5 Steps to Integrate Game-based Learning in Your Class

1- Determine the Purpose of Using a Game

Before researching, determine if you want to use a game for:

1- Intervention
If a student is struggling to demonstrate understanding of core material, you may consider using a game to address his or her trouble spots.

2- Enrichment
As students master core material, you may want a game that presents content through different media. For example, it may give questions through text, audio, images and more. This should encourage students to challenge themselves as they explore new ways to process the content.

3- Reinforcement
Instead of using games to teach and engage individual students, entire classes can play to reinforce curriculum content. This can also make game-based learning a group activity. Some games have multiplayer features and students may naturally compete against each other to earn higher scores

2- Play the Game Yourself, Making Sure It Is Aligned with Learning Goals

After finding a game you think is appropriate, play it and make note of:

1- Teacher Control
Many educational games offer teachers the ability to control content and adjust settings for individual students. For example, some let you match questions to in-class material, delivering them to specific players.

2- Intuitiveness
Whether it's a physical or video game, it should be easy to use. Students should challenge themselves by processing and demonstrating knowledge of the content — not by stressing over how the game works.

3- Engagement
Based on the content and how it's presented, determine if students will enjoy the game. If it's engaging, students should inherently want to play and, as a result, learn.

4- Content Types
To accommodate diverse learning styles, the game should offer different types of content. For example, an educational math video game may present questions as graphs, numbers and word problems.

4- Content Levels
To address diverse trouble spots and aptitudes, the game should use differentiated instruction principles to adapt content to each player. For example, a language video game may focus more on pronouns with one student than another.

3- Ensure It Meets Expectations from Parents
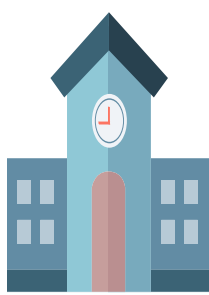
Getting buy-in from other teachers or admins may be needed before finalizing your game selection, but parents should also know about your game-based learning plans.

This opens the door to parent participation which, according to oft-cited research from the National Committee for Citizens in Education, is one of the most accurate predictors of student success:

"The family makes critical contributions to student achievement, from earliest childhood through high school … When schools engage parents and students, there are significant effects. When parents are involved at school, not just at home, children do better in school and they stay in school longer."

## 4- Dedicate Time to Consistent In-Class Play

In a classroom with 1:1 device use, make time for game-based learning activities by:

1- Including game time as a designated activity in your lesson plan, not an afterthought
2- Using a game as an entry ticket, drawing student attention to the lesson's topic
3- Using a game as an exit ticket, allowing students to reflect

In a classroom with limited device use, make time for game-based learning activities by:

1- Focusing more on non-digital games, such as board games with educational value
2- Creating learning stations, one of which is playing a device-based game
3- Playing team games, letting students play in pairs or groups
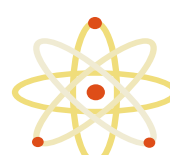
5- Assess Progress Throughout Play, Informing Instruction

Collecting data from the games you implement can uncover student trouble spots and aptitudes, helping you shape in-class instruction.

1-In-Game Reports
Some educational video games feature in-game reports for teachers, which record student performance. For example, charts will contain each player's marks for a series of questions, letting you click to see more details.

2- Self-Reports
For physical games, or video games without reporting features, you can encourage students to take ownership of their progress through self-reporting. Create a Google Forms spreadsheet for each student. Then, ask them to provide updates.

3- Class Discussions
After playing team games, conducting a class-wide discussion allows each group to share difficulties, progress and accomplishments.

Source

Based, with permission, on Marcus Guido's post: https://www.prodigygame.com/blog/implementing-game-based-learning-in-the-classroom-examples/