

Today's Presenters



Benjamin Stokes

Associate Professor, American
University and Director, Playful City Lab



David Quick

Adult Services Coordinator,
DC Public Library

Saint Peter, MN

ALL TOGETHER SAINT PETER

SCAN ME

A MOBILE HISTORY TOUR OF THE LIBRARY

Milton, WI

LINE UP TO MEET THE GREAT NEWBORN CAT
CUTE AND KIND "BELL" TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Cottage Grove, WI

Spencer, WI

Downtown Storywalk

Spencer County, KY

Have you seen this sign?

Emmaus, PA

PAINT THIS BOOK

Grand Ledge, MI

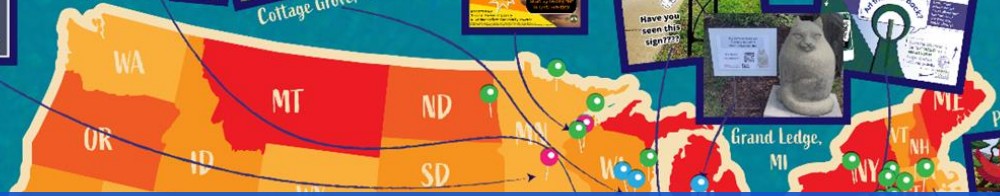
Purcellville, VA

Little Man, the peeing
beast!

South San Francisco, CA

Public Book Service

Public Buildings and Health Department
Preservation and Tour



Engaging Beyond Our Walls

Libraries connecting communities through outdoor games and stories



Seward, AK

Glendale, AZ

Umatilla, FL

GHOST OF THE CAROUSEL



Different technology

(infrastructure)



Image source: Apple Vision Pro [press release](#), January 8, 2024



Different technology

(infrastructure)



Image source: Apple Vision Pro [press release](#), January 8, 2024



Protected bike lane image via NYC DOT: <https://www.nycstreetdesign.info/geometry/protected-bike-lane>

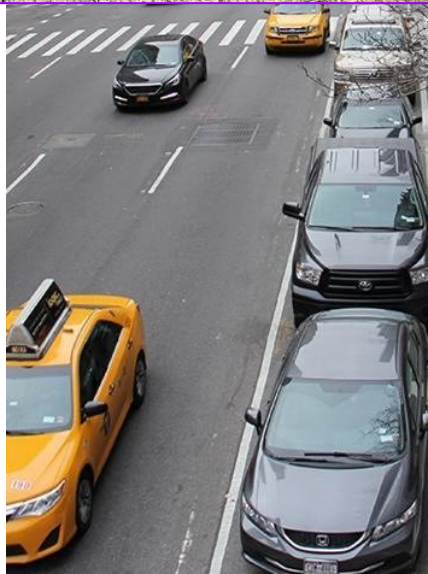


technology

(infrastructure)



Ebike program of the City of Concord Public Library



Protected bike lane image via NYC DOT: <https://www.nycstreetdesign.info/geometry/protected-bike-lane>



Photograph by Maria Avila of BART, as seen in a Bloomberg story on the [BART vending machines](#)



Different technology

(infrastructure)



Protected bike lane image via NYC DOT: <https://www.nycstreetdesign.info/geometry/protected-bike-lane>



Different technology

(infrastructure)



Tap payment system on public transit, photograph via Wikipedia by user ROTRANSIT



Protected bike lane image via NYC DOT: <https://www.nycstreetdesign.info/geometry/protected-bike-lane>

technology

(infrastructure)



Amanda Barrows has placed a "poetry nightstand" in parks around San Francisco; images courtesy her instagram feed and this SF Gate story





Suggested Route

Distance: 4.1 mi. Time: 2 hr.

This orange route was specially curated to provide the best experience and enjoyment of both Pokémon GO and South Philadelphia's places of interest together.

Map Legend

- Viewpoints
- Suggested route
- PokéStop
- Gym
- Academic Resources

Exploring South Philadelphia

If you venture past South Street, you will find a rich cultural and ethnic mix of communities. While it is most famous for its cheesesteaks and Italian Market, South Philadelphia has far more to offer than its cuisine, as you will see.

- 1 Marconi Plaza** Recommended
- 2 Bobby Rydell Blvd.** Recommended

This park got its name from the heavy Italian influence in its surrounding communities. Stay a while and explore the many amenities that this space has to offer.



This street is dedicated to South Philadelphia native Bobby Rydell, a rock and roll star from the 1960s. This former teen idol is most famous for his role in Eye Bye Birdie in 1963.

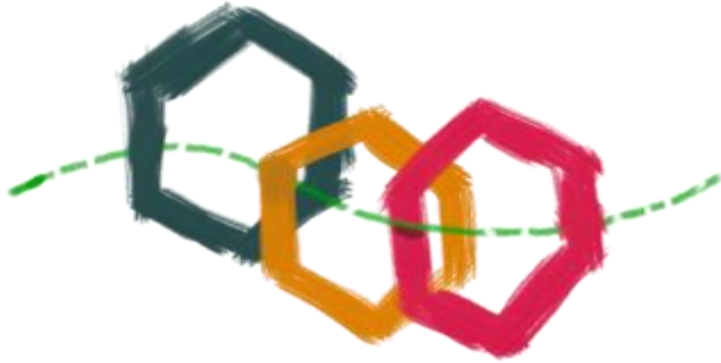


For your safety

Please enjoy Pokémon GO in a safe and enjoyable manner by reviewing and obeying the safety precautions and Trainers Guideline page.

Publisher
 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Fumo Family Library
 Phone: 215-685-1758
 Issue date: July 2017

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HIVE MECHANIC

FALL 2022

SPRING 2023 COHORT

Fall 2023 Cohort

OUR TEAM



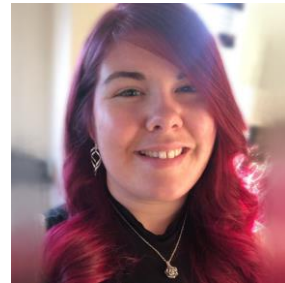
RESEARCHERS



Eric Schoenborn



Veronica Rubinsztain



Meagan Couture



Mig Mrizek



Benjamin Stokes
Program lead AU

DC PUBLIC LIBRARY LEADS

David Quick - DCPL
Programming



Allie Genia, DCPL
youth/labs



Víctor Benítez,
DCPL Labs



Lisa Warwick, DCPL
Peoples' Archive



GAME INSTRUCTORS

STORYTELLING BOX INSTRUCTORS

Hazel Arroyo



Tristan Sallin





Book:



<https://benjaminsstokes.net/locally-played/>

What did they make?



Photographs courtesy of the Milton Public Library

Milton Public Library
Milton, WI



Photographs courtesy of the Milton Public Library







Photographs courtesy of the Milton Public Library

CAW! SEE US BIRDS
TEXT THE WORD

OR SIMPLY SCAN
THIS QR CODE
WITH YOUR
PHONE CAMERA!



7:01



+1 (475) 473-8878 >

Hello, birds!
(Press send on this message to begin!)

Hello and look up! We are the birds on the Story Gardens arch, EZRA (closest to the library), AVO (the middle child), and SCOUT (furthest to the right)! Which one of us would you like to chat with? (Hint: reply with any of the capitalized name.)





(1) Low tech to play



Values at Play

(Flanagan & Nissenbaum, 2017)

Use a hole puncher to punch a hole and tie a ribbon through it.

Write your own bookmark messages

Replace these pictures with your own photos

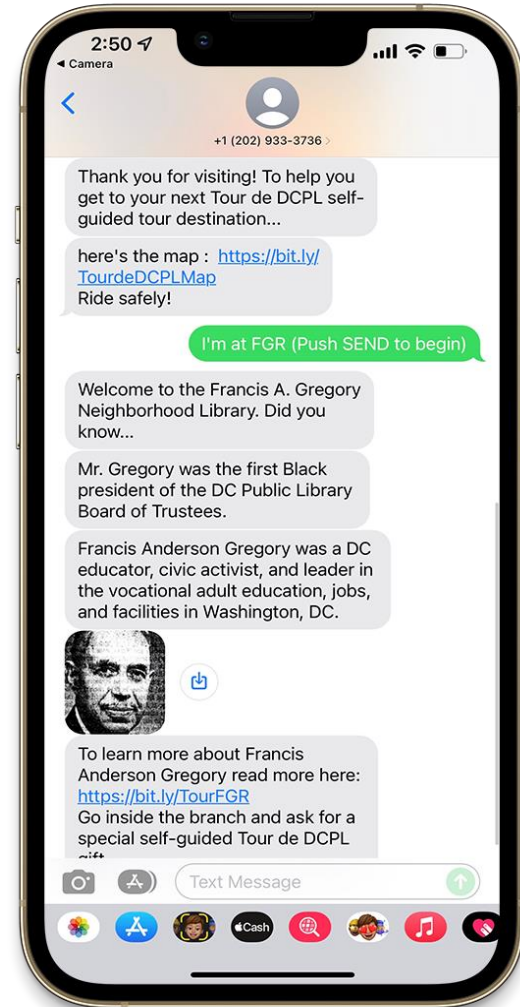
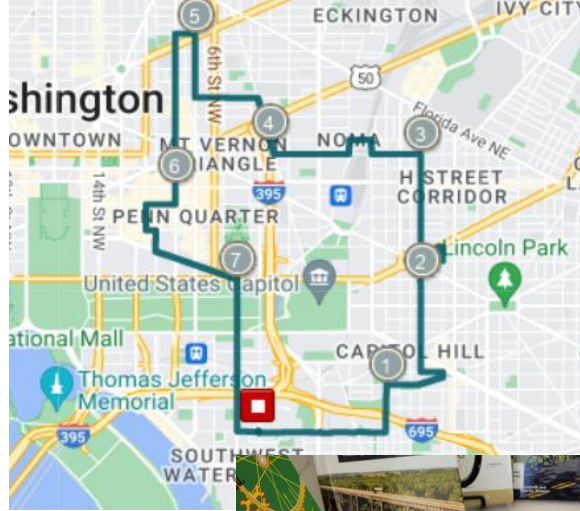


Use a hole puncher to punch a hole and tie a ribbon through it.

Write your own bookmark messages

Replace these pictures with your own photos







Bellows Falls, VT

So many partners: *Rockingham Free Public Library, Bellows Falls Historical Society, the Town of Rockingham, the Rockingham Historic Preservation Commission, and the Bellows Falls Downtown Development Alliance*

Time is out of order and must be set right!

Due to recent events, I suddenly found myself awake and thinking in this mysterious void.

...and help me remember who I am!

It's up to you to help me put history back in order.

Follow the clues with me through Bellows Falls' history...

I know this village is important to me, but I don't remember why.



Text Message





Postcard in exhibit

Women's History Museum
with the DC Public Library

Photographs courtesy of the DC Public Library

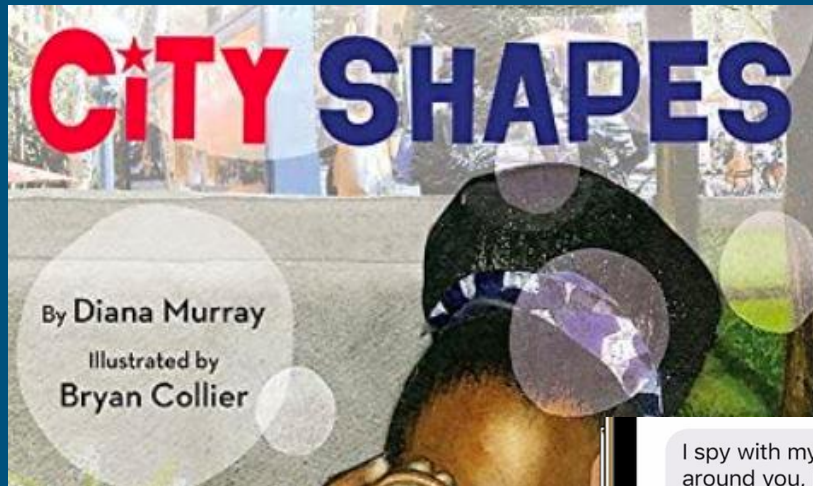


*Phone call
with live
images
(MMS)*

Storywalk Remix

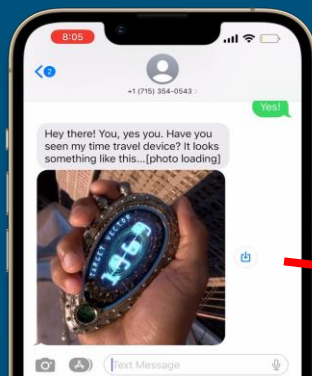
(with photo collecting)

in Spooner, WI



Players send in their photos:

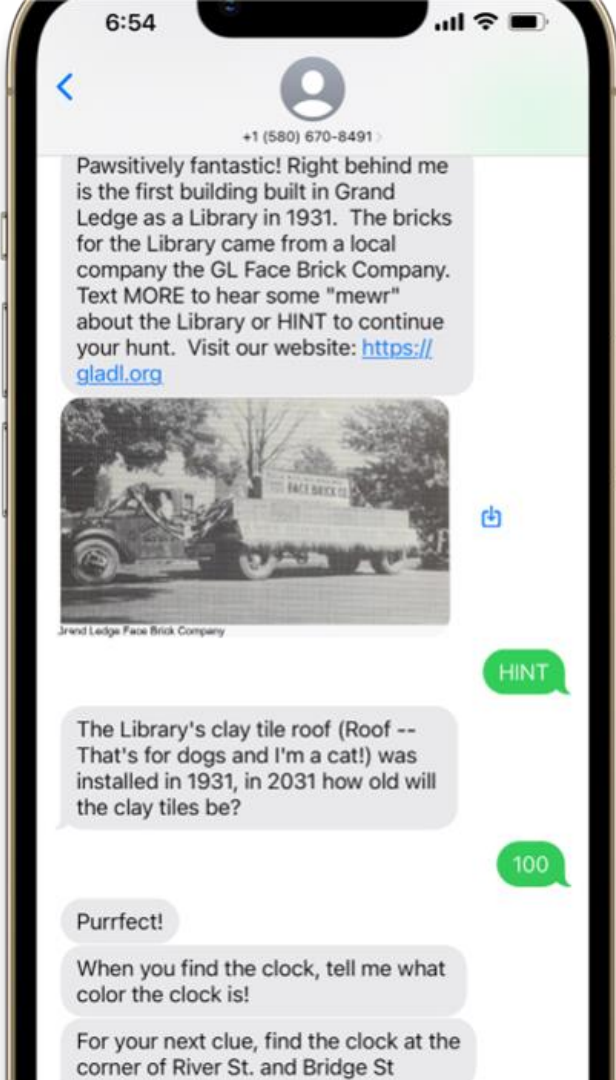
I spy with my little eye a shape. Look around you, left, right, up and down, and then...tell me one shape you see or send a photo of the shape!





(1) Low tech to play
(2) Low investment to make





Grand Ledge Area District Library, MI

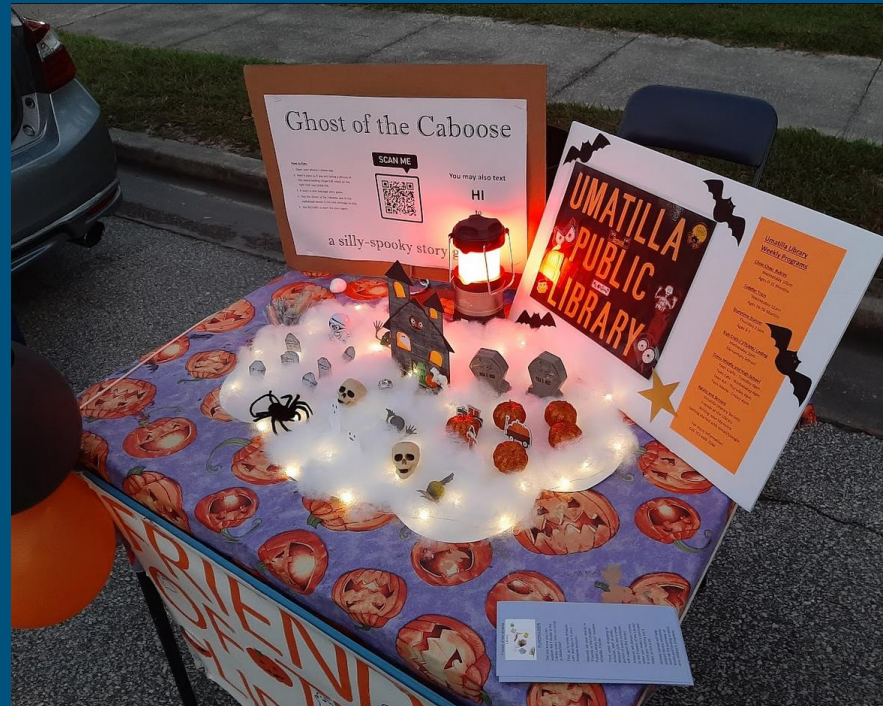
Photographs courtesy of Grand Ledge Area District Library

GHOST OF THE CABOOSE

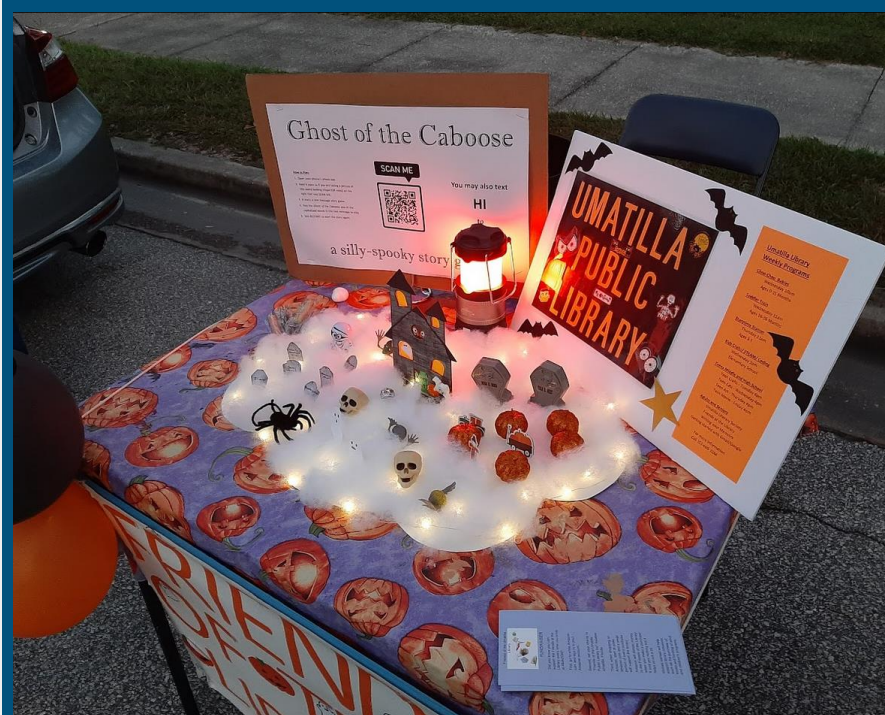
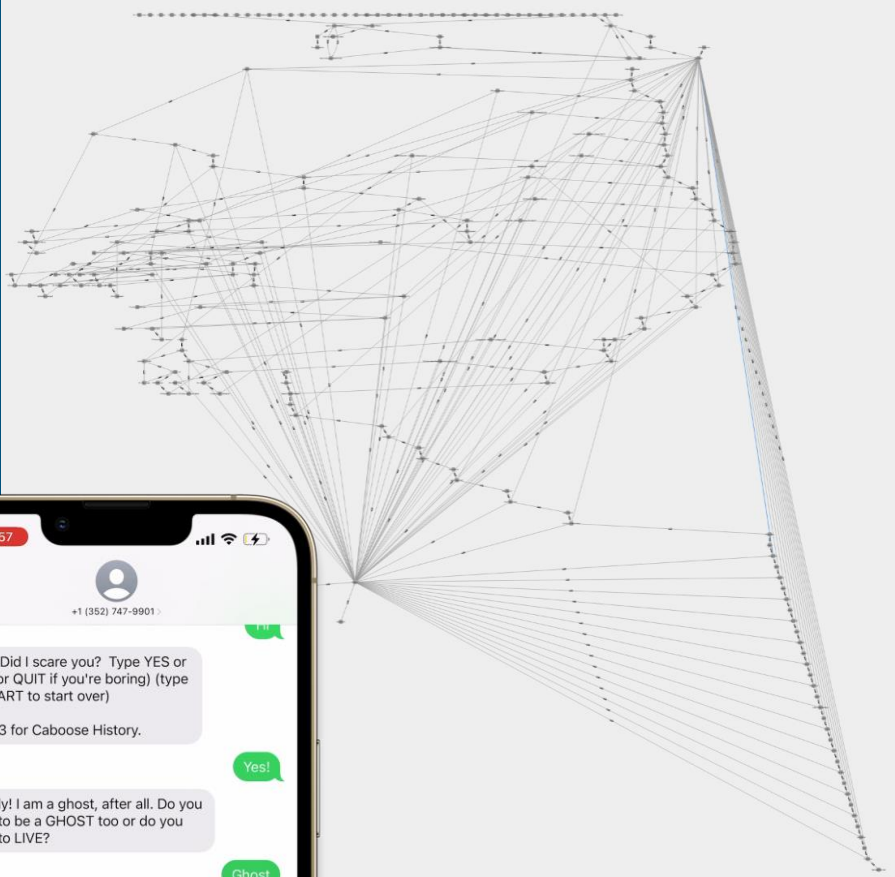


Our ghost has a one way ticket to a silly-spooky choose your own adventure game!

TEXT HI TO 352-747-9901
OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO PLAY!



Umatilla Public Library, FL



Photographs courtesy of Umatilla Public Library

Umatilla Public Library, FL





The Casa Peralta
Tiles
(San Leandro, CA)



Terms Accepted
Text Message

Great! Thanks for accepting the terms. Enjoy the game!

Send the welcome text

Welcome to the sculpture demo! I hope I'm not being too forward, but let me show you what I looked like when I was just a little tiny model. Let me find that photo, I know it's here s

Picture of Sculpture Model



Inform of Keywords Text Message

Isn't that neat? You know what else is neat? I'm also an oracle. Let me know if

Send Message

Card Name _____

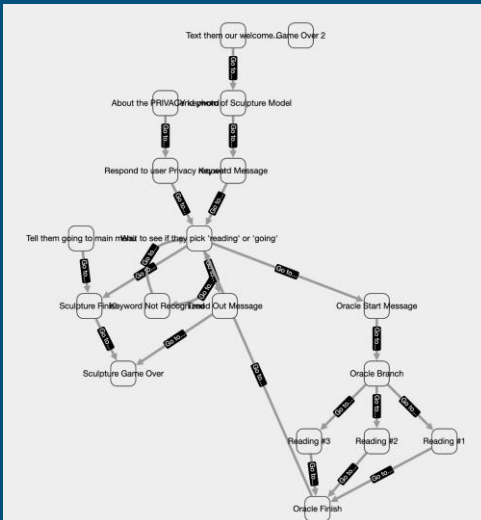
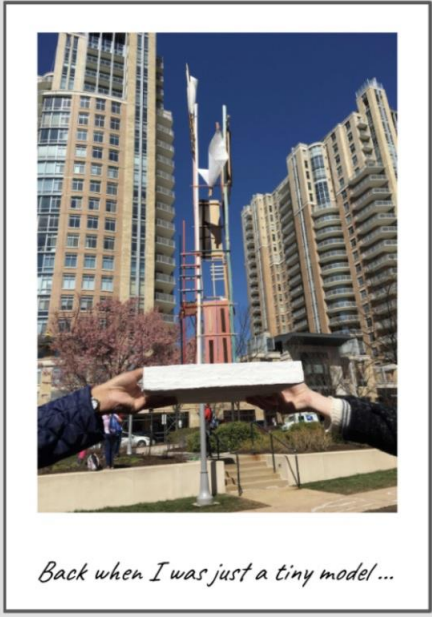
Text them our welcome...

Message

Welcome to the Sculpture Demo! I hope I'm not being too forward, but let me show you what I looked like when I was just a little tiny model. Let me find that photo, I know it's around here somewhere...



Send photo of Sculpture Model





Arrowhead Library System

TRY IT NOW!

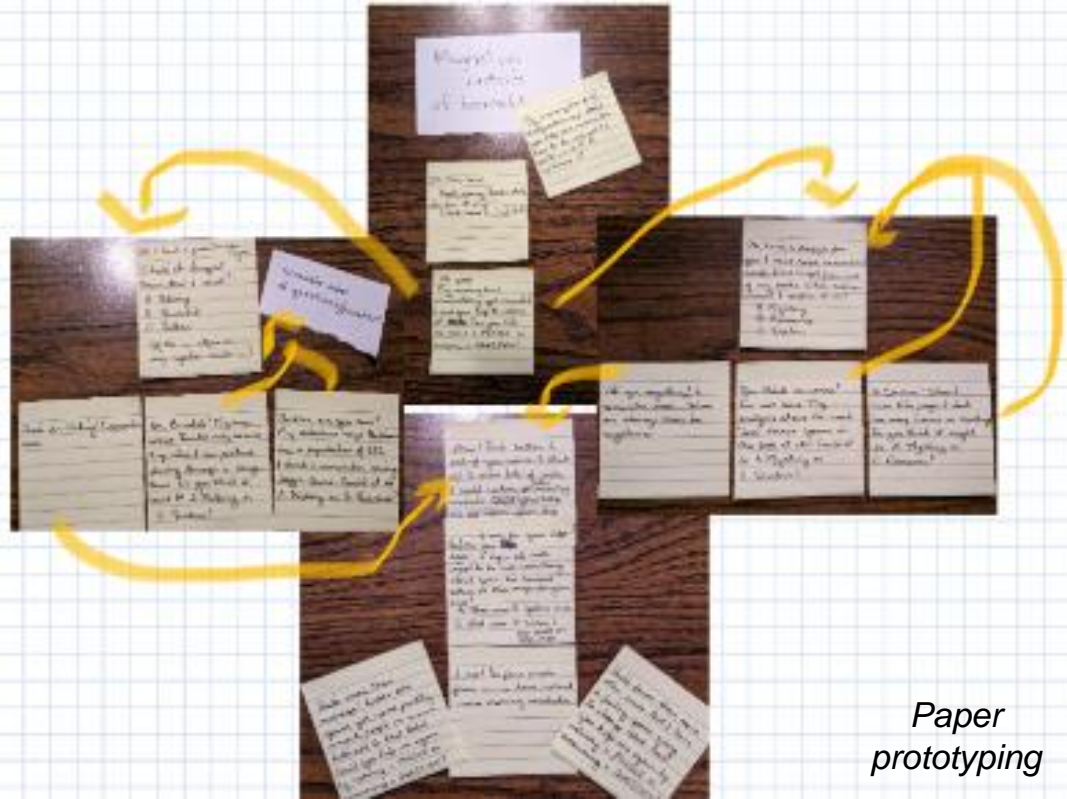
CHAT WITH THE BOOKMOBILE



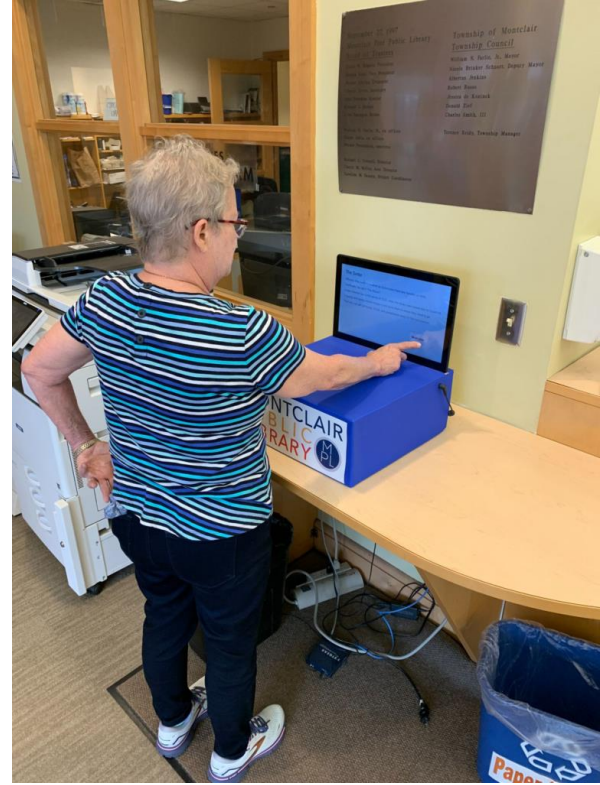
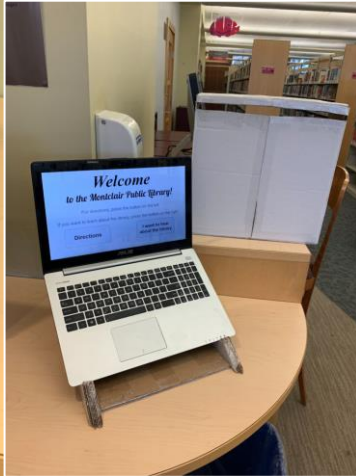
Text "Hello" to:
218-292-8657

www.alslib.info

Arrowhead Library
Arrowhead, MN



Paper prototyping





(1) Low tech to play
(2) Low investment to make
(3) Stronger places



Seward, AK



Glendale, AZ



Umatilla, FL



Values at Play

(Flanagan & Nissenbaum, 2017)

Our authoring tool

for connected play... no coding needed

free and open-source...



Send Message


Card Name _____

Text them our welcome...

Message

Welcome to the Sculpture Demo! I hope I'm not being too forward, but let me show you what I looked like when I was just a little tiny model. Let me find that photo, I know it's around here somewhere...

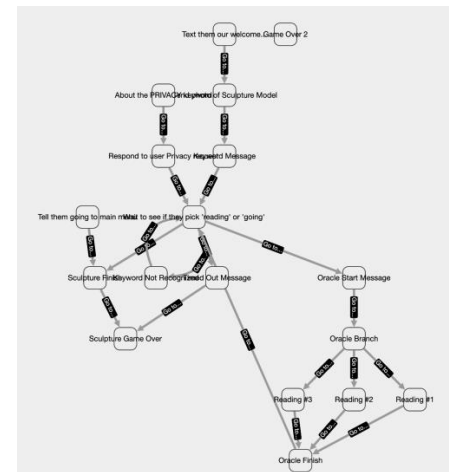
Send photo of Sculpture Model



Back when I was just a tiny model ...



Card metaphor

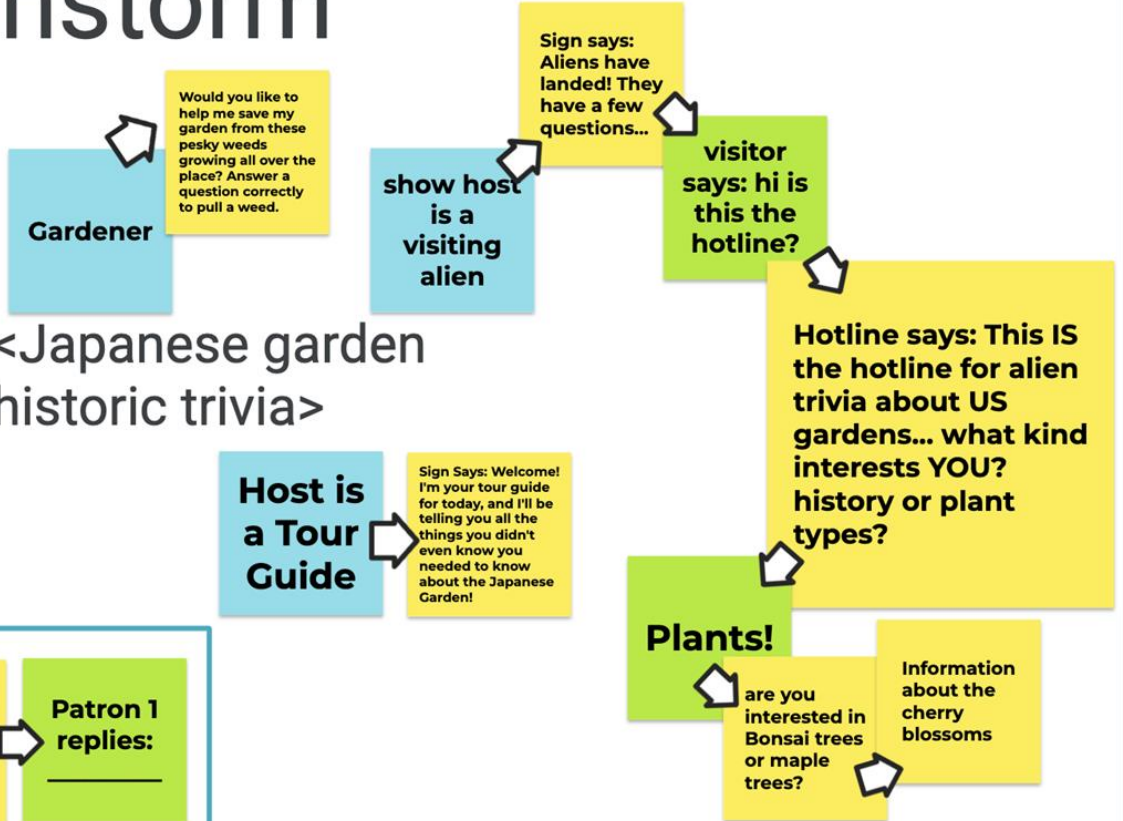


Story diagram

Project Brainstorm



<Japanese garden historic trivia>



Great use of index cards...

From a library in fall 2022:

“what I did was...made index cards for organization. This is a sample of blank cards. There are more.

Like writing a screenplay or a poem, it's important to have the format in mind when drafting your story. So by having the cards pre-made it forces us to think in that branching fashion. Also to keep the text very short.”

Choose (B1) or (B2) Until a Callback
 Process Response
 Contains B1
 Contains B2
 Timeout 15 mins
Ghost Sequence

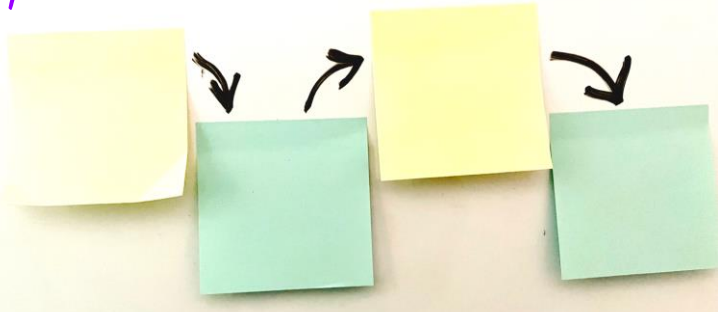
(B2) Branch Until a Callback
 send a message
 (B3) or (F) Ghost Sequence

B3 LOSE Until a Callback
 send a message
 You Lose
 (Restart or Out of game)
Ghost Sequence

(B) Branch Until a Callback
 send a message
 (B1) or (B2) GHOST SEQUENCE

Dialog prototyping

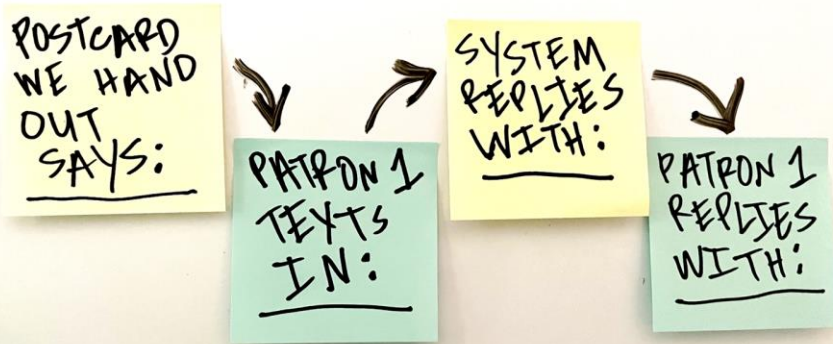
1



Step 1: Opening lines

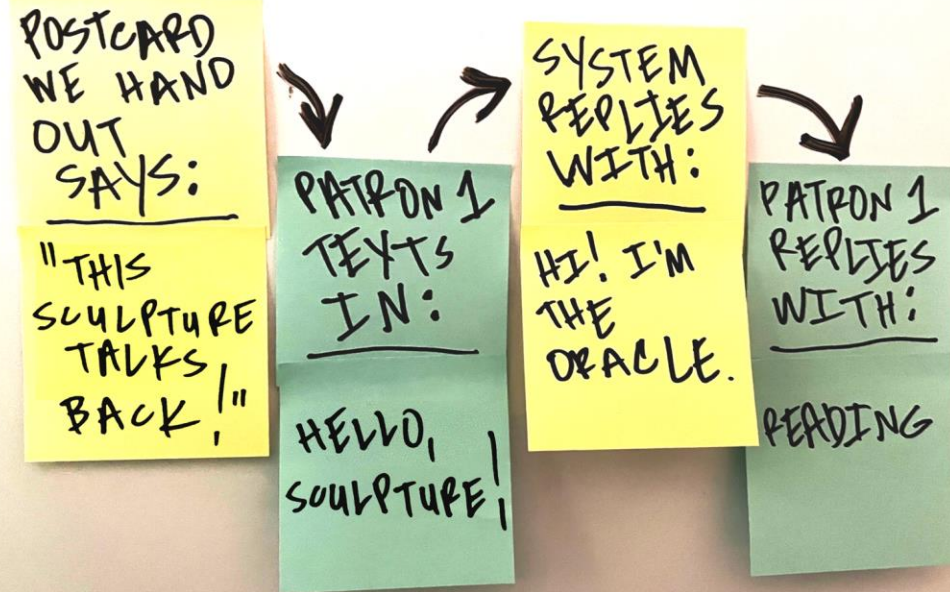
(with zest and often a rewarding photo, joke, or insight)

2



- Yellow post-its = what we say or show (our **protagonist**)
- Green post-its = what the **patron** texts back

3





The EBOW Recipe Book

for Engaging Beyond Our Walls

Edition 1a – September, 2024; Published by the [Playful City Lab](#) and [Game Center](#) of American University
Authors: Benjamin Stokes, Hazel Arroyo, Meagan Couture, Eric Schoenborn, Michael Mrizek, Alethea Saliba

Available online



Citation suggestion: Stokes, B., Arroyo, H., Couture, M., Schoenborn, E., & Mrizek, M., Saliba, A. (2024). *The EBOW Recipe Book for Engaging Beyond Our Walls* (1a ed.). Playful City Lab. Edition 1a.
<https://playfulcity.net/go/ebow/recipe-book/>



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<https://playfulcity.net/go/ebow/recipe-book/>

Recipe #2



Ghost Tour

Imagine: A friendly spectre has invited you to see the world through their eyes. As they guide you around, they reveal a new perspective to familiar surroundings.

Prepare the ingredients:

1. **Trim to 2-3 locations.** You can always add more locations *after* playtesting.
2. **Invent a compelling personality for the ghost.** See flavoring tips for [interactive hosts](#).
3. **Write your ghostly dialog.** Lean on the personality of the ghost to bring out creativity in the content. Figure out where it makes sense to use pictures to accompany the dialog.

Mix to taste:

4. **Playtest your dialog.** Make sure the dialog takes participants on the intended route in the correct order. See our [playtesting article](#).
5. **Build your tour in the digital tool of your choice.** Also, see our [essential appetizer: signage & paper](#).
6. **Launch your activity!**

Expansions and substitutions:

- ★ For a “no tech” version, consider using paper flyers at the starting location with a map of the path and dialog from the ghost tour guide to give them the narrative and any other content as they make their way around the tour path.

As seen in...

Ghost of the Caboose

Creator: Umatilla Public Library (FL)



Community members were able to participate in a spooky story led by a **friendly ghost** about a famous historical caboose in the center of town. The library launched this activity in time for Halloween and have since continued to expand on the project by adding narrative flourishes.

>> [See more photos online](#)

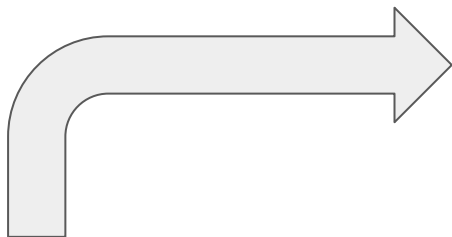


Umatilla Public Library

Umatilla, FL

7





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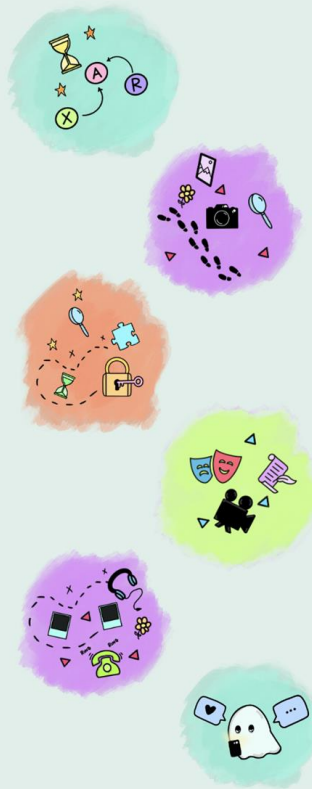


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5. [Escape-the-Tour Challenge](#)
6. [Voice Guide with Insider Choices](#)
7. [Sequencing Puzzle for a Place](#)
8. [Phone Calls that Lead a Hunt](#)
9. [Reenactment Tour with Media](#)
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Section C. **Flavors and technique**

Design principles for borrowing from game design, interactive hosts, and print/physical starting points

Section D. **Advanced recipes**

For makerspaces, playful city data & more

Technique:

Tasting Menus

Success stories bring a wonderful concreteness to the imagination. Read about as many as you can... or try a few!

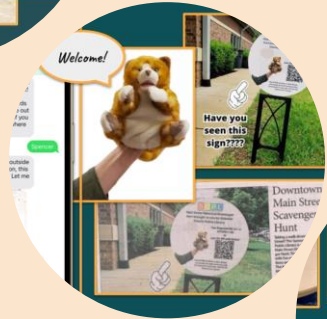
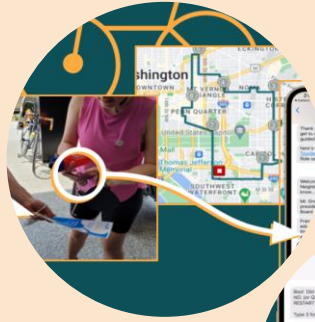


Image by Schellack: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tasting_menu#/media/File:Rokusan-tei_first_course.JPG

>> Try our sampler of EBOW projects:
<https://playfulcity.net/go/ebow/tasting-menu/>

Seasoning:

Borrow from Game Design



"Big Urban Game" (2003, Twin Cities)
Nick Fortugno, Frank Lantz, and Katie Salen

We can borrow from the emerging science and art of game design – even when we are *not* making games!

It turns out that interactive stories and engagement activities benefit from some of the same principles.



For more on game-based activities, read our book "Locally Played" by Prof. Benjamin Stokes (pages 8-10 in particular)

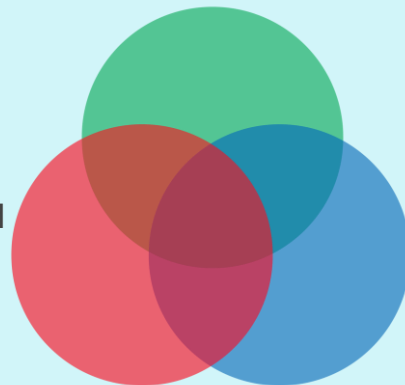
Try to amplify any one of the three elements from the definition:

Game-based activities
structure participation through...

1. **Playful challenges.** For example, are you bringing a playful spirit into transition lines of dialog? Are you trying to give participants a challenge rather than make everything boringly obvious?

2. **Feedback loops.** For example, when a participant makes a choice, do you compliment them on it, or show them the implications in a wonderfully exaggerated way?

3. **Uncertain outcomes.** For example, can you ask participants to reflect on something that is always changing, like a park bench or the length of a shadow? Can you introduce an element of randomness in who your participants will meet, or what conversations they will have?



Playful Tech can be accessible, cheap *(sometimes both!)*

- a) QR codes for phone numbers, text messages, or loading a hidden slide → *plenty of free tools*
- b) Google Voice – works for gathering input, and coordinating teams (by hand)
- c) Apps like [Action Bound](#) *(price depends on library service size)*
- d) Chalk for choices, maps as menus, push buttons
- e) RFID cards for iPhones or Android phones
→ *this is coming for all phones, although diverging standards make this a bit unpredictable*
- f) Twilio Studio → *anyone can create a voice or sms decision tree*



*You can buy buttons like these
from [AdaptiveTech.com](#)*

Studio *Preview*

Santa Bot



Editor



Logs



Revision History



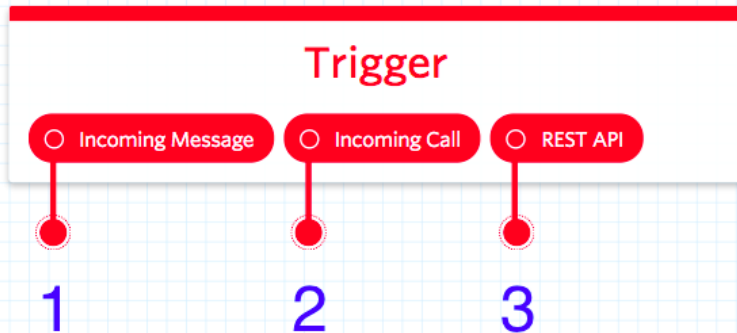
< Back



Santa Bot

Revision 1

Publish



WIDGET LIBRARY



Split Based On...



Send Message



Send & Wait for Reply



Say/Play



Gather Input on Call



Connect Call To



Record Voicemail



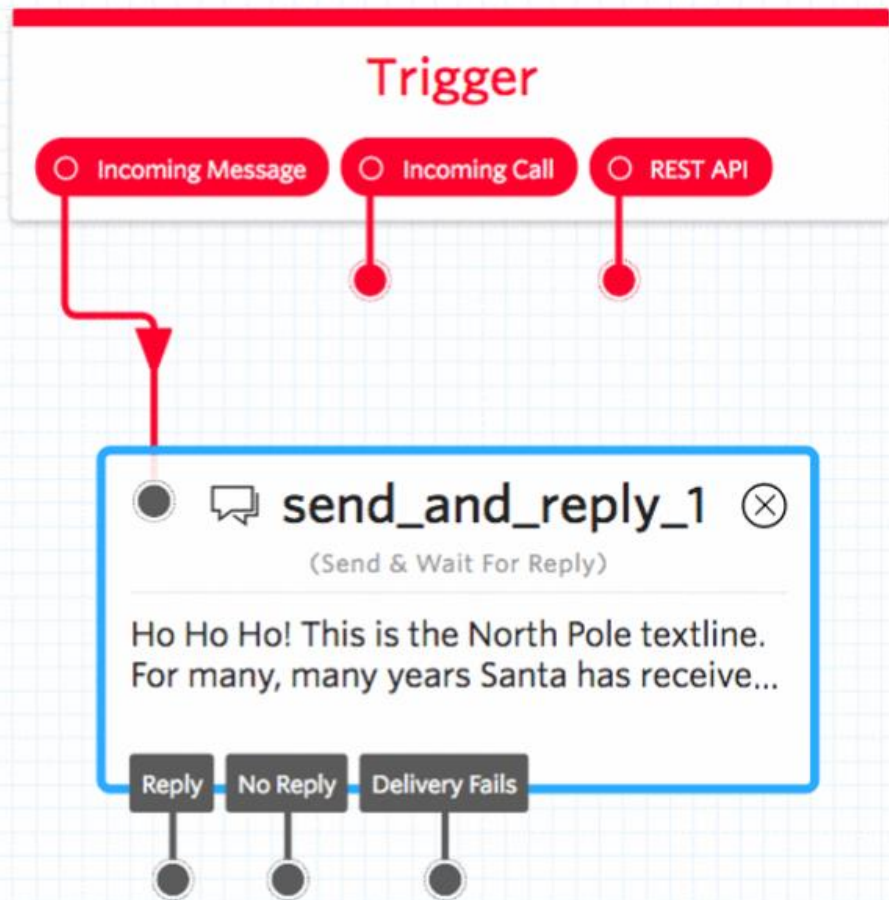
Make Outgoing Call



Pricing:

~ 1 cent per text or multimedia message sent/received

~ 30 cents for a half hour of voice calling



< SEND & WAIT FOR REPLY ...

Config Transitions

WIDGET NAME *

send_and_reply_1

MESSAGE BODY *

Ho Ho Ho! This is the North Pole textline. For many, many years Santa has received letters with lists of gifts that you want. This year, Santa is going to read all your wishes over text. But first, what your first name?

MESSAGE SENT FROM

{{flow channel address}}

Save [Delete Widget](#)

Get notified

...when our reports
(and more recipes)
launch



<https://playfulcity.net/go/connect/>

3 Timelines Converge



Movement for Libraries as Creative Hubs/Beyond Walls

1960s: **Bookmobiles** in 2000+ towns (growth since first in US in 1906)

1976: **Tool lending library launches** in Columbus

2011: **First makerspace** in the 21st C model opened in Fayetteville Free Library

2017: **'Placemaking'** featured at ALA as a core contribution of libraries

2018: **Palaces for the People** book helps recenter the library as social infrastructure for neighborhoods

2021: **Pandemic story walks created** at ~500 libraries in the US

Game/Play Movement

1920-50: **Playground movement**

1985: **Carmen Sandiego** launches

2004: Launch of **Games for Change** - the global movement hub for games tied to social issues

2007: **Gamers in the Library** book recognizes the power of video game tournaments in libraries.

2009: University **degrees in game design** Reaches 250 in USA (none a decade prior)

2012: NEA recognizes **games as art**

2016: **Pokémon GO** release shifts our imagination of play in public space

2022-23: **EBOW** attracts library applicants from more than 100 cities and towns

Mobile and Urban Tech

2007: **iPhone launch** turning point for smart screen

2008: **Twilio launch** (cloud telephony)

2009: **Open data movement** Enabled storytelling tied to live data on pollution, bus times, housing, etc.

2019: **Smartphone** ownership 81% of U.S. adults

2021: **QR codes go mainstream** during pandemic in US

2022: **ChatGPT** recenters the chatbot

Get out there...

Play & make locally!



Recipes:

<https://playfulcity.net/go/ebow/>



Benjamin Stokes
American University



David Quick
DC Public Library



DC Public Library

