EAIE

Esports as Accelerator for Social Inclusive Education

LESSON
THE OREGON TRAIL

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THE OREGON TRAIL

Subject and level
English B levels

Connection to curriculum
The English B curriculum has to contain a course on America – typically its history, culture, society and politics. I usually start out with a short history course on the US before moving on to culture and society. The game, "The Oregon Trail" was created as a learning game and can still be used to teach students about this central part of American history: the Frontier in the 1800's and its impact on American culture, society and self-perception.

Didactic and pedagogic considerations
The sequence will follow a number of introductory lessons on American history. This game, "The Oregon Trail", will introduce the students to the history and concept of the American Frontier which will be worked with later in lessons on American literature, culture and society.
The game is not complicated, but a big part of the exercise is for the students to cooperate (socially and communicatively) in order to learn to play the game. The game also has the added function of giving the students a vocabulary to discussing this part of American history.
Ultimately, the function of the game is to act as a time machine for the students; a way of getting close to experiencing the Frontier experience.

Time estimate
2-3 hours - The game can be assigned as homework if pressed for time

Group size
2-3

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Overall introduction to exercise

After a brief introductory course to American history (from ca. 1600-present), the students are going to play the game, “The Oregon Trail”. In groups, they have to discuss the best courses of action in order to complete the game. This means using their language, communication and cooperation skills. Each part of the game requires the students to make life or death decisions (for their characters) and so forces them to read and learn about the possible choices and analyse the possible outcomes. The game will therefore also practice the students’ analytical skills.

Exercise as presented to the students

No separate presentation needed.

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