

EDUCATIONAL ESCAPE ROOMS CREATION GUIDE

MADE BY LOGOS NGO

With the support of the Visegrad Fund





Hello world! This guide was made during the implementation of the international training course “Escape to diversity” which was supported by the Visegrad fund. Training course was implemented in Poltava, Ukraine and was organized by the NGO Logos.

We created this manual for anyone who wants to use **escape rooms for educational purposes**. At our training course we educated 20 youth workers on how to build escape rooms for education. As a result, they created 3 escape rooms on such topics as ethnic, religious and gender/sexual minorities. You will be able to find information on those rooms in this guide as well.

This was not the first time that we used educational escape rooms. For more information visit our web-site <https://logos.ngo/what-we-do/escape-rooms-for-education/>



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1. What is educational escape room

Escape rooms are **live-action, team-based** games where players discover **clues**, solve **puzzles**, and **accomplish tasks** in one or more rooms to achieve a **specific goal** (usually escaping from the room) in a **limited amount of time**.

Players are attracted to escape rooms because they give an opportunity to test your **logic**, **work in a team** and **have fun**.

What makes escape rooms effective is the fact that you can use **edutainment - combination of education and entertainment**. Escape rooms provide players with a chance to live through a short and intense **adventure** and it is possible to change a regular escape room story such as bank robbery to something corresponding to your **educational goals**.

It is possible to make escape rooms on **math, history, chemistry, or biology**. And it is also possible to make an escape room about **domestic violence, women rights or active citizenship**.

See more information in the learning video that NGO Logos prepared here - https://youtu.be/XVQ8Ot_QyLQ

2. What you should start with when making educational escape room

When you start to develop educational escape room, answer these questions:

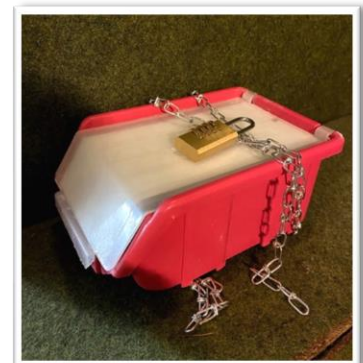
1. Why do you want to make it?
2. Which learning goals do you want to achieve?
3. What do you want people to feel and think after they will play your game or room?

Creating a clear educational goal **is always the first task**, as it will shape the story, puzzles, environment, and general logic of the room.

See a video that we prepared on this topic with a specific example of the learning goal and links to other examples of learning goals - <https://youtu.be/eD3m63Z8KtI>

3. Which equipment do you need?

Let's talk about **equipment**. Professional escape rooms can include sophisticated **locks, electronic equipment** and specially crafted puzzles which can be extremely expensive. But one of the challenges that educators can face is a **limited budget** as well as **limited time**.



The good news is that you can make an escape room with a limited budget and in a short period of time. We have experience of making educational escape rooms with a **budget of 50 euro and within 2-3 days.**

When speaking about necessary equipment, one can build an escape room with paper, markers and tape. Equipment is not the most important part of the educational escape room. What is most important is a **good and involving idea** and some **imagination.**

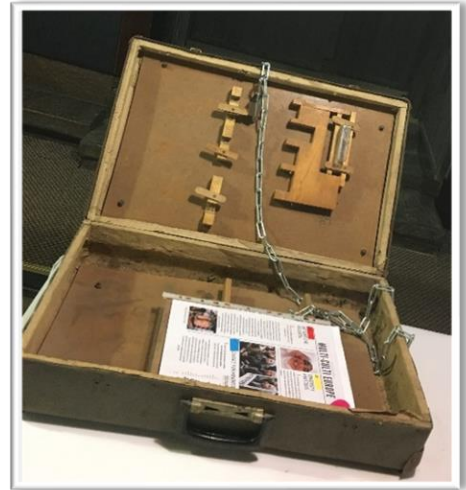


In the link below you can find **toolkits** to build rooms created by youth workers from Europe.

All of these rooms were built, tested and played several times. And to build them you will not need more than 50 euro.

<https://logos.ngo/materials/>

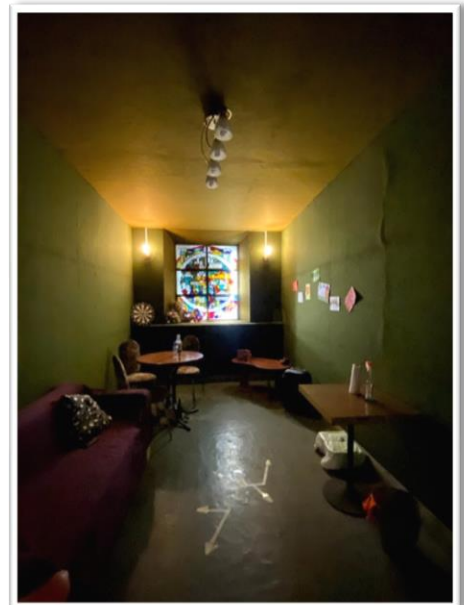
See a video version with additional information here - <https://youtu.be/KDKkAGoMTvA>



4. How to choose a room

It is literally possible to build a room in just **10 square meters.** But still there are some recommendations.

1. Best size for the room is **15-40 square meters.**
2. It is great to have at least **two spaces** in the room divided by **the door with a lock or other obstacle.**
3. It is of greatest importance to make sure that your room is **safe.**
4. If you have several rooms to choose from, pay close attention to the **furniture, equipment, painting, flowers.**
5. Ensure that you have enough **air and light** in the room.



See the video version with additional information and more detailed recommendations - <https://youtu.be/3uoWUu3mzVw>

5. Narrative levels.

Escape rooms can have different Narrative levels.

Level 1: Collection of puzzles without a theme or narrative.

Level 2: Escape room with theme and decorations matching with it but no story.

Level 3: Escape room has a narrative, players have their roles, puzzles do not move the narrative.

Level 4: Escape room with narrative and puzzles are part of storytelling. This is the level we need to aim for to get more solid learning outcomes.

When creating an educational escape room you need to strive to achieve level 4 narrative. This will not only let players get involved in the game, but will also cover the simplicity of puzzles and equipment.

See the video that we prepared where we explain in more details what each narrative level means and what should be in the level 4 narrative level escape room -

<https://youtu.be/PIPTM-wU4ns>

6. Story

To create a good story start with your learning goal and objectives. You also should think about the existing issue, knowledge you want to provide, attitudes you want to develop. We have a very positive experience of creating stories based on real-life situations, cases, news.

All stories have 4 main elements:

1. Introduction - you learn about the setting, you meet the hero and understand basic principles of the world, it's possibilities and limitations
2. Problem, challenge or call to action. A problem arises - that needs to be solved through investigation, escape, trial, runaway.
3. ReSolution. Players take some actions to solve the problem. They will face some difficulties and problems and will have to make decisions which end with culmination.
4. Ending. What happens after final decisions. Here the moral of the story is shaped.

Story in the escape room is delivered through proper introduction, appropriate environment, interesting puzzles that are connected to the story and deep debriefing.

See more information on the story in escape rooms here - <https://youtu.be/nGAHUGuLKIU>

7. Puzzles

Usually, for a one hour long escape room, you will need 8-12 puzzles. The flow of puzzles can be linear, where solving one puzzle leads to discovering the other one, nonlinear where you can solve multiple puzzles at the same time and mixed.

Main rules that you need to remember when developing puzzles:

- Go from easy to hard puzzles.
- You can make puzzles from anything.
- Make sure that your puzzle is not too easy and too not difficult.
- Don't use puzzles which require specific knowledge to solve them.
- Make sure that you have only one solution for the puzzle.
- One object plays once.
- Make puzzles easier as you will most probably think that the puzzle is too easy, but for players, it will usually be the opposite
- Use different types of puzzles.



In this video you will be able to see more information on puzzles in escape room and detailed explanation on each point stated above - <https://youtu.be/YDOLVMLZc7c>

8. Environment



The advantage of the escape room is that during the game players are in the new world or reality made by you, they are fully focused on the game and ready to learn.

To make an advanced environment is time costly, expensive and sometimes not relevant. But at the same time, if your story is taking place in the office, living room or school class - you can add some tasty details, without much additional effort.

Check this video to learn which rules should be followed in terms of environment in any escape - https://youtu.be/84X_lrfSaSg

9. Testing

After you've created the story, developed puzzles, connected them to each other and set the environment it is time to test it. Testing is extremely important as it leads you to understand and improve many aspects of your room.

When you do a test round, make sure that you have everything included - gamemaster's intro, puzzles, communication means, final debriefing and so on. Check this video to learn what you need to do while doing test round - <https://youtu.be/2xlOeWtnDDM>

10. How to ensure that your room is actually educational



While building educational escape rooms it is necessary **to keep in mind your original goal**. You do it to deliver some ideas and achieve some objectives. So if you are designing puzzles or creating the environment always ask yourself **how it might help you in making your room educational**.

See this video to learn what makes escape room educational and how to do debriefing - <https://youtu.be/8FJqrYrdPjs>

11. Gamemaster's role

Gamemaster is the person running the game. When we make an educational escape room, this is the most important person, because the gamemaster's actions can make the game interesting or boring and disappointing.

Gamemaster's role is:

1. To brief players before the game.
2. To give rules.
3. To explain how communication with players will happen and how they can get hints. By the way, think of how you will give hints in advance.
4. To monitor how the game is going.
5. To make debriefing and explain things players didn't understand
6. To restart the room.



Check our video where we provide detailed explanation on each of the points stated above - <https://youtu.be/lvZ-2xAKMY>

Escape room toolboxes created during the project.

1. Broadcast studio

The educational goal of the room: To show that there is still discrimination of Muslims, and it is bad. We are here to stop publishing the discriminative article. And to fill the gaps.

The main goal for players during the game:

Players are independent journalists who want to reduce negative impact of propaganda. Their main goal is to find the article before it published.



See the detailed description of the room, pictures, explanation of puzzles and much more in this folder -

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RZJwi7vH_YVfVvKE9A0kXm1m1dGp3e7KT?usp=sharing

2. Hata na tata

The educational goal of the room:

- Think about equal distribution of family responsibilities
- Appreciate woman's work as a mother, a wife and a working person
- Understand difficulties and their effect on mental health
- Breaking of stereotypes
- "Smaller issues can lead to unbearable results"



The main goal for players during the game:

Friends of father have to help him do all household tasks and look after children before social workers come to check everything.

See the detailed description of the room, pictures, explanation of puzzles and much more in this folder -

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FQtRTyuDyRaBr0kKKllyvynZm98RmXuc?usp=sharing>

3. Sürgünlük

The educational goal of the room:
Retelling the story of Crimean Tatars deportation in 1944. Understanding difficulties of the ethnic minorities in Ukraine.

The main goal for players during the game:

To collect all pages from a diary belonging to a grandfather while discovering the story of him being deported to Uzbekistan.



See the detailed description of the room, pictures, explanation of puzzles and much more in this folder -

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UbluOJpmpYIUAw_t39tkUKn0gt6DmU2f?usp=sharing