Role-Playing Games: The Fun Way to Learn and Grow

By Tomasz Laskowski

Course details

- 🕐 One week course
- € Starting from 480€ (Cultural activities included) *
- 🖥 Min. 4 - max. 14 participants
- 📋 Certificate of attendance included (80% of attendance required)
- 📍 Available in Dublin, Florence, Istanbul and Prague

* A 60 € late registration fee will be applied if you register less than 8 weeks before the course start date.

Course description

In a world where teachers struggle to keep students motivated and engaged, "gamification" is a new buzzword that gets thrown around more and more frequently. From online quizzes, through leaderboards and badges, to checkpoints, video games, and VR experiences, teachers try to find new and exciting ways to keep students interested in learning.

But instead of relying on small disconnected actions, why not refer to the origin of all those activities, that is, Role Playing Games (RPGs)?

With the incredible potential to captivate students in ways that traditional classroom methods may struggle to match, Role-Playing Games (RPGs) offer a fresh and engaging method for teachers to support academic skills and social-emotional development.

In this course, participants will learn how to design RPG learning activities in the classroom to teach academic subjects such as literature, mathematics, science, and history.

At the same time, participants will also learn hot RPGs that organically support self-driven learning, language development, motivation, and engagement.

Multiple studies have shown that incorporating Role-Playing Games like Dungeons and Dragons or Tales of the Loop into the classroom provides a holistic approach to learning, as opposed to isolated events or activities.

These games offer opportunities to practice problem-solving skills, as well as develop the four "C's" of 21st-century skills, that is, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity/imagination, and communication.

Moreover, by exploring different professions and (fictional) races, students can learn about diversity and tolerance, helping them become well-rounded, empathetic individuals.

This hands-on approach to learning through RPGs not only supports academic skills but also social-emotional development. The immersive and engaging nature of RPGs motivates students and empowers them to make decisions, act responsibly, and experience the consequences of their actions, thereby shaping well-rounded students who are ready to tackle the challenges of the real world.

In addition, the structured, imaginative, and collaborative nature of tabletop RPGs also allows for the inclusion of neurodiverse individuals, such as those on the autism spectrum, as well as students with other diverse needs. Reports show that autistic kids participating in RPGs show a reduction of stereotyped behaviors as well as improvements in social interaction, cooperative play, communication, and self-confidence.

Participants in the course will have the opportunity to take part in a variety of hands-on activities that will help them learn how to effectively use RPG games in the classroom. Some examples of these activities include:

- Learning about the basics of RPG games, including game mechanics and how to create engaging scenarios;
- Collaborating with fellow participants to design and run their RPG scenarios;
- Taking part in actual RPG play, both as a player and a game master, to gain first-hand experience with the game;
- Discussing the various ways that RPG games can support academic and social-emotional development in students;
- Exploring real-world examples of how RPG games have been used successfully in the classroom;
- Explore the potential of ARG (Alternate Reality Games). Alternate reality games (ARGs) are interactive storytelling experiences that blend the real world with a fictional narrative. They typically involve a large number of participants working together to uncover the story. ARGs often blur the line between the game and real life and can create a sense of immersion and involvement for players. Take the approach to the next level and create a "Multiplayer Classroom" by designing any structured learning experience as a game.

By the end of the course, participants will feel ready to use RPGs in their classroom to bring their students' engagement to higher levels and involve them in creative activities promoting their full potential.

Learning outcomes

Participants will gain several valuable skills and benefits, including:

- A deep understanding of how RPG games work and how they can be used in the classroom;
- The ability to design and run engaging RPG scenarios that support academic and social-emotional learning;
- Experience with using RPGs to reinforce creativity, communication, problem-solving, and collaboration;
- Knowledge of how to use RPG games to support the social-emotional development of students;
- The ability to create a structure that can make students self-motivated to learn topics that they might otherwise consider not interesting;
- A network of fellow educators who are also interested in using RPG games in their teaching practice.

Tentative schedule

Day 1 – Introduction to Role Play Games

- Introduction to the course, the school, and the external week activities;
- Icebreaker activities;
- 21st-century skills and how RPG games can reinforce them;
- RPG games and their benefits in the classroom;
- Overview of RPG game mechanics;
- Hands-on activity: participants will take part in an RPG game.

Day 2 – Design and running of RPG scenarios

- Continued participation in RPG game from Day 1;
- Designing and running engaging RPG scenarios;
- Collaborative activity: participants will work together to design their RPG scenarios;
- Tips and strategies for creating engaging and educational RPG scenarios.

Day 3 – RPGs and social and emotional development

- Using RPGs to support the social-emotional development of students;
- Examples of real-world use cases of RPG games in the classroom;
- Hands-on activity: participants will take part in an RPG game and discuss its impact on social-emotional development.

Day 4 – RPGs supporting 21st-century games

- Discussion of the various 21st-century skills that can be reinforced through RPG games: creativity, communication, problem-solving, and collaboration;
- Hands-on activity: participants will take part in an RPG game that focuses on reinforcing 21st-century skills.

Day 5 – Alternate reality games

- Introduction to Alternate Reality Games (ARG) and how they can be used to create a "multiplayer classroom" experience;
- Collaborative activity: participants will work together to design an ARG for their classroom;
- Tips and strategies for implementing ARG in the classroom and engaging students in learning through gameplay.
- Recap of the key takeaways from the course and next steps for incorporating RPG games into teaching practice;
- Creating a "multiplayer classroom" with RPG games.

Day 6 – Course closure & cultural activities

- Course evaluation: round up of acquired competences, feedback, and discussion;
- Awarding of the course Certificate of Attendance;
- Cultural activities.

*The schedule describes likely activities but may differ significantly based on the requests of the participants, and the trainer delivering the specific session. Course modifications are subject to the trainer's discretion. If you would like to discuss a specific topic, please indicate it at least 4 weeks in advance.

Our courses usually include two cultural activities. Further information is available on the webpage of each course location.

About the provider

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