CONSIDERING ALTERNATE FUTURES TO CLASSIFY OFF-TASK BEHAVIOR AS EMOTION SELF-REGULATION: A SUPERVISED LEARNING APPROACH
Narrative-centered learning environments (NLEs) have received increasing attention in the recent years due to their potential to replace standard curriculum activities with educational tools that are more interactive and motivating.

However, the same features that make these tools interactive can also introduce some off-task behaviors. Off-task behavior here is classified as any behavior that does not directly contribute towards the final learning outcomes.

Rowe and colleagues (2009) have done a study using the Crystal Island video game to explore the relationship between off-task behaviors in a narrative learning environment (NLE) and microbiology test scores.
METHODS & RESULTS

Results are from the same experiment as paper covered by group C

Participants split into 4 groups including CI and CI minimal narrative

During the 50 minute session, the number of times each student visited each area was recorded.

4 Areas classified as off-task as they do not contribute to narrative or learning goals. Areas were the same for full and minimal narrative.

Proportion of off-task behavior correlated negatively with both pre- and post-test scores but had no correlation with difference in test scores.

Narrative condition had no effect on proportion of off-task behavior

Off-task behavior of male students almost 2x that of female students

No significant relationship found between off-task behavior and self-efficacy, goal orientation, interest, presence or enjoyment.
VERDICT: WEAK REJECT

Paper is well written overall.

Exploratory nature of the paper means it is not well suited to this collection.

Later work (When Off-Task is On-Task: The Affective Role of Off-Task Behavior in Narrative Centered Learning Environments) more suitable for this paper collection.

We have some concerns about the methodology used and how it is explained

- Beach classified as on task, despite containing only peripheral information - suggests classification of off-task areas non-trivial, no accounting for weighting
- Tests administered to students not explained or explored.
- Students given PowerPoint intervention mentioned but their significance not explained.
THE PAPER AS A WHOLE

The paper was well written; it was accessible and understandable.

The motivations were well articulated.

While the paper was readable and understandable at a high level, as you begin to pick apart the finer points the quality of the paper deteriorates. It wasn’t clear what motivated some of the decisions made, and some of the methodology wasn’t well described.

Additionally, the paper doesn’t really narrow the field in a meaningful way. Rather, the paper introduces an area of possible interest. While for researchers keeping abreast of recent advances, this is acceptable. However, this is not an appropriate paper for students who are being introduced to the foundations of a particular field. Indeed, there are more complete papers by the same research group which would be more appropriate for an undergraduate compendium.