

TLPEC PRESENTS

GAMIFICATION IN THE CLASSROOM



"Playing games grows brains," claims [Brain-Compatible Strategies](#) author, Dr. Eric P. Jensen (Ph.D. in Human Development). Dr. Jensen synthesizes brain research and develops practical applications for educators. He is listed among the top 30 educators in the world by [GlobalGurus.org](#).

I know what you all must be thinking...you have dedicated your life's work to your field of study, earned several advanced degrees, and have developed courses fit for higher education settings. It's serious work and someone is trying to take this serious content and lower the standards into fun and games. *Am I right?*

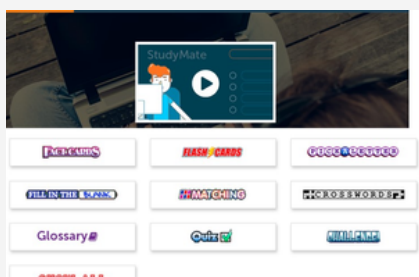
This is the furthest intent from the truth, and I hope you will allow me to explain.



Today's learners are different than those of the past. They come from diverse backgrounds with different learning and communication styles and have grown up immersed in various technologies as a part of daily life. To meet today's students where they are, it may be time for us to adapt and include some elements that are familiar to them. Many cultures learn through storytelling.

Gamification of learning is not about lowering standards—it's about changing the methods of how information is delivered, in an attempt to help today's learners more clearly understand, and more easily retain, content.

A few examples of gamified learning options include...



StudyMate

[StudyMate](#) is a free resource that allows students to review course topics with 11 different games and self-assessments. Students or instructors can create flash cards, Jeopardy-like game, quizzes, flash cards, cross words, and more with course materials. While there is a paid version that can integrate within the Canvas LMS, CSC does not have a contract with StudyMate for this service. The tools can still be accessed from the StudyMate website and the link, with the study materials entered into various games, can be shared.

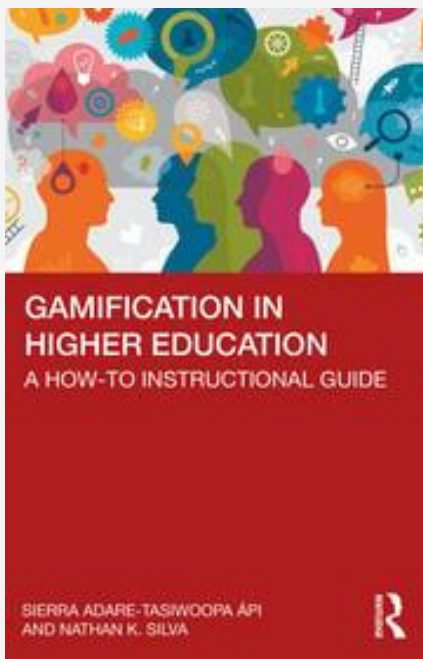
During the Spring 2024 semester, TLPEC staff spoke with a graduate student preparing for an upcoming professional certification exam. The student was looking for (free) ways to prepare for the exam. Initially my thought was to encourage the student to input questions into Microsoft Forms and have them create their own practice exam. Not only would the student have a practice exam, but they would also absorb the content while entering in the questions.



While this is a valid option and likely viable for smaller exams, However, Microsoft Forms only allows for up to 100 questions per form. This means a practice exam may not be comprehensive (with enough question to include all content in one form). Some material may not be included.

GAMIFICATION CONTINUED

Thanks to an earlier spring webinar I attended, hosted by [California Outcomes Assessment Coordinators Hub \(COACHES\)](#), that had a focus on [gamification in the classroom](#), I discovered Dr. Sierra Adare-Tasiwoopa Api who currently serves as the instructional technologist for Nevada State University. Dr. Adare-Tasiwoopa Api co-authored the book *Gamification in Higher Education*. Inside the book, among many resources, StudyMate was included. **This book is now available in CSC's TLPEC library.*

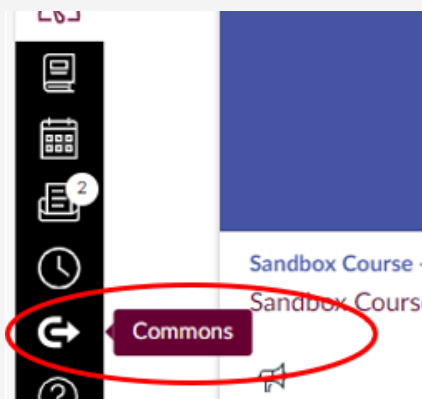


After reading more about StudyMate, the essence of creating a quiz in that program (vs. Microsoft Forms) meant the tools were similar, but StudyMate does not have the question number limitations. It also had different options for how to interact with the content (after it was entered into 11 different game options), and StudyMate is free.

The graduate student is now preparing for their upcoming certification exam via practicing on StudyMate quizzes and is enjoying the process of studying.

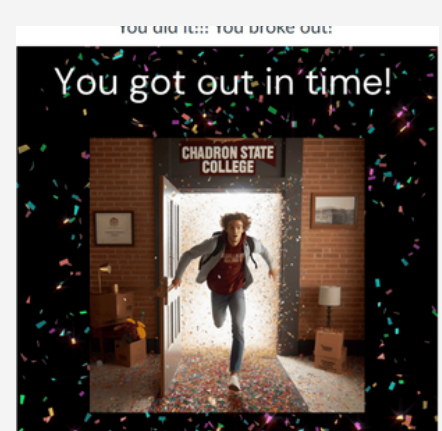
Canvas Escape Rooms

In the same webinar referenced earlier, Dr. Adare-Tasiwoopa Api presented a model of a Canvas escape room Module. It utilized mastery pathways with quizzes that can determine if the participant could continue or had to go back and reattempt the determined task, such as a Quiz. It was engaging and informative to participate in the activity. Following this example, I looked at several pre-created escape room modules in the [Canvas Commons](#) portal.



Most examples of interactive Canvas escape rooms involved integrations with Google Slides. While this is a possibility, Chadron State College is a Microsoft school and has Office 365 integrated into Canvas. It was practical to create the interactive elements in PowerPoint and embed them into a Canvas Module.

This process also required coordinating with our IT department. Sharing files from a One Drive typically requires giving access permissions to an individual. That process wouldn't be realistic for accessing course materials, so our talented IT department arranged for faculty and current students to have group settings applied for sharing in Office 365 OneDrive files. [That process is covered in another document.](#)



Once all the elements were set up, I was able to create a Module with quizzes, clues, PowerPoints, and a final animated page, which appears once participants escape. The sample escape room was designed to teach new students key elements of Canvas and how to utilize them. If faculty members are interested in reviewing the escape room Module, please email TLPEC@csc.edu, and we will be happy to get you the information.