advancing
children's learning
in a digital age

Fun Follows Function
Ten Tips for Developing Quality Toys

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sandbox summit®

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The Joan Ganz Cooney Center
at Sesame Workshop

"We don't pretend that media or a television show can solve the problems of our world, but we do believe it would be a terrible mistake not to use these most influential tools to contribute to the solutions."

- Joan Ganz Cooney

Mission

To catalyze and support research, innovation, and investment in digital media technologies to advance children's learning.
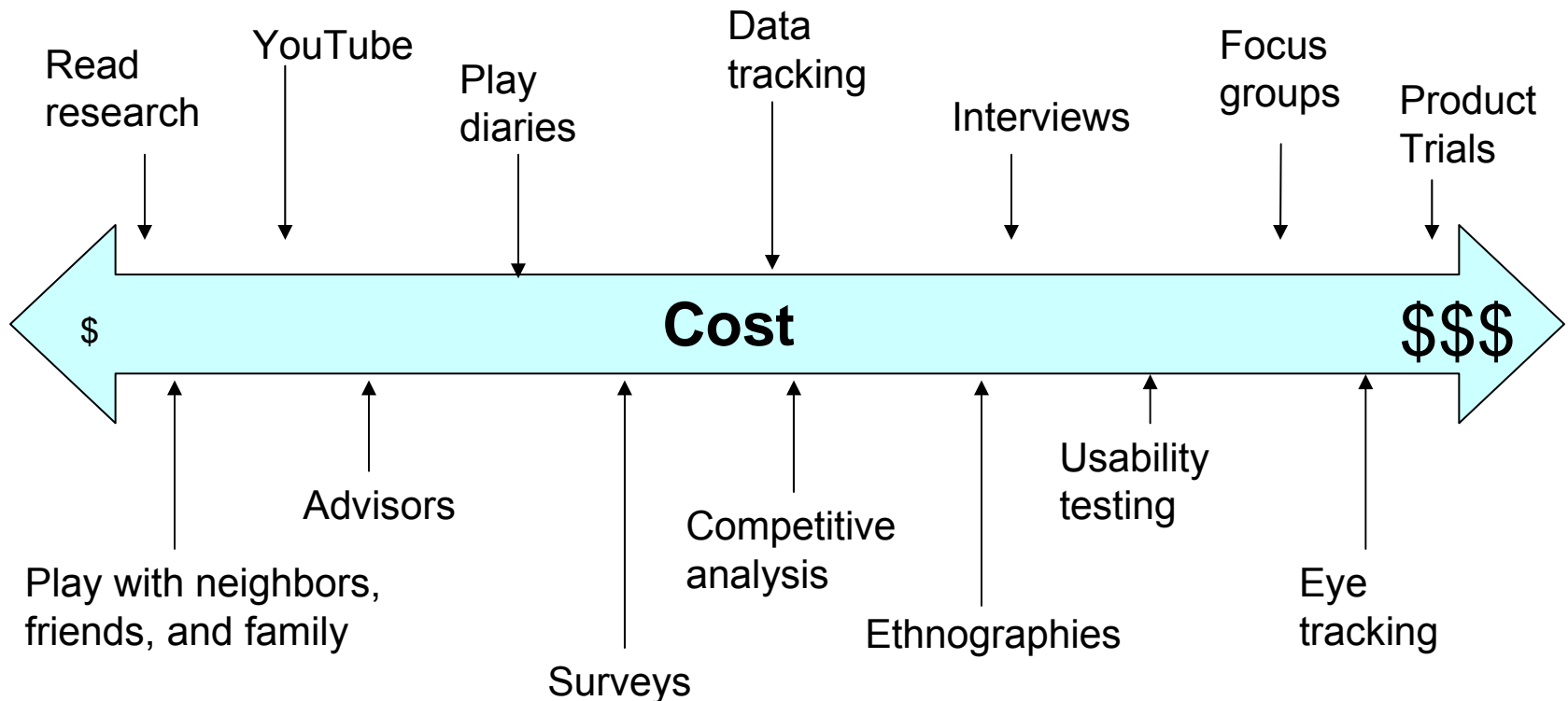
#1: Bridge the gap between industry and academia

► Convene multi-disciplinary teams

► Apply knowledge about child development and learning in product design

#2: Research and Testing

► Everyone can afford something

► Integrate throughout the development timeline
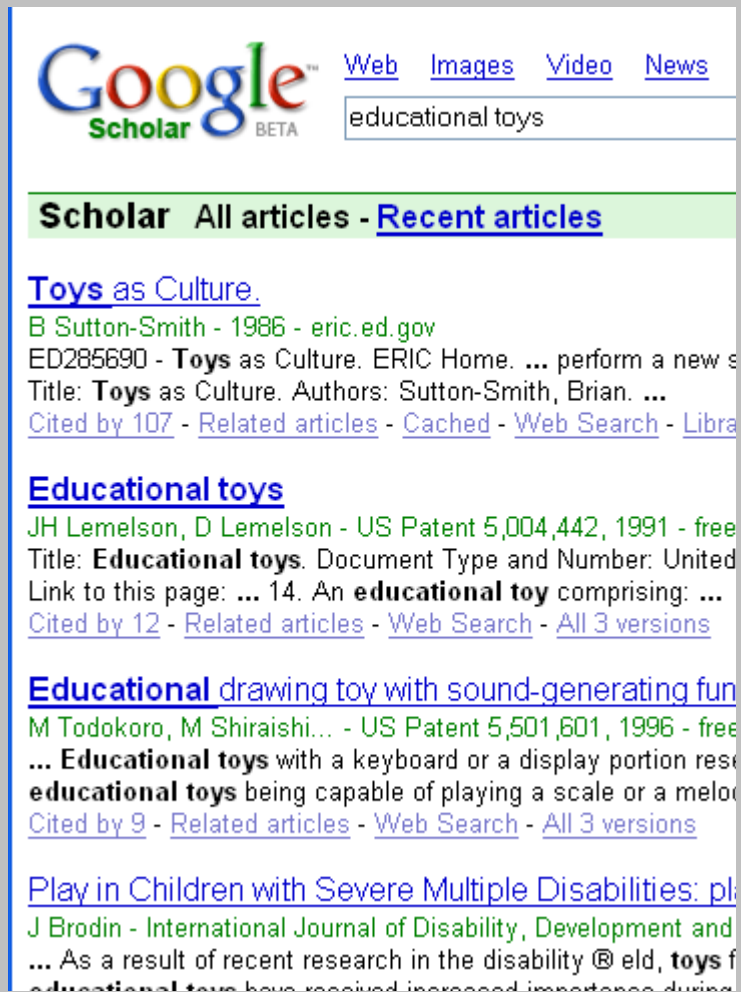
#3: Track what users do

► Automated data tracking and in-game metrics can

   ► Identify where users get stuck

   ► Aggregate reaction times to inform level design

   ► Supply intelligence for automatic leveling

   ► Provide usability information
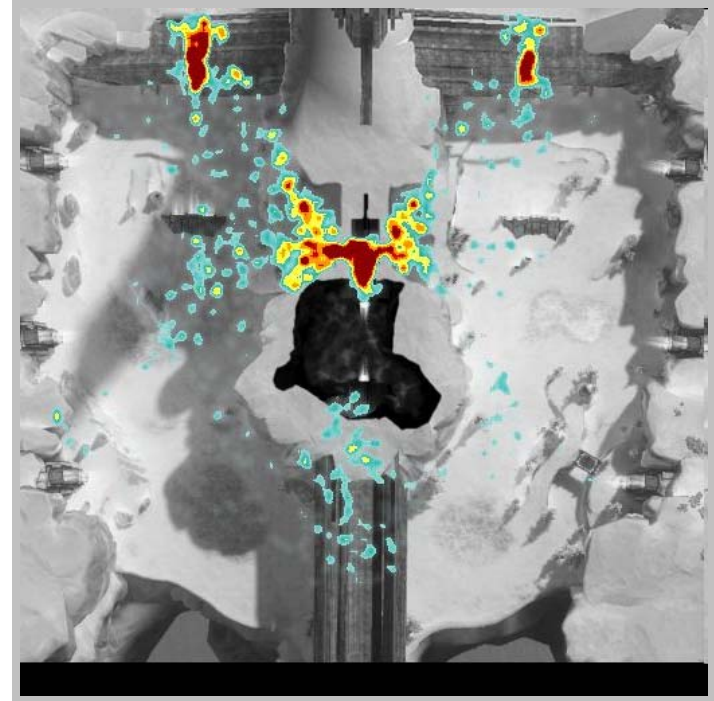
From Bungie.net

#4: Read.

► First, know the basics
  ► Read information for parents or basic developmental psychology textbooks

► Then, stand on the shoulders of those who are doing the research relevant to you
  ► Look in unusual places: overseas, other academic fields

#5: Become an Observer

► Don't just play with the neighbors, friends, and family

► YouTube and other video sharing sites are a gold mine of valuable usability info

► Walk the toy store aisles

#6. Break the model of one child per screen

► Encourage intergenerational interaction

► Think outside the 'keyboard' box

► Combine the virtual & physical worlds

#7. Leverage consumer market trends for learning

► 'Youth' generated content

► Virtual Worlds

► Video content on the web

► Casual games

#8: Go beyond the "three R's"

► Rethink literacy for the 21st century:

   ► Creativity and Innovation

   ► Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

   ► Communication and Collaboration

   ► Global knowledge and skills

#9. Explore new mechanics

► Add new twists to old mechanics (or vice versa)

► Transfer or evolve mechanics from different platforms

► Look to general audience games for new ideas
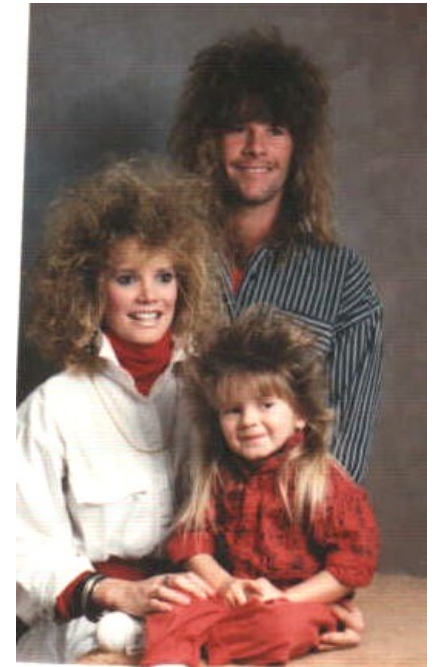
#10: Tap into your own childhood

►Do you remember…

The 60's

The 70's

The 80's

Thank You!

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