

Board Games in Education

National Institute of Technology, Gifu College

- A: Now let me ask you a question. Did you enjoy studying at school in your junior high school days? If I answer this question, I say no. I guess many of you do so. In fact, the Ministry of Education reports that more than 70 % of elementary school students are satisfied with their classes. But in case of junior high school, the rate decreases to 60 %.
- C: Yes, I have seen a similar report. According to the Benesse Research, while 60 % of elementary school students like studying, it drops down to 40 % in junior high schools.
- A: Yes, that's true. Students are getting reluctant to study as they grow. How can we solve this problem?
- B: How about taking our tips into your classroom?
- A: What's that?
- B: To add a twist to studies and make it fun!
- A: Hey, don't hold back. Tell me about your concrete idea.
- C: When some students say they don't like to study, they must be feeling it boring.
- A: Yes. That makes sense.
- C: Just listening to the teacher. Just copying the blackboard down the notebook. Monotonous textbooks, lots of memorization, of complicated contents...
- A: Stop it! Just hearing you makes me sick. I just remember that I couldn't see the goal of study.
- B: That's it. You noticed the important fact. The most important thing in studying is the sense of accomplishment.
- A: I agree. But how do you make it?
- B: We have a suitable counterplan.
- A: What's that?
- B: Board games.
- A: Board games? Hey, we are not discussing recreation.
- B: Exactly. I guess some people ask, "Why board games for study?" because you would imagine amenity board games such as cards, chess, Othello, and so on. But modern board games we present today are more sophisticated than the ones you have ever played.
- C: For example, we have "CODER MINDZ". This is one of the popular board games for learning AI programming. It gives us good incentives through the tackles to reach the goal point. You can learn programming while having fun. I have been studying about implementing boardgames to education. I want to expand the possibility of board games in education.
- A: That's great! Please share your ideas with us.
- B: At the start of this presentation, you said 60 % of elementary school students think studying is fun. I think there are reasonable factors. Look at these pictures. Have you

ever seen these items?

A: Yes, I remember that. I used to be excited when I opened this “Sansu-box”. And every time I succeeded to complete these Arithmetic puzzles. I got a great sense of accomplishment.

B: Yes. Actually, we have experienced several familiar board games at school.

A: That is correct. So, how can we take them into classrooms at junior high schools and home studies?

C: I'm glad you asked. Now, we are going to introduce an educational board game that we developed for junior high school students. We named it “Quarter Knowledge”.

B: This focuses on a memorization challenge that students are facing. And the subject of this is history. First, each participant has five cards, on which some words or phrases are written. Those words or phrases are related to different categories depending on the player.

C: After this preparation, the game master gives them the name of a historical figure. In response to it, every participant chooses the best match card in their hands.

A: What types of categories are there? Let's look at player A choosing his card. Oh, He was given the category of Country of Origin.

C: The historical figure of this turn is Albert Einstein. So, he chooses the card on which “the Flag of Germany” is printed.

A: How about player B?

B: She was given the category of Keywords to remember. So, she chooses the one on which “Theory of Relativity” is written.

A: What will they do after everyone chooses the cards?

C: All chosen cards are placed side by side and they are reversed finally. If the chosen cards are all correct ones, the face of Einstein appears, and they get points.

A: That's interesting, isn't it?

Then, what if someone chooses incorrect card?

C: If any player chooses a wrong one, the face will be a stranger.

B: When someone makes a mistake, they can know whose card is incorrect. Then another participant is supposed to answer, so they can get the chances to acquire knowledges to learn.

C: You can apply the concept of this game on other subjects.

B: Yes, it would be a good idea to let the students make their original cards and play with them.

A: You are right. One of the positive aspects of board games is “Everyone can play”.

C: Also, if you create this as an online game, you can play it with people far away.

A: That's great! This board game is easier to try than I think! It will be useful to introduce them.

C: When we play boardgames in education, we do not need to memorize every word on textbooks. The goal is to get sense of accomplishment after one cycle of the game ends.

B: The studies in junior high schools are essential to establish basic academic skills.

In addition, by converting passive lessons into active ones, we can acquire a variety of skills we need.

A: Thank you. I believe we can make all the students like to study.

C: Board games have more and more potential to be used in education.

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B: If you try to take a little bit twist into your school education, students will change their mind in school learning.

C: As if it were a pinch of salt.