HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT GAME FOR THE TOPIC?

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Teachers struggle to get students attention and especially when students are out of reach… (Either lack of sleep, due to playing too much online games, attitude towards the subject, doing things not related to the topic, or sometimes teacher’s attitude or personality) makes students lose focus. What bother most teachers is that, they have topics to be discussed and competencies that require timeline.

In my previous articles, I had sited some games that can be useful in teaching, the article entitled “Games as a helpful instructional material”, and in here teachers are not required to use much technology. They simply choose among the listed games and even create their own.

Choosing the right approach to deal with learners is one of teachers’ special talents, it is natural, and it’s in their blood. Game on the other hand, helps teacher to get students attention and participation. According to Stathakis (2013), playing games is a powerful instructional tool, on top of the list, students learn to comprehend by understanding the direction/mechanics of the game, and secondly, it widens their vocabulary by engaging in practices. Furthermore, games also help develop important skills, like creativity, teamwork, good sportsmanship and critical thinking skills. In addition to these, games grab students’ attention and actively engage them.

Here are some Tips for teachers in designing their instructional game in their class.

1. Know your topic’s objective
Game can leads students to establish connection on the topic; they learn the concept of the topic inductively, while enjoying it with their group mate or partner. In doing so, the game should be in connection with your topic. As the trend of education goes spiral, the teacher can also use concepts in other learning areas that require the knowledge or similar to what is the topic’s objective.

2. In proper place

The teacher also needs to consider the place where she/he would like to have the game. First is for student’s safety. Most of the games happen inside the classroom, thus, it will lessen the burden, especially if the teacher is managing a large group of students. Second, since the chairs inside the classroom are not fixed in one place, it is an advantage for teacher to provide a space for different group of students, depend on how the teacher would like to have his/her game. Thus the arrangement of the room also depends on the game.

3. Know your client (students)

First, know your students’ interest, don’t just focus on one group of student. You need to address them as whole. Since the game is for students of the same section, it will be a easier for teacher to choose character that will interest students to participate; knowing their ability to learn is also important. Second, how many students are inside the room? Teacher also needs to consider the number of students, so she/he can group them accordingly.

4. Time Required

In teaching, everything is time bounded, nowadays; this is usually stated on the box. If your students are young, or if you have limited time for playing, be sure to check the time required. Choose or design a game that is time bounded.
5. Make it clear

According to Curley (2019), the best games are those that can be explained less than ten minutes but played again and again. It follows that in designing a game, teacher must explain his/her mechanics well, in a way that students can understand.

6. Make it fun

Bekoff, (2014) is a professor in the University of Colorado states that “The Importance of Play: Having Fun Must be Taken Seriously, Play is a banquet for the brain, a smorgasbord for the senses”. In his blog, he mentioned different studies conducted by different doctors and psychologist pointing to the importance of fun. They cited advantages of having fun, especially in children who are on the process of learning. Think of it, if fun can be brought inside the room using the topic’s objective, it will bring a wholesome learning.

Making it clear, designing game for the lesson is not easy, but if the teacher love her/his job, she/he will find ways to reach her students. But there are things that a teacher should take into consideration in conducting game, according Shapiro (2014 ) teachers need to make sure they’re comfortable with the game’s assessment strategies. Don’t allow the game to tell you how to assess, make sure it strengthens your current practices. He also stated that the games are tools to make work more efficient and effective. Make sure to use the game, and that the game is not using you. And teacher should explain to her/his students how and why the game fits into the larger context of the classroom. Have fun teaching teachers!
References:


