

Using Game Shows for Effective Teaching

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Incorporating hands-on practices from popular TV shows can serve to enhance student engagement and learning, as they can visualise concepts from the show and turn them into valuable learning tools. Ruben (cited by Grabowski & Price, 2003) states that games, in general, are well known in education and widely exploited by science and technology curricula [1] [2]. Games can be designed to be very engaging while simultaneously challenging students to use their knowledge in novel ways and to test their knowledge of the subject content [2]. For example, “Who Wants to be a Millionaire” is another game show that students normally have seen on TV, and its format can be incorporated into a fun learning session.

The American TV game show *Jeopardy* was used effectively as an activity in several modules within the Worcester Business School. *Jeopardy* has been adapted internationally and takes the form of a quiz featuring a variety of trivia topics such as science, celebrities and sports. The game format has been adapted by lecturers in the Business School who adapted their own questions and answers within a PowerPoint format. For the COMP1112 (Database) module, a Powerpoint presentation was set up so the first board contained 5 columns of topics specific towards that weeks seminar. Questions were created under each column and given a point value, with 10 point questions being ‘easy’ and 40 points being ‘difficult’. Students were divided into teams and each chose a question in a round-robin format.

The game was very well received by the students and there were many positive comments about it for instance, students liked that the game was played in a team environment as opposed to an individual format. This way, the team could collaborate on an answer, and one student would not stand out to the class if they did not know the answer. Similarly, the game had value for the instructors who could tell which concepts the students had trouble with.

This game could be easily adapted towards any module. Questions from the text or lectures can be adapted for use in various topics. Several pre-defined games are available on various teaching web sites that are available for free download and modification.

Some recommendations for using this game in class are:

- Use a predefined template from the web – it saves valuable time in setup
- Try to use the text sample tests and review questions as a place to start compiling your questions and column headings to save time.
- Include a short discussion of the answer after each team answers the question. This helps reiterate the concepts to the class again.
- Teams love to compete for prizes, and something as low-cost as a bag of chocolates gives an extra incentive.
- Let the students know a week ahead of time that the next session will include a game with prizes, and to read the text. Students tend to review material ahead of time if they know what to expect.

References

- [1] Ruben, B.D. (1999) Simulations, Games, and Experience-Based Learning: The Quest for a New Paradigm for Teaching and Learning in *Simulation & Gaming* 30,4, 498-505. [Online]
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- [2] Grabowski, J. and Price, M. (2003) 'Simple HTML Templates for Creating Science Oriented Jeopardy! Games for Active Learning', *Journal of Chemistry Education*. Vol. 80. 967. [Online]
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