiq** which is an early trial of creating a couple sample user screens, but it indicates it is optional – given our time can be skipped unless students are anxious to work in App Inventor or we want to start some on Balsamiq early.

For Next week 15 – 19th (when Earl is not around)

Formalizing the problem statement and other text deliverables. Key: hopefully finalize the description of the apps feature set so can create elevator pitch. Mention of Pitch Presentation (Slide Show) in material, but I did not notice it in the contest guidelines.

Considering making the Problem and/or Elevator Pitch video (I think the latter may be more interesting); could consider using **S11 - Storyboarding** & **S12 - Shooting a Problem Video** lessons.

S16 - Business Modeling – realizing the key 9 parts of the App's business model; interesting exercise, uses post-it's or work sheet.

Week of 22nd – 30th (end of class)

Could do [S18 - Designing User Experience](#) if we don't get to it earlier and then days of lab work getting App Inventor working and Balsamiq Mock up's. Team members may divide up to get all the material generated.

[S20 - Pivoting Solutions](#) – is about changing direction to adapt during the development and as you get better feedback on your design. Has an interesting “App Hangman” exercise, that might be useful.

[S21 - Ending the Course](#) – Students give pitches slide shows and judging with awards?