Gamification: Hype or Useful Teacher Tool?
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Gamification vs. games

They’re not the same
Gamification

- Gamification is adding elements of games and gaming to regular activities that we may not normally think of as games.
  - Business
  - Training
  - Education
Why gamify?

• Our students use “game” as a verb
• If done well
  – Gamifying can help students achieve learning outcomes
  – Students can move from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation
What’s a game?

A system with rules, some sort of challenge, feedback of some sort, interaction, fun, and often with an emotional response.

• What if there are no rules?
  – Then it’s play
What makes a game?

Look for
- Rules
- Challenge
- Feedback

- Interaction
- Fun
- Emotional response
What makes it a game?


Hangman with this month’s vocabulary words

A?N?M?
T! L!

www.manythings.org/
What makes it a game?


http://eslgamesworld.com
Games?


- Spelling bee where participants work in teams
- Writing contest where the winning entry is published
Gamifying education

video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuDLw1zlc94
Kapp, 2012: Elements

- Game mechanics – points, badges, and levels; scoring, time constraints
- Aesthetics – a visually or otherwise interesting environment that creates a different “feel” to the activity (pp.9-11)
  - Farmville; World of Warcraft
- Game thinking – competition, cooperation, exploration, storytelling
Not students - players
Game mechanics

What can you use to gamify your classroom? How can you create a game world in your classroom and make classroom activities more game-like?

Victor Manrique (2013)

*A Simple and Easy to Use Toolkit for Gamification Design*
Teachers use these

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game mechanic</th>
<th>Teaching equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Scaffolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party/Team</td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Player vs. player</td>
<td>Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game constraints</td>
<td>Classroom routines, rules, and penalties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>Stars and the like</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience points and levels</td>
<td>Grades – but they're not used the same way</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What we might add

- Levels – adding up, not down
- Badges – different ones for different achievements
More to consider

- Progress display – visual reminder of progress (e.g., weekly word count adds up)

- Free lunch – rewards for all
More options

• **Social area – interaction time and place**
  – Free interaction and collaboration

• **Ambassador – designated mentor**
  – Possibly an achievement, too

• **Ownership - a very useful concept**
  – High motivation
Okay, so what can I do?

Project-based learning (PBL)

– Extended timeframe
– Activities outside the classroom
– Concrete result that can be shared
– External audience
Project/task-based learning

• Quest – a mission
• Epic meaning – doing something big
  – Projects outside the classroom, audience
• World – a special space
My classes: the process

Step 1
• Look at learning objectives/outcomes
  – Create listening/speaking material, a lesson plan, and a WebQuest
  – Read about relevant research and share that information on a web page
  – Use citation/bibliographic tools appropriately
  – Course overview and reflection at the end of the course
Step 2

• Set tasks and “quests” for the learning outcomes
• Tasks are smaller activities
• Quests are large projects
  – Research page quest
  – Course overview quest
• Assign points to tasks and quests
Point system

- Discussions: 10 XPs for one post and 10 CPs for two comments in at least one discussion. Up to 5 additional CPs in each discussion for on-time, substantive responses to others.
- Tasks (in and outside of class): 20-40 XPs per task, with up to 20 CPs for most work during each session.
- Quests
  - Research Quest: up to 40 XPs and 30 CPs
  - Overview Quest: up to 50 XPs
Step 3

• **Create quests**
  - Based on large projects
  - Break into steps, with XPs and CPs for each step
  - Must complete quests to pass the course
Step 4

• **Create levels**
  – Complete activities for about 2 weeks
  – Total number of points for those tasks as XPs
  – Make sure there are CPs, too

• **Create badges**
  – Achievements – certain number of points related to a task
My levels

- Level 1: 25 XPs and 5 CPs
- Level 2: 80 XPs and 10 CPs
- Level 3: 135 XPs and 20 CPs
- Level 4: 180 XPs and 45 CPs plus the Research and Final Overview Quests (80%)
- Level 5: 250 XPs and 75 CPs plus the Research and Final Overview Quests (90%)
- Level 6: 280 XPs and 85 CPs plus the Research and Final Overview Quests (100%)
Results

• Most students liked it
  – Weaker students had more chances to succeed
  – Several added gamification to their Master’s projects

• Some intense, high achievers wanted to see percentages rather than points
  – They always did well with grades

• Platform made a difference
  – Blackboard worked; Canvas not so much
You can start small…

What could you do to gamify lessons?

Let’s look …
• Responding to questions about a 10-minute video clip
  – Gamify: add points, teamwork, student-generated questions [ownership]
  – Use a student-created video [quest, epic meaning, ownership]

• Memorizing vocabulary for a weekly quiz
  – Gamify: teamwork, player vs. player, points with flashcards, progress on a chart
• Highlighting the transition words in a reading
  – Gamify: teamwork, player vs. player, points, rewards

• Doing a workbook exercise about the past tense
  – Gamify: teamwork, challenge, progress, points
  – Ownership if they make their own questions
• Doing a presentation about a favorite vacation or writing a compare/contrast paragraph
  – Ownership; epic meaning if shared online; points with a rubric; possibly a team effort
  – Progression – presentations/essays getting longer, check off steps for the task
What will you do?

• Add up rather than down?
• Give points (XP and CP)?
• Team work – but where everyone can win sometime?
• Other??
Teachers are key!
Quick poll

What do you think about gamifying?
• I’m ready!
• I’ll try a few things.
• I need to think about it.
• I don’t think I’ll gamify.
Any questions?

Website for this presentation:

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