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A TRAIL WITH LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: BETWEEN THE BNCC, THE SHORT STORY AND THE GAME

K. K. F. SANTOS*, V. M. A. PONTES, F. J. F. AZEVEDO
Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande de Norte
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4540-7683*
katinllyn@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The Base Nacional Comum Curricular (2017) establishes rights, fields of experience, and learning and development objectives for Early Childhood Education in the Brazilian context, based on the axes of interactions and play. Thus, pedagogical actions should stimulate transcendence, going beyond literacy practices. In this regard, this research aimed to develop a serious game designed to explore the tale Little Red Riding Hood, integrating children's literature and games, both essential to human culture. The game, structured as a trail, is intended for children aged 4 to 5 years and 11 months, containing 20 challenge cards related to the tale, guided by gameplay principles and the learning and development objectives prescribed for young children. The journey begins with "once upon a time" and ends with "happily ever after," encouraging engagement with literature, imaginative play, and teacher mediation, serving as a powerful tool for fostering children's literary reading development.

KEYWORDS: tale, *serious games*, children's literature.

UMA TRILHA COM CHAPEUZINHO VERMELHO: ENTRE A BNCC, O CONTO E O JOGO

RESUMO

A Base Nacional Comum Curricular (2017) estabelece direitos, campos de experiências e objetivos de aprendizagem e desenvolvimento para a Educação Infantil no contexto brasileiro, fundamentando-se nos eixos de interações e brincadeiras. Assim, as ações pedagógicas devem estimular transcendências, indo além das práticas alfabetizadoras. Diante disso, esta pesquisa buscou desenvolver um jogo do gênero *serious games* para a exploração do conto Chapeuzinho Vermelho, integrando literatura infantil e jogos, ambos essenciais à cultura humana. O jogo, em formato de trilha, destina-se a crianças de 4 a 5 anos e 11 meses, contendo 20 cartas com desafios relacionados ao conto, orientadas pelos princípios da jogabilidade e pelos objetivos de aprendizagem e desenvolvimento preceituados para as crianças pequenas. A trajetória inicia-se no "era uma vez" e encerra-se no "final feliz", estimulando o contato com a literatura, o faz de conta e a mediação docente, sendo uma ferramenta potencializadora da formação leitora literária infantil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: contos, *serious games*, literatura infantil.

1 ONCE UPON A TIME: BNCC GUIDELINES

For a long time, Early Childhood Education in Brazil was considered a stage prior to formal schooling. As a result, national education documents used the term pre-school education, treating this phase as independent and merely preparatory for later schooling, which would only begin in Elementary Education. From a historical perspective, it was only in 1988, with the promulgation of the Federal Constitution, that the provision of daycare and pre-school education for children aged 0 to 6 became a state responsibility (Brasil, 1988).

Subsequently, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (1996) integrated Early Childhood Education into Basic Education, granting it the same normative relevance as Elementary and Secondary Education (Brasil, 1996). In 2006, with amendments to the aforementioned document, Early Childhood Education came to encompass children aged 0 to 5 years, as access to Elementary Education was brought forward to age 6. However, the mandatory nature of Early Childhood Education for children aged 4 and 5 was only established through Constitutional Amendment No. 59/2009, which set the compulsory age range for Basic Education from 4 to 17 years (Brasil, 2009a).

In 2013, this mandatory enrollment was incorporated into the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Brazilian Education, officially establishing Early Childhood Education as both a right of the child and a duty of the state, thus requiring the enrollment of children aged 4 and 5 in appropriate institutions. Concluding this historical trajectory, the Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC) was approved in 2017 as a guiding document aimed at ensuring a set of essential learning experiences for Brazilian students. The inclusion of Early Childhood Education in this document reinforced its integration as the first stage of Basic Education (Brasil, 2018).

As a reference document for curriculum development within the national education system, the BNCC must be thoroughly studied, and curricula should be designed in alignment with its prescribed learning objectives. With a closer focus on Early Childhood Education, the document is based on the guidelines of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI), issued in 2009. These guidelines recognize the child as a subject of rights, one who "plays, imagines, desires, learns, observes, experiments, narrates, questions, and constructs meaning about nature and society, thereby producing culture" (Brasil, 2009b, p. 12). To foster this child's development, all Early Childhood Education proposals must be structured around the axes of interactions and play.

The BNCC asserts that activities centered around these axes generate experiences that enable children to construct and internalize knowledge. Through play, children interact and reflect on their everyday experiences, thereby enhancing their holistic development. Based on these two axes and the general competencies of Basic Education, the BNCC establishes six learning and development rights for Early Childhood Education: coexisting, playing, participating, exploring, expressing, and self-awareness. To ensure these rights are upheld, the curricular organization of Early Childhood Education in this document is structured into five fields of experience, which, in turn, align with these rights (Brasil, 2018).

The first field of experience is called The Self, the Other, and Us, emphasizing the need for interaction with peers and adults to shape one's own way of acting and to discover new ways of life. The second, Body, Gestures, and Movements, focuses on the exploration of the world, spaces, and objects through physical means, placing the child's body at the center of learning. The third, Traces, Sounds, Colors, and Shapes, highlights engagement with diverse artistic, cultural, and scientific expressions. The fourth field, Listening, Speaking, Thinking, and Imagining, centers on everyday communicative situations, emphasizing both speaking and listening. The fifth, Spaces, Time, Quantities, Relations, and Transformations, explores natural and sociocultural phenomena (Brasil, 2018).

In this same framework, learning and development objectives were established for each of these fields of experience, structured into three age groups: infants (0 to 1 year and 6 months), very young children (1 year and 7 months to 3 years and 11 months), and young children (4 years to 5 years and 11 months). These categories represent learning possibilities rather than rigid divisions. This age-based organization serves as a guideline rather than a strict classification, as children's learning and development rhythms are unique and must be taken into account when planning pedagogical actions.

To better organize these objectives, an alphanumeric coding system was created for each one, representing the educational stage, age group, field of experience, and skill position. Despite this categorization, the BNCC emphasizes the need for a comprehensive education that fosters the holistic development of the learner, avoiding the compartmentalization of knowledge. This approach helps move away from a fragmented teaching logic and challenges the dichotomous view of classroom practices (Brasil, 2018).

It can be inferred, therefore, that the BNCC discussion is deeply rooted in interdisciplinarity. According to Fazenda (2002), interdisciplinarity is not merely a teaching practice, but rather a principle, positioning the teacher as a mediator in this process. Consequently, for a learner to develop holistically, there must be an educational mediator who perceives and interprets them as an active subject of learning.

Thus, the following assertions can be made: i) The BNCC is a key document in curriculum development for schools; ii) Early Childhood Education guidelines are structured around interactions and play; iii) Learning and development rights, fields of experience, and learning objectives were defined in an interconnected manner; iv) These connections highlight the need to explore imaginative play and enhance creativity; v) The teacher, as a mediator, must reflect on these objectives and implement actions that foster the holistic development of students.

Given the reflective role of the teacher, the guidelines presented, and the need for enriching learning environments, two key pathways emerge: literary reading and games. When a child reads— or listens to a story—they experience the emotional depth of an imagined world, encounter new situations, and engage in tangential learning. Similarly, when a child plays a game, they unconsciously follow rules that extend beyond reality, elevating their imagination beyond immediate lived experiences.

This prompts reflection: If both literary reading and games enable immersion into imagined worlds, how might one support the other in educational practices? In what ways can games intersect

with literary reading to contribute to a child's holistic development? Is it possible to create games that encourage literary reading? How can games and literary reading be mobilized within the axes of interaction and play?

Amid these many inquiries, the general objective of this research was to develop a serious game (Din, Baig, & Khan, 2023) designed to explore the tale Little Red Riding Hood. This game represents an innovative methodology aimed at motivating and stimulating dialogue around the selected story. Serious games have emerged as a promising approach to enhancing literary reading in early childhood education. These games provide an engaging and interactive experience, which can increase children's interest and enjoyment. Studies indicate that serious games can effectively support the development of reading skills, particularly for children with learning difficulties, by focusing on specific literacy components, such as reading fluency and metaphonological skills (Marinelli et al., 2023; Tacoronte Sosa & Peña Hita, 2023). However, the transfer of these skills to broader literacy competencies remains a challenge (Wohlwend, 2022). Educators must consider the specific needs of their students and the educational context to maximize the benefits of these games in literacy learning (Papanastasiou et al., 2022; Wohlwend, 2022).

This study was conducted within a qualitative research framework, using bibliographic research as its primary methodology. The approach adopted does not aim to schoolify literature but rather seeks to foster reading habits by stimulating the child's holistic development. The focus is not on quantifying literacy acquisition or teaching reading through the game, but rather on enchanting children through texts and games—awakening emotions, promoting dialogue, giving meaning to the world of imagination, and presenting games and literary reading as cultural objects that develop sensitivity and ensure the rights established by the BNCC.

2 DOWN THE ROAD: DEBATES BETWEEN LITERARY READING AND GAMES

Discovering what interconnects literary reading and games requires a careful examination of their shared ability to create possible worlds. Before exploring these connections, however, it is essential to reflect on each element separately. Literature, in a broad sense, is considered one of the most significant human creations in shaping the individual, as it involves words, ideas, and thought—all of which are intrinsic to human nature. Given that childhood is a crucial stage of development, fostering access to literary reading for young learners is imperative. Through literature, children establish and harmonize the connection between the empirical and historical-factual world and the possible worlds of the text, thereby satisfying their imaginative desires and cultivating sensitivity, imagination, and creativity (Silva, 2009).

With its multiple codes, formats, and textualities, literature must be incorporated across all age groups, not only for its visible role in literacy acquisition but, more importantly, for what is considered its greatest potential: human development. Often, when children are not yet literate, there are few structured proposals for engaging them with reading. However, if reading is fundamentally rooted in interpretive abilities, why shouldn't it begin from a child's symbolic understanding of life? This question inspired the construction of this research, as it envisions opportunities to use literary reading as a means to stimulate emotional immersion in the imagination and foster the joy of reading.

Literacy emerges as a consequence of access to the literary world, which is why this study focuses on the initial encounters children have with reading. To achieve this, literature must not be treated as a mere pretext, confined to specific projects and their final presentations, but should instead be integrated transversally throughout daily school life. According to Reyes (2010), working with literature in the classroom allows children, even before they can read, to encounter new concepts, shape their identity, dream, name things, and engage in narrative possibilities. Similarly, Freire (1988) argues that reading the world precedes reading the word. Before learning to decode written text, children participate in a dynamic relationship between imagination and everyday life, a process deeply intertwined with language acquisition.

In this same context are games and the concept of play. According to Vygotsky's theoretical framework, play can be seen as an imminent opportunity to enhance learning through the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 2008). Additionally, Mackey (2002) posits that play involves make-believe, offering a pathway to other realms based on what is already known. However, when shaped by a "what if" scenario, it transforms into an imagined reality, transcending the limitations of the immediate environment.

The very word game, which derives from the Latin *jocu*, inherently carries the notions of jest and amusement in its translation. For this reason, Antunes (2013, p. 11) understands the game as a "metaphor for life." Accordingly, beyond its etymological roots, the game can foster social and cognitive development, serving as a powerful tool for thought development, especially when employed as a pedagogical resource. Games have the capacity to integrate the experience of words, sounds, movements, gestures, and imagination. No game is truly complete without the genuine engagement of the player, who immerses themselves in the fictional world and derives from that narrative a new experience.

We thus perceive that both games and literary reading contain aspects of transcendence, but what intersections exist beyond these? Addressing this question, given the nascent nature of studies exploring these relationships, is both intriguing and challenging. However, despite their apparent distance, the connections are real. Games and literary reading stimulate students' interest, foster personality development, create a fictional self, enable imaginary scenarios, generate content creators, break away from the hierarchical logic common in traditional teaching practices, stimulate creativity, cultivate more critical and problem-solving individuals, generate unique interpretations based on prior world knowledge, and transform everyday situations into immersive experiences. The points of intersection presented here stem not only from this study but also from other contributions, research, and perspectives developed in previous works.

The Game	Literary Reading	Interconnections
The game is built through playing	The reader can generate content rather than merely absorbing it	Active and constructive individuals in the face of presented challenges
In the game, there is a search for information beyond it	Reading a text involves knowledge that goes beyond the initial perception other domains	Tangential learning, which extends beyond immediate needs and traverses other domains

The game involves different languages	Language is stimulated during reading	It is through language that humans can express their thoughts
Maturing functions can be developed while playing	Through reading, functions still in development can mature	Through these two activities, different ZPD experiences can emerge
The player's imagination is richly stimulated while playing	While reading, the reader's imagination is awakened and stimulated	Both experiences offer opportunities for transcendence, leading to learning
It is possible to learn content while playing	It is possible to learn content while reading	Throughout these experiences, procedural, attitudinal, and conceptual content is accessed
The player's self-esteem can be shaped throughout the game	The reader's self-esteem can be shaped throughout the text	Both the game and the text present a certain level of difficulty, which can contribute to building self-esteem and increasing the individual's confidence
To play, the player can create a fictional self	To read, the reader can create a fictional self	While playing or reading, one can access the concept of "make-believe," which is an essential element for exploring imagination and building a repertoire
The game can evoke pleasure	Reading can evoke pleasure	Both players and readers experience situations that provide enjoyment and enhance emotional skills
Multiple intelligences can be accessed in games	Multiple intelligences can be accessed in texts	Linguistic, spatial, naturalistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences are enhanced through both activities

Table 1: Interconnections Between Literary Reading and Games

Thus, the points of intersection can only contribute to the development of reading skills when the teacher acts as a mediator, serving as a threshold in these practices and enabling new applications and adjustments. Rizzo (1997) argues that games should be more frequently incorporated into classroom activities. In this sense, it is essential that games are not perceived merely as distractions but as genuine tools that promote reading engagement, recognizing literature as an integral part of social spaces rather than confining it to a restricted perspective.

When considering the mediation of a game to support literary reader development, it is necessary to take into account who the students are, what their needs entail, to listen to their voices, and to pay attention to their narratives, avoiding a simplistic and meaningless application of the practice. Games can only serve literary reading when their creative potential is harnessed in their design. Therefore, before creating or implementing any game in this context, it is essential to reflect on both the collective and individual characteristics of those involved. The teacher can assume the role of a mediator in this process, as Oliveira (1997) asserts that mediation, when

conducted by a more experienced individual, facilitates greater transformation and internalization of the discussed concepts.

For this reason, the mediation we require must be collaborative and infused with socio-emotional education. As teachers, we have the ability to further stimulate children's imagination. Mediation should involve the creation of comprehensive, participatory, collaborative, communicative, and self-awareness-driven dynamics. Moran, Masetto, and Behrens (2013) also advocate for a form of mediation that fosters more open, coherent, and engaged thinking. Specifically, in the mediation of games for literary reading, the teacher must consider the conditioning factors outlined by Ramos and Cruz (2018), ensuring that the game fosters self-esteem, provides psychologically favorable conditions, includes an appropriate environmental setting, and is underpinned by technical foundations.

The following section presents an experience in mediation: the creative process of developing a game designed to promote reader formation through the tale *Little Red Riding Hood*.

3   GAME PROPOSAL BASED ON THE TALE *LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD*

To design a game that fosters literary reader formation in Early Childhood Education, with the goal of immersing children in an imagined world, the tale Little Red Riding Hood was chosen. This selection was based on its privileged status as a genre for game development, its open accessibility, its popular narrative, and its availability in full text. The version used in this study is the one written by the Brothers Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. It is important to clarify that this version was chosen over Charles Perrault's because it presents a more sensitive narrative composition, which allows for a more suitable approach when working with young children. From the very moment the text selection process begins, the role of the mediator is essential, ensuring that the chosen path aligns with the child's holistic development.

The first step in creating the game was to define its category. In this regard, we chose to develop a game within the serious games category. Clark Abt (1975) distinguished serious games from commercial games by emphasizing their explicit educational purpose, in addition to their entertainment value. Thus, our goal is to engage and entertain while simultaneously exploring the various dimensions of learning. Therefore, the educational purpose that Abt refers to is not solely tied to the game's design, but rather to how the teacher integrates it into the classroom setting.

The development of the game took into account the importance of proper planning, ensuring that it aligns with the context in which it will be implemented. The goal is not merely to introduce any game into the classroom, but rather to carefully consider which instructional content should be presented, assessed, or enhanced, as well as to define the core objective of the proposal. This approach is essential because games that are not properly planned may lead to unsuccessful teaching practices, failing to achieve their intended purpose—or, worse, lacking a clear educational goal altogether. For this reason, it is crucial to analyze the needs of the students and, based on this understanding, select and adapt a game proposal that aligns with those needs.

It is also essential to ensure that games are neither too difficult, which could lead to student disengagement, nor too easy, which might fail to capture their interest. Additionally, games should

not be imposed as a negative experience, associating them with punishment, sanctions, or excessive work. Instead, they should be presented as a tool with the potential to foster immersion. Even the way a teacher introduces a game to a class can significantly influence its effectiveness, reinforcing the importance of careful planning in ensuring the success of an educational game.

Beyond these considerations, the game structure should include a clear beginning, middle, and end. When connected to a literary text, it is important to incorporate the hypercodified narrative formulas of opening and closing—such as "once upon a time" and "happily ever after". These elements serve as technical foundations and contribute to appropriate environmental conditions for gameplay. Since the primary concern—even before defining the game's design—was to establish the instructional content, the process began with a close reading of the tale, followed by the development of appropriate challenges.

These challenges were aligned with the Learning and Development Objectives established by the Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC) for young children, aged 4 to 5 years and 11 months. The objectives were selected across all Fields of Experience, considering the need for holistic development, thus maximizing the potential for growth. Below, the questions and the corresponding mobilized objectives are outlined.

Question	Objective	Representation
Who is the main character of the story?	EI03EF07	Formulating hypotheses about textual genres conveyed in familiar media, using strategies of graphic observation and/or reading.
How many letters are in the name Little Red Riding Hood?	EI03EF07	Formulating hypotheses about textual genres conveyed in familiar media, using strategies of graphic observation and/or reading.
With a friend, place only the foods that are good for Grandma to consume in the basket!	EI03EO03 EI03ET02	Expanding interpersonal relationships by developing attitudes of participation and cooperation. Observing and describing changes in different materials resulting from actions performed on them in experiments involving natural and artificial phenomena.
Look on the classroom walls for an image of where Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother lived!	EI03EF07	Formulating hypotheses about textual genres conveyed in familiar media, using strategies of graphic observation and/or reading.
What sound is this?	EI03TS03	Recognizing the qualities of sound (intensity, duration, pitch, and timbre), applying them in sound productions and when listening to music and sounds.
Which animal did Little Red Riding Hood encounter in the forest?	EI03EF07	Formulating hypotheses about textual genres conveyed in familiar media, using strategies of graphic observation and/or reading.
Which face would you choose to represent the Big Bad Wolf?	EI03EF01	Expressing ideas, desires, and feelings about personal experiences through oral and written language

		(spontaneous writing), as well as through photos, drawings, and other forms of expression.
Express how you imagine the face of a Big Bad Wolf…	EI03CG03	Creating movements, gestures, expressions, and mimics in games, play, and artistic activities such as dance, theatre, and music.
Which path did the wolf suggest to Little Red Riding Hood?	EI03EF07	Formulating hypotheses about textual genres conveyed in familiar media, using strategies of graphic observation and/or reading.
Did Little Red Riding Hood disobey her mother? Would you do the same?	EI03EO07	Using strategies based on mutual respect to handle conflicts in interactions with children and adults.
If you could talk to Little Red Riding Hood before she set off down the road, what would you say?	EI03EO01	Demonstrating empathy for others, recognizing that people have different feelings, needs, and ways of thinking and acting.
Let's complete the song? "Through the woods alone I go, bringing these sweets to _____."	EI03EF02	Inventing singing games, poems, and songs, creating rhymes, alliterations, and rhythms.
Who rescued Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother?	EI03EF07	Formulating hypotheses about textual genres conveyed in familiar media, using strategies of graphic observation and/or reading.
Which word rhymes with "hunter"?	EI03TS03	Recognizing the qualities of sound (intensity, duration, pitch, and timbre), applying them in sound productions and when listening to music and sounds.
It's time to organize this puzzle…	EI03ET05	Classifying objects and images according to their similarities and differences.
Reproduce the drawing of Little Red Riding Hood…	EI03TS02	Expressing oneself freely through drawing, painting, collage, origami, and sculpture, creating two-dimensional and three-dimensional productions.
Color the character's hood with her favorite color…	EI03TS02	Expressing oneself freely through drawing, painting, collage, origami, and sculpture, creating two-dimensional and three-dimensional productions.
Who would you be in this story?	EI03EO02	Acting independently, with confidence in one's abilities, recognizing personal achievements and limitations.
Shall we test your memory?	EI03ET05	Classifying objects and images according to their similarities and differences.
How would you retell this story?	EI03EF04	Retelling heard stories and collectively planning scripts for videos and performances, defining contexts, characters, and story structure.

Table 02 – Instructional Content Related to the BNCC

The selection of each of these guiding questions was made to align with the learning and development objectives proposed for Early Childhood Education by the BNCC. In this way, children do not need to know how to read to participate in the game, and the goal is not to teach reading through the created game. Instead, through a mediating action, the aim is to provide contact with literary reading, stimulate the ability to listen to and retell stories, encourage free expression, formulate hypotheses about what has been read, and foster transcendence.

Recognizing the need to construct diverse experiences for learning, we must always develop facilitating elements for working with conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal content. Consequently, considering that the instructional content has been defined and aligned, we designed the flow of activities so that each step naturally leads to the next. For any game constructed within a framework that meets educational expectations, it is also essential to consider those technical aspects.

Berzosa (2018) argues that a game can be structured using three types of paths: open, where there is no specific sequence for completing activities, which creates some difficulty in coding; sequential, where one activity necessarily leads to another; and trajectory-based, which incorporates different forms of structuring. We chose to use a trajectory-based path, which combines open and sequential elements: the child rolls the die, is directed to a challenge, and, based on the outcome of that challenge, may either advance or move back a certain number of spaces, thus incorporating both possibilities.

It is also crucial to consider the construction of the game's design, ensuring it effectively presents the planned aspects within its action. The development of this work was mediated by Information and Communication Technologies (TIC), whose initiatives, as highlighted by Cultri and Bazilio (2021), are proving increasingly present and significant in the educational context. Specifically, the two-dimensional vector drawing program for graphic design, CorelDRAW, and the social media graphic design platform, Canva, were utilized. In the former program, the game board's format was constructed, and challenges and colors were added to stimulate student curiosity, alongside figures also designed to capture their attention.

In this context, both game elements (integrated data, whether technical or not) and the inherent logic of gameplay (challenges designed to facilitate learning) were incorporated, creating a continuous—trajectory-based—flow that explores Little Red Riding Hood in ways that foster the sought-after possibilities of transcendence. Below, in Figure 1, the developed game path is presented, illustrating the journey from "once upon a time" to a "happy ending" with the proposed design.
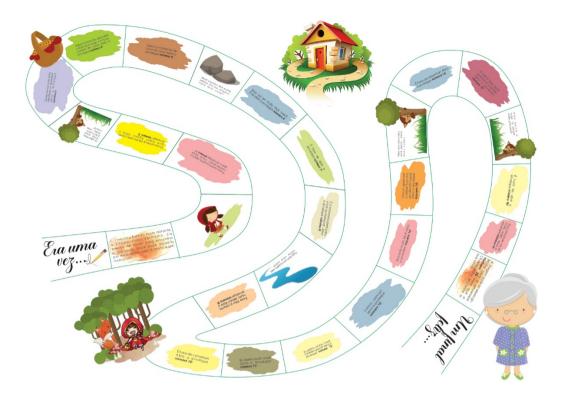
Figure 1: Little Red Riding Hood Game.

The system created prioritized the "once upon a time" and the "happy ending", while also incorporating the key questions addressed in the game. Throughout the game path, prompts were included to enhance playability. The text in the first space reads: "Once upon a time, in a very distant forest, there was Little Red Riding Hood. She needs help finding her grandmother. Can you help her through this game? Let's go!" This serves as an invitation for the child to actively participate. As the game progresses, various challenges are introduced.

Considering the creative possibilities of the game and the elements that shape playability, rather than embedding the instructional content directly onto the game path, additional elements were created — a set of 20 challenge cards. Each space on the path directs the player to one of these cards, which the student must open with the teacher's assistance. Since the target audience likely consists of pre-literate children, the teacher's role in reading the challenges is essential. However, it is crucial to maintain a focus on the child's creative potential throughout the process. The challenge cards designed for the game are presented below.

Figure 2: Challenge Cards.

Once the game development was completed, the final step involved composing the reference matrix, ensuring that the instructional content and the game path itself incorporated the elements of agency, immersion, and transformation. Regarding agency, we confirmed that the game provides opportunities to stimulate actions that foster protagonism, exploration, and active construction. In terms of immersion, the game engages thinking, intuition, and sensory perception. Finally, we determined that transformation will occur through moments of tension, specifically the challenges embedded throughout the game path and the storyline of Little Red Riding Hood.

Regarding the instructional level, several key points must be clarified: i) The rules should be defined by the teacher, who will organize the setting according to the class context. ii) The game should primarily be played in teams, fostering idea exchange, interactivity, and collaboration. iii) The game should not be assessed based on a right-or-wrong scale, as the experiential learning fields should be encouraged rather than labeled. iv) It must be ensured that there are no interruptions during gameplay. v) Throughout the game, feedback should be provided, motivating students to stay engaged and continue playing.

In attempting to weave a conclusion, one must neither overlook nor neglect the primary purpose of applying the game in each of its proposed challenges: stimulating literary reading development. The teacher, acting as a mediator in this process, should foster enchantment, imagination, and the child's ability to express themselves—to articulate what they know, what they

do not know, how they feel, and what they need. Listening to the child is fundamental when implementing a game. It is impossible to create meaningful experiences in both gameplay and literary reading if children's voices are disregarded. More than just rolling a die, this process involves holding the child's hand and journeying through the entire forest together—experiencing the anxiety evoked by the Big Bad Wolf, the security provided by the Hunter, and the lightness brought by Little Red Riding Hood.

4   FINAL REFLECTIONS: WALKING THROUGH THE FOREST

Certainly, discussions on the interconnections between games and literary reading, particularly within the context of Early Childhood Education, remain limited and, for this reason, do not conclude definitively but rather outline possible directions. When choosing to use a serious game that engages with a literary text—and even more so when participating in the process from conception to application—it is essential to deepen the understanding of literature's transformative power. Perhaps the greatest challenge lies in creating experiences that do not reduce literary engagement to mere literacy acquisition or memorization of concepts but rather enable the construction of new perspectives based on the reading experience, fostering critical thinking and inference.

The challenge before us, as researchers in this field, is not—nor does it seek to be—to classify games as superior to reading or as a replacement for it. Instead, games are recognized for their potential to spark students' curiosity for reading, foster contact with stories, and provide access to the imaginary worlds that emerge from this engagement. A child does not necessarily need to know how to read for a literary text to hold meaning for them. The teacher plays a crucial role in this relationship, introducing children to their first literary readings, presenting images, narrating stories, and creating experiences that awaken pleasure and engagement in everything that literature has to offer. Since all reality is contextual, everyday life itself can serve as a tool for stimulating imagination. After all, who better than a child to transform a broom into a galloping horse?

The child's creative potential must be further explored, and this is entirely possible through gamified reading experiences. Achieving this does not require an extensive game with a high level of difficulty; rather, thoughtful planning is sufficient to ensure that instructional content aligns with the intended learning objectives and that game design principles are properly implemented. To accomplish this, we must first break down the dichotomies that seem to separate games from reading. These two elements are deeply interconnected, and one can serve the other—as long as the teacher takes on the role of mediator, working in an interdisciplinary manner. Just as Little Red Riding Hood carried a basket of nourishing food for her grandmother, we, as teachers, must fill our own baskets with educational opportunities that nurture the development of young literary readers.

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SOBRE OS AUTORES
K. SANTOS
Mestra em Ensino pelo Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte. E-mail: katinllyn@gmail.com
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4540-7683

F. AZEVEDO
Doutor em Ciências da Literatura, Especialidade de Literatura Portuguesa, pela Universidade do Minho (UMinho). Professor Associado com Agregação no Instituto de Educação da Universidade do Minho (IE - UMinho), Braga, Portugal. Filiação Institucional: CIEC, Instituto de Educação, Universidade do Minho. E-mail: fraga@ie.uminho.pt
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7373-705X

V. PONTES
Doutora em Educação pela Universidade do Minho (Portugal). Pós-doutora em Educação pela Universidade do Minho, Universidade de Lisboa e Universidade de Buenos Aires. Professora do Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte - Campus Mossoró. Coordenadora e Professora do Doutorado em Ensino - RENOEN/IFRN. Professora do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ensino - Posensino/UERN/IFRN/UFERSA. E-mail: pontes.veronica@ifrn.edu.br

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2774-4491