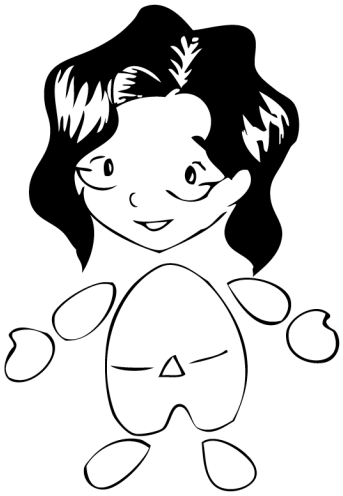
PC

Most educational PC software is not actually designed in game form, but rather strictly as educational software without much entertainment value. See myfamilysoftware.com for a large catalogue of products, searchable by age range and subject.

Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? Recommended for tweens, this computer game has players traveling the globe, learning geography and solving puzzles in order to receive clues about Carmen's location.

Math Blaster: Also aimed at tweens, this series of games requires the player to complete mental math equations and then target the correct number as it appears on screen. The games cover different areas of math such as pre-algebra, graphs, estimation, and order of operations.



MMORPGs

Identity Theft, Harassment and Privacy, Oh My!

A **MMOG** (Massively Multiplayer Online Games) is a form of computer game entertainment that can be a lot of fun for people of all ages. Using the internet, a **MMOG** allows you to connect with players from all over the world, including friends or family that live far away. There is a variety of games out there, but it might best to stick with the more well known ones. **RPG**s (Role Playing Games) are probably the most popular out there, *World of Warcraft* boasting millions of players from all over the world. There are other programs to choose from such as *EverQuest, Guild Wars, Dungeons & Dragons* and *Lord of the Rings*, just to name a few. If your library is thinking of adding these games onto their computers, it would probably be best to do a survey to find out which are more commonly used in your community because some of them have monthly charges, and those can become expensive. Along with being aware of the costs, there are other issues your library and users should be aware of and work to avoid.

Identity Theft

For the most part static password mechanisms are used for getting to a players profile or characters in order to authenticate that the right person is logging on (Ying-Chieh Chen, et. al, 2004, p. 5). This means that a user will have chosen a user name and a password that only they should know. It should be strongly encouraged that patrons not share this information with anyone. This won't protect them completely as there are cheat and Trojan backdoor programs throughout the Internet. If the games come with any offers of additional protection against identity theft, then recommend that users get those if they intend to use the library systems for play.

Harassment

There are several different ways that harassment can occur on an online game, including, but not limited to, insults, stalking and intentionally disrupting play. These fall under the heading **griefing**, and often take the form of a player inhibiting the progress or enjoyment of another player. There are usually in game avenues available to a player to report any players **griefing**, but there is very little else a player can do about it. Often a player is left frustrated and will chooose to log off and come back later in order to avaiod the behaviour.

Privacy

With virtual worlds, data can continue to be collected after the initial purchase of the software. This data includes extent of play along with the times and places the user is connecting from (Zarsky, 2004, p7). With the extent that information gathering can go in virtual worlds, profiling is more easily carried out though there are still limits to their scope. Players should be aware that this information is being collected since it is often referenced in the Terms of Service of **MMO**s.

All patrons should be aware of these issues, and parents and youth should be made aware of these possible problems before permission forms are signed and given back to the library.