

Computer Gaming

Topic

Computer games, attitudes to games

Aims

- To practise speaking skills
- To practise question formation
- To develop reading skills
- To learn vocabulary related to computer gaming

Age group

12 – adult

Level

B1 / B2

Time

60 - 90 minutes

Materials

1. Computer Gaming student worksheet
2. Internet links: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_banned_video_games - list of banned computer games around the world.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/womanshour/02/2009_42_mon.shtml - Podcast on dangers of teen screen time.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_8030000/newsid_8037500/8037513.stm - Short video about banning violent video games
http://www.bbc.co.uk/labuk/results/braintestbritain/4_brain_training_games.html Website about a BBC experiment into brain training

Introduction

This lesson is about computer games. It gives students a chance to express their opinions about gaming. There are opportunities to personalise the lesson for your students by giving them the chance to design their own quiz and do a class survey to find out about the gaming habits of the class.

A reading text from the Trend UK website will stretch higher level students and can be used as a basis for discussion on the possible dangers of playing violent games. Quotes from people within the gaming world can also be used to provoke debate and to get students to express their own opinions on the influence of computer games. Younger students with good imaginations have the chance in the final task to design their own game.

Puzzle style introduction: Ask your students: "More money is spent on them than going to the cinema or renting films. Britain is the third biggest market in the world for them and one European country (Greece) banned them completely until recently and others want to ban them (e.g., Germany). What are they?" Accept guesses until you get the answer - Computer games.

Procedure

1. Introduce the topic – Computer functions	<p>Ask students in pairs or small groups to brainstorm as many different functions for using a computer. Set a time limit and then ask the group with the most ideas to share them with the class, adding in any different answers from other groups in the end.</p> <p><i>Possible suggestions: send e-mail, write a letter, do calculations, surf the internet, print, listen to music, watch DVDs, watch TV online, record CDs, play games...</i></p> <p>Explain that the class is going to be about playing computer games.</p>
2. Task 1 – Computer games survey	<p>This is a class survey for students to find out about the gaming habits of the class members. With low levels go through the questions together, check their understanding (try not to ask them 'do you understand this question?' but ask someone the actual question and see if they give an appropriate response) Check pronunciation of the sentences too before the students begin to carry out the survey with their class mates.</p> <p>Students should ask the questions to five others. If you think some students will get left out then put the students into groups of six and they must ask the questions to their group members. Older students should be able to do the activity as a 'mingle' and choose who they want to ask.</p> <p>The results could be displayed in a bar chart if you have time. Show an example of a bar chart on the board to give students the idea.</p>
3. Task 2 – Test your computer games knowledge	<p>If your students seem keen on computer games, they can test their knowledge by doing this quiz. I'm not sure how this quiz will 'travel' and work in different countries but it will at least give the students some ideas of question types for task 4 where they can design their own quiz based on the games they and their friends play.</p>

Answers: 1) b 2) a 3) b 4) b 5) a 6) c 7) a 8) b 9) c

4. Task 3 – Make your own computer games quiz

With very low levels go through and check their understanding of the 'wh' question words before you start. (What, when, who, where, why, which etc.) Focus on question formation and check each group's questions.

If you have done task 3 with your class and they seem to be real gamers, put them into pairs or groups and they can design a quiz with questions about the most popular games in their country. You can assist with the question writing. When they have 5 questions each you could do the quiz as an inter- team competition.

If you have a buzzer or a whistle the first team to buzz gets the chance to answer. If this would raise excitement levels too much you could run it like a pub quiz! Give teams papers and they all get the chance to answer the other teams' questions. At the end, swap the answer papers, the teams give their answers, and points are awarded.

5. Task 4 - Computer gaming

This text is taken from the Trend UK website. Before students read the text they should match the words and definitions in the table. They might need dictionaries to help them with this task. Encourage stronger students to help weaker students here with some peer teaching.

When students have read the text, use the questions below to discuss their views on the influence and effects of gaming.

Answers: 1. f, 2. c, 3. a, 4. b, 5. h, 6. d, 7. e, 8. g.

6. Task 5 – Discussion

Students read the quotes from people working in the gaming industry. Encourage them to agree / disagree with the quotes and give reasons for their opinions in small groups or pairs. When students have finished, get some whole class feedback to compare opinions. You could use this activity as an opportunity to agree language of discussions.

7. Task 6 – Design a new computer game

Students work in small groups to design their own computer game. Encourage the students to use their imaginations. Show an example of a storyboard (like a comic strip) on the board. If you have time and your students get involved this could develop into a project. Students could draw pictures of the characters and write descriptions of them or they could make posters to advertise the new game. If you have coloured card and lots of time, this could make a great wall display. You could have a class vote to decide on the best game

Contributed by

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