



EduTrend Contents

EDUTECH · GAMIFICATION CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Points That Mean Something

Design a points system tied to learning behaviours and test it for loopholes

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

60 minutes

Groups of 3 · up to 30

Activity 04

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

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Points That Mean Something

Groups design a points system for a class project. Every point must be tied to a learning behaviour they can name, such as correcting an error or explaining a method. They then test their system against loophole scenarios, such as students rushing easy tasks for points, and improve it with team goals, retries and progress views.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- tie rewards to learning behaviours;
- predict unintended effects;
- test designs with scenarios;
- improve fairness and focus.

KEY WORDS

points · learning behaviour ·
loophole · unintended effect · team
goal · fairness

CURRICULUM LINKS

Maths: scoring systems.
Economics: incentives. PSHE:
fairness.

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 group)

- Design template
- Loophole scenario cards
- Poster paper
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Prepare loophole scenarios.
- Print templates.
- Plan groups.
- Print worksheets.

SAFETY

No specific hazards. Keep examples about
fictional classes.

ACTIVITY 04 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

If points can be earned without learning, students will find that route; design against it.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Hook	A points system gone wrong.	<i>“What did students learn to do?”</i>
8–25 min Design	Points for named behaviours.	<i>“What learning does this reward?”</i>
25–40 min Test	Apply loophole scenarios.	<i>“How could someone game it?”</i>
40–52 min Improve	Add team goals, retries, progress.	<i>“Is it fairer now?”</i>
52–60 min Present	Share designs.	<i>“What rule matters most?”</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Design a points system where every point is tied to a named learning behaviour, test it for loopholes and improve it.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The gamification know-how in brief

Rewards shape behaviour. If points reward speed or quantity, people optimise for those instead of learning. Tying points to named learning behaviours keeps attention on learning.

Team or whole-class goals protect students who are always near the bottom of a ranking. Allowing retries and showing personal progress keep motivation healthy.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Any points system helps.” Poor designs reward the wrong things.
- “Leaderboards motivate everyone.” They can discourage many.
- “Rules can be complicated.” Keep them explainable in two minutes.

Adapting the activity

Support

Provide a list of learning behaviours.

Stretch

Design badges that mark meaningful milestones.

WORKSHEET 1

Points design

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Tie points to behaviours.

Points design

Behaviour	Points	Why it shows learning
1		
2		
3		
4		

WORKSHEET 2

Loophole test

Test scenarios.

Loophole test

Scenario	Loophole?	Fix
1		
2		
3		

WORKSHEET 3

Final rules

Explain in two minutes.

Our rules and why they are fair

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

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

Student	Ties to learning	Finds loopholes	Improves fairness

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

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Points That Mean Something is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents Edutech Gamification Concepts and Principles programme (middle school, level: intermediate). 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.

© 2026 EduTrend Contents. This activity may be printed and copied for use with students in your own school, club or home. It may not be resold or published elsewhere. Photos: Brands&People / Unsplash.