

Article 9:

Game-Based Learning and Gamification

A personal experience from the point of view of students of all ages

Our Erasmus+ Project GAMELEARN aims at increasing motivation and active participation of students through high-quality, digital game-based teaching courses.

Nowadays, there is a lot to offer students: online learning games, quizzes and a huge variety of gamification elements, such as awards or prizes, to name just two!

When thinking of our target group and how to ensure that learning is fun and not just effective, our own learning experiences come to mind.

In the early 1970s, i.e., half a century ago, a sort of gamification element was being used by a catholic priest who taught religion in a primary school of a small village in southern Germany. Not even in our wildest dreams would we have called it ‘gamification element’ half a century later!

The gamification element in question was a pack of playing cards with images of Saints printed on them. On one side, there was the picture of a Saint and on the other a short biography of such Saint. If schoolchildren had done their homework well or achieved some learning goal, they would receive these cards as a prize for their efforts.

These prizes had a two-fold impact: they would show appreciation for their efforts but were also useful because schoolchildren would learn the life stories of the Saints in question.

It is clear that game-based learning has been around for a long time and was used generations ago without even knowing what it was or that it would be called game-based learning.

As we were curious to find out if other people, of different generations, had unknowingly had similar gamification or game-based learning experiences, we started asking around if this had been the case or if they would have loved to.

As an example, representative of others, this is what a young Italian man in his mid-twenties told us:

“I’ve never had any game-based learning experience at school. But hearing about this project makes me feel like I’ve lost a great chance to learn things in a different way. For example, I would have loved to have felt more engaged through games. Learning without even being aware of it would have stimulated my imagination and curiosity.

Moreover, having a reward would have kept me motivated to carry on with the learning process. Applying game elements, such as a quiz with a prize, to a learning activity would have made me happier.”

Have you ever had any experiences with game-based learning or gamification without even knowing that it was game-based learning? If so, we would love to hear from you. Please share

your experiences with us on Facebook and tell us what you liked or even what you disliked about these experiences.



Posts for Facebook:

Post number 1

Thinking back to our learning experiences at school, interesting memories pop up. In the early 1970s, i.e., half a century ago, a sort of gamification element was being used by a catholic priest who taught religion in a primary school of a small village in southern Germany. Not even in our wildest dreams would we have called it 'gamification element' half a century later!

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It is clear that game-based learning has been around for a long time and was used generations ago without even knowing what it was or that it would be called game-based learning.

We would love to hear about your personal experiences. Please share them. Thank you!

Post number 2

The last time we shared a personal experience, we talked about gamification elements introduced in a primary school in the early 1970s.

Today we want to share the experience of a young Italian man in his mid-twenties who would have loved to have learned by playing games.

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What are your personal experiences with learning at school? We would love to hear about them. Please share them with us, and tell us what you liked or even what you disliked: it will enrich our project.