

Computer gaming

Topic

Computer games, Attitudes towards computer games

Learning outcomes

- Use vocabulary related to computer gaming
- Practise forming questions (optional)
- Summarise the main points of a text about violence in computer gaming
- Participate in a discussion about computer gaming and give opinions

Age and level

13-17, Adults (B1, B2)

Time

65-85 minutes (including optional tasks) + optional project

Materials

- Student worksheet OR presentation

Introduction

This lesson is about computer games. It gives learners a chance to express their opinions about gaming. There are opportunities to personalise the lesson for your learners by giving them the chance to design their own quiz and do a class survey to find out about the gaming habits of the class.

A reading text will stretch higher level learners and can be used as a basis for discussion on the possible dangers of playing violent games. Quotes from people within the gaming world can also be used to

provoke debate and to get learners to express their own opinions on the influence of computer games. Younger learners with good imaginations have the chance in the final task to design their own game.

A student worksheet accompanies this lesson. Teachers can copy and use the worksheet or display a presentation for a no printing option.

Procedure

<p>1. Introduce the topic (5-10 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask learners in pairs or small groups to brainstorm the different things we can do with a computer. Set a time limit and then ask the group with the most ideas to share them with the class, adding in any different answers from other groups at the end. • Possible suggestions: send emails; write a letter or CV; write an assignment or create a work document; carry out research; do a virtual tour; watch videos, movies, TV programmes; make and give a presentation; attend a webinar; create a piece of art; do calculations; participate in a meeting or event; chat to friends; print; read books; make a blog; store pictures; and play games. • Explain that the lesson is going to be about playing computer games. <p>Note: 'Computer games' in this lesson refer to any games played on or using an electronic device e.g. a gaming console, smartphone, TV set, tablet, or personal computer. 'Computer games' are also known as 'video games'.</p>
<p>2. Task 1: Class survey (10-15 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 2 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 1 in the student worksheet. If using the slide, learners can copy the table into their notebooks. • Check that learners understand questions 1-5 by asking some individuals in the class and seeing if they give an appropriate response. Check pronunciation of the questions. • Ask learners to write their own question in the final row (question 6). If necessary, brainstorm some questions with your class. • Explain that learners should ask 5 classmates questions 1-6. They should write each name at the top and write notes of their answers in the table. If needed, choose a learner and give a demonstration using the board.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With smaller groups, learners can move around the room to ask who they like. With larger groups, learners can ask others around them. • Invite learners to say who the biggest gamers in the group / class are.
3. Quiz (optional) (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your learners seem keen on computer games, they can test their knowledge by doing a quiz now or later in the lesson (see the Appendix and slides 6-15 of the presentation). • Put learners into pairs / small groups. Read out, hand out or display the questions and give them a time limit to answer them. • Tell learners to swap answer sheets. Read out the answers. Learners mark each other's sheets. Award bonus points if groups can give extra information. The pair / group with the most points wins. <p>Answers: 1b (in 1994, Europe and North America in 1995); b (it was released in 2009, it came out as 'Minecraft' in 2011, in 2023 it is the best-selling video game of all time); 3a (in 1993, it was not a success); 4c ('Hooba noobie' means 'What's up' & 'Geelfrob' means 'See you later', 'Dag dag' means 'Goodbye'); 5c; 6a; 7b (it is thought that the first video game was created in 1958 – also based on tennis and called 'Tennis for Two' – but it was not released commercially, 'Pong' was created by Atari); 8b (Dr. Robotnik is also called the 'Eggman'); 9b (Ash Ketchum is a Pokémon trainer and does not appear much in the video games, Pikachu is probably the most well-known character); 10b (It was released in arcades in 1981)</p>
4. Make a quiz (optional) (10-15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your class enjoyed the quiz and they seem to be real gamers, put them into pairs or groups and they can design a quiz with questions about the most popular games in their country. You can assist with the question writing. When they have 5 questions each you could do the quiz as an inter-team competition. • If you have a buzzer or a whistle the first team to buzz gets the chance to answer. If this would raise excitement levels too much, give teams papers so they all get the chance to answer the other teams' questions. At the end, swap the answer papers, the teams give their answers, and points are awarded.

<p>5. Task 2: Vocabulary (10 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell learners that they are going to read a short text about gaming. Before they read, ask them to say what words they think might appear in the text e.g. gaming console, arcade game, role-playing, sound effects, realistic graphics etc. • Show slide 3 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 2 in the student worksheet. • Individually or in pairs, learners match the words and meanings. They can refer to dictionaries. • Check answers: 1f, 2h, 3a, 4d, 5c, 6g, 7b, 8i, 9j, 10e • Explain that the words are in the text that they are going to read. Ask learners to say what they think the text might be about.
<p>6. Task 3: Reading (10-20 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 4 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 3 of the student worksheet. • Give learners some time to read the text then ask them to summarise the main ideas of the text: how today's games are increasingly realistic; some people worry that realistic violence in games might make players more aggressive in real life; there is no evidence that there is a link. • Read the final sentence of the text aloud: should it be acceptable for computer games to depict graphic scenes of violence? Ask learners to say what they think. • If your learners are interested in gaming, carry out a post-reading activity. • Organise learners into small groups. Ask groups to make a list of the games they play, or games that are popular in their country. • In groups, they should discuss the games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do any of the games encourage negative behaviour? ○ At what age should people be allowed to play these games? Why? ○ Are there any games they would not play? Why?
<p>7. Task 4: Discussion (10 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 5 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 4 of the student worksheet. • You could select some quotes to discuss as a whole class, or give a selection of different quotes to pairs / small groups. • Make sure that learners understand the quotes and ask them to discuss them and say if they agree or disagree.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If learners discuss in pairs or small groups, invite them to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.
8. Project: Design a new computer game (30-45 mins +)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise learners into small groups. Explain that they are going to design a computer game. • Write the following headings on the board. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name ○ Theme / setting ○ Synopsis ○ Characters ○ Market • If necessary, do an example with the whole class by asking for their ideas, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name: Forest Fun ○ Theme / setting: Rainforest ○ Synopsis: Apes move up and down the forest layers looking for food; they chase off others looking for food and loggers ○ Characters: Apes, other forest animals, evil loggers ○ Market: Primary-aged children • In groups, learners design a game. As they work, walk around and help where necessary. • Groups present their games to the rest of the class. If you have a large class, they can present their games to other groups. • Learners vote for the game they'd most like to play. • If your class really enjoys this and if you have time, learners could develop the game, e.g.: draw pictures of the characters and write descriptions of them; create storyboards of the game; make posters to advertise the new game.

Adapted from a lesson contributed by

Jo Budden & Sally Trowbridge

Appendix: Quiz

1. Where was Playstation first released?

- a) Europe b) Japan c) North America

2. 'Minecraft' is one of the best-selling games of all time. What was it originally called?

- a) Block World b) Cave Game c) Craftopia

3. Which was the first video game to be made into a film?

- a) Super Mario Brothers b) Double Dragon c) Lara Croft: Tomb Raider

4. The language Simlish is used in the game 'The Sims'. How do you say 'Hello' in Simlish?

- a) Hooba noobie b) Geelfrob c) Sul Sul

5. Many people like playing RPGs. What is an 'RPG'?

- a) racing power game b) retro pixel game c) role-playing game

6. What is the name of the virtual currency used for in-app purchases in the game 'Fortnite'?

- a) V-bucks b) Gold c) FortCoins

7. The first successful arcade video game was 'Pong' and was based on table tennis. When was it released?

- a) 1958 b) 1972 c) 1980

8. Which iconic game character collects golden rings while fighting Dr. Robotnik?

- a) Pac-Man b) Sonic the Hedgehog c) Zelda

9. Who is the legendary Pokémon often referred to as the 'guardian of the sea'?

- a) Ash Ketchum b) Lugia c) Pikachu

10. Which video game company created 'Donkey Kong'?

- a) Atari b) Nintendo c) Sega