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Comment on gc-2021-11

William Parcell (Referee)

Referee comment on "Pandemic Minecrafting: an analysis of the perceptions of and lessons learned from a gamified virtual geology field camp" by Erika Rader et al., Geosci. Commun. Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/gc-2021-11-RC1>, 2021

The paper addresses relevant scientific questions within the scope of geoscience communication and education. The manuscript presents both (1) developing methods for and (2) perceptions of teaching field methods and mapping in a virtual format using and modifying the popular sandbox game, Minecraft. The results are sufficient to support given interpretations and conclusions. The overall presentation is well structured and clear, and the language is fluent. The number and quality of references are appropriate, with a caveat described below. I found no spelling/grammatical errors in the paper. The title clearly reflects the contents of the paper. Likewise, the abstract provides a concise and complete summary of the manuscript.

The paper presents novel concepts and methods as related to developing the virtual geology worlds. These components are well explained and clearly outlined. Biggest issue for me was initial discussion of perceived improvement in skills and interest in section 3 (Findings). Wilcoxon Signed-Rank tests needs a brief explanation and introduction for uninitiated geologists. Additionally, mention of "Likert-like statements" in line 245 need some context for those uninitiated readers.

Authors should also make mention of concurrent work with virtual worlds and Minecraft beyond what is cited in this manuscript, including Eric Pyle and Steven Whitmeyer at James Madison Univ., and myself (Wm Parcell) at Wichita State Univ. These were presented at 2020 Geological Society of America annual meeting and conference proceedings can be cited in this manuscript. Reference to other current efforts using Minecraft will support the significance and applicability of this study.