First-Person Thinker
A Video Game to Develop People Skills

Los Angeles, CA (Institute for Creative Technologies - Army)–Video games can be used to train soldiers in non-traditional military skills. This interactive game teaches social skills and cultural awareness. The game is called a "first-person thinker" because it trains people to build social relationships, in contrast to more typical games nicknamed "first-person shooters," which focus on fighting. The game teaches social skills and cultural awareness in service of rebuilding communities.

"We're teaching soldiers how to interact with people, how to better understand the people that they're dealing with– people who are from different cultures." **Julia Kim, project director**

Framework	Standards
Middle School	STL - 3.E ➤ Developments are applied from one setting to another. STL - 6.F ➤ Social and cultural priorities are reflected in technology. STL - 9.H ➤ Ideas are transformed into practical solutions through modeling. STL - 17.J ➤ Messages are designed.

Content Illustrated

➤ Technology affects society through training systems.

Content

Technology
➤ A video game, called ELECT BiLAT, is a training program designed to build relationship skills. In this game the user researches situations, interacts with people, and builds relationships to solve a problem.
➤ The game format includes a virtual teacher who guides the user through the learning experience.

Engineering
➤ The game was developed with the help and input of many different people–video-game designers, researchers, educators, artists, writers, and military experts. One of the key issues was to make this training game relevant to the soldiers' needs.

Guiding Questions

➤ What important things need to be included in this video game to make it realistic?

➤ How can video games be used for education?

➤ Why use a video game to teach social awareness?

Keywords

Cultural awareness
ELECT BiLAT
training program
video game
virtual teacher

Suggested Activities

To think about as you watch:

➤ Have a classroom discussion about other scenarios that could benefit from "first-person thinker" games.

➤ *First-Person Thinker* can be found online at www.ndep.us/First-Person-Thinker. Visit www.ndep.us/LabTV for a list of process skills modeled in webisodes.