

“‘Educational’ games are not fun, like broccoli dipped in chocolate. There are few examples of fun educational games and many boring ones.” —BRIAN WINN

MAKING EDUCATIONAL GAMES MAKE SENSE

WITHOUT LOSING ENTERTAINMENT VALUE

ERIK A. EVENSEN
 MFA 2009, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
 GRADUATE COMMITTEE: PETER KWOK CHAN,
 ELIZABETH B.-N. SANDERS, PAUL J. NINI
 RESEARCH TEAM: ERIK A. EVENSEN, ERWIN LIAN,
 ERIN LUCARELLI, LOUIS MILLER, PAUL SCUDIERI

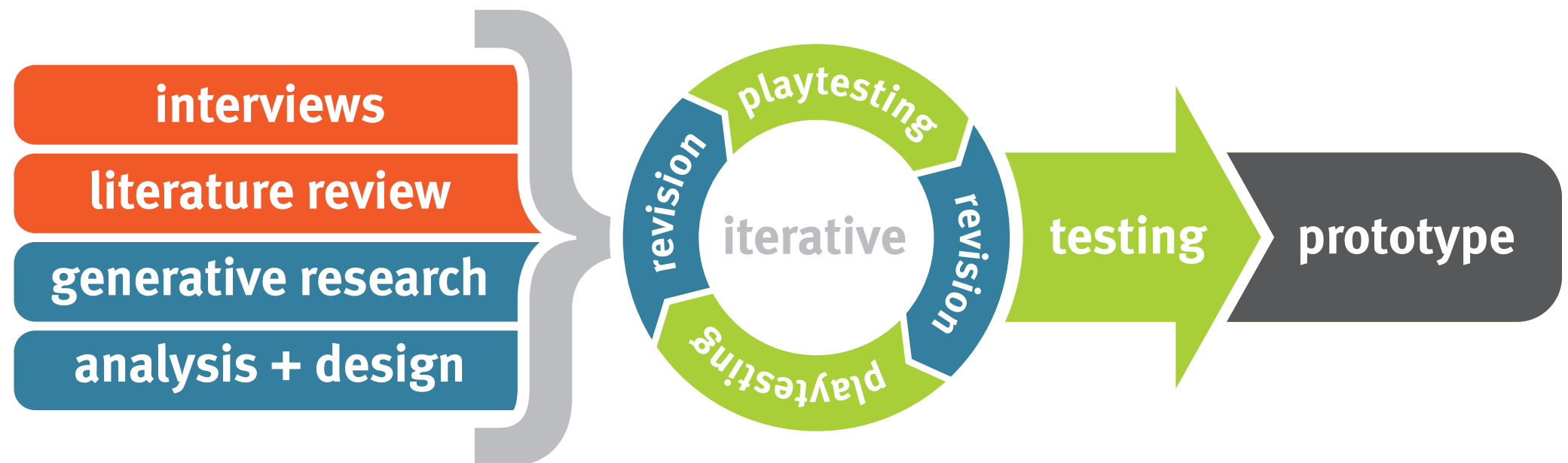
the game design model

This research model was developed as part of an educational game design project in collaboration with the Central Ohio Diabetes Association. It was used as a graduate thesis case study, and was incorporated into a graduate Design Research class at The Ohio State University. It can be condensed into four phases: Data Gathering, Creative, Testing and Evaluation, and Prototype. Each phase utilizes a set of processes borrowing from different forms of design research and generation. The model should not be seen as a step-by-step process. The four phases of research making up the model fit within it fluidly and can be intermeshed with one another, depending on the designer’s context.

data gathering

This phase encompasses all areas of traditional, background research regarding the game and its relevant subject matter. Appropriate methods can include interviews, literature review, statistical data, and any subsequent analysis.

data gathering / co-creative / testing + evaluation / prototype



co-creative

This phase encompasses the creative methods needed for the game development process. After reviewing data, it is appropriate to begin developing a game concept prototype that is functional. Recommendations include generative research + co-creation methods.

testing + evaluation

This phase is largely an iterative process of playtesting + revision, designed to gather enough data to help develop a finished prototype. The phase can also include other evaluative forms of research, including usability testing and pilot testing.

prototype

This phase is the final stage in developing a finished, working game prototype. Graphics + structural design elements should be refined to create a playable, durable prototype for larger-scale testing and evaluation.

