

## GAMES AS TEACHING METHOD IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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**Abstract**

This article describes the importance of using gaming technology at English lessons in primary school. Because the games motivate students to study a foreign language and influences for the all sides of their development: the senses, the consciousness, the will and behavior.

**Keywords:** foreign languages, games, teaching methods, primary school

First of all let's get acquainted with the word game. What is the game? A game is a structured activity, usually undertaken for enjoyment and sometimes used as an educational tool. Games are distinct from work, which is usually carried out for remuneration, and from art, which is more concerned with the expression of ideas.

Key components of games are goals, rules, challenge, and interaction. Games generally involve mental or physical stimulation, and often both. Many games help develop practical skills, serve as a form of exercise, or otherwise perform an educational, simulated or psychological role.

Games can be used at any stage of the lesson once the target language has been introduced and explained. They serve both as a memory aid and repetition drill, and as a chance to use language freely and as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. They can also serve as a diagnostic tool for the teacher, who can note areas of difficulty and take appropriate remedial action.

Games are fun and children like to play them. That in itself is a strong argument for incorporating them in the EFL classroom. Playing games is a vital and natural part of growing up and learning. Through games children experiment, discover, and interact with their environment.

Many experienced textbooks and methodology manuals writers have argued that games are not just time – filling activities but have a great educational value. W. R. Lee holds that most language games make learners use the language instead of thinking about learning the correct forms. He also say that games should be treated as central not peripheral to the foreign language teaching program. A similar opinion is expressed by Richard – Amato, who believes games to be fun but warns against overlooking their pedagogical value, particularly in foreign language teaching. There are many advantages of using the games. “Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely” (Richard - Amato). They are highly motivating and entertaining,

and they can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings. They also enable learners to acquire new experience within a foreign language which are not always possible during a typical lesson. Furthermore, to quote Richard – Amato, they, “add diversion to the regular classroom activities,” break the ice, “but also they are used to introduce new ideas”. In the easy, relaxed atmosphere which is created by using games, students remember things faster and better. Further support comes from Zdybiewska, who believes games to be a good way of practicing language, for they provide a model of what learners will use the language for in real life in the future. Games encourage, entertain, and promote fluency. If not for any of these reasons, they should be used just because they help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems.

Games are often used as short warm – up activities or when there is some time left at the end of the lesson. Yet, as Lee observes, a game “should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do”. Games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign languages. Rixon suggests that games be used at all stages of the lesson, provided that they are suitable and carefully chosen. At different stages of the lesson, the teachers’ aims connected with a game may vary:

1. Presentation. Provide a good model making its meaning clear;
2. Controlled practice. Elicit good imitation of new language and appropriate responses;
3. Communicative practice. Give students a chance to use the language.

Games also lend themselves well to revision exercises helping learners recall material in a pleasant, entertaining way.

Games in the elementary school classroom work best when they are built upon the premise of relaxation and reward, but in reality are strengthening skills already learned. Once teacher finds out which game works best, the effective teacher can then utilize this game as a means to get students on task and focused.

Many teachers use entertaining and didactic games on their lessons for increasing the pupil’s activity, which is the most important way of acquiring solid knowledge, skills and abilities.

Didactic games are the one of the most important means of mental and moral education of children. The principal type of didactic “entertaining” are the games, which form stable interest for learning and which remove the tension. They form psychological qualities which are necessary for educational process as thinking, attention and memory. They also form the skills of educational work. All playing syllabus can be divided for:

1. educational games which depend on teaching material;

2. entertaining games, which characterize by puzzles, logical games, games for quickness of wit.

The playing syllabus in the primary school is explained, first of all, by psychological – pedagogical peculiarities of children of younger ages. The particular significance of game contains its role as the means of adaptation children for learning. That's why it must become the essential part of the educational process in primary schools. The developmental playing sphere of cognitive character is used to develop logical thinking, imagination, and the quickness of wit. There are some entertaining games as puzzles, crosswords, enigmas, riddles, games with geometric figures, and others. In these games the main part is not speed, but the right solution. These games promote the development of constructive thinking, forming the skills of creative types, and the development of spatial thinking. As the experience of teachers' works of using the playing syllabus shows that if teachers organize the educational process of cognitive character in the form of game, they can quickly increase the effectiveness of teaching.

There are many great games that can be played in the elementary school classroom, it is just a matter of finding those few games that particular students thoroughly enjoy and actively participate in when played. Elementary students love games, as it seems as though it is a break from the mundane monotony of rudimentary learning, but this is merely a subterfuge. Many of the best games that are played are actually building upon concepts being studied. This is the benefit of playing games within the confines of the elementary school classroom.

Games should be positive at any moment they are applied because this makes students enjoy the activity while they are having a “hidden” useful practice. And hidden is mentioned since this kind of activities usually make students forget they are learning, and they concentrate more on playing and/or winning.

Games that are created in a form of training in the classroom with the help of gaming devices and situations can lead to motivation, stimulation of students to educational activity. The main areas in which implemented game methods and techniques:

1. didactic goal to students in the form of a game problem;
2. training activities subject to the rules of the game;
3. the training material is used as its tools in learning activities introduced as an element of competition, which transfers didactical task during the game;
4. the successful implementation of the didactic tasks associated with the result of gaming.

The game technologies are one of the most effective forms of training of pupils of younger age at lessons, which allows teachers to make interesting and exciting not only the work of students in the creative and exploratory level, but also in everyday

learning. The location and role of the gaming technology in the educational process, a combination of elements of the game and learning depends on understanding the teacher functions and classification of pedagogical games. G. K. Selevko classified educational games on such criteria as: field of activity, the nature of the pedagogical process, playing technique, subject area, game environment.

There are can be following groups of games:

- 1) educational, training, monitoring, and summarizing;
- 2) informative, educational, socializing;
- 3) reproductive, productive, creative;
- 4) communicative, diagnostic, psychological et.al.

Thus, the gaming technology should be understood as including a large enough group of methods and techniques of the organization of the pedagogical process in the form of a variety of educational games, allowing you to make the learning process fun and interesting. A lot of it is important for the development of creative abilities of students of junior classes. Of the variety of educational games teacher should choose the one that most accurately transmit the content of educational material, interested students, and will be a catalyst for the development of creative abilities of the students.

The successful development of child creative abilities should experience deliver the solution of educational problems. It forms the important qualities such as: the positive attitude towards school, a school subject; the ability and willingness to be included in the collective training activities; the ability to listen to each other; voluntary desire to expand their capabilities; disclosure of their own creative abilities; self-expression, self-assertion.

These qualities arise interest of primary school level students and desire to continue training activities and contribute to the development of creative abilities.

Games in the language classroom help children to see learning English as enjoyable and rewarding. Playing games in the classroom develops the ability to co – operate, to compete without being aggressive.

Most important, games can make the lesson planning easier. All English lessons must involve games, as the games are best set up by demonstration rather than by lengthy explanation. The game is the most important and essential element in developing the person or all the society.

Thus, children will discover the world by playing. The necessity of games and the wish of playing must be used and directed rightly with a view of solving definite problems in educational process. The game will be the means of upbringing and teaching, if it will be involved into the all pedagogical process. When teacher conducts the game and organizes the pupil's life in the game, she influences for the all sides of pupil's developments: sense, consciousness, will and behavior.

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