

Teaching Tips

A Forum for discussion and tips for advancing teaching and learning at Mona

Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning



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Special points of interest:

- The **Teaching Tips Newsletter** is a publication of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) at the UWI, Mona.
- The Newsletter is published once per month and provides tips for improving teaching and learning in higher education. It is available online (<http://myspot.mona.uwi.edu/edu/>) as well as in the office of the CETL.
- If you have an area that you would like to explore using this medium, do not hesitate to contact us at the CETL.

Using Games in the Classroom

Higher education has been involved in the use of games in teaching and learning. Sometimes the term gamification is used with reference to games in the classroom. However, strictly speaking, the term gamification is a reference to the process of turning a mundane task into a fun-filled one with the principles that make games engaging. So, by adding such elements as competition, an otherwise boring activity might be transformed.

One of the most used and arguably the most liked games in the classroom is jeopardy. At the recently



held Premium Teaching Workshop, the faculty of The University of the West Indies, Mona, were introduced and in some cases re-introduced to the use of games in the university classroom. The greatest emphasis was placed on Classroom Jeopardy and the facilitator, Dr. David Yearwood, offered his template to the faculty. This template can be retrieved from the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL).

The introduction of Classroom Jeopardy might be just that strategy that is needed to transform a dull lecture room from a boring and passive learning environment to a more dynamic and engaging one. Classroom Jeopardy is very similar to the television version, however educational content is intentionally used to promote learning. This game can be used in any classroom setting and importantly, it can be used at almost any level of the educational system from primary education to higher education. It is also usable in multiple classroom settings from small classrooms to large lecture theatres.

Classroom Jeopardy can be so configured to meet some or many of the pedagogical outcomes desired by most classes and it also comes with enormous flexibility. It enables the faculty member to break down the subject matter, develop different categories of content and in fact, the difficulty index of the questions can be addressed. In this regard a hierarchy in the difficulty of the content can be provided. A range of questions from the easy to the very difficult, covering the various domains of learning and the multiple levels of the Bloom's taxonomy can be facilitated. It can be used to review material, encourage participation and break up a lecture by providing activity. Further, it can provide for competition to be introduced through point valued questions. Classroom Jeopardy can also be organized in such a way that questions are fielded that call on the thinking skills of students to supply the correct responses. It also creates opportunities for students to supply questions when the answers are provided. This pushes the student to think deeply about the answer and in fact to change his/her thought process in order to develop an answer.



Using Games in the Classroom cont...

In using Classroom Jeopardy, a facilitator of learning will create an environment for interaction and engagement with the content. There are multiple benefits that are associated with the use of classroom games. These benefits are also readily observed whenever Classroom Jeopardy is used. These include:

- ◆ Involving students in active learning.
- ◆ Encouraging students to call on higher order thinking skills.
- ◆ Increasing motivation for learning.
- ◆ Providing intrinsic rewards.
- ◆ Fostering better and more positive attitudes towards attending classes, paying attention and better participation.
- ◆ Improving retention, decision-making skills and comprehension of general principles.
- ◆ Creating room for greater levels of cooperation .

Some tips for incorporating games in the classroom are as follows:

- ◆ Ensure that the game or games is/are geared towards the achievement of your learning objectives.
- ◆ Develop the game to offer challenge to your students, not to frustrate.
- ◆ Create opportunities for success and positive reinforcement.
- ◆ Make sure you debrief after the game.

The use of PowerPoint is the preferred way to develop this Jeopardy. The representation of the traditional jeopardy game show board is done. It is then projected through the projection system in the classroom to the presentation board.

(Please remember that a template for Classroom Jeopardy is available at the CETL).

Score Team A	Wood the Material	Framing	Alternate Framing Systems	Barriers	Roofing	Windows & Doors	Score Team B
6400	200	200	200	200	200	200	4800
	400	400	400	400	400	400	
	600	600	600	600	600	600	
	800	800	800	800	800	800	
	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	



Leveraging Social Media/Facebook

Teachers and learners in higher education have been using social media, for instance Facebook, to advance learning. There are those who caution its use. However, with more advanced thinking on how it might be used meaningfully, there is greater willingness on the part of faculty from many institutions of higher education to use social media, especially Facebook in their classrooms.

Research has found that students claim that they don't want their lecturer to "friend" them on Facebook. Hence, there has been some reluctance to use Facebook for academic purposes. Some lecturers have used Facebook in their classes and are reporting meaningful interaction and generally the advancement of learning by the incorporation of this technology tool. The recommended approach for using this innovative teaching strategy is to empower the students to start the Facebook page for the class and to take responsibility for uploading content, starting discussion threads and making other important posts to the page.

KISS Your PowerPoint for a Stunning Presentation (Keep it Simple Sweetie)

- Use one idea per slide.
- Use a consistent graphic/theme.
- Use high contrast colors.
- Use plain fonts.
- Use graphics and animations carefully.



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