Identifying Gamification

Summary

Gamification is here to stay and will rapidly increase in the classroom as more teachers, schools and companies try to harness the possibilities of gamification in education. Due to this trend, it is essential for teachers to empower students to develop their media literacy in recognizing gamification, how it works and how it feels.

Objectives

I can define gamification and identify common aspects of gamification.
I can investigate how gamification affects my experience of an activity.

Warm Up (10 minutes)

Write/Pair/Share: What are some qualities that most games share?
Possible Responses:
- Points
- Levels
- Fun
- Increasingly difficult
- Competition, many games are social and played together.
- Turn Taking
- AI opponents
- Rules
- Ability to win and lose.
- Avatars
- Storylines and relationships
- Choices

Hook (10 minutes)

Say: "We often call these qualities 'Game Mechanics.' We can think of the way that games work."

Turn and Talk: Can you think of times when game mechanics are applied to non game experiences?
Possible Responses: Views, likes, and followers are like points. Rewards for completing things. You might need to push student thinking here, but it is ok if they can't identify many.

Define Gamification:
"Today we are going to investigate Gamification. Gamification is when game mechanics are used in non-game, non-entertainment ways."

"Many times, gamification takes the form of points, badges, and leaderboards. Can you think of non-game experiences that use these?"

Give students a chance to talk and then share ideas as a class.

Activity (25 minutes)

Choose one activity that the whole class can do in small groups, or assign each option to specific groups based on learning/working styles of students. Each team can do a quick demonstration for the class.
Ideas:
  A. Research/Evaluation: in small teams, have students explore/evaluate a gamified program used in school (a curated list by the teacher to help foster exploration: khan academy, duolingo, kahoot, ??) with a checklist of elements found.   The team decides how they feel using these platforms and if they think it helps them learn.
  B. 2D Design Prototype: students devise a gamified experience at school for something they feel is boring. They will add a certain number of gamified features from a list. Deliverable is a paper prototype that conveys the interface.
  C. Theatrical Prototype: Using the concept in B, students create a personified example of gamification for something at school they feel is boring. They should add gamification features from a list. The deliverable is a theatrical, personified version of the gamification (ie: two students work through math problems, each time they finish a problem the team cheers, or gives them a high five, once they finish a row of problems, they can move up a seat, or receive some other reward).

Discussion (10 minutes)

Q: Which activity do you feel you would respond to the best? Which one would motivate you to stick with a boring task?
Q: Do you think that gamification should be used in school more often?
Q: What problems can you think of that too much gamification in school could create?

Cool Down (5 minutes)

"Give me Five" - asks students to make a list of 5 things that they will take away from today's class. These can be facts, opinions, or questions.