

# **Intelligent Narrative-Centered Learning Environments**

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# North Carolina State University Center for Educational Informatics



*Transforming education  
with AI-driven learning  
environments*



# AI-Enriched Learning

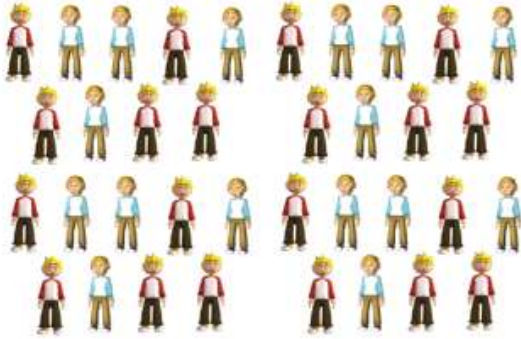


# Personalized Learning Assistants for Lifelong Learning





# One-on-One Tutoring



# Design Challenge

“Provide a teacher for every learner”

- Learn at their own pace
- Receive continuous, customized and meaningful feedback and assessment
- Acquire new skills in a way that is compelling and engaging

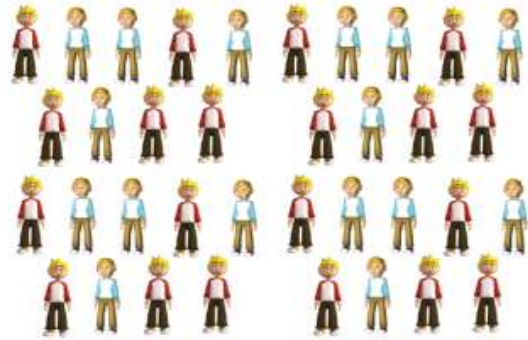


# Design Challenge

“... provide learning environments that approach the effectiveness of one teacher for every learner. Such systems, properly used, can produce a significantly better-educated populace by combining advances in learning sciences with advances in information technology.”

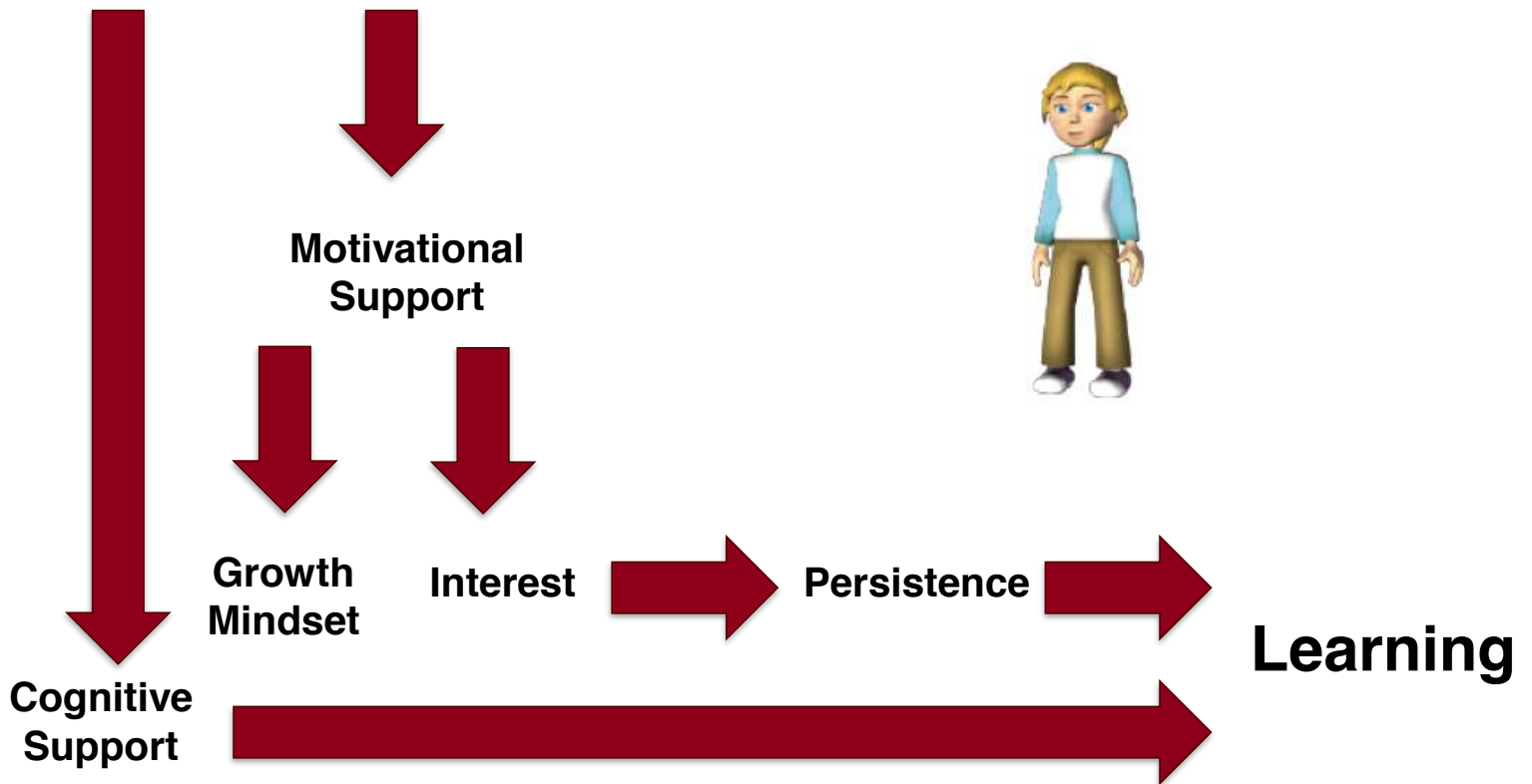


# Narrative-Centered One-on-One Learning



# Personalized Learning Hypotheses

## Intelligent Story + Pedagogical Agents



# Story-centric Games

- Game-based learning environments in which learners:
  - Participate in “story-centric” problem-solving activities
  - Immerse themselves in tailored narratives
- Revolve around:
  - Believable characters
  - Expansive virtual worlds
  - Rich stories





# Affect-Rich Learning Environments

- Interplay of affect and cognition
  - Performance impacts affective states
  - Affective states impact performance
- Supporting affect
  - Natural component of tutoring
  - Keystone of effective learning
- Long term effects
  - Motivation
  - Self-efficacy



# Intelligent Tutoring in Game-Based Learning Environments



- Affect-rich characters
- Problem-solving guidance
- Context-sensitive feedback
- Dynamic problem selection
- Tailored explanations

# Crystal Island Narrative-Centered Learning Environment



- Curricular Focus
  - Eighth grade microbiology
  - NC Standard Course of Study
- Story
  - Investigate outbreak on remote island
  - Recover notes from earlier investigation
  - Identify illness and recommend treatment
- Evolution
  - ~10 years iterative refinement
  - Many laboratory and classroom studies

# Crystal Island: Lost Investigation

1. Design a suite of **intelligent game-based learning environment** technologies for middle grade science + literacy education.
2. Create an **implementation program** to provide an account of middle grade students' acquisition of science and literacy skills as they interact with intelligent game-based learning environments.

The logo for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, featuring the text "BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation" in a serif font, with "GATES foundation" in a smaller, italicized font.

BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation

The logo for the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, featuring a stylized "H" icon to the left of the text "WILLIAM + FLORA Hewlett Foundation".

WILLIAM + FLORA  
Hewlett Foundation

The EDUCAUSE logo, consisting of the word "EDUCAUSE" in a bold, white, sans-serif font inside a dark red rectangular box.

EDUCAUSE

# Tailoring Events in Narrative-Centered Learning Environments

- Game elements have dual roles
  - Pedagogical
  - Narrative
- Multiple forms of narrative-centered tutorial events
  - Side quests for knowledge remediation
  - Narrative events for embedded assessment
- Dynamically tailored sequences of embedded assessments



# Explore Virtual Environment





# Posters



# Laboratory Equipment



# Diagnosis Worksheet

**1 Patient's Symptoms**

Symptom A	Symptom B
Pain	Stomach Cramps
Symptom C	Symptom D
Vomiting	No entry

**2 Test Results**

	I have tested:	The results showed:
Object A	Egg	Not contaminated
Object B	Orange	Not contaminated
Object C	Cheese	Not contaminated
Object D	Water	Not contaminated
Object E	No entry	No entry
Object F	No entry	No entry

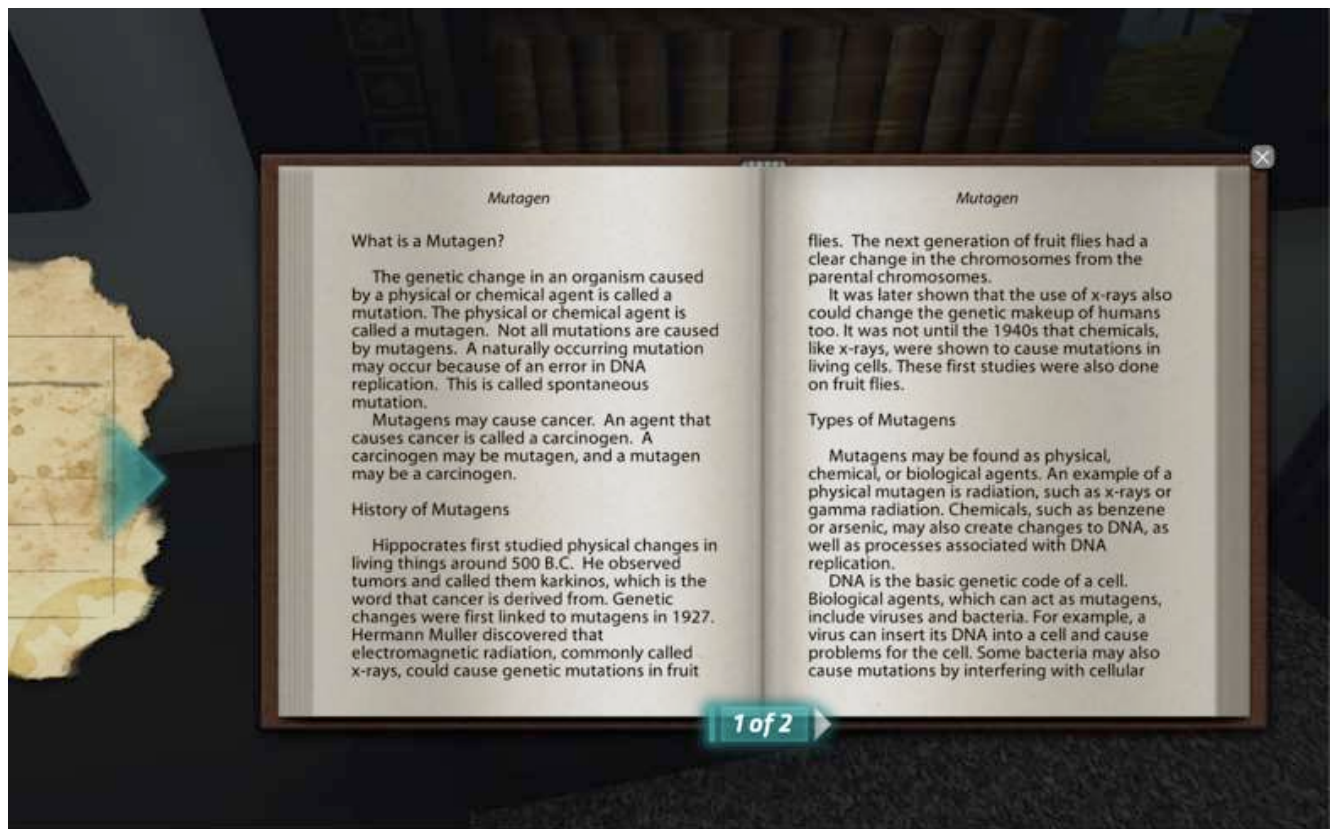
**3 Possible Explanations**

	Likelihood:	Because:
Anthrax	Unlikely	Characteristics don't match
Botulism	No entry	No entry
Ebola	No entry	No entry
Influenza	Unlikely	Characteristics don't match
Salmonellosis	Possible	No entry
Smallpox	Very unlikely	Characteristics don't match

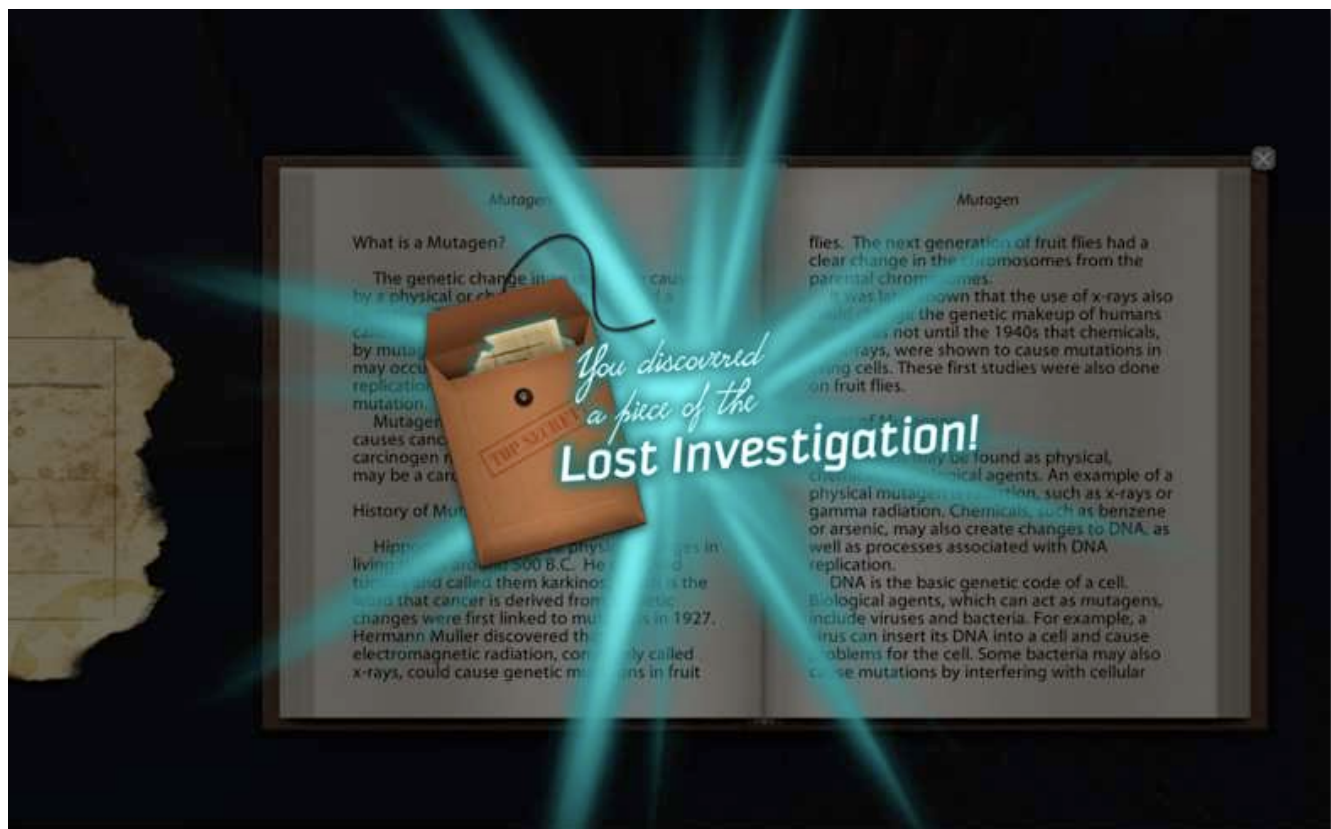
**4 Final Diagnosis**

Disease	No entry
Source	No entry
Treatment	No entry

# Informational Texts



# Informational Texts





# Concept Matrices

The image shows a digital interface for a concept matrix. On the left, a parchment-like card titled "Mutagen" contains a table with five rows. A blue "Submit" button is at the bottom of the card. On the right, a white text box with a brown border provides a detailed definition and history of mutagens. A blue arrow points from the "Definition" row of the table to the text box.

Mutagen	
Definition	Causes genetic change
Characteristic	May be a carcinogen
History	Studied with Fruit Flies
Scientist	Hermann Muller
Example	Radio waves

**Mutagen**

What is a Mutagen?

The genetic change in an organism by a physical or chemical agent is called a mutation. The physical or chemical agent is called a mutagen. Not all mutations are caused by mutagens. A naturally occurring mutation may occur because of an error in DNA replication. This is called spontaneous mutation.

Mutagens may cause cancer. An agent that causes cancer is called a carcinogen. A carcinogen may be a mutagen, and a mutagen may be a carcinogen.

History of Mutagens

Hippocrates first studied physical living things around 500 B.C. He observed tumors and called them karkinos, a word that cancer is derived from. Genetic changes were first linked to mutagenesis. Hermann Muller discovered that electromagnetic radiation, commonly known as x-rays, could cause genetic mutations.

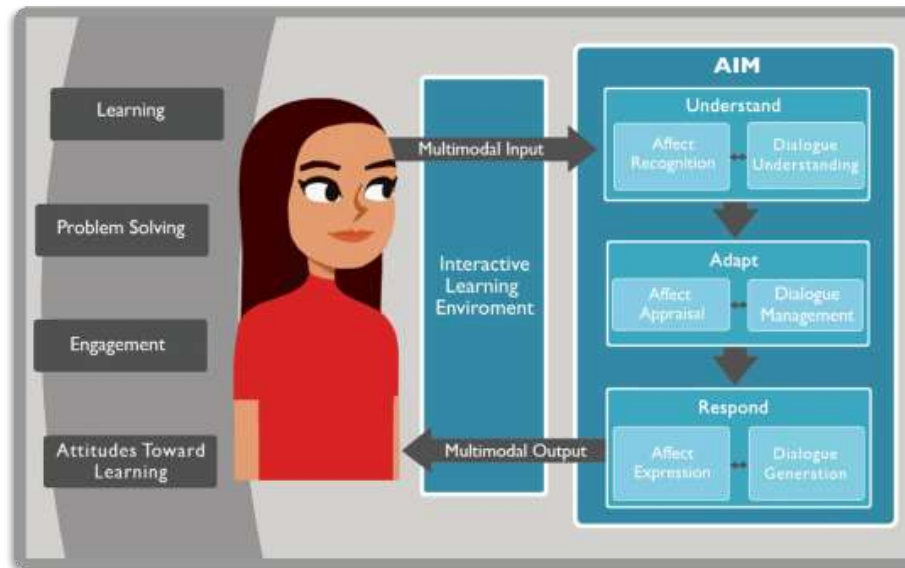
Submit



# Multimodal Character Dialogues



# Adapting to Affect in Narrative-Centered Learning



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# Empathetic Scaffolding in Narrative-Centered Learning



**Elise:** I'm a visitor here too, like you. A few years ago I was on another remote research station where an illness broke out, and I helped solve the mystery. I learned a lot about how to solve science problems! I'll hang out with you and we can figure out why people are getting sick.

⋮

**Elise:** Here we are, back in the lab.

Student runs a pathogen test on an egg she collected.

**Student:** Ugh, negative again. Frustration

8 second pause

**Student:** I was sure it was a virus! I'm terrible at science. Low Self-Efficacy

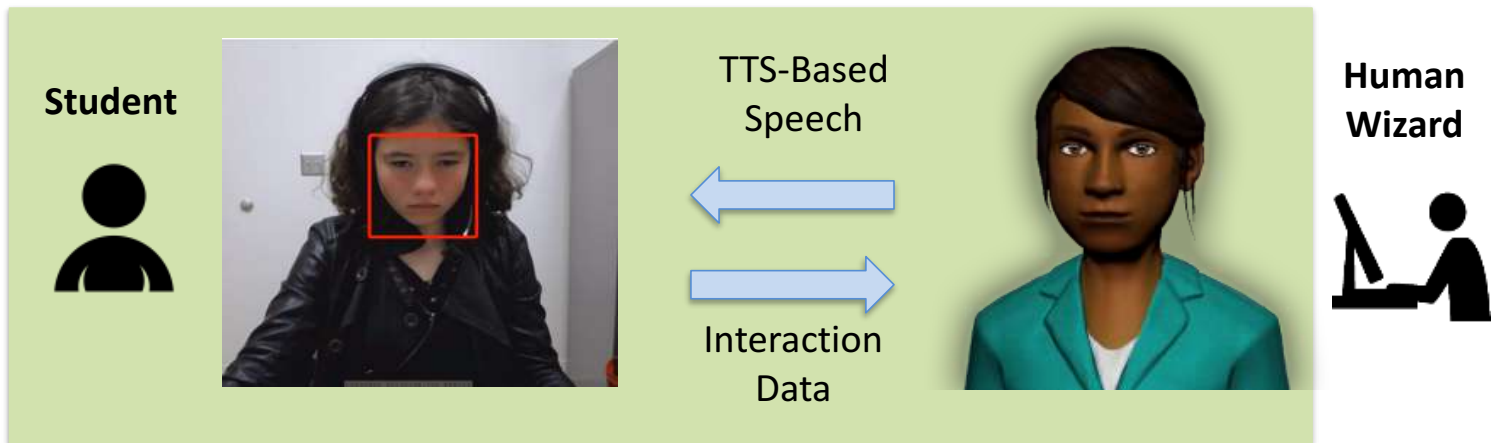
**Elise:** Even the best scientists in the world have to put lots of effort into solving science problems because it's hard. But every time, you learn and get better at it. Growth Mindset

**Elise:** Now let's talk through what we already know, ok? Problem-Solving Strategy

**Student:** Ok.

Student self-explains, and then works with Elise to gather remaining data and solve the problem.

# Wizard-of-Oz Narrative-Centered Learning Studies



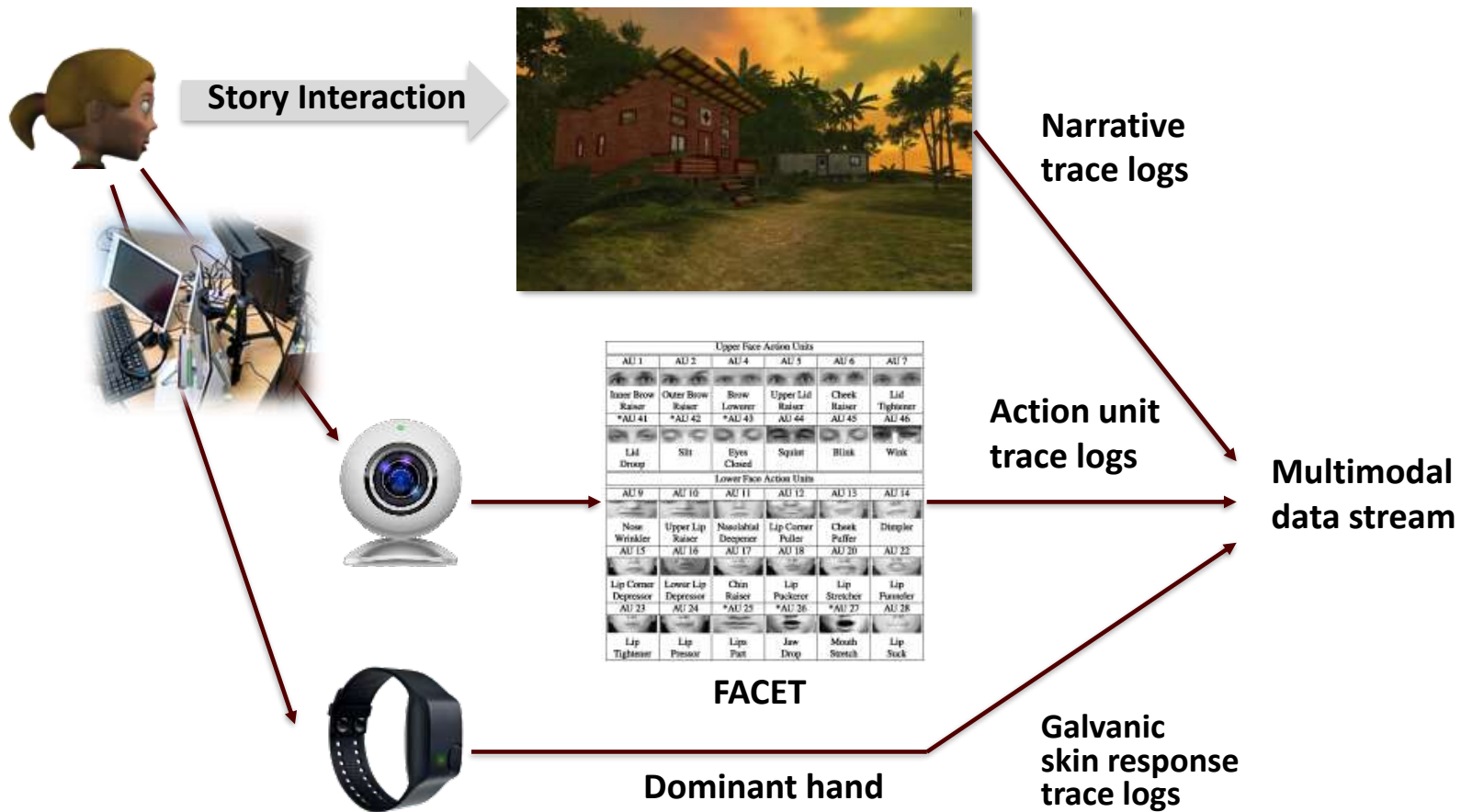
## Multimodal Sensors

- Facial video camera
- Galvanic skin conductance-recording bracelets
- Depth camera
- Gaze tracker
- Microphone

## Dialogue Moves

- Wizard selects one of six dialogue act categories.
- Wizard chooses from a predefined set of utterances for the chosen dialogue act category.

# Dialogue Act Modeling in Narrative-Centered Learning





# Embedded Assessment in Narrative-Centered Learning





# Narrative-Centered Learning Analytics



- Real-time trace data
- Window into student motivation
- Triangulation: learning processes + outcomes
- Designing for scale

# ENGAGE: Game-based Learning for Middle School Computational Thinking



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# ENGAGE: Game-based Learning for Middle School Computational Thinking



## Curriculum

- Middle school computer science education
- AP Computer Science Principles

## Platform

- Unity game engine
- FLARE user interface toolkit [Mott et al., 2014]

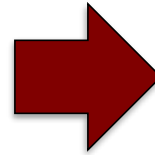
# Design Challenge Reformulated



Affect-Informed  
AI



Game-Driven  
Interactive Narrative



Highly  
Motivated,  
Highly  
Effective  
Learners

# Intelligent Narrative-Centered Training

- Rich personalized story-centered training driven by AI
- Example: Collaboration with ARL and Columbia University
- Leverage machine learning to induce models
  - Integrate trace data, sensor data, and field observations of trainee emotions
  - Predict emotions accurately and efficiently



Source: [www.ecsori.com](http://www.ecsori.com)

# Affect Detection in Combat Medic Training



**Ryan Baker**  
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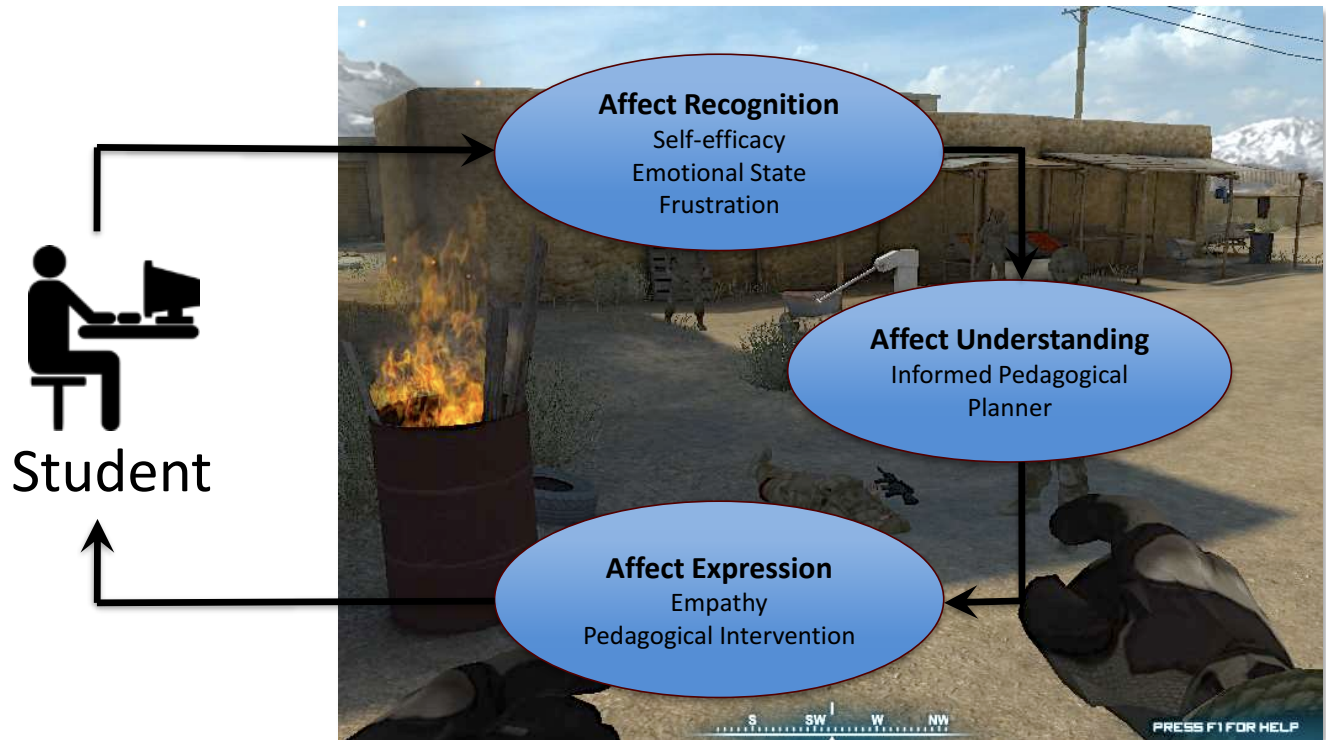


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# Affect-Informed Learning in Narrative-Centered Training





# Narrative-Centered VR Training for First Responders

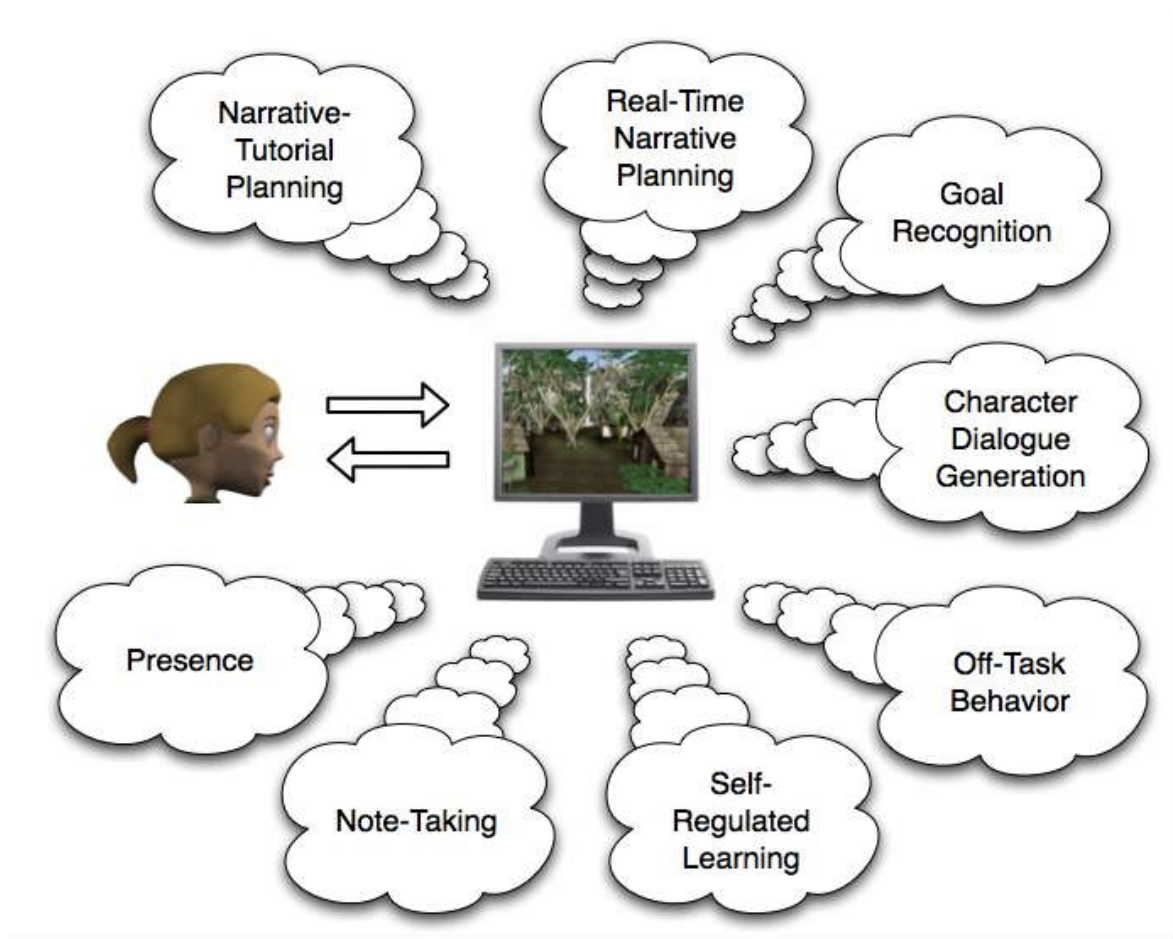


# DeepGen: Reinforcement Learning-based Training Scenario Generation

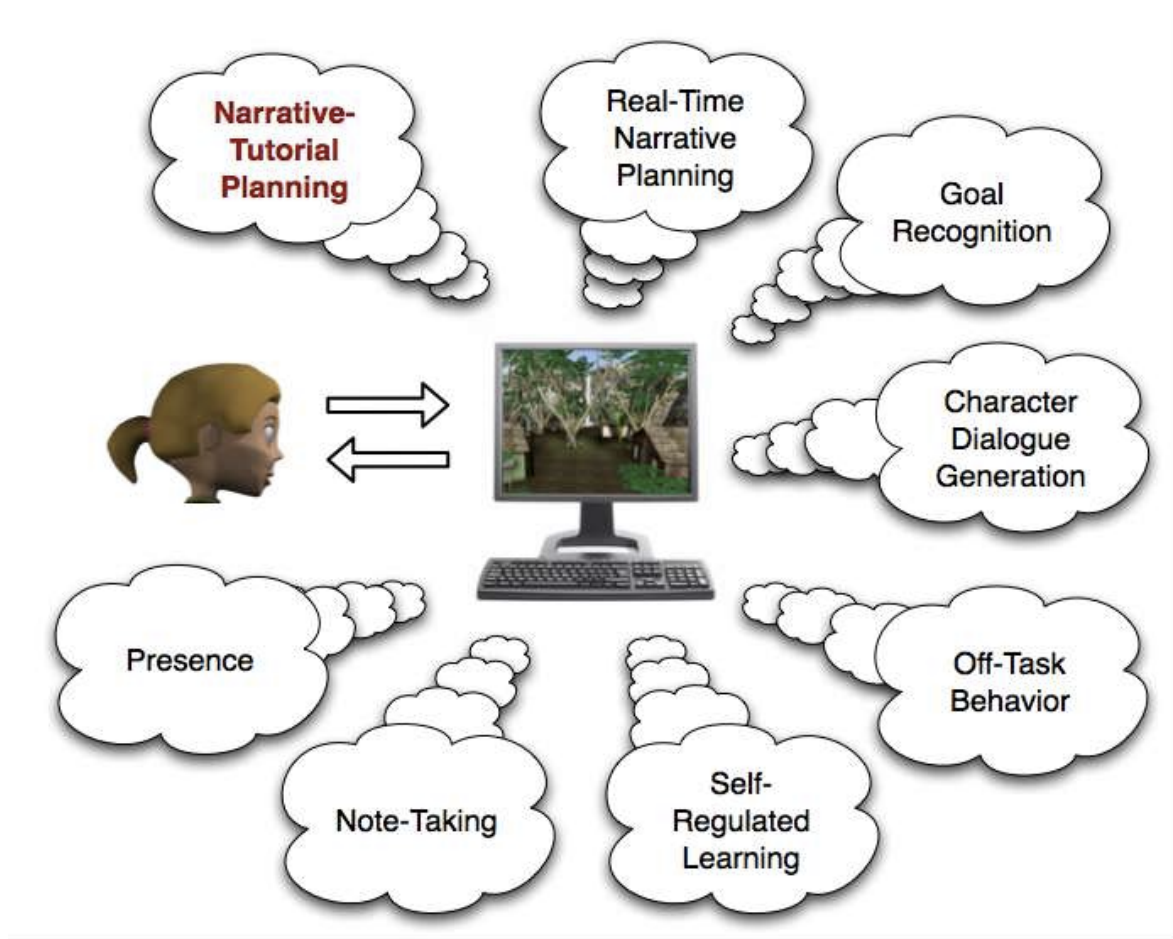
- Automated scenario generation is invisible to learners
- Training scenarios are dynamically tailored to learner traits, knowledge, and performance
- Scenario generation improves as more data is provided to DeepGen



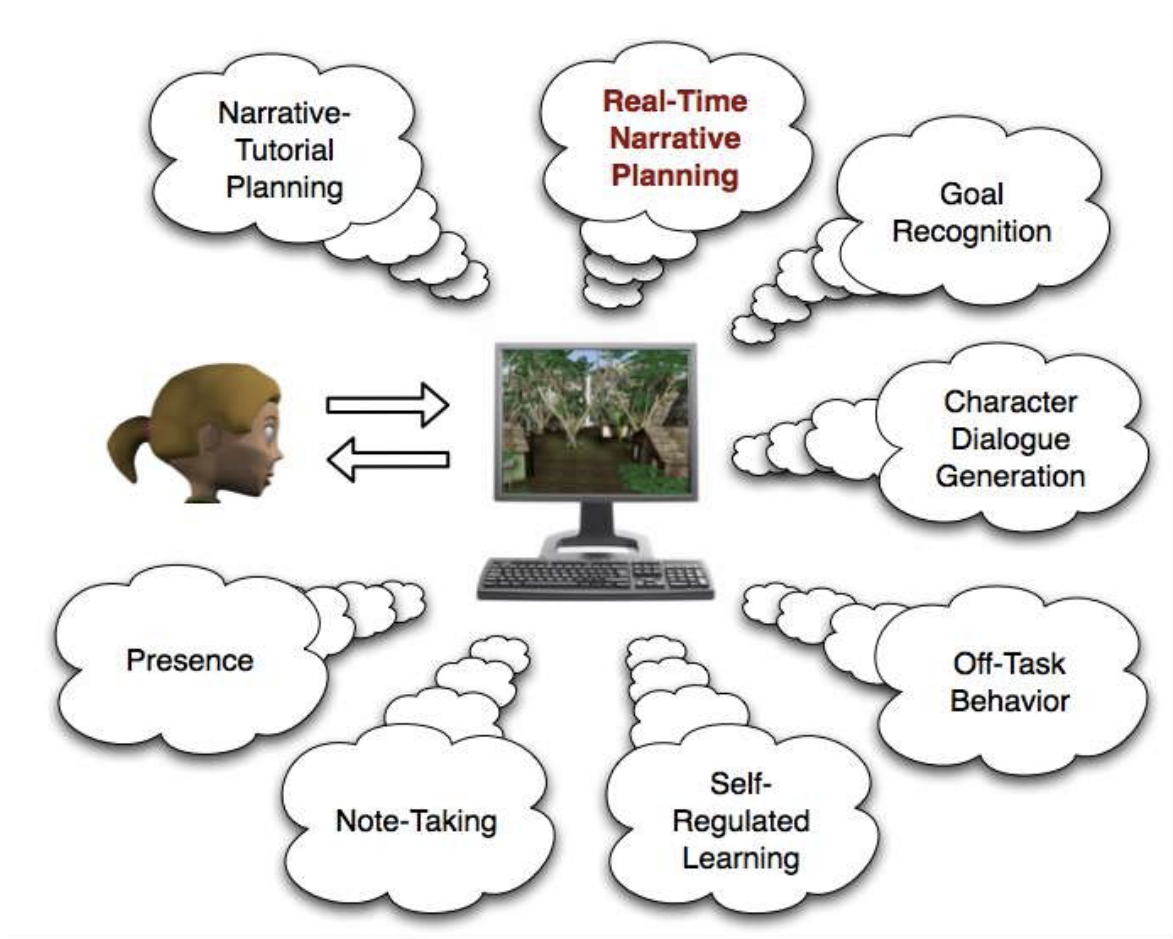
# Narrative-Centered Learning



# Narrative-Centered Learning

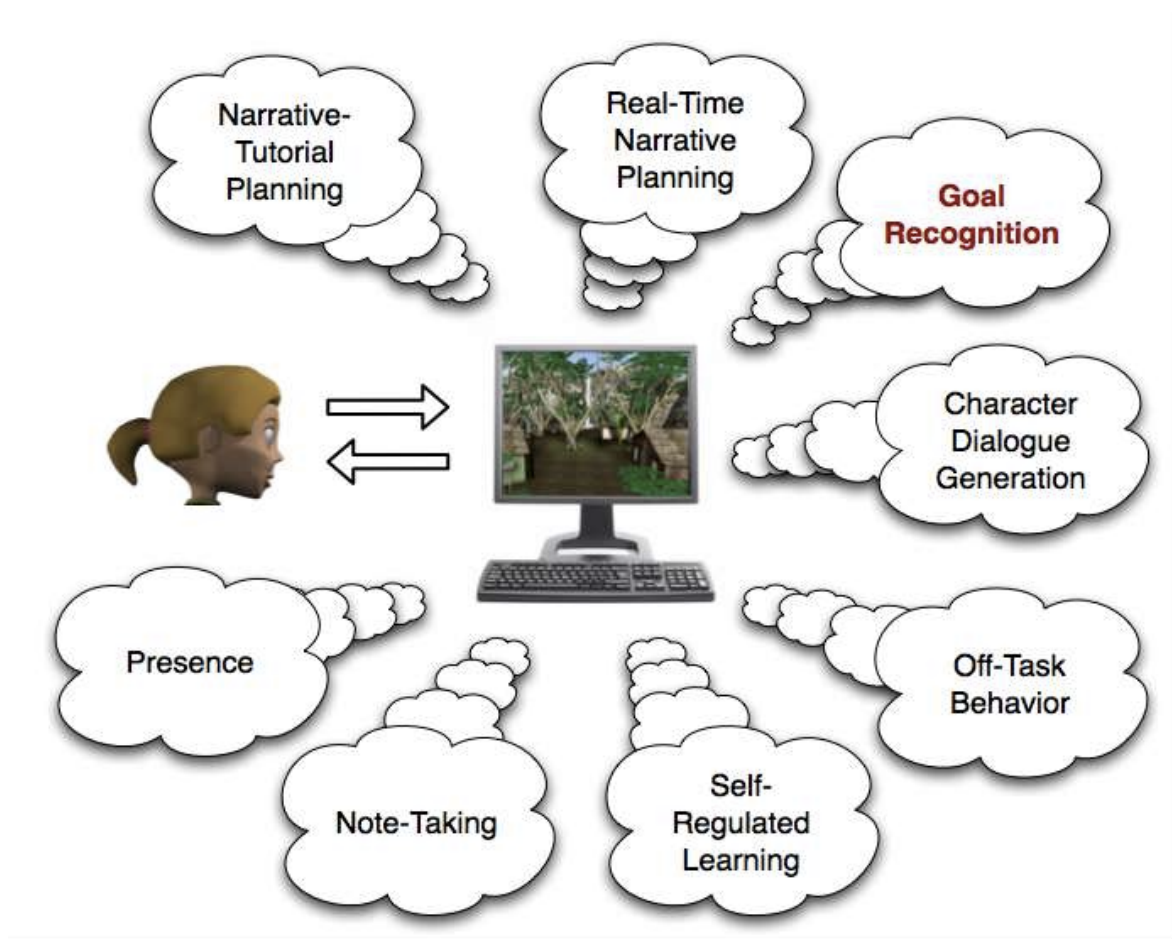


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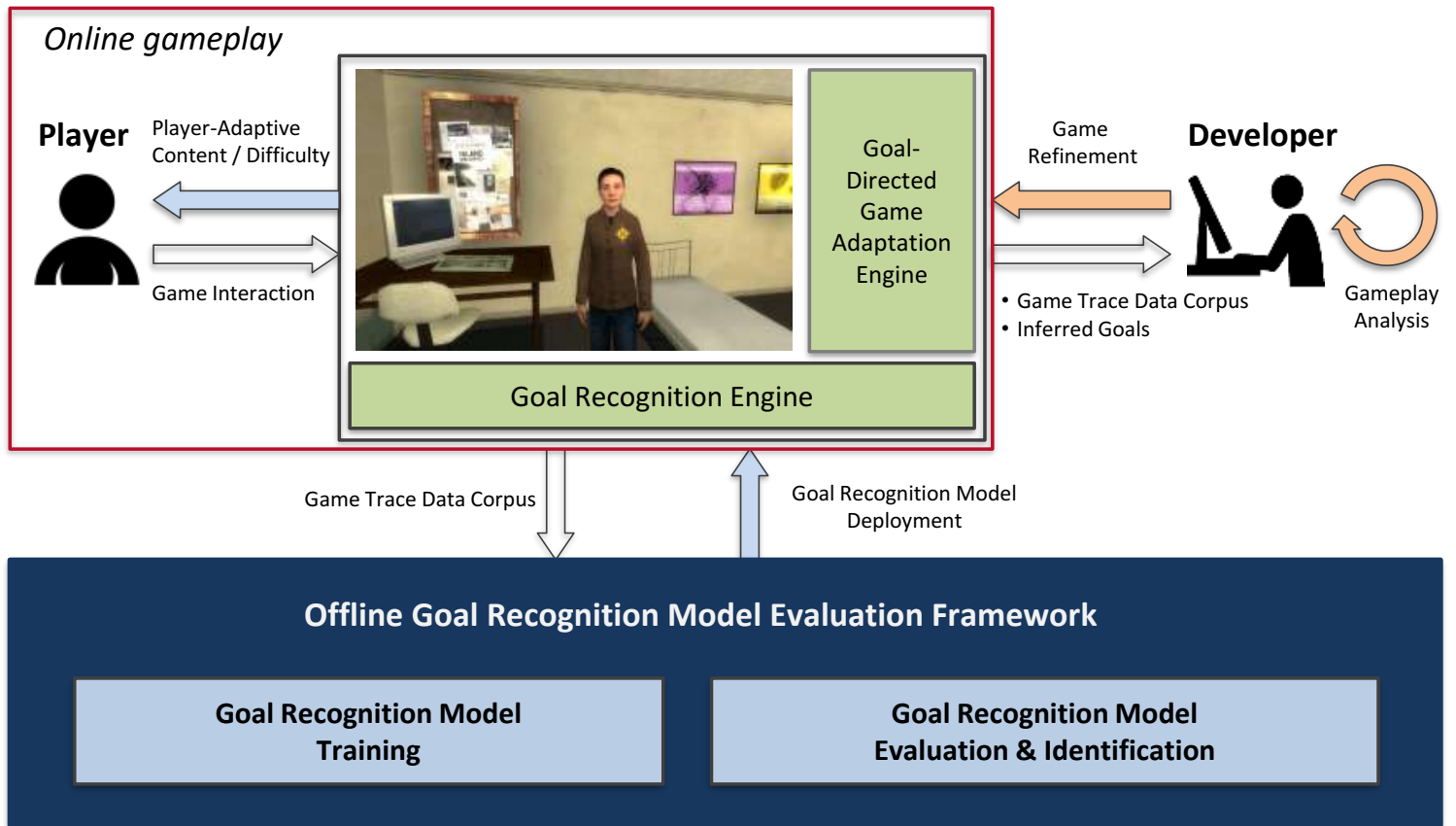




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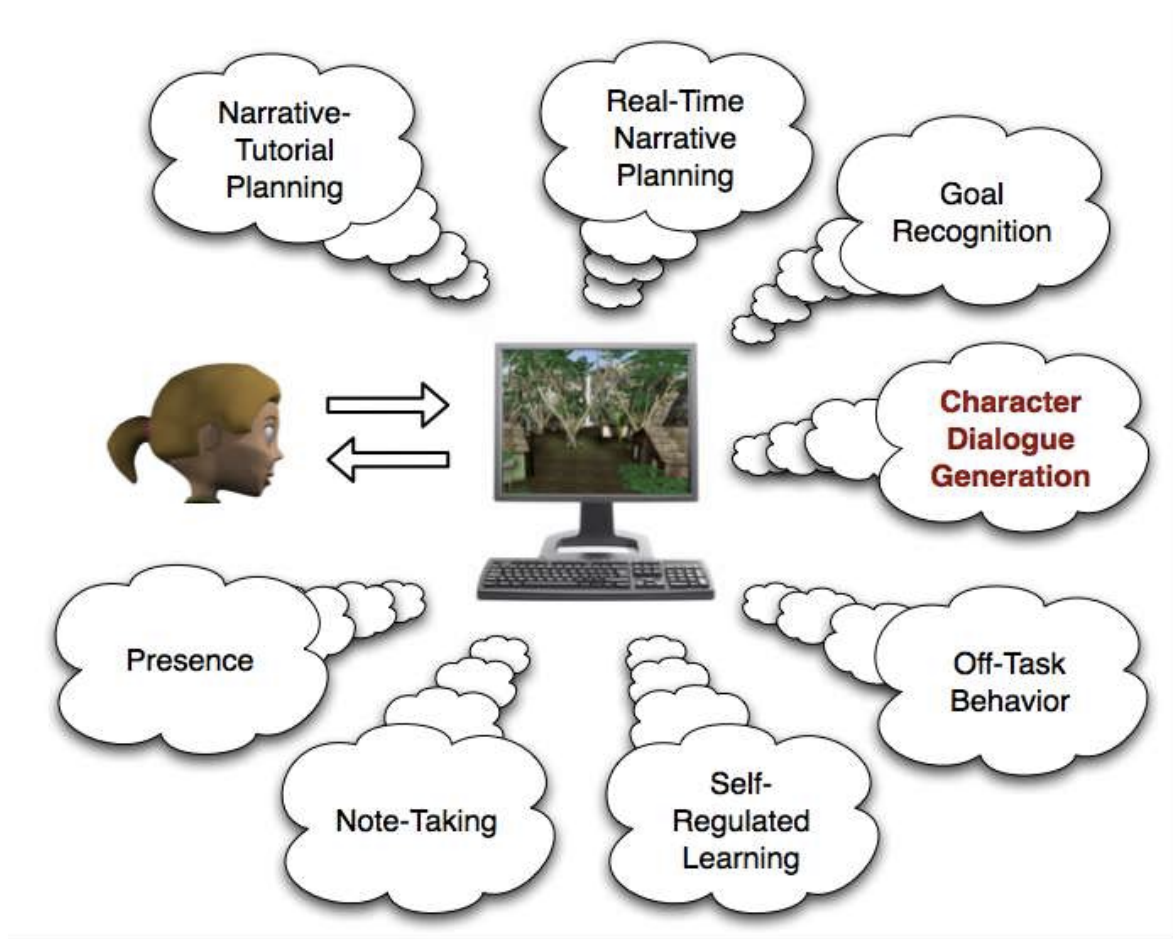


# Goal Recognition in Narrative-Centered Learning

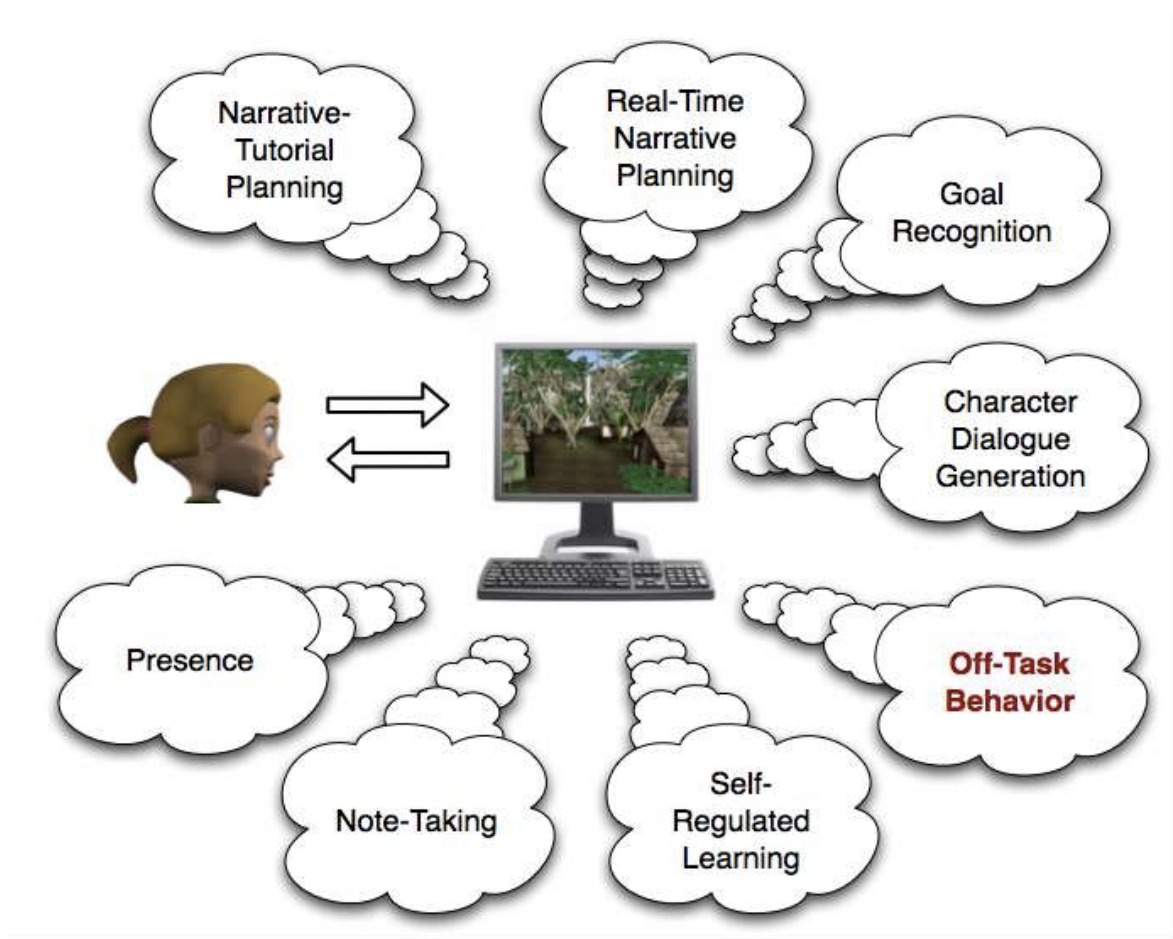




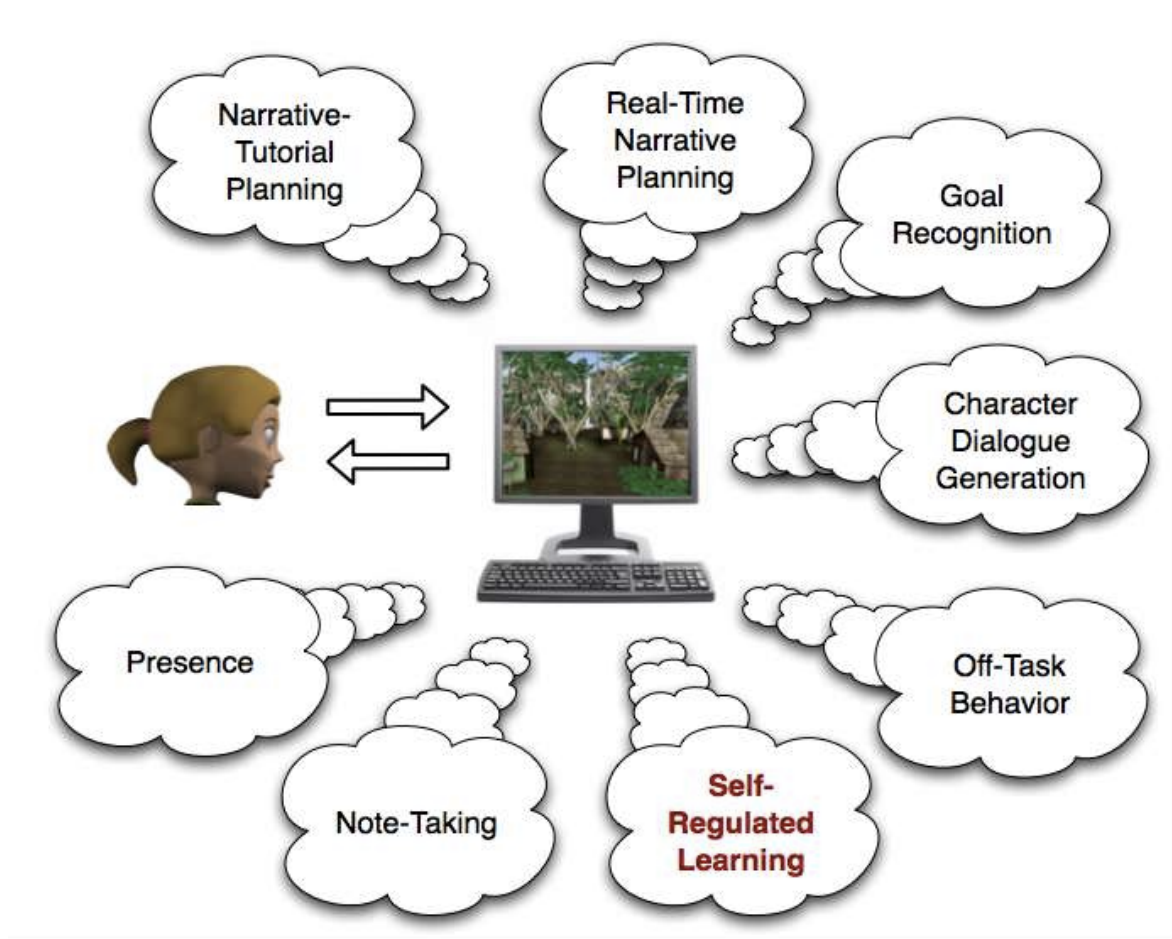
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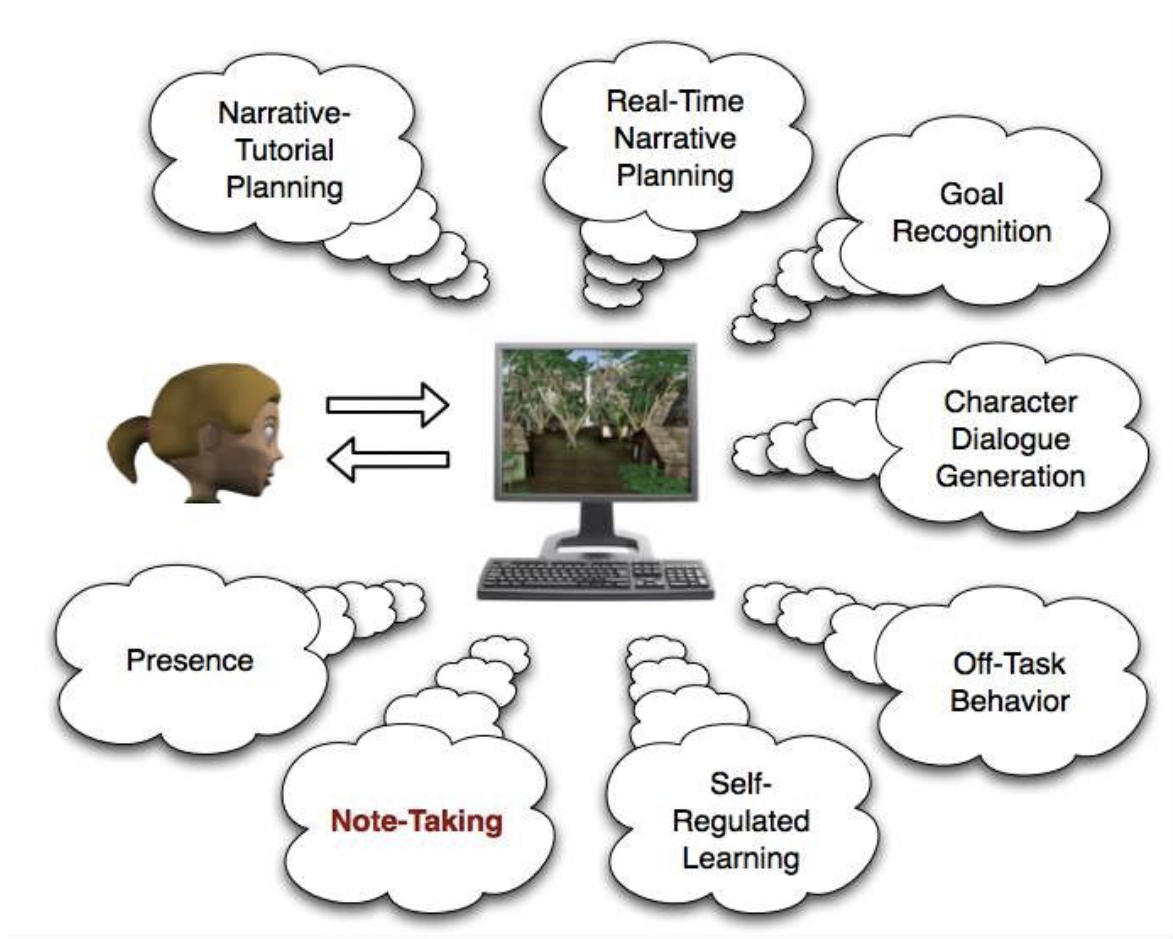
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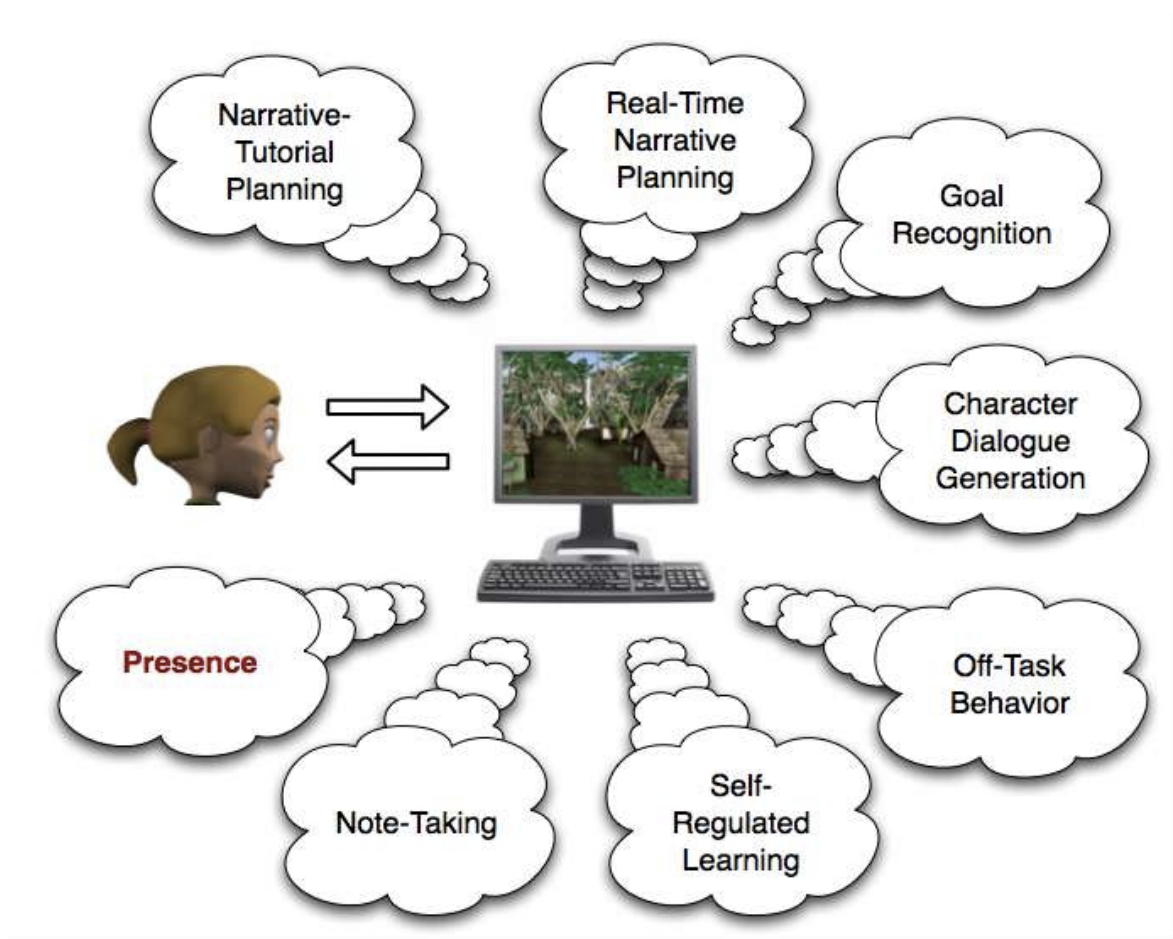
# Narrative-Centered Learning



# Narrative-Centered Learning



# Narrative-Centered Learning



# Narrative-Centered Learning in Informal Learning Contexts



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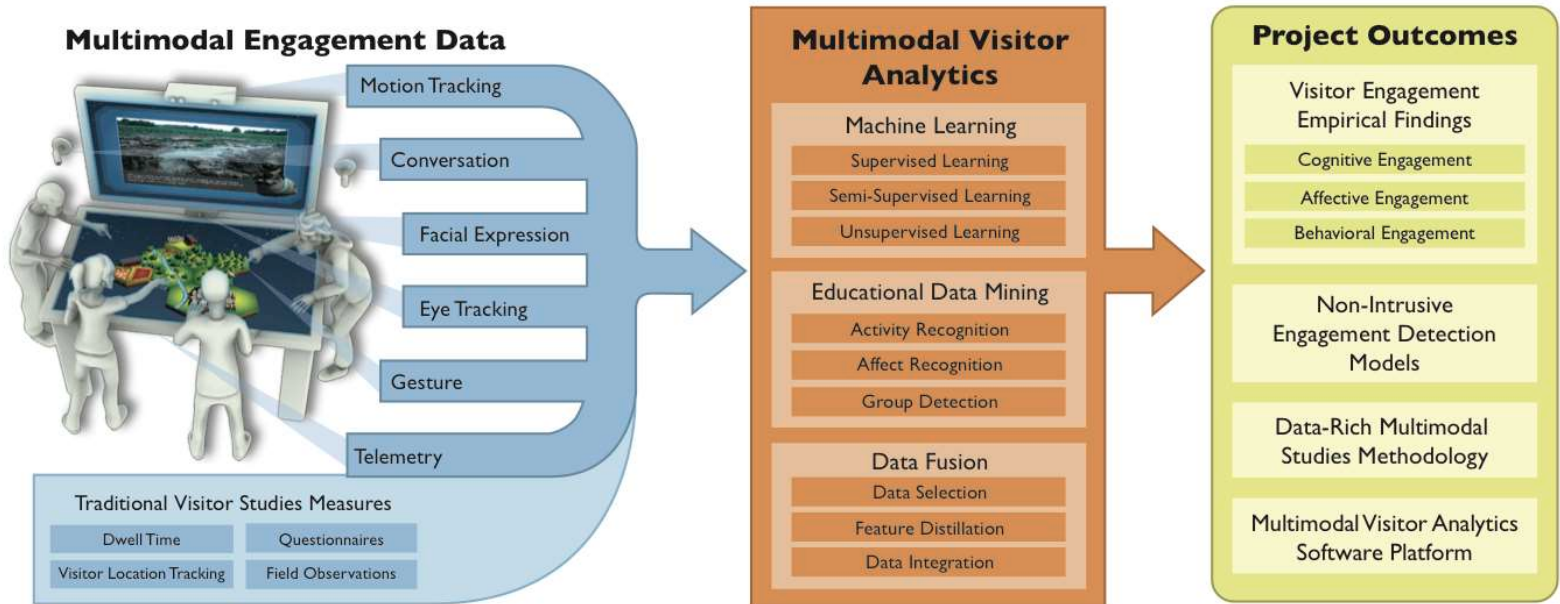


# Multimodal Narrative-Centered Learning Analytics

- Science centers and museums
- Investigating visitor engagement
  - Cognitive
  - Affective
  - Behavioral
- Multimodal sensor streams



# Multimodal Narrative-Centered Learning Analytics



# Narrative-Centered Learning for Health Behavior Change



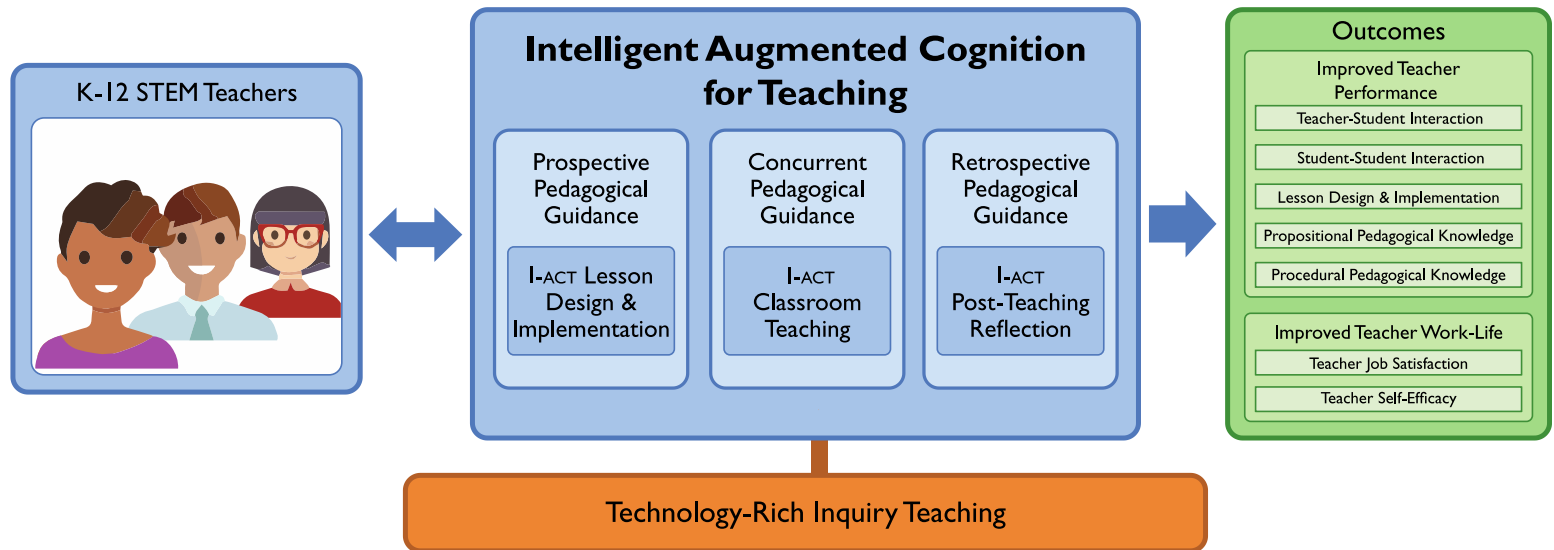
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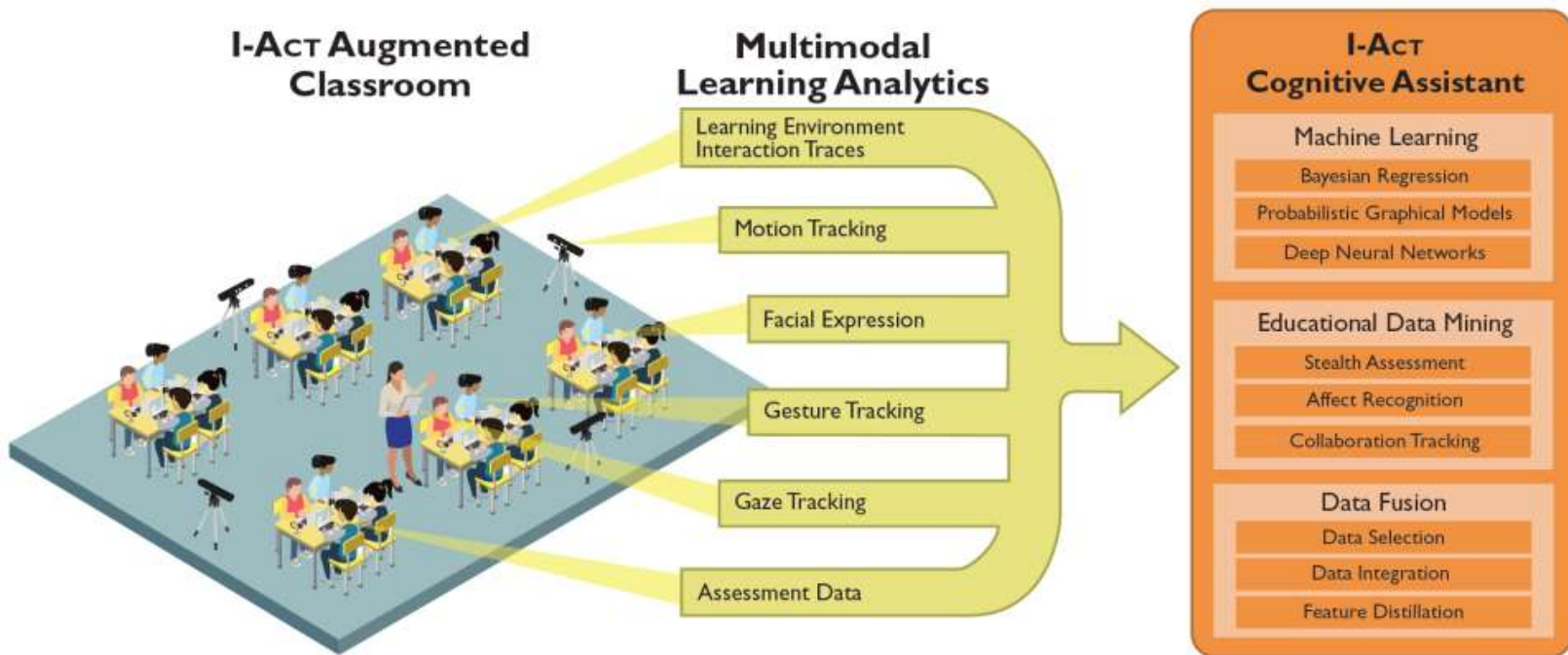
# Intelligent Narrative-Centered Classrooms of the Future

## I-ACT: Intelligent Augmented Cognition for Teachers



# Intelligent Narrative-Centered Classrooms of the Future

## I-ACT: Intelligent Augmented Cognition for Teachers



# Future of Narrative-Centered Learning

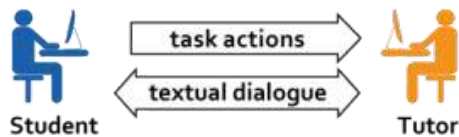
## Intention Recognition



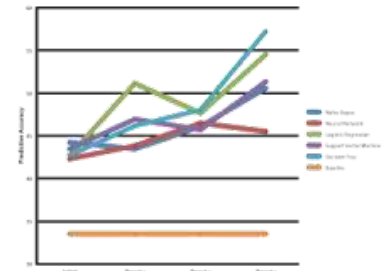
Formulae

$\forall t, a, g : action(t, a) \Rightarrow goal(t, g)$	0.7
$\forall t, a, s, g : action(t, a) \wedge state(t, s) \Rightarrow goal(t, g)$	1.5
$\forall t, a, a_1, g : action(t, a_1) \wedge action(t - 1, a_2) \Rightarrow goal(t, g)$	2.3
...	...

## Tutorial Dialogue



## Self-Regulated Learning



## Affect Modeling





# Scaling Narrative-Centered Learning

- **Goal:** Design robust story-rich pedagogical support for learner-adaptive interactions
- **Potential Impact:** Narrative-tutorial planning generalized from training populations to unseen students for high engagement



# Conclusions

- Personalized learning poses significant computational challenges.
- Designing narrative-centered environments holds considerable promise for fine-grained, real-time in-classroom and out-of-classroom learning.
- Integrating rich cognitive student modeling and affective student modeling offers considerable potential for personalized learning.
- Narrative-centered learning with adaptive scaffolding offers promise for supporting engaging learning experiences on a broad scale.

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