

The Game module, like the majority of Moodle modules, is a tool whose potential can be fully exploited through teachers' imagination and creativity. Its exploitation can be restricted to something fun, or can be broadened up to a hidden examination medium, a diagnostic test, a context-free teaching software, a medium assisting students to create material for subjects or for their school site, an ice-breaking device when initiating projects which require co-operation among people of different cultures. Furthermore, the module can be exploited directly on the Moodle platform; it can be printed or exported in another format so as to be utilized on a mobile device or a site. What follows is a more detailed presentation of each case.

One of the most important aspects of games is the fun they bring in the learning process. This factor is even more crucial when dealing with youth online. To be truly effective e-learning needs to be engaging as well as informative. And one of the best ways to engage students online is for games to be interactive. Online games satisfy the basic requirements of learning environments and can provide engaging learning experiences for students.

The greatest advantage of the Game module is that it is a kind of concealed form of testing as it presents a quiz in a fun way. Games, therefore, can be used for evaluation, vocabulary practice, team work and interaction of participants. More specifically, games can supplement conventional quizzes, being more entertaining for students and equally effective. It also has benefits to offer to the teacher since the students' results/scores are automatically stored in the gradebook. The above games encourage students to become involved as they seek to improve their scores. Consequently, they serve as an indirect form of self-evaluation and motivate students to improve their performance.

They could also be used as diagnostic quizzes. The difference between conventional quizzes and diagnostic quizzes is that the former come after specific material in order to certify the acquired knowledge whereas the latter precede the material and are used to introduce and familiarize the students with the lesson to come. The advantage of this is that the students could skip the specific lesson if they attain a high score as this would indicate good command of the content.

The Game module and quizzes draw on a question bank in Moodle, which is created and enriched by the teacher. This important aspect makes it possible to adjust the games to the needs and interests of the students. The Game module is not linked to any specific lesson or set of activities, but can be deployed across the entire curriculum. Since the content for the games offered by the module is based on the lesson's questions or the dictionary, it can be

used for every lesson taught in school.

Another interesting suggestion is for the students to create their own questions for the games using the dictionaries. Then they can all play the games they have developed, becoming agents in the acquisition of knowledge. They could also export the questions in the form of a Hangman Game, suitable for cell phones and distribute it to their friends, while they could also upload and post games such as Hangman, Crossword and “Who wants to be a Millionaire” on their school’s website. Students can be allowed to update and enrich the dictionary in order to create more complex questions for the games themselves. Since all games of the module are automatically generated using either Questions or lesson dictionaries, rarely can a Crossword or Hangman game appear the same twice!

One of the most important characteristics of the platform is that different groups of people from different countries or schools could participate in a lesson by getting to know the other group. Various glossaries could be used presenting issues that deal with personal interests, local characteristics, material that could be incorporated in games, enabling the different groups to become acquainted. In subjects that contain terminology or are based on a foreign language, learning can become more interesting and entertaining for students. Furthermore, in a social constructivist oriented course, where students are divided into groups, games can be used as part of a project. In such cases, each group is assigned to research, study and write a paper and then use the material to create questions or glossaries. These will then be introduced to the platform so that games will be created for the other groups to play and familiarize themselves with the specific subject or issues.

It is also noteworthy that a crossword or cryptex can be printed and used without a computer while it must be pointed out that many different games can be produced from the same question bank.

The use of mobile devices has created new possibilities for exploiting games. Such games could be given to students to intrigue them before a visit to a museum or as gifts after such a visit or they could also be downloaded from a museum’s website.