



An Overview of Gamification in the EFL Classroom at the Universidad Panamericana

Activities: We use a blend of task-, problem-, and project-based learning activities. All activities are open-ended, but usually require some sort of deliverable. The vast majority of the activities revolve around creativity and design. Creative Inc. is the fictional company/simulator, and it's modeled on Google, Apple, and other progressive and creativity friendly companies. The company's motto is 'we are the world's imagination'.



Disruptive: Creative Inc classes are different because we strive to be disruptive. There are no assigned seats or partners. We demand students use their cell phones or laptops to do their work, sometimes we also demand they leave the classroom to complete their tasks. We tell students to get something to eat if they are hungry (but hurry back), and we do collaborative exams. We encourage students to use the internet for their work, and because all exams have open-ended questions or tasks, cheating isn't a problem. We find students perform better in a low stress, high engagement environment.

Badges and Awards: Students can earn badges for their efforts outside the class, too. (see the attachment). Examples include awards participating in various international activities, completing a MOOC course, or for helping their fellow students.

Homework: If students fail to complete their tasks in class, they certainly are allowed to work on the material outside of class time, we don't assign anything related to class as homework. At the beginning of each partial (we have 3 six weeks periods) we assign a set number of materials from the MacMillan English Campus. Rather than calling it homework, we call it practice. We only give points if the work is done completely and to a 100 percent level. Incomplete or scores less than that result in drastically reduced scores.

Positive student feedback: Students report they enjoy these kinds of English classes more, and have been re-registering to get out of the traditional classrooms. Attendance has improved as well as course evaluations. Many students feel they are using their English more, and many, many more report they don't miss grammar instruction. Our year-long study revealed that students who took this course had a higher degree of satisfaction with their course and teachers than in traditional classes. Students in the 'game' courses scored at or above the same levels as students in traditional style classes.

Negative student feedback: The most common complaint has been that the student felt they haven't learned anything, or that the teacher wasn't teaching them. Other complaints were the students weren't practicing their English or there was no textbook. Positives outnumbered negatives by 90%

IATEFL 2016 **Gamification for Language Learning** Universidad Panamericana
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