Games and Roleplaying in the Classroom

Lydia C. Gwyn
East Tennessee State University, gwynlc@etsu.edu

Jonathon Wilson
East Tennessee State University, wilsonjr3@etsu.edu

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Games & Roleplaying in the Classroom

JONATHAN WILSON & LYDIA GWYN
Session Overview

WHAT WE'LL COVER

- Benefits of Games & Roleplaying in the Classroom
- Types of Games that Work Well in the Classroom
- Best Practices for Integrating Games in the Classroom
- We'll Play a Game
- Brainstorm ideas for Games in Your Classroom
Benefits of Gamification

- Creates immersive and experiential learning environments (Oblinger, 2006)
- Success is dependent on problem-solving, relying on prior learning, and developing new understanding (Oblinger, 2006)
- Functions as a type of educational community of practice by creating a culture of learning in which the diverse backgrounds and experiences of team members leads to collective understanding (Oblinger, 2006)
- An effective method for increasing student engagement in the classroom (Hanus & Fox, 2014)
- Have a positive effect on brain activity, stimulate retention, are engaging, and lead to higher cognition when compared to traditional instruction alone (Wouters, et al 2013)
- Games engage different learning styles that aren't typically engaged in traditional instruction (Gareau & Guo, 2009)
Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

- **Verbal-Linguistic:** Well-developed verbal written and oral skills; good with languages
- **Logical-Mathematical:** Conceptual and abstract thinking abilities; good at understanding logical & numerical patterns
- **Musical:** Sensitivity to pitch, rhythm, tones; good at singing or playing instruments
- **Bodily-Kinesthetic:** Ability to handle objects and bodily movements with skill; good sense of time and physical movement
- **Spatial-Visual:** Ability to think in images; good at seeing spaces in the mind
- **Interpersonal:** Sensitivity to the moods & feelings of others; good at reading & empathizing with others
- **Intrapersonal:** Ability to be self-reflective or introspective; good understanding of the self
- **Naturalistic:** Ability to relate to and understand natural surroundings; good at identifying plants & animals
- **Existential (2009):** Sensitivity to the human condition; good at tackling deeper questions
ROLE-PLAYING IN THE CLASSROOM
(HAWKES-ROBINSON, 2008)

- Collaborative and highly social, with no winners or losers
- Powerful therapeutic tool (well established in psychological fields); helps overcome depression, anxiety, and tension
- Goal is a "mutually rewarding experience for as long as participants wish"
- Utilizes imagination and develops the ability to relate to others and the self more effectively
- Relies on and enhances communication skills
HIPS

High Impact Instructional Practices

Collaborative Assignments & Projects:

1. Learning to solve problems as a group or a team
2. Listening to and valuing the ideas and insights of others in order to enhance your own understanding
Types of Games

You Can Play in Your Classroom

- Already-Existing Popular Games
- Already-Existing Educational Games
- Games You Create
- Games Students Create
Games are most effective when supplemented with instruction (Wouters, et al, 2013)

Games work best when played as a group (Wouters, et al, 2013)

Multiple game sessions yield higher learning effects (Wouters, et al, 2013)

Good game integration involves "understanding the medium and its alignment with the subject, the instructional strategy, and the students learning styles and intended outcomes" (Oblinger, 2006)

Measure effectiveness by using assessment tools, by observing student interactions and engagement during game play, and by asking/surveying students
Let's Play a Game!
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