

MAD-learn Mobile Application Development Program – Shepherd Middle School

At Shepherd Middle School in Shepherd, MI, we received a grant to fund access to the MAD-learn mobile app development program. According to their website at <http://www.advancedclassroomtechnologies.com/mad-learn---mobile-application-development.html>, “MAD™ is short for ‘Mobile Application Development’. MAD-Learn™ is a rich, end-to-end program for teaching cross platform mobile application development.”

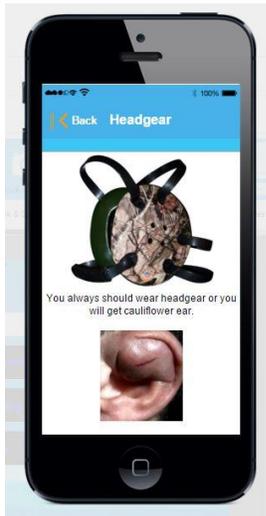
MAD-learn provided the teacher with resources for each step of the professional app development process, which provided students a hands-on experience with what goes on behind the scenes when apps are developed. These steps include the following:

1. Ideation: the process that goes in to generating ideas for a mobile app.
2. Mind Mapping: utilizing idea mapping resources, which is key to the success of an app’s development.
3. Intro to the CMS (Crescance Management System): the basics of the website used to develop mobile apps.
4. CMS Operations: the different templates and how they can best be used within apps.
5. Adding Content: examining the screen template options and matching the appropriate templates to elements of the mind maps.
6. App Design: marketing and branding the apps.
7. Testing the Apps: learning the process for submitting apps to iTunes and Google Play (which is informational, but not likely for students, as it costs money). Then, students conduct Beta testing to determine if the apps are fully functional.
8. WrAPP Up: Presenting finished apps to the class!



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We used this process in our Computer Enrichment classes, which included students with very diverse ability levels. Students were immediately excited at the prospect of developing their own apps. After selecting a topic that interested them, students immediately began to organize their ideas for topics to include. The next step was to determine in what order the users would access this information. This led to the process of developing menus and linking the menu items to various templates, including blank screens for typed up content, image galleries, HTML links, and so forth. As students chose and developed their resources, they also learned the process of giving credit for their sources using easybib.com. The most exciting part of this process for the students was launching their apps on mobile devices. Crescance provided a host app that we downloaded to our devices. Once we launched the host app, we entered a code that launched our student-developed apps on our mobile devices. Every student in the class successfully developed and launched an app!



This next term, we are adding a partnership with the EduGuide web resources. www.EduGuide.org defines themselves as, “The nonprofit, evidence-based online training program that strengthens core learning skills.” This will introduce our students to an organic Beta testing process with the instruction and supervision of Jon Morgan, Web Services Manager for EduGuide. In addition to the Beta testing experience, the actual content of EduGuide’s website will help the students develop the core skills needed to set goals, problem solve and persevere when they encounter obstacles along the development process.



Through the generous support of the Michigan STEM Grant, Shepherd Middle School students are developing cutting-edge skills that both excite and empower them to be more than consumers of web content; they are creators of the future!