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LIS 723

Prof. Nemecek-Loise

Unprogram Supporting Statement

Unprogram Title: Pixel Art: Making Perler Bead Keychains with 8bit-style Art

Informational Text: *Craft Projects for Minecraft and Pixel Art Fans* by Choly Knight

Audience: Tweens

Length: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials:

- Perler Beads
- Trays to catch stray beads
- Plastic bases
- Iron
- Ironing paper
- Keychains
- Chain loops
- Pliers

Statement (291 words): While many people might think that 8bit-style is a thing of the past, pixel art is just as prevalent as ever. Some of the most popular indie games today like Minecraft, Terraria, and Starbound, as well as timeless hand-held sprite games like Pokemon, still use this classic video-game design. In this interest-based unprogram, tweens will use perler beads and plastic bases to model their favorite pixel-based characters or create their own design to form their own gamer keychains. The design is up to them! We will set out ideas from Choly Knight's *Craft Projects for Minecraft and Pixel Art Fans* as well as blueprints from that book as well as some from the internet. The tweens will use 21st Century skills of critical and creative thinking to

choose their designs and manipulate the perler beads on the plastic bases to create the keychains. In doing so, the tweens will gain an understanding of the complexities, limitations, and appeal of “basic” video game pixel art. This knowledge will allow them to better appreciate the work creators put into games and maybe even inspire them to try their own hand at video game design. This is especially useful for tweens who are thinking about the future and how their interests can be applied to a career. Our informative text also provides some great pixel art tie-ins to the real world including contemporary art, architecture, and graphic design. While the unprogram is low-tech, the same skills can carry over to digital art programs and video game character design. To build on their social and technological skills as well as their creative skills, we encourage tweens to work together and use their own tablets or smart phones to look up patterns or ideas not provided.