Core Skills Analysis

Digital Literacy

By creating mods for Gorilla Tag, the student learned how interactive media can be customized and how users can move from being players to creators. A 13-year-old in this activity would have developed familiarity with digital tools, file handling, and possibly online resources or communities related to modding, which are important parts of modern technology use. They likely gained experience evaluating instructions, following technical steps, and understanding that software has limits, risks, and permissions. This activity also supported responsible digital engagement because modding often involves making choices about safety, compatibility, and respecting game systems.

Tips

To extend this learning, the student could document each mod they made in a simple changelog, explaining what was changed, what worked, and what still needed fixing. They could also compare two versions of the game or mod setup and describe how small code or asset changes affected gameplay, which would deepen cause-and-effect reasoning. A useful next step would be designing a brand-new mod concept on paper first, including the goal, the player experience, and any technical challenges, so they practice planning before building. Finally, they could reflect on safe and responsible modding by listing what makes a mod compatible, respectful of the original game, and stable for users.

Book Recommendations

- Hello Ruby: Adventures in Coding by Linda Liukas: A creative introduction to coding concepts, debugging, and computational thinking for young learners.
- Mission Python by Sean McManus: A beginner-friendly book that teaches programming through interactive activities and game-building ideas.
- You Are a (Mathematical) Genius! by David J. Hand: A playful book that strengthens logic, pattern thinking, and problem-solving skills useful for coding and modding.

Learning Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2**: The student can explain a process clearly by describing how the mod was created, tested, and revised.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.4**: The student demonstrated an ability to produce organized writing or planning when outlining the steps for a modding project.
- **CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP1**: The student made sense of a problem and persevered in solving errors or compatibility issues during mod creation.
- **CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP4**: The student used structure and patterns when thinking about how game systems and mod rules work together.
- **CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP5**: The student used tools strategically by working with modding software, files, or game assets to complete the activity.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1**: The student could discuss or explain their modding choices, test results, and improvements with peers or an adult.

Try This Next

- Write a mod design worksheet: name the mod, describe its purpose, list the steps to build it, and note possible bugs.
- Create 5 quiz questions about debugging, game systems, and cause-and-effect in modding.
- Draw a flowchart showing how a mod changes gameplay from start to finish.

- Write a short paragraph explaining one problem you solved while making the mod and how you fixed it.