



EduTrend Contents

EDUTECH · GAMIFICATION CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES · HIGH SCHOOL

Does Gamification Work?

Evaluate research evidence and design an evidence-informed gamified unit

Ages 15–18

Level: Advanced

75 minutes

Teams of 3

Activity 05

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 05 · AT A GLANCE

Does Gamification Work?

Teams read short summaries of research, including a 2014 literature review by Hamari and colleagues and a 2020 meta-analysis by Sailer and Homner. They identify what effects were found, under what conditions and with what limits. Teams then design a short gamified unit that uses the evidence and explain how they would evaluate it.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- summarise research findings;
- identify conditions and limits;
- design evidence-informed gamification;
- plan an evaluation.

KEY WORDS

evidence · meta-analysis · effect · condition · novelty · evaluation

CURRICULUM LINKS

Psychology: motivation research.
Maths: effect sizes. Science: evaluating evidence.

1**GOAL**

What is the learning goal?

2**CHALLENGE**

What is the task?

3**FEEDBACK**

How do players know?

4**PROGRESS**

How is growth shown?

5**RETRY**

Can they try again?

6**REFLECT**

Did it help learning?

Materials (per team)

- Research summary cards
- Design template
- Evaluation planner
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Prepare summary cards from the cited studies.
- Print templates.
- Plan teams.
- Print worksheets.

SAFETY

No specific hazards. Cite sources accurately.

ACTIVITY 05 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Research suggests effects depend on context and design; avoid claims that gamification always works.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Hook	A bold claim about gamification.	<i>“What evidence would convince you?”</i>
10–30 min Read	Research summaries.	<i>“What did they find?”</i>
30–45 min Evaluate	Conditions and limits.	<i>“When does it work less well?”</i>
45–65 min Design	Evidence-informed unit.	<i>“Which finding shaped this?”</i>
65–75 min Evaluate plan	How to test it.	<i>“What would you measure?”</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Summarise research on gamification, identify its conditions and limits, and design a gamified unit with a plan to evaluate it.

ACTIVITY 05 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The gamification know-how in brief

Reviews of research have generally found positive effects of gamification on learning and motivation, but results vary with context, design and the people involved.

Some effects may fade as novelty wears off, and well-designed studies with comparison groups are needed to judge impact. Evaluation should measure learning, not just engagement.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Research proves gamification always works.” Effects vary.
- “Engagement equals learning.” Measure learning too.
- “One study settles it.” Look at reviews.

Adapting the activity

Support

Provide a findings table to complete.

Stretch

Design a fair comparison study.

WORKSHEET 1

Findings

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Summarise research.

Findings

Study	What was found	Limits
1		
2		
3		

WORKSHEET 2

Design choices

Link to evidence.

Design choices

Element	Evidence that supports it
1	
2	
3	
4	

WORKSHEET 3

Evaluation plan

How would you test it?

What we would measure and compare

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Summarises evidence	Identifies limits	Designs and evaluates

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Does Gamification Work? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents Edutech Gamification Concepts and Principles programme (high school, level: advanced). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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