

BIOME BUDDIES



Riley Hernandez

Kiki Tolles

—

Pitch

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1. Introduction

Kids today are faced with the reality of living in a dying world. Or so they are told. No matter a child's background, few escape absorbing news of unprecedented storms, rising temperatures, and plastic pollution. Despite any parent's attempts to preserve their child's innocence, headlines everywhere scream the announcement of yet another mystical animal species falling to humanity. It can be bleak to grow up watching storybook creatures die right before your eyes. As diverse as our country has become, one sentiment unifies the young generation: fear for the future of our planet.

Feelings of grimness and hopelessness in regard to the planet we live on have manifested themselves into a new type of anxiety all together. One in ten Americans report experiencing "climate anxiety," and one in twelve have sought counseling for this reason specifically. Fueled by constant reminders of a looming environmental "doomsday" and tipping points surpassed years ago, these feelings can inhibit kids from experiencing joy and leave them utterly unmotivated.

We do not wish for our children to live in such a world. We want our kids to have the opportunity catch and release critters in creeks and point out wild deer without fear that these opportunities may be fleeting. It is not a child's place to worry about the world, but, for any child paying attention, there is hardly a choice.

We believe that education is the most empowering tool for action. Understanding the science behind the changes to our planet offers a path forward to creating impactful solutions. If we can educate kids about the planet in a way that is fun, informative, and positive, perhaps humanity will grow towards building a kinder relationship with our home planet.

(see references for statistic source)

2. Problem Formulation and Project Objectives

Problem Statement: Kids are overexposed to discouraging messages about the state of the environment and may develop strong negative feelings as a result.

Opportunity Statement: We have the opportunity to empower kids to feel confident in their knowledge of the planet and their ability to fight climate change.

Objective: We will create a series of books and adventure games to teach kids about Earth's natural biomes and the animals which make them thrive.

3. Technical Approach

We will research each biome in depth to create a comprehensive, informative, and fun set of stories and interactive games to teach kids about natural systems, ecosystem services, and solutions

We will write a set of stories and create recognizable characters called *Biome Buddies* to guide young children interested in the environment to paths forward creating more sustainable practices.

We will develop interactive games with the *Biome Buddies* in Unity using C#. These games will hopefully be made available for download in the IOS app store. These games will allow kids to learn and play with environmental themes.

4. Plan of Work and Milestones

1. Design a set of characters, each to represent one of Earth's Biomes
2. Research the characteristics, animals, plants, symbiotic relationships, natural and human threats, and strategies for protection for each biome
3. Write and illustrate a set of positive, informative stories with environmental topics and recognizable *Biome Buddies* characters
4. Create an MVP for interactive games to accompany stories
5. Iterate on game design based on feedback
6. Release game to the app store
7. Promote books and games with marketing tactics

5. Team Members: Names, Affiliation, Role in Project

Riley Hernandez



Major: Business Administration

Minors: Computer Programming, Product Design

Schools: Marshall, Iovine and Young Academy, Viterbi

Roles: Character, Story, and Game Design, Marketing

Kiki Tolles



Major: Business Administration

Minors: Environmental Science

Schools: Marshall, Donsife

Roles: Research, Business Strategy

7. Statements of Endorsement - Mentors



Grant Delgatty

to me ▾

Hi Riley,

I will absolutely support you as a mentor with this! Exciting stuff!

See you tomorrow,
Grant



Molly Bendall

to me ▾

Hi Riley,

Ok sure I'll be willing to mentor you on this,
although I may not know a lot of the scientific information, but the overall project sounds great.

Best,
Prof Bendall

8. References

<https://sustainability.yale.edu/explainers/yale-experts-explain-climate-anxiety>