Ed Software Evaluation

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Title: Swift Playgrounds

Type of Software: Tutorial: This app is explaining/teaching how to code and students are learning a new skill.

Version: Version 2.2

Publisher: Apple

Target Audience: 4+

We think a student would need a good grasp on reading before they could use this app. We think the child would need to be 9 at the very least.

Curriculum/How it might be used in our class: This app can be used to meet our ETS standards. We can use this app when explaining about designing something within certain parameters, testing out prototypes, and generating new solutions to replace ones that aren't working. There are various standards in engineering, technology, and application and most of them can be demonstrated using a coding app. Students can create their own playgrounds and complete various programming tasks. Students can video their coding live, share their projects, or record a video with narration of them coding.

Possible Environments and Why: This can be used by a single individual, they can create a playground and share their creation later. You could also have groups working together to create a projects. You'll need a classroom with several iPads and you'll need internet for some aspects of this app.

Cost: This app is offered free. No in-app purchases.

Paragraph Describing App: Playgrounds is an app that teaches coding. Apple created this app in a way that you can learn coding in logical sequences. You start with tutorials that help you learn to code, move on to challenges, and then you have a section that lets you start coding on your own. You download the section that you want to work in and the app will save your progress and programs in "My Playgrounds." The learn to code section has steps that teach you, in a game setting, how to code. You play with the animated character, Byte, and use code to help him complete challenges. The challenges increase

in steps and you gain new commands along the way. You also learn how to look for errors in code and fix them.

Impressions of Software:

We're in love with Swift Playgrounds. It may not be easy moving forward into the challenge or start coding phases, but the learn to code phase is so much fun and you learn a lot too! The animated character, colorful screens, and sound effects turn this learning experience into an interactive lesson that feels like a game. You hard even notice that you're learning coding vocabulary and the steps of coding. You would need to be able to read some complex vocabulary in order to use this app, but our fifth graders should be able to handle most of these words. If the sounds are distracting, there is an option to turn them off. There are hints for every challenge and an extensive toolbar in the upper corner of the screen that gives you a lot of information/help options. You can record a movie of your screen, create a PDF of your program, take a picture, or board cast live. This gives students many options to differentiate their learning and make it even more interactive. If you mess up, you can always restart the page. We enjoyed this app and think it has great possibilities.

Does it pass APPS: We think this app passes! We would use this app in our classrooms and recommend it to others.