

ESCAPE ROOM AS A STIMULUS FOR EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITY

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, escape rooms have gained popularity, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were looking for ways to engage students or prepare different methods of education for students. Commonly known to people as a fun activity, the concept of escape rooms is associated with solving mysteries, puzzles, and tasks where you meet sub-goals to fulfil the overall goal. The overall goal can be to save a friend, solve a mystery, or escape from a haunted room using cooperation. Educational escape rooms differ from fun ones in that students must achieve educational goals to reach the goal of the game. Teachers create educational escape rooms to explore active learning environments to increase student motivation and engagement, promote learning, and develop teamwork, and communication (Veldkamp, van de Grint, Knippels, & Joolingen, 2020, p. 9).

CREATION OF EDUCATIONAL ESCAPE ROOMS

The authors (Veldkamp et al., 2020, p. 1234) list four guidelines for creating educational escape rooms resulting from their study, which we followed when creating our activity:

- Co-creation of activity with the students for whom the game is intended. The students had the opportunity to express their observations on the activity after the pilot testing.
- Start from scratch or use a prototype that meets the educational requirements. When creating the activity, we were inspired by available activities. During the search, we mainly focused on the availability of platforms on which the escape room activity can be created.
- The hybrid learning spaces. The activity is based on a real-world scenario linked to physics topics.
- Serial testing of the activity from different perspectives (teacher, student, player).

ESCAPE ROOM ACTIVITY

The authors (Taraldsen, Haara, Lysne, Jensen, & Jenssen, 2020) see the use of escape rooms as a didactic tool in primary and secondary education. We carried out the activity of the escape room created by us with the pupils of the eight-year high school in the beginning grades. The activity is situated in an online space, in which the student's task is to solve a mystery. In individual rooms, there are various puzzles, clues compiled from secrets, fake cash documents, and fake internet communication. Since we focus on stimulating students to experiment, the task in one room is the realization of the experiment by the students. During the implementation of the escape room activity, we mainly observed the progress of the part in which the students had to experiment. We also noticed the progress of the activity, how the students reacted, what caused them difficulties, whether this activity stimulated them to experiment, and whether they were able to experiment.

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