



ESCAPE
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EXCLUSION

STARTER KIT FOR EDUCATORS

INS & OUTS

Escape Adventures for innovation in education

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION:

Project:

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INTRO TO THE STARTER KIT

Dear reader, dear educator,

To provide high quality education in current times is challenging. It became clear that formal education approaches alone are not enough to educate students and prepare them for modern society. The challenge is also valid for participants in non-formal education in youth work.

Schools and youth work organisations in Europe are increasingly looking for different ways to innovate their educational approaches, in order to address the needs that current society puts on young individuals, the educators of these learners and the educational institutes that provide this education.

In this Starter Kit we use the terms **educators** and **learners**. **Educators** is a collective description of people who are involved in formal or non-formal education. **Learners** for this handbook are young people involved in formal or non-formal learning. In the Glossary you can find the full descriptions.

However, one of the biggest challenges they face is that most schools, school staff and youth workers themselves have (almost) no experience with innovative methods and non-formal education. They lack the competences and good practices for innovating education, which are an essential for implementing major innovative changes within educational approaches.

This challenge actually was the main trigger for the development of the project **Escape Exclusion** and the project's intellectual outputs. For this 24-months cooperation project a diverse team of teachers, youth workers and non-formal education trainers, all active in the educational programmes of the European Union, developed their own learning environment where 'their ideas could connect'.

We were prepared to fail, we learned a lot, we had fun, we experimented and discovered new things. Now we have new understandings and we see things in new perspectives. We collected the outcomes in this Starter Kit, that shows how innovation looks and feels like. And we want to share it with you to help you innovate your practice. Enjoy!

The **Escape Exclusion** authors team



THE STRUCTURE OF THE STARTER KIT: HANDBOOK- TOOLKIT- TUTORIAL- GLOSSARY


This Starter Kit focuses on content development for inclusive escape adventures and is meant to support you, educators and educational institutes and organisations, to develop educational escape adventures, and more generally to develop inclusive learning environments.

An escape adventure is a collaborative game, based on the escape room fundamentals. Escape rooms can be found all over the world. In those regular commercial rooms you need to find your way out usually in 1 hour.

The escape adventures we focus on are a broad variety of escape games that can be done or played in an educational setting (classrooms, youth centres, sports clubs, youth houses, etc.) and are inclusive for all learners. We kept the fundamentals of the escape room, but chose different formats that would better fit the educational settings. We have developed 9 formats of escape adventures: The escape board game, escape box, escape book, escape cards, escape folder, escape puzzle, escape map, escape space divider and escape suitcase.

The Starter kit explains the conceptual part of escape adventures in an educational and inclusive setting and how to create practical escape adventures and how to ensure that they are inclusive and educational. As a preparation, the partnership made an analysis on the needs of educators to develop creative and inclusive environments. The main challenges educators in Europe face are:

- 🔒 Lack of time: educators have too much work. They find it hard to invest extra time into a new methods, even if they see the potential.
- 🔒 Lack of resources (money and materials).
- 🔒 Lack of self-confidence and creativity: educators don't feel confident enough to create these learning environments or to deal with the unknown. It can feel scary to create something new of which you don't know exactly how it works or if the learners will like it.
- 🔒 Lack of support: Some school environments are not supportive for innovation, even if the individual educator is interested in making changes. Some educators feel judged and are afraid of the opinion of colleagues or boards.
- 🔒 Lack of clarity: They are 'balancing between 'self-guided learning' & 'guiding them with information and tips'; between 'letting them make mistakes' & 'prevention of mistakes'; between 'giving freedom' & 'setting boundaries'.



Educators are curious on how to use educational escape rooms, but they often don't use this tool because the step to act feels too big. They do not doubt the value of it and how it contributes to innovation in education. There is also a need to create more inclusive escape rooms and educators struggle with how to do that. To address these needs, the project team decided to develop a Starter Kit that supports educators to implement inclusive escape adventures in their practices. As a kick off, educators can just copy-paste one of 8 special escape adventure modules on Inclusion.

We believe that by creating this Starter Kit for our staff, our colleagues and professionals in the fields of education, we support them to overcome the obstacles they face to innovate their practices. This Starter Kit supports understanding relevant concepts, skills and competence development related to escape game creation in 4 parts:

- 🔒 The **HANDBOOK** contains the concepts on which these escape adventures are based - games, game mechanics and gamification; creative learning environments; ownership of learners; inclusion; etc. - for a deeper understanding of creative and inclusive learning environments.
- 🔒 The **TOOLKIT** is a gallery of 8 complete, developed and designed inclusive escape adventures for those who are not confident (yet) in making their own escape adventure. These 8 inclusion modules will give the opportunity to try out escape adventure(s) with a minimum of time investment, as they are developed as complete copy-paste modules on inclusion topics. Print- setup according to instructions and go!
- 🔒 The **TUTORIAL** gives a supportive detailed step-by-step description for educators to develop their own educational and inclusive escape adventures.
- 🔒 The **GLOSSARY**

Let's go and take a look at learning!



THE INTRO

The Handbook is the first part of the Starterkit.

It contains an overview of where the project and the escape adventures came from and how the project team approached this idea of innovating the school and youth work practices in order to come to Inclusive Classrooms and Inclusive Youth spaces.

The Handbook is divided in 6 chapters:

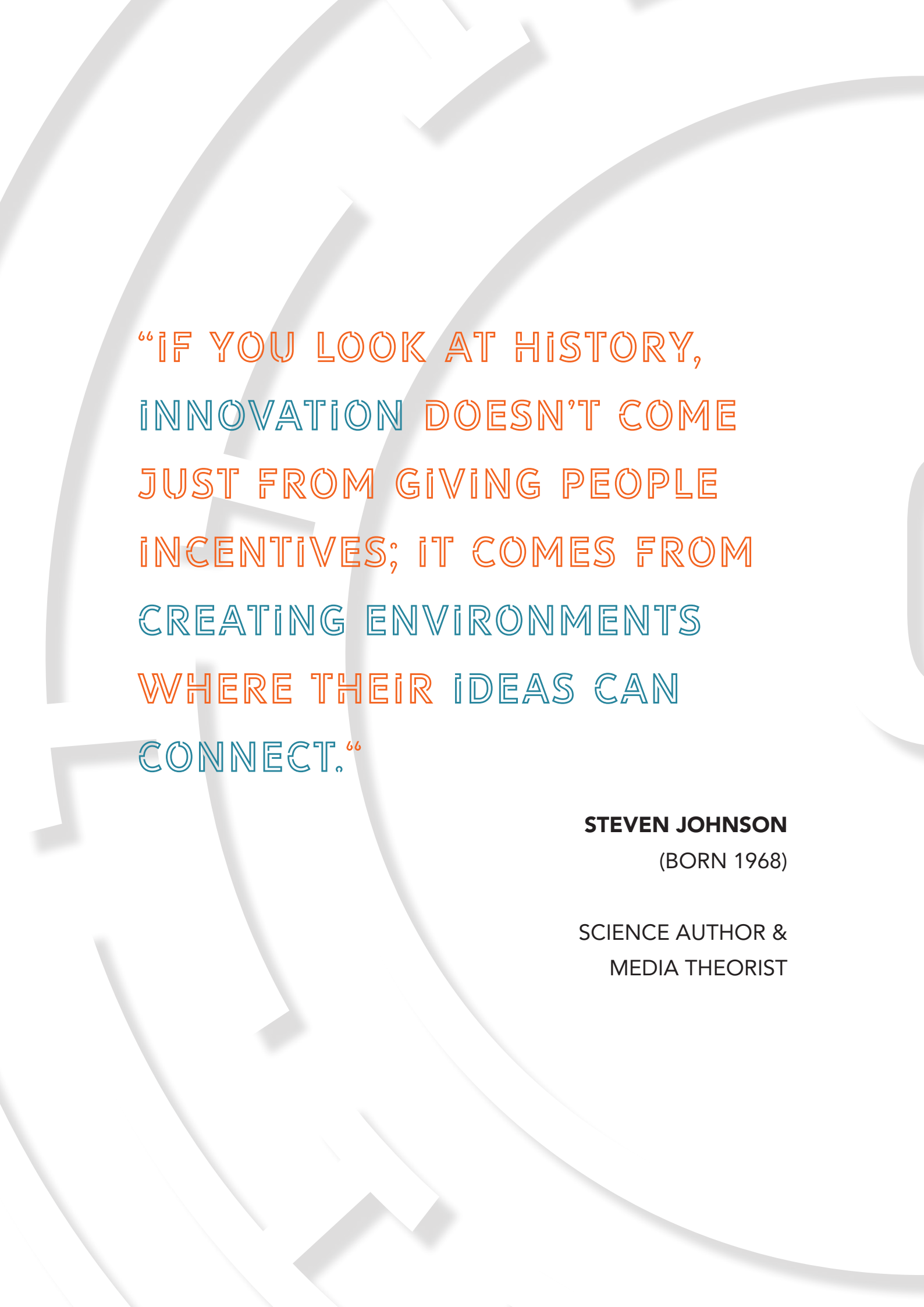
1. The Escape Exclusion Project
2. Games in education
3. Building a Creative learning environment
4. The game adventure: Educational inclusive escape adventures
5. Focus area: Educational element- Giving ownership to learners
6. Focus area: Inclusion element - How we can make it (more) inclusive

A large, stylized teal gear graphic is positioned on the right side of the page, partially overlapping the text. The gear is composed of several curved segments that form its teeth and body.

PART I:

HAND BOOK

**on creating
inclusive
educational
escape adventures**



“IF YOU LOOK AT HISTORY,
INNOVATION DOESN'T COME
JUST FROM GIVING PEOPLE
INCENTIVES; IT COMES FROM
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS
WHERE THEIR IDEAS CAN
CONNECT.”

STEVEN JOHNSON

(BORN 1968)

SCIENCE AUTHOR &
MEDIA THEORIST



CHAPTER

01

**THE
ESCAPE
EXCLUSION
PROJECT**

CHAPTER 1: THE ESCAPE EXCLUSION PROJECT

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

This Starter Kit has been developed as part of the project Escape exclusion - Educational inclusive escape adventures for schools and youth work. It is a Strategic Partnership project in Key Action 2, with financial support of Erasmus+ School education, specifically the Latvian National Agency - Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra (State Education Development Agency).

Erasmus+ is one of the educational programmes of the European Union, that support the quality development of both formal and non-formal education. Erasmus+ gives organisations and institutes that work in educational fields the possibility for capacity building by developing international (cross-sectoral) cooperation projects. With these long-term Cooperation projects organisations can develop and innovate their practices and education in Europe and contribute to the quality development of youth work in Europe.



ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT

The project Escape Exclusion is building on a longer cooperation between partners. The origin of this project is a seminar in Salamanca in 2014 where 4 of the key actors met and expressed their interest to work together on the topic of Creative Learning Environments. This resulted in 3 long-term Cooperation Partnership projects:

- 🔒 **2015 - 2017 Looking at Learning (L@L)** cross-sectoral Strategic Partnership project on Innovation: In this 24-months project, 6 project partners from both the formal and non-formal education sector, from Latvia, Netherlands and Spain developed the first ever useful products for the educational escape room, and research on Creative Learning Environments. The aim of the project was to provide space and support for cross-sectoral cooperation of professionals in formal and non-formal education on innovation of education in order to create contemporary and successful learning environments for young people. This means we zoomed in to what makes a creative learning environment a safe and successful learning environment for young people. You can find more detailed information here (link) <https://lookingatlearning.net/looking/>
- 🔒 **2018 - 2019 CLEAR** (Creative Learning Environments- Adapted and Renewed): A Strategic Partnership project on Sharing Good practices. In this 11-months project, 4 project partners Italy, Latvia, Netherlands and Spain exchanged good learning environment practices, which other partners took to experiment with, by using other target groups, other space, other timing, other materials etcetera, partners adapted and renewed these good practices and they extended their Toolkit. Meanwhile partners used the opportunity to also discuss the concept of creative Learning environments. You can find more detailed information <https://lookingatlearning.net/clear/>
- 🔒 **2020-2023 - Escape Exclusion:** Escape Exclusion has been developed as a 24-months cooperation project with 7 partners to take place 2020-2022, but because of Covid-19, the end has been postponed until 31st of May 2023.

PROJECT PARTNERS

We had a base to construct our partnership and invited two schools that were very interested in this project and competent in certain fields, which meant they could make a valuable contribution to the already existing cooperation between the other 5 partners.: Our partnership consist of 7 project partners:

ITALY:

Stranaidea Cooperativa Sociale is a social cooperative type A (personal services, social, health and educational services) aimed at promoting the welfare of people and the prevention of risk situations. Stranaidea works with a broad range of individuals and groups, like disabled, refugees, gypsy groups, children and families at risk, homeless, and other fewer opportunity groups. The objectives of the various services are pursued through the methodology of community development.

LATVIA:

Gulbene municipality (GM) consists of 13 villages and Gulbene city administrative territory. The main aim is to provide the community for the needed services and to represent the interests of the local residents. GM initiates different social and educational activities that address the needs of the different local population groups, among them youth, disabled and disadvantaged people to help them carry out their ideas and ambitions to improve quality of life and to facilitate their active civil participation.

Jaunpils Secondary School is the only educational institution in the district of Jaunpils that is comprehensive educational institution, which provides several educational programmes: Preschool education program (for 2 to 6 years old children), Basic education program (1st-9th class), General secondary education program (10th-12th class), Basic education program for children with learning disorders. The school also provides a wide variety of interest and after-school programmes for pupils of all age groups:

NETHERLANDS:

VO De Vallei is a school for Democratic Education and thus has a different educational approach than 'conventional' formal secondary schools. The school offers education based on the learning goals and learning needs of each student, not divided by age groups in classes. The school has subject teachers for most of the conventional subjects and students can choose to attend classes being organised by these teachers. The main governance model being used is Sociocracy and decisions are being made through the Sociocratic decision model.

Youth Exchange Service (YES!) gives young people the opportunity to explore the world and the possibilities the world has for them. They empower people by giving them space to develop themselves on a personal and professional level. Their target groups are young people in the age of 14-30, in mixed groups of young people with various social- economical level, educational level religion and cultural background. They work mainly on a European level and have developed various Erasmus+ projects.

SPAIN:





Asociación Promesas is a Promoter of Methodologies in Education for a more Sustainable and Alternative Society and has been set up in order to find alternative solutions to the current situation of our European society regarding youth issues and education. Promesas acts on the lack of individualization of learning processes for learners and other problems as a result of current forms of education. Promesas is a platform to work for and with the citizens, through the implementation of different educational activities and projects to contribute to their self-development, in order to create an alternative and better society.

La Milagrosa y Santa Florentina school is a bilingual school using English as a second language in both primary and secondary education. It is a christian based educational centre that is approached not only academically, but relentlessly angling our educational approaches towards defining and developing responsible, critical, solidary and Christian citizens in our society. The school targets children and young people in a broad range: first and second year of kindergarten, primary and secondary education, middle professional training towards assistance to individuals in situations of dependency, high professional training towards social inclusion. In different levels their methodology is based on project based learning.

AIM AND EXPECTED IMPACT

The main aim of the cross-sectoral project is for the participating schools and youth organisations together to develop, create and implement Inclusive Learning Classrooms/Spaces, in which educators innovate their educational practices and develop their competences through the use of inclusive escape adventures.

Following the objectives the project had the following activities:

-  **3 live Transnational Partner meetings**, various online cooperation meetings;
-  **2 learning mobilities for professionals**: sharing and developing inclusive educational escape formats, developing relevant competences;
-  **3 intellectual Outputs**: 3 specific products, explained more in detail below;
-  **4 multiplier events**: dissemination of the products and outcomes of this project.

PROJECT TIMELINE IMAGE : COMING SOON!

For those who want to know more: <https://lookingatlearning.net/escape/>

Through the testing phase with respondents, educators and youngsters that were engaged in the try-outs, we were able to identify which formats had the biggest potential for relevant learning outcomes and were more easily adaptable to different environments. From the 9 formats we have identified in IO1: Find your way, we have developed an additional 8 completely developed and designed ready-to-use inclusive escape adventure modules for the Toolkit in this Starter Kit.





THE CONCRETE PRODUCTS OF OUR PROJECT. INTELLECTUAL OUTPUTS:

IO1: FIND YOUR WAY:

Development of 9 Escape adventure formats for educational settings. The outcomes have been described in detail in the [Find your Way document](#) and the formats have been used to build 9 fully developed and ready for copy-paste inclusive educational adventures, which can be found in The Toolkit: Part 3 of this Starter Kit;

IO2: INS & OUTS:

Starter Kit for educators on using and developing inclusive educational escape adventures. The Starter Kit contains of 4 parts:

-  **Part 1: Handbook** - description of the development of innovative escape adventures, the project and the concepts linked to inclusive educational escape adventures;
-  **Part 2: Toolkit** - 8 fully developed and described Inclusion educational escape adventure examples, including fully developed and designed downloadable material. Ready to be used (copy-pasting). (page xx)
-  **Part 3: Tutorial** - for detailed description on all aspects of how to make inclusive escape adventures for educational settings;
-  **Glossary**



IO3: INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS:

Overarching research in various aspects of creative learning environments, ownership of learners and inclusivity. During the whole project, partners have collected data and feedback from users and stakeholders in order to understand and learn about important aspects and effects on the learners and educators of the escape adventures and the Creative learning environment in general.

EXPECTED IMPACT OF THE PROJECT:

Partners have:


- 🔒 Strengthen their capacity as a European long-term cooperation partner;
- 🔒 Developed their project management skills;
- 🔒 Increased their knowledge of Erasmus+ and European policies;
- 🔒 Built their network of stakeholders;
- 🔒 Extended their activities on a local, regional and international level.

Participating educators have developed professional competences on:

- 🔒 Using games and gamification as a base of the practice;
- 🔒 Being more learner-centred, letting go, giving ownership to young people and creating the conditions to better youth participation. Use of democratic or sociocratic decision making;
- 🔒 Know and use of inclusive methods, tools, and implement inclusivity in their educational practices, especially on inclusive learning;
- 🔒 Working in an international context and sharing practices.

As a result of this capacity building, young people directly and indirectly involved in this project will be able to participate in a more playful and inclusive learning environment and have more possibilities to develop 21-st century skills.

The experience and the Intellectual Outputs will be shared among hundreds of educators and schools and disseminated in the national and European youth work field and school education field. You reading this Starter Kit, shows that we were successful.



“WHEN YOU ARE PLAYING,
YOU ARE LEARNING
THINGS, WHEN YOU STOP
DISCOVERING AND LEARNING
NEW THINGS, YOU START TO
GET BORED”

RAPH KOSTER

GAME DESIGNER & THEORIST

CHAPTER

02

**GAMES
IN
EDUCATION**

CHAPTER 2: GAMES IN EDUCATION

Education is changing and innovation is visible. Games have an important role in the innovation of education. Despite the fact that games were often seen as light entertainment, it became more proven that games are serious business. Also, games got more consciously connected to learning, but also used in policy making, commercial strategies and product development.

Of course we have to be honest. We are not neutral in this. We love games! Some of us could be called game fanatics. Gabi (YES) always says you can wake her up anytime to play games. At home, she has a cabinet from floor to ceiling filled with (board)games and jigsaw puzzles. Javi (Promesas) feels that games are an opportunity to test your competences & creativity in a fun and safe environment. Jurgis (Jaunpils) is approaching games from the artistic side, as he explains that for him games are a form of human art to play with time and space. And so all of us have a special connection to games. What we have in common is for us games in education are putting two of our passions together: games and education. Now let's get to know more about games.

According to Raph Koster theory - fun and learning are essentially the same activity in the brain. In history, schools were not at all associated with fun and play. In youth work, games, fun and learning have been part of the way of working with young people for quite some time. In the last decades also schools and teachers have been incorporating game mechanics into their classrooms, in order to engage students more into their curriculum. Games can serve as a perfect way to make education more fun and motivating for young people. But before we zoom in into games in education we need to explain some basic elements of games to understand the next steps.

"Games are one or more casually linked series of challenges in a simulated environment"

E. Adams & A. Rollings - Game designers

GAME MECHANICS

The mechanics of a game is “how it works”, what you have to do and how you have to do it to play. The game mechanics are the central axis around which the experience turns. It connects the elements with the players and makes dynamics possible. Some examples of game mechanics are:

- 🔒 **Action planning**, like in Risk: make a strategy for attacking others-usually in more complex games),
- 🔒 **Movement**: (like in chess where you move your piece according to the rules, King can move only one step in any direction, Tower only to the side, backwards or forward)
- 🔒 **Buy/Sell**, like in Monopoly- buying and trading your streets and houses.
- 🔒 **Storytelling**, Story cubes: You create a story with that come out of cubes.
- 🔒 **Throw the dice** -Like in Ludo (Don't get angry, man) you advance with your figure the number of steps on the dice. When you throw six, you can throw again. You need to throw six to get a new piece on the board.
- 🔒 **Role Games** (like Dungeons and Dragons where your character influences the way you play).

More game mechanics you can find in the 'Tutorial' part of this Starter kit.

Game mechanics are always there in a game. A game designer then combines these game mechanics in a creative way. This gives the game its uniqueness. When we decide to design our own escape adventure or escape game, and we are the game designers of an escape adventure, we need to design the specific game mechanics for that. In escape adventures, we use storytelling for sure, because each escape game has a narrative and that influences what people do in the game. Then we have a lot of options for game mechanics. Sometimes players need to collect parts of a puzzle, sometimes they need to translate pictures into numbers, or numbers into letters. Hiding and finding is also often present in escape games. Which other game mechanics we use, is up to us, as our own game designers.

“Games are a series of meaningful choices”

Sid Meier - Designer of “Civilization”

If we design games, we want (young) people to participate and be engaged in our games. Therefore, it is important that they are motivated to do so. If we look at the 3 basic motivators from games that we are getting in education are:

- 🔒 **AUTONOMY** - the capacity to choose and have fun, within the rules;
- 🔒 **RECOGNITION** - the reward, and the need to keep moving forward;
- 🔒 **PROGRESSION** - growing the levels of the competences level and progress.

Steven Reiss, a psychologist, specialised in motivation, goes even more in detail with his list of “16 basic human motivators”. If you are interested and want to understand more in detail how these motivators influence the thinking and behaviour of our learners, and how we as game designers can use it, please take a look at the book: [“Who Am I?: The 16 Basic Desires That Motivate Our Behavior and Define Our Personality”](#), by Steven Reiss

When we design games, we take advantage of these motivators and trigger our learners to develop an intrinsic motivation or an inner readiness to get engaged. That is when the real magic of learning happens!

GAMIFICATION

Another concept we need to understand about games is Gamification, which refers to the application of game mechanics in a context which is not a game. Authorities, companies, schools and many social environments have been gamifying their processes in order to get users engaged, increase participation, perform better and get better results and make content more enjoyable and engaging.

In education, gamification refers mainly to the use of games or game-like elements in the learning process. This can include the use of points, rewards, challenges, and progress tracking to make learning more engaging and enjoyable. For example, students may earn points for completing assignments, or be rewarded for reaching certain milestones in their learning journey, but we have to try to avoid approaching this as simply “external motivators” and create a more natural and immersive process on which they jump in naturally.

After some years of Gamification processes, we can find all kinds of materials, success stories and inspiration that we can apply on our target group and working environments.

For instance: there have been municipalities applying gamification to regulate traffic and encourage drivers to respect traffic rules (In the Netherlands you can see led panels showing a happy face when drivers are under the speed limit) and most of the apps and programs for fitness and workout are based on gamified principles.

The impact is simple: it helps to motivate them, it triggers them and encourages them to fulfil their goals and make the changes they want or need and they do it because It's fun! (It's a Win/Win)

GAMES IN EDUCATION

Teachers have been using games in formal education because they provide a fun and engaging way to learn. The same goes for youth workers and other people involved in non-formal education.

Game-based Learning [GBL] is a term that refers to the use of traditional or commercial games in education. These games were not created with the intention to educate, but are being used as an educational tool in a stand-alone way or as a combination of several games. For instance: Many teachers are using the "rush hour" game to help students improve their spatial thinking and solve logic problems faster.

"We are born with the ability to play and it is through play that we are able to know the world, to be amazed and to survive!"

Javi Quilez (@javiquil), Non-formal educator





Games can also be designed to be educational and challenging, providing learners with opportunities to learn and grow while still having fun. They can also be customised to fit the specific learning needs of the learners making it easier for educators to tailor their lessons to meet the needs of their learners.

By playing games, learners can develop a variety of skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, collaboration, and communication. Additionally, games can also be used to teach specific content and concepts, such as language, history, science, and mathematics, in a more interactive and memorable way.

Furthermore, playing games is also a social activity that helps learners to develop social skills and build relationships with their peers. This can lead to a more positive and supportive learning environment, where learners are more motivated to participate and learn.

To sum up: Games are used in education as a way to make learning more enjoyable and effective. It supports learners to develop a variety of competences, skills and knowledge. In this way games can give an added value to formal education.

HOW WE UNDERSTAND AND APPROACH GAMES IN EDUCATION WITHIN THIS PROJECT

In an Educational Escape Adventure the mechanics are embedded in each puzzle flow and lead the players through a series of interactions that will create some situations and trigger some emotions (this is called Game Dynamics). Our approach was to try out and explore the potential for each of our educational settings.

In this project we experimented with several educational escape adventure formats taking the best of each of the game mechanics, the gamification processes and the game based learning to design a specific learning process that puts learners' competences to the test while acquiring new ones inside of a story, a narrative and taking all forms of inclusion as the central element.

Before we go into the specifics of designing these escape adventures, we invite you to look at these escape adventures as a form of a creative learning environment. In the next chapter we explain what a creative learning environment is and important elements we have to take into account when designing these educational methods.



“THE BEST EVIDENCE OF
HUMAN CREATIVITY IS OUR
TRAJECTORY THROUGH LIFE.
WE CREATE OUR OWN LIVES.
AND THESE POWERS OF
CREATIVITY, MANIFESTED IN
ALL THE WAYS IN WHICH
HUMAN BEINGS OPERATE,
ARE AT THE VERY HEART OF
WHAT IT IS TO BE A HUMAN
BEING.”

SIR KEN ROBINSON

(1950-2020)

PROFESSOR & EDUCATION EXPERT



CHAPTER

03

**BUILDING A
CREATIVE
LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT**

CHAPTER 3: BUILDING A CREATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In many researches, TED talks and articles, experts on education express their concern about educational environments being outdated. Main conclusions are that:

- 🔒 The concept of learning is evolving and different educational approaches are needed;
- 🔒 Learning needs of young people are not the same anymore, as possibilities and resources have been changing significantly;
- 🔒 The role of educators should change from being the main knowledge providers to becoming learning supporters or learning coaches.

Based on these conclusions, in 2014 we decided to dive into the concept of creative learning environments in order to innovate our practices and find ways to address these needs and make radical changes in our work with young people. We have worked on this topic ever since.

In this project, we work with the escape adventure as a tool for a creative learning environment. Therefore we feel the need to clarify what our understanding is of a creative learning environment. We believe it has roots in holistic and organic learning, and creates the conditions for curiosity and creativity, but is also related to feeling of physical and emotional safety.

HOLISTIC AND ORGANIC LEARNING

In our vision, holistic and organic learning are essential for creating learning environments. It does not only involve the brain, but also the body. Following Howard Garners' model of multiple intelligences, in a creative learning environments we give space for various and diverse intelligences:

- 🔒 **Visual-spatial;**
- 🔒 **Verbal-linguistic;**
- 🔒 **Logical-mathematical;**
- 🔒 **Bodily-kinesthetic;**
- 🔒 **Interpersonal;**
- 🔒 **Intrapersonal;**
- 🔒 **Musical-rhythmic;**
- 🔒 **Naturalistic.**

Organic learning refers to the non-linearity of learning. Generally, learning is seen as a step by step linear process. In reality it is hardly ever a structured process. Sometimes it is a step back, or three steps to the side, before we can go forward again. Learning is more comparable to a dance than to a hike, because we move according to our interest, the results or non-results, our environment, our mood and so many other aspects that influence our learning at each moment. Recognizing the non-linearity of learning, and seeing learning as a natural, organic learning that happens in various ways and moments, was an important aspect in the (own) learning process.

As a result, in our projects, the creative learning environment has been identified as an organic, holistic concept - an ecosystem that includes the activity and the outcomes of the learning. This means that we see learning as a natural, organic process, which allows different paces and styles of learning, it is holistic, using all the senses, the body and mind and soul. It is learner centred and based on creativity and curiosity, on trying out, and discovery, rather than on copy-pasting pre-selected answers.

In the Looking at Learning (L@L) project, one of the Intellectual Outputs was a research on the topic of CLE "The Key Elements of Creative Learning Environments: A Case Study from Latvia, Spain and the Netherlands": <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B23HzLyhtRAMVlc3REYwWHNRa3M/view?resourcekey=0-XJFonMaBj1Ji73Lbd7x3xw>

The main result of the L@L research document are the 5 Key Elements of Creative Learning Environments:

- 🔒 **the role of the educator;**
- 🔒 **(division of) responsibilities;**
- 🔒 **interaction and synergy;**
- 🔒 **learning space and materials;**
- 🔒 **time limit.**



SPACE FOR CURIOSITY

“Curiosity is a natural aspect of humanity and it is the engine of achievement”, as Ken Robinson, our main inspirator, said. We are born curious, which we can witness clearly when we see children discovering the world from the first days of their lives. Being curious is a catalyst for learning, it creates the condition to explore and discover the unknown, however scary that may feel sometimes. The reality is, that during the period of growing up, many of us lose the capacity of being curious, as the rather strict school systems don't appreciate curiosity too much.

Curiosity helps to keep us motivated, if things don't work out the first time and keeps us wanting to understand, to solve the issue or achieve our goal. Curiosity therefore contributes to failing forward or keep on trying. Creative learning environments that spark curiosity will likely engage learners in their exploration and their learning in a playful way. The concept of 'escape games' is built on curiosity and playfulness, therefore we believe escape adventures have good potential to become a good creative learning environment.

SPACE FOR CREATIVITY

Creativity is a phenomenon where the use of imagination or original ideas forms something new and valuable. It allows us to deal with not knowing and finding various ways to find things out and to learn new things. Creativity is also the ability to use not only the brain, but to use all the intelligences (see [Tutorial, page 107](#)), and use all the senses to express thoughts and feelings. Freely combining thoughts, experiences, memories and feelings brings creativity out. Education could and maybe should be the place where creativity is embraced and used in order to spark learning. In an escape adventure we need to give enough space for creativity in order to spark learning.

“The best evidence of human creativity is our trajectory through life. We create our own lives. And these powers of creativity, manifested in all the ways in which human beings operate, are at the very heart of what it is to be a human being.”

Sir Ken Robinson, education expert

SAFE SPACE

From our research we concluded that learners who feel free to try and discover, go through a more profound learning process. Therefore, creating a safe environment, both physical and emotional, supports learning and has no major negative consequences. In order for learners to feel free, educators have to let them free and let them try out. Sir Ken Robinson said:

“If you are not prepared to be wrong, you will never come up with anything original”.

If we educators want to prepare our learners to come up with original ideas and solutions and learn to think for themselves, we need to encourage them to feel ok by being wrong, and not create the fear of not being good enough. Being prepared to be wrong is essential to feel safe in a learning environment. A non-judgemental and diverse learning environment also contributes to inclusion.

More details about these 3 aspects you can find in [chapter 6: giving ownership to learners](#).







CHAPTER

04

**THE GAME
ADVENTURE:
EDUCATIONAL
INCLUSIVE
ESCAPE
ADVENTURES**

CHAPTER 4: THE GAME ADVENTURE: EDUCATIONAL INCLUSIVE ESCAPE ADVENTURES

So we are talking about escape adventures, but we have only provided you with a very general description in the intro of the Starterkit. Now that you know the context - the project, the role of games in education and creative learning environments, it is time to zoom in on what the escape adventure really is, and what the potential is for it in the educational field.

Just to check with you: Have you heard about escape rooms before?

Escape rooms can be found all over the world and are live presence leisure time games, where a group of people needs to get out of 'escape' a room/space in a certain time limit. Usually the story is related to the world being attacked or possibly destroyed, spies and criminals, etc. and the group needs to prevent the bad things from happening and save a person or 'save the world'.

Escape rooms are very popular among young people and some of us educators saw a great opportunity to explore the escape room concept for education fields. So we did and started with the idea in 2014. The L@L project was (one of) the first projects in Europe to connect a popular leisure time game "escape rooms" with educational content.

It developed the concept of the Eduesc@peroom - a practical learning tool to foster a creative learning process. One of the main differences between regular escape games and Educational Escape Adventures resides in the analysis of the whole process that the educator is able to make during and after the game in order to create, together with the players, a bigger learning impact after the experience.

The Eduesc@peroom was presented in various conferences, the European Academy of Youth Work, conference on Innovation in Youthwork, Toolfair on educational tools, etc. It became a symbol of innovation in education. Various youth centres and schools are successfully using educational escape rooms in their practices. Although the Eduesc@peroom was a good concept, especially the schools and their teachers were struggling to fit it in within their educational context.

So from the escape room, we needed to go to other ways of the escape game, that gave opportunity to:

- 🔒 Also work with larger groups (20+ students/youngsters);
- 🔒 use other time frames;
- 🔒 have less time consuming preparations;
- 🔒 had a lower threshold for teachers: was more simple, easy to grasp and less fearful to try out;
- 🔒 more specific on inclusion and inclusivity.

Our starting point was to “make an educational game that young people would like to play”, just as the escape room was. As a result we came up with the educational inclusive escape adventure formats. The term ‘escape adventure’ has been chosen by the project team as a collective name for alternative educational escape formats.

What do we mean by an inclusive educational escape adventure and what makes it an ‘escape adventure’? Let’s look at the main elements of these escape adventure that are inclusive and educational:

- 🔒 escape element;
- 🔒 adventure element;
- 🔒 educational element;
- 🔒 inclusivity element.

ESCAPE ELEMENT

In escape adventures, it is all about escaping the situation - usually there are unpleasant or dangerous circumstances, or something that has bad consequences. In escape rooms the word escape is very literal, in escape adventures, it is more metaphorical. Escaping does not only mean getting out of somewhere, but to get rid of threats or risks, save somebody or something, or sometimes even save the whole world and escape a global disaster.

It could go even further and the escaping aspect might be related to something more abstract such as: escaping the ordinary; or escaping the grades (in school); or escaping the darkness; or escaping the boredom etc. At least, completing the escape adventure contributes to a better world or a more social, healthier, equal or simply a nicer world by solving tasks and riddles. Having an initially unclear, ambiguous and complex situation also strengthens this feeling of escaping the unknown (or why not also escaping the known), a life without autonomy or without clear directions.

ADVENTURE ELEMENT

The escape adventure needs to have a certain excitement and possible heroism to it. Adventure means an exciting, risky and unusual experience or action that includes excitement. Not something most students would link to formal education. But in educational escape adventures the players are in an exciting experience and they will be celebrated for their wisdom, their courage and problem-solving skills.

The task and risk are also creating this adventurous ambience by having the quest to find the password or secrets, find links, clues, hidden messages and all the keys to exit the door, putting together a puzzle etc. The adventure aspect is also supported by a Narrative that goes through the whole adventure and connects it's different elements, making sense and inspiring to continue until the end.

EDUCATIONAL ELEMENT

The educational escape adventure is learner-centred; it is based on learners' needs and giving responsibility to the learner. It encourages learners to explore and allows them to fail, using their curiosity and creativity. It gives space for different learning styles and encourages learners to be active and to look for their own answers, using their own competences and learning styles. In that environment the educator is not so much a knowledge provider, but more a supporter of learning by monitoring and interacting, but only when learners ask for it.

The learning aspect can be intertwined within the games and riddles, or the narrative so in this sense the educator is also setting up the environment, designing it in a way that the knowledge is hidden in it and the learners are discovering it and thus learning by themselves. What we add is that by reflection this knowledge is being brought up and made conscious, so they also become aware of their own learning process. An escape adventure can also be used as a spark, or a trigger for further learning on a specific topic or subject in school.

An important part of that makes the escape adventures educational is the space that is created for reflection on the learning experience and collecting learning outcomes. This is an element that doesn't exist in regular escape rooms and it was introduced as an important element in educational escape rooms. It gives the possibility for participants to reflect on the experience, question what happened, give and/or receive feedback and become aware of their learning. We go deeper in this element in **Chapter 5: Focus area: Educational element-giving ownership to learners.**

INCLUSIVITY ELEMENT

In the escape adventures that have been developed in this project, inclusion and inclusivity has an important role. It focuses on diversity in the group and using the potential of all members of the group, using various intelligences and learning approaches; it uses diverse (creative) materials and supports creativity to allow various ways of engagement and expressions of learning. Most escape adventures are planned to be a cooperative activity with emphasis on learning from and with each other. We go deeper in this element in [Chapter 6; Focus area: Inclusion element - how can we make it \(more\) inclusive](#)

THE ESCAPE FORMATS

The following step was to map out the possibilities of using different escape adventure formats that could be used in both formal and non-formal education. Here is an general overview of these formats:

1. ESCAPE BOARD GAME

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 🔒 Compact table top size
- 🔒 Easy to take with you
- 🔒 The concept is recognisable for people as a board game
- 🔒 If you have multiple copy's multiple small groups can play simultaneously

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- 🔒 To create it from scratch it can take a lot of time, especially designing the adventure's game mechanics and graphic design can take up a lot of time.
- 🔒 Playing time will be in general between 30 minutes and a few hours, depending on how complicated you make the Escape Board Game

SPACE TO PLAY:

To play you only need a small (indoor) space with one or more tables and enough chairs. If multiple groups play simultaneously, it is nice to have a big space so they don't interfere with each other.

2. ESCAPE BOOK

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 🔒 Mostly meant for individual use, optionally with some invitations to cooperate with others in moments.
- 🔒 A group of people can simultaneously work on the Escape Book.
- 🔒 Easy to take with you and use everywhere
- 🔒 Meant to be used over a long(er) period of time, possible to put away for a while and go back to it later.
- 🔒 Especially when printed in high quality it can be expensive to produce.

SPACE TO PLAY:

You don't need a specific place to play.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- 🔒 To create it from scratch it takes very long, because you need to create the complete storyline of the book, the puzzle mechanics and the graphic design. This is worth the time investment when you want to use it for large groups of people.
- 🔒 Playing time will be from days to weeks, possibly months depending on how long the book is.
- 🔒 It can be good to organise a common briefing before handing out the book to the players, and to organise an evaluation afterwards, so that players can share with each other their personal experiences and learning.

3. ESCAPE BOX

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 🔒 Compact table top size
- 🔒 Easy to take with you
- 🔒 If you have multiple copy's multiple small groups can play simultaneously
- 🔒 Easy to create

SPACE TO PLAY:

To play you only need a small (indoor) space with one or more tables and enough chairs. If multiple groups play simultaneously, it is nice to have a big space so they don't interfere with each other.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- 🔒 The box can be created in a short time, especially when the elements are kept simple
- 🔒 Playing time will be in general between 30 – 60 minutes and there can be some extra time for debriefing and evaluation.

4. ESCAPE CARD GAME

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 🔒 Small and easy to take with you, even a large amount of copies.
- 🔒 If you have multiple copy's multiple small groups can play simultaneously
- 🔒 Can easily be taken outdoors or on a school camp etc.

SPACE TO PLAY:

You just need a small place to play. Can be a table or even a blanket on the ground. A bigger space is nice to have if multiple groups are playing it at the same time, so that they don't interfere with each other.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- 🔒 Basically, it doesn't take a lot of time to design the card game if it doesn't have very complicated game mechanisms and consist mostly of text. A intricate graphic design will take more time to create.

Playing time will be in general between 30 – 60 minutes, with some additional time for debriefing and reflection.

5. ESCAPE FOLDER

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 🔒 Gives players a chance to mix group play and to also divide task or subfolders to players
- 🔒 Small and easy to take with you, even a larger amount of copies
- 🔒 If you have multiple copy's multiple small groups can play simultaneously
- 🔒 Can be easily made very visually attractive and as complex as you want and fits your target group.

SPACE TO PLAY:

You need just a small place to play. Can be a table or even a blanket on the ground. A bigger space is nice to have if multiple groups are playing it at the same time, so that they don't interfere with each other.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- 🔒 Basically, it doesn't take a lot of time to design the Escape Folder if it doesn't have very complicated game mechanisms and consist mostly of text. An intricate graphic design will take more time to create.
- 🔒 Playing time will be in general between 30 – 60 minutes, with some additional time for debriefing and reflection.

6. ESCAPE SPACE DIVIDER

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Is a very nice way to use a common space like a classroom in a new and different way than what the students are used to.
- Could be designed specifically for one specific space, or more general so that it can be used in several spaces.

SPACE TO PLAY:

You don't need a specific place to play.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- In principle it doesn't take a lot of time to design the Escape Divider, However it can be very specific to the intended space which then can make it more time demanding to create.
- Playing time will be in general between 60 – 90 minutes, with some additional time for debriefing and reflection.

7. ESCAPE MAP

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Uses your own neighbourhood and direct surrounding
- Invites players to physically move and explore their surroundings
- Always has to be adapted to the local situation / geography, but that makes it a unique experience.

SPACE TO PLAY:

Neighbourhood, city, town or village. It could also be adapted to be played in nature, but one of the characteristics is that it gives players the chance to 'rediscover' their own familiar surroundings.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

- In general it doesn't require a lot of time to create the escape map, but if the surrounding is completely new for you it can demand some extra time to get to know the area yourself before you can decide places of interest.
- Playing time will be generally between 60-120+ minutes. Time and distances covered in the Escape Map can and should be adjusted to the capabilities of your target group.

8. ESCAPE PUZZLE

CHARACTERISTICS:

Combines the idea of completing a (jigsaw) puzzle and solving puzzles and riddles.

Can be played individually or in groups

Easy to play on a table, multiple groups can easily play in the same room on tables

SPACE TO PLAY:

Can be played on a table in virtually any space.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

🔒 In general it doesn't take a lot of time to create the Escape Puzzle, but that also depends on how many puzzles and riddles you include or how much graphic designing is included.

🔒 Playing time will be in general between 30-60 minutes.

9. ESCAPE SUITCASE

CHARACTERISTICS:

Similar to the escape box, but it uses an already existing suitcase. This means you don't have to design or create that part.

Is very suited to take with you. Taking multiple Suitcases could require a car.

SPACE TO PLAY:

You can play it virtually wherever you can take the suitcase. A table could be nice to put the suitcase on.

TIME TO CREATE / PLAYING TIME:

🔒 Designing the Escape Suitcase does not require a lot of time. You use an old suitcase as the basis of the escape adventure. Most time goes into designing

🔒 The story and the puzzles and riddles. Playing time will be in general around 60 minutes.

From here, you could start implementing escape adventures in your practices. For that you could go to the Toolkit, where you can try out some fully developed escape adventures, or if you like a bigger challenge or adventure for yourself, to go to the Tutorial, to try to design and develop one escape adventure for your own practice.

But, before that we recommend you to read the two specific chapters on how to design and integrate - in our opinion - two important elements of the escape adventures : Ownership of learners and inclusion, in order to increase the quality of the learning environment you design.





CHAPTER

55

**FOCUS:
EDUCATIONAL
ELEMENT-
GIVING
OWNERSHIP
TO LEARNERS**

CHAPTER 5: FOCUS: EDUCATIONAL ELEMENT - GIVING OWNERSHIP TO LEARNERS

To educate learners and prepare them for modern society, educators and youth workers have been looking for different ways to innovate their educational approaches. The needs that society puts on young individuals are constantly changing, as are the needs of young people. How do we prepare the next generation for a future that is relatively unknown?

In recent years education has been focussing on Ownership and Self-directed learning, or also called "Agency":

"Agency is a new concept in education, so it is important to conceptualise it. It is the term used in the English language when it comes to what we call ownership. It is about involvement, initiated by the student and active participation in which the student expresses his own preferences, asks questions, tells the teacher what he likes, needs and wants, not only in class, but also outside of it in conversations and, for example, via email. Through cooperation and mediation, the student is more in line with the teacher.

The concept of agency is not the same as self-management. Self-direction means that students learn to set goals, select and adopt certain learning strategies and evaluate their own effectiveness in order to function increasingly independently. Self-management moves from social control to independence. Agency means that students work together with the teacher to create learning environments that stimulate their latent motivation. The student is therefore dependent on the teacher. This should offer choices to address the student's latent autonomy, create challenges to address the student's latent competence and provide opportunities for social interaction to address the latent connection." (Reeve, 2013)

By playing, children experiment. They can only really let their creativity run wild in a safe environment with minimal consequences. Play offers the opportunity to interact with others, and making discoveries through play can form a basis for later innovation, genuine creativity and intellectual curiosity. Play is crucial to children's development and the most instructive forms of interaction are with peers. Psychologists like Maslow and Rogers say that children are naturally curious and want to discover, know and experience.

Feeling is just as important as knowledge in the learning process and when children are given the freedom to satisfy their needs, they naturally become self-regulating and weigh their own needs against those of others. Spontaneous and meaningful learning delivers the best learning efficiency.

Education should lead to insight and understanding; curiosity and the urge to explore are the best drivers for learning. Self-regulation and cooperation are both drivers to motivation.

Another aspect of the learning to keep in mind, is the process-oriented versus result-oriented education. The question that pops up is: What do we want? - Young people, who have the perfect answer but who might not (fully) understand what it is really about, or do we want young people to be engaged in the process of fully understanding, but maybe haven't found their answer yet?

The reality is, that schools of course have to deal with a predetermined curriculum, and work with expected results from students, parents, higher education and society in general. The risk of this result-oriented approach is that students just learn what others expect them to, instead of what they are really interested in. Some schools, like the Democratic schools, have found ways to not put the result as the goal, but the learning process itself.

In non-formal education, as it does not have these official and strictly regulated requirements, the approach is often more oriented at the learning process itself. This process-oriented has the risk of not knowing and not guaranteeing the exact learning outcomes. The approach is more complex, needs more support, could have different learning outcomes for each learner, that can only partly be controlled by educators, and has a more long-term than short-term impact. But it also makes long-term learning possible. If we want to work with more deep understanding and learning, we need to create more space for process-oriented learning. The educational escape adventure is giving us that opportunity because it is based on curiosity and exploration by learners themselves and it gives space for trial and error. The true value is in the process of solving the riddles and codes, not so much in the result of escaping.



The Self Determination Theory (SDT) is all about motivation. It assumes that people have a natural tendency to grow when they are in the right, supportive environment. Us humans have a few basic needs that must be satisfied in order to enable the natural growth of people. These needs are, so to speak, the minimum conditions of learning:

🔒 AUTONOMY:

The experience of willpower and that you are responsible for your own actions. Autonomy is not the same as independence: it is about wanting, willingness and commitment to the activity rather than acting independently and alone. Opposite to autonomy is heteronomy, acting because of an externally imposed pressure or control.

🔒 COMPETENCE:

The sense of effectiveness while interacting with the environment. For example; the feeling that you can handle a task can make you take on a task. The experience of successfully performing a task confirms the feeling of competence.

🔒 RELATEDNESS:

The experience of love and care from significant others. Every human being needs contact with others, we are social beings with a need to belong. Security and trust create respectful relationships that can promote learning motivation.

"To be motivated means to be moved to do something"

Richard Ryan & Edward Deci - psychologist

The ideal learning environment promotes autonomy, competence and connectedness: according to Ryan and La Guardia (1999), autonomous learners have their own voice and will that they are allowed to use, they determine their own learning paths, are given responsibilities, feel seen, heard and accepted by their teachers so that they are not afraid to ask for help, are given assignments that are challenging and exploratory in nature, are given choices within a framework, often collaborate with classmates, receive feedback instead of grades, are not compared with each other.

Teachers are there to facilitate, not to dictate and control. So let learners try, make mistakes, help each other, and try again. In an escape adventure for example: let them figure it out! Stay back, observe (so you can have a great debriefing and talk about the process you have witnessed), do not interfere too fast. When players lose interest because it is difficult, you could invite another to help out and not give the answers yet. Think about what hints you can give as to get them one step further; not directly to the solution.

This approach needs educators to give learners more choices, to create a safe space to experiment and where mistakes can be made (without punishment). It needs educators, who think about the learners' perspective; working with the learner to find solutions instead of imposing from above. Try to give young people more responsibility so they can learn to take it! Create a space for wonder, curiosity, and exploration.

The more we support autonomy, competence and relatedness, the more we facilitate (intrinsic) motivation.

Through its needs-based approach, SDT provides concrete evidence-based guidelines for educators on how to create a motivational learning climate. The website: <https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/> offers a lot of information on the theory and the applications for education and many other topics.







CHAPTER

06

**FOCUS:
INCLUSION
ELEMENT-
HOW CAN WE
MAKE IT
INCLUSIVE**

CHAPTER 6: FOCUS: INCLUSION

ELEMENT - HOW CAN WE MAKE IT INCLUSIVE

“People are social animals, with a strong need to belong to groups. This need to be included in groups and interact with others is considered fundamental to what it means to be human. Inclusion has been shown to have many benefits, for individuals’ well-being and engagement as well as for their contexts (such as the workplace), and for minorities as well as majorities. Inclusion in groups is understood to have two dimensions: belonging and authenticity. People need to feel they are part of the group and that they can be their authentic selves in it.

For people who deviate from group norms, for example because they look, think, or act differently in some way, a sense of inclusion can be harder to achieve. This may be because other group members willingly or unwillingly exclude them, or because they exclude themselves. When individuals are excluded, they feel hurt and experience negative emotions and distress.’ This aversion to being excluded is so strong that people typically respond quite intensely even to subtle signs of exclusion by others.”

This is how inclusion and exclusion are explained like in a research project of the university of Leiden:

<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/research/research-projects/social-and-behavioural-sciences/inclusion-and-exclusion>

Exclusion is something that all of us face everyday in our lives. We feel it when people in a wheelchair cannot move around freely, when women get less salary than men, we feel it, we feel it when poor people cannot have even once a nice dinner out, we feel it when refugees are not allowed to work, we feel it when people protest in the streets against immigrants, or when certain groups shout hate speeches against queers, and many many more. It hurts many people in their daily life. Based on the partnership’s mission and vision, we need to make radical changes in our practices to have more impact on young people’s lives when it comes to exclusion and inclusion. We can create awareness about exclusion, we can create tools to empathise, or ways to support and take action. Before explaining how this project implements inclusion aspects in both conceptual and practical level, we need to clarify first what exclusion and inclusion are, and what are the steps to get from exclusion towards inclusion.

Exclusion	Segregation	Integration	Inclusion
The sense of not belonging and the attitude to not allow the belonging to others, which makes (a group of) people live outside the group, community or system.	The action and effect of separating, marginalising or alienating someone from other things or persons, usually motivated by social, cultural or political reasons.	The process by which one particular element is incorporated into the majority.	The policy or attitude of accepting people within society. They contribute with their competences and are compensated with benefits that society can offer.

If we want a society where everybody can take part and be an active citizen, if we want to work on equality of humans and on cohesion of communities, we need to prioritise inclusion in our work with young people. Inclusion is an essential focus area for this Escape Exclusion project. Inclusion has the highest priority with European policy making, also in the European educational programme of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC). This partnership is putting that policy into practice by this project.

Join us in putting inclusion into an act!. So when we look at inclusive educational environments, we should provide equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as those who have physical or intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups, based on their appearance, gender, sexuality, religious or political background. We should create environments that prevent people from excluding themselves and to exclude others.

Diversity basically means 'being composed by different elements'. If we look at groups of people in a broader term diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences.

This means that when we design inclusive learning environments we need to approach the diversity of the group and propose a broad variety of learning experiences in the environment. In case of escape adventures we can prepare learners to use other learners as a resource and understand diversity as an asset of the whole group. So the focus is not on competition, but rather on the strength of the group as a whole, as a collection of complementary abilities. In escape adventures we can provoke inclusion by making a broad variety of tasks that can be solved with different kinds of intelligences. The fast thinkers probably have no patience to do a puzzle, or reading a larger text. The bodily intelligent person will not be attracted to mathematical tasks, and the visual intelligent learner, not to the musical tasks. In order to include everyone, we can design tasks for any of them. The big question is if all the tasks should be accessible for all people. Sometimes tasks are challenging. Just make sure all people are able to do a few tasks, and maybe think of tasks that could be done better with the disability or the impairment.

How to increase cooperation and collective responsibility?

Another way to make it inclusive is by creating cooperation tasks, that only will be successful, when they do it together with a larger group or with all learners together. That makes the cohesion of the group bigger and everybody is essential to the success. Preparing the group for these kinds of tasks and putting emphasis on the togetherness and collective responsibility could increase inclusion during the process. In case the group is really diverse and dealing with people who have educational, social, physical or cognitive challenges, the preparation of learners in supporting each other should have your utmost attention.



The group formed a text "Escape Exclusion Project". This task could only be done if all people would be part of it, as it had the exact number of letters as there were participants.

ASPECTS OF INCLUSION IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT:




Adapting the space to be more inclusive is complex and actually very much depending on your group and the individuals in the group. Our suggestion is to find out what support the specific learner needs.

But we still would like to share with you some very basic general tips that we have used in the past: or came up with:




🔒 VISUAL SUPPORT:

- 🔒 use of pictograms and images for people who have linguistic challenges;
- 🔒 readability - use font Verdana 11 for general text. Use high contrast;
- 🔒 contrast colours - Do you have colour blind people in the group? Use bigger contrasts;
- 🔒 bright colours - Some people get very triggered/anxious when they see 'screaming' strong colours. Yellow, red and fluorescent colours (especially in combination with black) are more likely to create anxiety or irritation. Green, brown pastel colours and cream create more calmness.;
- 🔒 create a corner/space with no/few triggers for people who are neurodiverse;
- 🔒 for people with hearing impairments - prepare everything written or arrange a sign language interpreter;
- 🔒 you might provide an enlarging glass for people with visual impairment.





AUDITIVE SUPPORT:

-  audio files - for people who are blind, have difficulty to read, or dyslexia;
-  to create calmness - use slow and soft music;
-  create a silent space/corner for people who are neurodiverse.

SENSORY SUPPORT:




-  for blind people or visually impaired - use braille or text with very big letters;
-  for blind people - create sensory guides for finding the way (in case of a spatial escape
-  adventure).

SPATIAL SUPPORT:



-  for people in wheelchairs - make sure there is enough space for getting everywhere, both on the floor as in between walls, trees, etc. Make sure there are no obstacles, stairs etc on the way or obstacles;
-  make the height of the (working) tables fitting for people in wheelchairs;
-  check if the tasks are readable or doable for people in wheelchairs (it is not too high or unreachable);
-  for people who have physical difficulties in standing and walking - make sure there are enough handles, objects or furniture to hold on to. Make sure there are enough chairs for them in certain spaces.

In an inclusive learning environment, the aim should be the involvement of all learners. Here are some tips to take in consideration while constructing or implementing an escape adventure:








USE A BROAD VARIETY AND DIFFERENT LEVEL OF TASKS & CODES:

-  fast thinkers/restless people, 'do'-ers ADH(D): logical tasks, with quick result or complex tasks;
-  slow thinkers (people who take time to think),observers, reflectors): tasks that need time, that need patience to do (puzzles, hand crafts, etc.), longer text to read,or articles as a base to a riddle (maybe make several copies, so if people need they can read things in their own pace);
-  create a narrative with different characters that all have their own special ability/capacity, according to the real capacities of learners.These characters could have specific tasks. This way you can ensure that all learners will be involved.

LANGUAGE:





-  use simple language (don't use too difficult words and sentences);
-  in case of immigrants, or people who do not speak the language, make sure you have translations in their language or in English.

GROUP AS A WHOLE:

-  how big is the group and what kind of impact it may have on the learners. Maybe a division
-  makes it more easy to work (in smaller groups);
-  space and possibility for gathering (structured or on demand of the group);
-  possibility for people to ask for a 'Time out' or an 'Inclusion request' - just to inform what has been done, and what has to be done, f.e. In case of using a timer to show the time limit, they can ask to stop the timer;
-  space/table to put things together, to collect things so everybody is able to know what happens and what the state of art is;
-  you could identify 1-2 persons who have the role to 'facilitate inclusion';
-  you could identify 1-2 persons who translate into simple or other languages.

SPACE AND TIME FOR A DEBRIEFING MOMENT:

It could be at the end of the game either with the presence of a facilitator / educator / teacher or among participants. A moment like this can be useful not only to monitor the learning(s) but also to monitor the level of inclusion. Here are some questions that can facilitate a constructive reflection among the participants towards inclusive topics:

-  Did you feel part of the group while playing?;
-  In which moments of the game, did you feel "outsider"? Why did it happen?;
-  In which moment of the game, did you feel "insider"? Why?;
-  In which moment of the game do you think that the group really collaborated? Why? Could you export these elements that facilitated cooperation during the game, in situations of real life?

If there's a facilitator or an educator/teacher who proposes the escape adventure, it is important that they take into consideration some aspects concerning their attitude. For instance, the facilitator should trust the (different) abilities of the group and be patient with the different paces of each player, by not anticipating solutions or revealing hints, without a clear request from the group. Before starting the game, it would be also important to clearly define and share their role with the participants (are they an observer of the process? Are they going to interfere during the game and in which way etc.).

Of course it seems impossible to be able to achieve all this in one and only escape adventure. We know that it may be a challenge. What is important for you to know the needs of the learners and what inclusion support they need. Also, if you have a mindset that is aware of the challenges of inclusion/exclusion and you know a few tools how to increase inclusion, you are on the good way.

Good luck with your adventures for a more inclusive classroom or youth space!





A large, stylized teal gear graphic is positioned on the right side of the page, partially cut off by the edge. It consists of several curved segments that form the teeth of a gear, rendered in a solid teal color with a slight drop shadow.

PART II:

TOOL KIT

**a gallery of 8
complete developed
and designed
inclusive escape
adventures**

THE INTRO

'Practise what you preach' is an effective approach to education. In order to be inclusive ourselves, we as professionals have decided to develop this Toolkit especially for those educators, who are not very familiar with the escape room or escape adventure concept and not very confident to develop one by themselves.

Actually these modules have been made for the partnership to share between our less experienced colleague educators, but these low-threshold escape adventure examples will also be available outside the partnership and can be used by any educator as a simple but complete escape adventure that can be copy-pasted. They are tested, they are designed for both formal and non-formal education settings and they are described in detail.









Additionally, all aspects are fully developed; the storyline, the game flow, the riddles, the visual materials, the possible debriefing questions, and the list of materials needed will be available and freely downloadable for educational use/ non-profit use. Of course the content or design of this project's intellectual outputs cannot be sold or being exchanged for any financial benefit by others than the partnership.

We hope you will use and enjoy them in your school or youth centre, youth club etc.

HOW TO USE THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE MODULES

In this gallery you will find 8 descriptions of an escape adventure on inclusion topics in different formats.

The general overview of the Gallery of Modules of Inclusive escape adventures:

-  Escape Backpack adventure: **A GIFT TO FRANCISCA**- on Self-acceptance
-  Escape Board game adventure: **HOME ALONE!** on Autonomy
-  Escape Box adventure: **ALL INCLUDED!** on Inclusion in general
-  Escape Folder adventure: **MONOMAZI GAME** on Loneliness
-  Escape Map adventure: **5 ELEMENTS** on Environmental inclusion
-  Escape Puzzle adventure: **FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET** on the Generation gap
-  Escape Space divider adventure: **HUMAN PROCESSOR** on Self-exclusion
-  Escape Space divider adventure: **LOST IN THE WOODS** - on Common responsibility for inclusion

HOW DOES IT WORK FOR YOU?

1. TARGET GROUP: WHO AND HOW MANY?

First you define for yourself who your target group is and for how many people you want to create the escape adventure: Check if you can adjust the number of players to the number of learners you have lined up. In case of a low number of people in the description, like f.e.5 people , you can make several identical things that small groups can play simultaneously and you make 4 times the same adventure (with all its material).

Note: In case of parallel sessions, make sure it is not becoming a competition between the teams, as that is not the purpose of this adventure. More info on that you can find in the Handbook, on creative learning environments.

2. CHOOSE THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE:

This should give you the possibility to choose one or more adventures to play in your educational setting. You select one of the modules from the Gallery list (next chapter) and read the description. You can make a choice according to the topic, or on the format, if you want to try it out. Of course, the important part is to check if it fits your target group and if it fits the number of learners that you want to engage. Read the basic description here in this Toolkit. Could it work for you? If so, then you have made your choice!

3. GO TO THE MATERIAL LINK ON THE WEBSITE [here](#)

Go to the link in the description. On the website you will find a folder with all the material you need. The material is complete and made for one escape adventure. You can download all the visual and background material that has been designed for you. In case you want to make parallel adventures, you have to make sure to print and arrange the right amount of materials. It also includes a material list of things you have to arrange or buy, f.e. locks, tape, maybe lights, etc. You have to buy or arrange those materials for yourself. Good for you to know is that the modules are designed for the limited budgets of schools and youth centres and clubs.

Note: keep in mind that buying cheap locks from sites like amazon could take a few weeks, in other cases it could be borrowed or bought in no time.

4. PREPARE THE MATERIAL AND THE SPACE:

Read the extensive description, so you understand the game flow in detail. Follow the instructions to put the module together in your space. Prepare the locks (set them on the right code and set up all the riddles, codes and tasks. Arrange technical equipment if needed (screen for video, or speakers for music/ sound) .



5. PREPARE THE SPACE AND THE AMBIENCE

Make sure the ambience is convincing. Check out the lights, the mood, the attributes that invite learners into an imaginary story or adventure. Maybe you disease to add some things?

6. UNDERSTAND IT

The role of the educator is already explained in the handbook but one fundamental step to take is to really understand the whole process of your escape adventure. Participants might ask for your help, and you will need to know how everything works in order to provide the appropriate help.

7. TRY IT OUT! (TESTING)

We recommend testing it out, maybe with some colleagues or some interns. That way you know and feel what is challenging, where it could go wrong or where people are likely to get stuck, and how much time it really takes.

8. LET THE ADVENTURE BEGIN!

Prepare you participants (Some tips about this in the Tutorial page xx) and Let the adventure begin! We wish all the learners and educators a joyful and playful learning time!

GALLERY OF MODULES:

A GIFT TO FRANCISCA (ESCAPE BACKPACK)



Title of the module	"A GIFT TO FRANCISCA"
Developed by	Vita Medniece and Zita Grinberga Gulbene Municipality Upper Secondary School, Latvia
Inclusion topic	Self-acceptance (subtopics: physical and emotional violence in family, among teenagers; low self-esteem)
Format of escape adv.	Escape backpack adventure
Target group:	Age: 14-18
Number of players	4-5: You can divide the class/group into several smaller groups and play simultaneously. In this case you would need a separate backpack for each group. Additional help for observation of the process will be needed, one person could observe 2-3 groups at a time.

Preparation of the materials:	3 h
Setting up the space before the adventure:	2 min
Intro time:	3 min
Play time:	40 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	Min 15 min

“Trying out the escape backpack, we were surprised that the young people were able to believe in the legend of the game and actively participated in searching for information and discussion. The young people themselves, providing feedback, admitted that the game was related to real life and that the situation depicted in it elicited empathy.”

Vita and Zita

Aim of the adventure

To encourage participants to think about the inclusive topic “Self-acceptance”, to discuss the role of family, friends, and society in the formation of teenagers` self-esteem.

Learning objectives

- to develop cooperation skills;
- to create an inclusive environment;
- to develop logical thinking;
- to improve literacy by searching information in different sources;
- to analyse and discuss what reasons affect a person’s self-esteem and overall level of mental and emotional health.

General Overview of the adventure

There has been a tragedy with a teenager that was found unconscious in the city park. Currently, the girl is in a coma and doctors are fighting for her life. The players are being invited to find out what has happened to her. The only thing they have is her backpack.

To open the locks, players should carefully look at both the information on the bag and the contents of each bag compartment, read and analyse the data in various text messages, letters, the diary and sticky notes, and be able to hear the necessary audio details and draw conclusions after watching the video, perform other tasks related to attention, logical thinking and digital skills. The game is designed to be done step-by-step (linear). When performing task 1, players will open compartment 1 by finding the following code, and open the next bag compartment.

The game ends when the participants have found the QR code (half of it - in the diary, half - in the name card), watch the video and are ready to share the information about Eva.

At the end of the adventure the participants evaluate the group work and discuss the topics and problems raised.

The game is designed by motifs of Mirjam Pressler’s book “Bitter Chocolate”

Guiding the process

A facilitator needs to instruct the players briefly before the game starts and talk things through when the game is finished. To lower the difficulty might be said that the facilitator has an inside knowledge and he can guide the players somewhat, by giving hints, asking the right questions or guiding the players focus, can be present during the game.

Level of ownership

The intro to the game might be organised in the school nurse's office, so the believability effect would certainly get bigger. The students' motivation to find out the reasons for Eva's health problems would increase.

The educator interferes only if the students ask for help. The main role of the educator is an observer.

Level of inclusion

The legend that is told at the beginning of the game is designed in such a way that the participants are interested in working as a team. The theme of the game and the texts used (text messages, letter, diary) cause co-experience and make young people discuss the problems that are relevant at their age. The game observer encourages the less active game participants by asking questions and giving individual instructions.

The game is designed to be suitable for participants with different types of intelligences - auditive, visual, kinesthetic. There are tasks of varying difficulty. The game is suitable for young people with movement disorders, learning and behavioural disorders, learning difficulties, hearing and vision problems.

The game can be used as an introductory lesson in Social Science, if the teacher plans to talk about an inclusive environment or issues related to self-acceptance.

If the topic of self-acceptance is unfamiliar to the participants, there should be a conversation or discussion about this issue before the game. The game is also suitable for participants with movement disorders, learning disabilities and learning difficulties. There should be an inclusive study environment (participants with different abilities could work in the group, including one participant with special needs, one - the most capable in studies etc.). A participant with behavioural disorders can also be included in the group, but the facilitator must observe the participants' work and, if necessary, guide the participant's behaviour.

If a participant with hearing or vision problems participates in the game, the game can be adapted (video subtitles should be placed for the hearing-impaired participant; for the visually impaired - the font size of the texts should be increased).

Remarks

The participants must know English well enough, because the video at the end of the game is in English. The facilitator observes the group and makes sure that all participants feel comfortable.

HOME ALONE (ESCAPE BOARDGAME)



Title of the module	ESCAPE HOME ALONE
Developed by	Giulia Agui, Chiara Bechis, Marco Fiorito, Katerina Nastopoulou, Marta Sartorio Stranaidea Impresa Sociale SCS, Italy
Inclusion topic	Autonomy for people with intellectual disabilities
Format of escape adv.	Escape board game adventure
Target group:	“Escape Home Alone” is mainly designed for adults with mental disabilities or disorders (more or less 10 years, functional/cognitive age and not chronological one), or for children who would like to deal with this topic with their parents.
Number of players	2-4

Preparation of the materials:	??
Setting up the space before the adventure:	10 minutes
Intro time:	5 minutes
Play time:	Normally, the game lasts 40-50 minutes but if the abilities of the players don't allow it to finish in this time frame, the game can be splitted in 2-3 meetings of one hour using 2 boxes per time.
Debrief/ evaluation time:	Min 15 minutes

"It's amazing to see how participants' different abilities are getting connected in a surprising way during the game."

Katerina

Aim of the adventure

To work on competencies, related to personal autonomy of people with mental disabilities or disorders, as well as to create an opportunity for entertainment, enhance collaboration and communication among participants.

Learning objectives

Practice tasks related to autonomy such as: administrate money, manage the time, handle daily tasks at home (cooking, recycling, using the washing machine etc);

Promote collaboration among the participants, by creating a situation in which each of them has to use different intelligences (visual-spatial, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic and intrapersonal etc);

Promote self-confidence, creativity and self-expression.

General Overview of the adventure

The game could be introduced by cards included in the box, those cards introduce players with the story. Throughout the game players discover the entire story. The whole game takes place on a board which represents a flat.

Before the game begins, participants are told that they have organised a trip to visit their friend Giulia who lives in Turin. Once they arrive, they find a letter under the doormat from Giulia in which she says that she has organised a small surprise for them: she has hidden and she invites them to enter the house and find her.

Players will have to go through each part of the house in the right order: the entrance, the kitchen, the bedroom/bathroom and the garage, solving the riddles and finding Giulia. There's only one way to finish the game.

The Giulia's address book is given to participants and they are invited to "call" somebody in case they can't resolve a riddle. There are three steps of support: if the first contact doesn't help, participants are invited to contact another person and then another. The first and the second contact give participants a hint to the riddle and the last one contents the final solution.

The adventure finishes when players have opened the four boxes and found Giulia and her surprise. She is hidden at the bottom of the cover of the last box (representing the attic of the flat) together with other friends with whom she has organised a welcoming party!

Guiding the process

If there is at least one person with disabilities in the group, the educator/facilitator is needed so as to support special needs. Facilitator doesn't need to have a special preparation, but it is good if he/she knows the flow of the game and the solutions to the riddles beforehand.

During the game there is no need that the facilitator intervenes if it is not asked to do so, since there is already a helping tool (Giulia's telephone book) that players can use whenever they want to arrive gradually to the solution of the riddles. In case the group is composed exclusively by people with disabilities, maybe it can be useful if the facilitator supports the group to keep together all the elements of the game and remind from time to time (if needed) the aim.

In the end of the game, the facilitator can use the debriefing guide so as to structure the reflection moment according to the needs of the group.

Escape Home Alone can be played as a game, just for fun or as a team-building activity, by a group of children and their parents who want to work on this topic or by teenagers and adults. In this case, the presence of the facilitator isn't mandatory since instructions are clear enough to guide players into the adventure. Players in this case can decide if following the debriefing guide.

Level of ownership

The level of ownership is more guaranteed if players can arrive at the solutions by themselves. Educator/facilitator should be able to trust the group and its components' abilities. If it comes to a group composed of people with disabilities, he/she should be aware that "timing" is quite different for them and that creativity could have unexpectable expressions. It's therefore important that he/she keeps a patient attitude and respects the time the group needs to arrive at solutions. No need for educators/facilitators to stress them or to intervene continually suggesting solutions. If needed, the game can be divided into more meetings playing one/two boxes per time.

Level of inclusion

The way the riddles are structured encourages players to work together and to make use of each others' strong points. The puzzles are diverse, so every player can express himself/herself on something, according to their abilities and skills.

In addition, there is a tool inserted (a bell) that every player can use in whichever moment of the game, he/she feels excluded for the process of the collaboration.

Moreover, some objects are distributed at the beginning of the game to each player so each of them should understand in which moment of the game they should use them.

Finally, the tool that gives the hints to solve the riddles has three difficult levels of support so that players can decide the level of support they need.

The nature of the riddles is diverse enough: there are visual ones, mathematical, kinesthetic, logical ones. The way they are structured encourages players to work together and to make use of each others' strong points. Every player can express himself/herself on something, according to their abilities and skills.

If an educator/facilitator is present he/she should try not to meddle into the dynamics or into the game itself, but to observe and give feedback during the debriefing moment. Just if players clearly ask him/her to intervene or if things go wrong (for the game or for the dynamics), he/she should intervene.

ALL INCLUDED!

(ESCAPE BOX)



Title of the module	ALL INCLUDED!
Developed by	Marina Represa, Yaiza Martínez e Inés Aparicio. Secondary school - La Milagrosa Y Santa Florentina, Spain
Inclusion topic	Inclusion in general: LGTBIQ+; Elderly; Visual Disabilities; Food disorders
Format of escape adv.	Escape box adventure
Target group:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teenagers from 13 - onwards, some of them who has necessities concerning social issues, more specifically social groups at risk (the elderly, homophobia, racism, disabilities, etc) - Not recommended for children under 13 since it contains some manipulative parts, such as little boxes, riddles made of cardboard or weak materials they could have trouble with.
Number of players	4

“Creating this adventure allowed us to explore the endless educational possibilities of games.”

Marina

Preparation of the materials:	30 - 40 min
Setting up the space before the adventure:	10 min
Intro time:	10 min
Play time:	60 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	Minimum 10 min

Aim of the adventure

To involve participants in a motivational activity that provides them with knowledge about people in different exclusion situations and how they behave. This will help them to be more aware about excluded people.

Learning objectives

- realise the importance of the actions of human beings towards the elimination of exclusion in the world.
- learn about the exclusion situations in the world;
- understand abilities of other participants;
- respect other people’s social situations.

General Overview of the adventure

The participants will be organised in families and later receive a box given from an old relative of theirs. The box contains different objects that the relative has been collecting throughout his trips around the world in search of the question that has been tormenting him day by day: “What is the reason for exclusion in the world?”, hoping that these objects hold the answer to it.

Then they will have to solve 5 puzzles, which are based on different social groups at risk of exclusion, like a jewellery box that tells the story of a homosexual relative, a spanish traditional card game about the difficulties of old people in the modern world, old glasses that tell the story of a blind relative, another story of a relative who went through some eating disorders and the last is a letter they will have to decipher to get the final code with which they will find out at the end that the reason for exclusion are “people themselves”.

The game ends.

A discussion follows with questions to talk about the ending of the game and inclusion topics.

Guiding the process

It can be facilitated by anyone who has read the instructions of the game in advance. Facilitator should be an observer during the game and only interact if they feel it's an opportunity in some way. However, they must try not to help participants much to not interfere with game dynamics. Though, if participants have been stuck for quite some time, the facilitator could solve their questions.

Take into account: There might be some participants who feel mirrored with some situations depicted in the different riddles. This should be informed in advance by making a disclaimer to participants. If someone wants to quit it is perfectly fine, this person should be allowed. Then, as educators it would be interesting to talk to these participants about their feelings during the game and the reason for quitting.

Level of ownership

By taking the situations happening in the riddles and transferring them to the lives of participants, towards exemplifications. This also will help them to guess the answer of the riddles.

Level of inclusion

There are role cards so that each member has a role during the whole game, avoiding some players overshadowing the game. The different riddles are created around different areas of intelligence for each player to have his/her moment of shining.

However, by knowing the different needs of participants in advance, necessary modifications in the game can be made, so that all participants can take part. Such as turning some parts into braille, or using voice notes to record the introduction to the riddles, that way can be adapted to people with special needs.

MONOMAZI GAME!

(ESCAPE FOLDER)



Title of the module	MONOMAZI GAME
Developed by	Chris van Walraven Democratic Secondary school VO de Vallei, The Netherlands
Inclusion topic	Loneliness
Format of escape adv.	Escape Folder adventure
Target group:	Age: 14+: The topic is serious and the adventure is quite realistic. Besides murder and loneliness, there is mention of discrimination, war, drugs and conspiracy. The adventure is as light hearted as a typical murder mystery program, but if you feel uncomfortable with any of the mentioned topics, you might not want to play this escape adventure. No special skills are needed for the escape adventure, but the difficulty of the puzzles requires an age of about 14 or older. Anyone of that age that can play a boardgame for two hours will be able to play this escape adventure. To lower the difficulty a facilitator with an insider knowledge, who can guide the players somewhat, by giving hints, asking the right questions or guiding the players focus, can be present during the game.
Number of players	2-5

Preparation of the materials:	30 - 60 min (depending on the speed of the printer)
Setting up the space before the adventure:	5 min
Intro time:	5 min
Play time:	120 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	Min 10 min

Aim of the adventure

The escape adventure can be interesting to educators who want to make their students think about topics such as 'inclusion', 'loneliness' or 'forensic research'. The adventure can be used to learn more about inclusivity, cognitive skills, social skills or handling information, as mentioned earlier. It can, of course, also be played just for fun.

Learning objectives

- Develop cognitive skills (deduction, problem solving, mathematics, logical thinking)
- Gain biological knowledge such as about animal hair, knowledge about forensic research, practising reading)
- Develop social competences- working in team and communication skills
- Develop skills to find and organise information
- Awareness of reasons for loneliness
- Understanding of supportive behaviour when it comes to loneliness.

General Overview of the adventure

The players receive the folder and envelope, and are instructed by the facilitator. The players explore the folder and solve puzzles.

Five different people (Isiah, Kala, Liseli, Meili and Paul) who found themselves lonely joined a self-help program called MonoMazi. Isiah is lonely because of his trauma which makes him grumpy towards others. Kala is lonely because of her drug addiction which makes her manipulate others. Liseli is lonely because of her anxiety. Meili is lonely because she thinks differently (high IQ and believing in conspiracy theories) which drives others off. Paul is lonely because he is an ex-prisoner. The group of five plays a murder mystery game together once a week, but one night Liseli gets actually murdered. Nobody knows who did it, but it must be one of the other four. CSI has been handling the crime case so far, but to prevent the wrong person going to jail, the case file is now in the hands of the players who have to solve this murder mystery.

“As a teacher and a maker it’s amazing to see the game working out, challenging the students, being conquered in the end. Some of the students had been looking forward to playing the game for over a week. It’s quite fun following your own tool and expanding on it. It was interesting to dive into the world of forensics and learn for instance how diverse animal hair can be.”

Chris

All the information is in the folder. The overarching puzzle is finding the necessary information in the folder, organising it and then deducting who the killer is (a la zebra puzzle), but to get all the necessary information there are five smaller puzzles that need to be solved.

The game ends when the players have chosen their main suspect and open the envelope. This contains the confession of the person who did it. They reflect on the game and their experiences. Now is also a good time to talk about the topics the facilitator wants to pay attention to

Guiding the process

It can be facilitated by anyone who has read the instructions of the game in advance. Facilitator should be an observer during the game and only interact if they feel it’s an opportunity in some way. However, they must try not to help participants much to not interfere with game dynamics. Though, if participants have been stuck for quite some time, the facilitator could solve their questions.

Take into account: There might be some participants who feel mirrored with some situations depicted in the different riddles. This should be informed in advance by making a disclaimer to participants. If someone wants to quit it is perfectly fine, this person should be allowed. Then, as educators it would be interesting to talk to these participants about their feelings during the game and the reason for quitting.

Level of ownership

Do not force students to play the game. Rather ask them if they’re interested in playing. Try not to meddle too much with the gameplay. Leave the students to it. Help when needed, but never too much, and remember it’s the game of the players, not the game of the educator.

Level of inclusion

The way the puzzles of the escape adventure come together encourages the players to work together and make use of each other’s strong points. It is almost impossible for one player to take over. The puzzles are diverse, so every player, no matter their skill set, can latch onto something. Even the characters in the story are diverse, so players can more easily get into the story and the lives of the people in it, no matter who they are.

THE 5 ELEMENTS

(ESCAPE MAP)



“Creating an Escape Adventure is a challenge, that involves developing one self through exploring possibilities to help others to learn and grow with you.”

Jurgis

Title of the module	THE 5 ELEMENTS
Developed by	Jurgis Kuksa Jaunpils vidusskola, High School, Latvia
Inclusion topic	Environmental inclusion:
Format of escape adv.	Escape Map Adventure
Target group:	Age: 13+
Number of players	Best 4-12 (can be adjusted to needs)

Preparation of the materials:	30 min -60 min.
Setting up the space before the adventure:	30 -60 min
Intro time:	5 min
Play time:	40 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	5-10 min

Aim of the adventure

To think about topics such as the environment, me as a part of nature, How can I positively impact the environment around me

Learning objectives

- Get a deeper understanding of global and local environmental threats;
- Learn to implement solutions for sustainable living in their daily lives;
- Work as a team and understand the advantages of working together;
- Understand how to take simple steps in order to positively impact the environment.
- To become aware that each of us is a part of nature while doing small local things we can impact nature on a global level.

General Overview of the adventure

The facilitator starts the game by asking a question: Who likes Oxygen?

(There should be some hands raised.)

Great.. Do you know how whales help you breathe in some of this oxygen?

Whale poop gives nutrients/food to phytoplankton which produces more than half of the planet's oxygen. Nowadays one of the reasons why Whales die is because they confuse plastic bags for jellyfish. Another point is microplastic is bad for our health so we need to work together to help ourselves to be free from plastic/ocean pollution and other environmental threats, so that we can thrive rather than try to survive

Participants receive specific information, they have to prepare as a team for a mission. "You are on a planet that might soon become uninhabitable. As the current way of human life has brought all of us to this point, it is obvious we cannot continue the same way. We have to grow and evolve in order to live harmoniously with the environment or we have to create a new planet elsewhere. In order to do that(create a new planet) you will need to collect 4 different elements(water;air;soil;fire). You can collect the elements by following the instructions and while you do that, you might learn how we could save the planet we are on." The game takes them to 4 locations where they find elements like water, air, fire and soil. In addition there are practical tasks to develop participant's sense of responsibility to the environment. Meanwhile doing simple tasks to involve themselves in helping nature. Through the journey they learn that fixing this planet might be easier than creating a new life elsewhere. They also learn that they are the 5th element and they can impact the environment with their daily actions. As they are on their way they pick up trash, plant a seed and learn a breathing exercise.

During the adventure participants need to solve different riddles and collect information during the game. Tasks Involve: travel to a specific location; solve puzzles, maybe overcome a fear of water or height; look for clues and use digital tools, if needed.

Upon reaching the final destination, they have all the elements to start fresh on a new planet. But there is no way to get there yet, or create a new planet even if they have all the existing elements found on a living planet. Therefore they discuss the possibilities to fix some of the environmental challenges presented in the game. and discuss what are some of the things they can do or change in their daily lives.

Guiding the process

The only safe way is to have it inside so it is possible to oversee everything. Then if you go outside then as one group with the educator/facilitator/ monitorer. In the best case scenario: It doesn't need to be monitored (it should not be monitored if there are no hazards present) if clear instructions are given by following the map and understanding the task they can find it by themselves or call if need help). To check on the progress of the escape adventure it's possible to contact through phone or follow in an application (example- Live location: run/walk app like mapmyrun) meant for that purpose to see how the progress is developing.

The way to keep accurate track is to have a facetime group call.. Easier option might be to call the educator/facilitator if stuck.

If the game is set up correctly the facilitator meets the participant at the beginning and then at the end location, found by the participants who collect all the clues.

Level of ownership

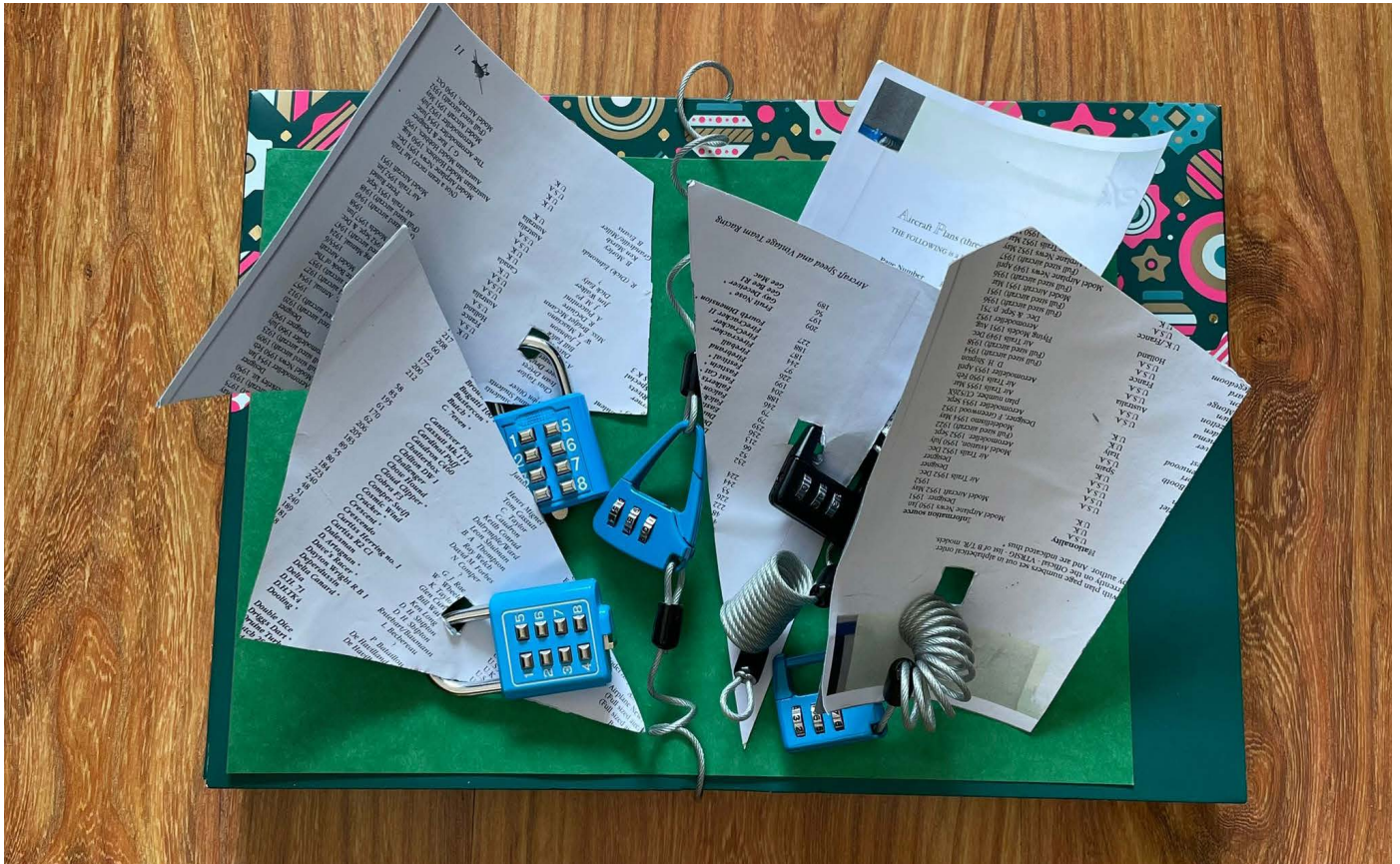
If they are stuck, they can call the facilitator. Otherwise They have full ownership of their experience playing the game. The facilitator can only try to make someone think, therefore is just an observer in the process of the game. If someone fails to succeed in the game he calls and asks where should he go(then when he arrives for debriefing he can hear how others solved it and what was the best tactic to approach the game in the debriefing part)

Level of inclusion

The game is designed to be suitable for participants with different types of learning -, visual, auditory,logical, and kinesthetic mostly as well as with a possibility to be intrapersonal or interpersonal. It can be audial if the facilitator reads out the questions and narrates the story. There are multiple ways how they are led to locations in the map. The game is suitable for young people with movement disorders if the school premises are equipped for that. If there are learning and behavioural disorders then their educator or caretaker can participate and go along, as well as being outside in sunlight can help to improve the condition of learning and behavioural disorder.

In addition hearing and vision problems/challenges can be overcome if they are placed in a supporting team.

FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET (ESCAPE PUZZLE) ✕



"I was surprised that there are more young people than I expected, who are ready to talk about this topic and share their thoughts, knowledge and experience about the gap between generations."

Inga

Title of the module	FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET
Developed by	Inga Ābula Jaunpils vidusskola, High School, Latvia
Inclusion topic	Loneliness
Format of escape adv.	Escape Puzzle Adventure
Target group:	Age: 10-18 years.
Number of players	2-14

Preparation of the materials:	2h
Setting up the space before the adventure:	30 min
Intro time:	5 min
Play time:	50 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	15min

Aim of the adventure
To break the stereotypes and clear the misunderstanding that is being created between generations by encouraging sensitivity, understanding and a constructive view of people of other generations.
Learning objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop skills for working as a group; - To accept all the group members as they are - with different types and ways of task-solving skills; - To develop logical thinking; - To analyse and discuss the human life cycle and aware themselves (group members - players) as a part of it.
General Overview of the adventure
<p>The story is about a man in his 90's, who is starting to forget things that have been done so far and have to be done, so he has started to make notes with important numbers and events. This time he can not remember the code of his locker, in which his book has been put and has not written down the code this time.</p> <p>The task is to find a code with the help of the other notes he has made before.</p> <p>The path to the solution itself is linear and step-by-step, but it involves several types of puzzles. In order to arrive at the solution, numerical combinations of code keys are used, to which both numerical tasks and careful reading of the text and delving into the content lead. A puzzle is "led" by a combination of letters that can be reached when all the number combinations are solved and the puzzle pieces are freed. You can "escape" from the puzzle when the combination of letters is found in the puzzle itself. "Escape" from the puzzle picture opens the last code key, which "protects" the book that the hero of the story has put in a safe place.</p> <p>The combination of the puzzle with the 128th page of the book will be the solution to the 3-digit combination that can be used to unlock Gordon's briefcase.</p> <p>The group reads Gordon's message.</p>

Guiding the process

Support for the group is needed from the facilitator in cases where something fails for a long time. This breakthrough adventure involves having the educator by your side throughout the game as a companion to guide you through the adventure. An educator is mainly a story-teller in the very beginning of the game and the one who reads the task to reach the goal. After the goal has been reached, the educator leads the reflection and discussion part.

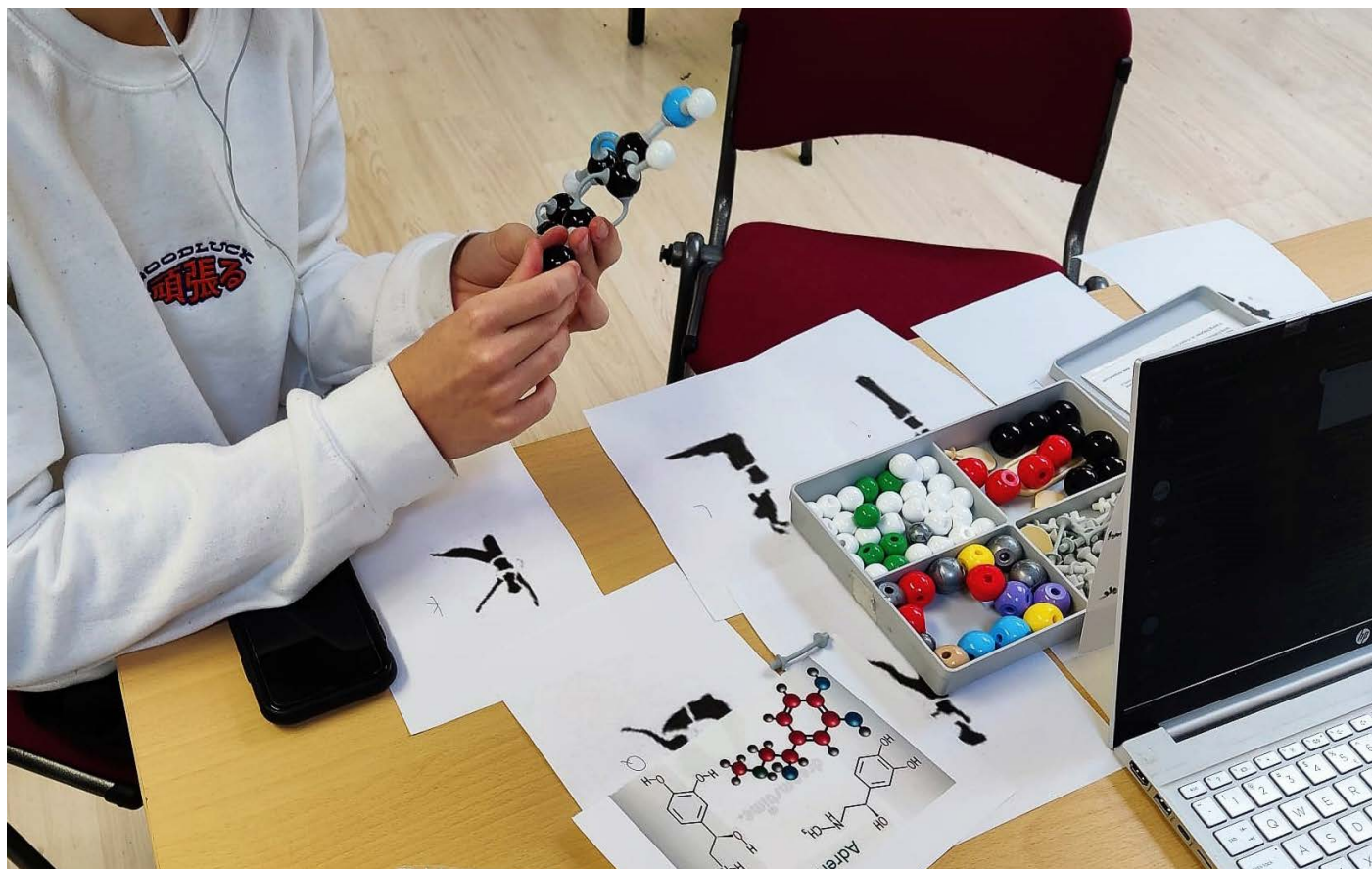
Level of ownership

While the game is on, the educator is observing the situation to give some hints if the group stocks for longer, but other than that is mostly observing the process.

Level of inclusion

The activity is inclusive, as the number of people can be easily adjusted to the tasks, that is, the playing cards can be distributed to the existing number of people in the group, so that until the interim solution, the players end up in smaller teams. As many as 14 people can search for the main solution together, and the entire large group can also participate in the discussion part.

HUMAN PROCESSOR (ESCAPE SPACE DIVIDER)



"I really loved seeing my students learn by playing the escape adventure I made for them. I really had fun and learned a lot, about making games and also about myself and I gained a deeper insight about the subject I teach in."

Lex

Title of the module	HUMAN PROCESSOR
Developed by	Lex Eijt Democratic Secondary school VO de Vallei, The Netherlands
Inclusion topic	Self-exclusion
Format of escape adv.	Escape Space Divider
Target group:	Age: 12+
Number of players	9 -13 players

Preparation of the materials:	Minimum 60 min
Setting up the space before the adventure:	30 min
Intro time:	10 min
Play time:	50 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	Minimum 10 min

Aim of the adventure

This adventure gives way for starting a conversation about exclusion. That sometimes it doesn't matter how inclusive your surroundings are, you can still feel excluded. Awareness about how exclusion could also be a part of your own behaviour.

Also for biology teachers, this adventure lets students get a feeling about how processes work in the human body and more general knowledge about the human body itself.

Learning objectives

- raising awareness of the part which individuals and groups play in the whole;
- knowing more about processes in the human body, for example:
 - How to create hormones;
 - How emotions affect the body;
 - How every process in the body is affecting another;
 - How drugs affect the body.

General Overview of the adventure

In the beginning they have to make a decision which part they have to take on, not knowing what will happen.

The players form one human body. This human body is split into 5 functions: Brain/ main body (1p), senses, emotions, bones/muscles, organs. The human that they all form, finds itself after waking up on a cold hard floor, not knowing how it got there. It's up to this body that they find out where they are and escape. They have to escape from a slaughterhouse by solving puzzles in 3 rounds. The puzzles match the body part/function. This results in quite a range of diversity in puzzles. For example, the senses have to do a silhouette puzzle (sight), an audio puzzle (hearing) and a maze puzzle (spatial awareness).

After that the group will "leave" the slaughterhouse and they are free. Then comes a reflection on what has happened during the escape adventure, how they feel, what they've learned etc.

Guiding the process

Support is actually only needed when a body part / function takes too much time in solving their puzzle. Because then the other groups have to wait for too long.

Only intervene when students are having an argument about how to solve a puzzle.

Level of ownership

This adventure creates ownership on multiple levels.

They will experience they have to take ownership of themselves in their level of participation in the group. They're responsible as a smaller group for the whole. So they have to ask themselves what can I do?

Educators can ask the students about these things in the debriefing to increase the level of ownership. You can never guarantee ownership, because like feeling included, ownership is something you have to take for yourself.

Level of inclusion

Well considering that this escape adventure requires a form of exclusion, the level of inclusion during the game changes. In the debriefing, you'll have to talk about how individuals are important for any group, but also that groups are important for each individual. So that everybody learns about the meaning of this adventure. The puzzles per squadron are different, so you can play this game multiple times and have a different experience every time if you let people occupy different squadrons and let different people be the brain/ main body. The puzzles are quite diverse and give a high level inclusion for different types of thinkers and problem solvers.

Checking beforehand with what kind of puzzles they have affinity with, so the teacher can sort them into groups based on that might increase the level of inclusivity.

LOST IN THE WOODS (ESCAPE SPACE DIVIDER) ✕



" A perfect way to learn and forget about time limits"

Jana

Title of the module	LOST IN THE WOODS
Developed by	Gunta Gruniere, Jana Keibeniece Youth Initiative Centre "B.u.M.s.", Tirza Primary School, Latvia
Inclusion topic	Common responsibility for inclusion and belonging
Format of escape adv.	Escape Space Divider
Target group:	Age: 12-17 years
Number of players	4 teams of 5-6 players

Preparation of the materials:	120 min
Setting up the space before the adventure:	15 min
Intro time:	10 min
Play time:	25 min
Debrief/ evaluation time:	10 min

Aim of the adventure

The aim of this game is that learners step into an adventure where they have to escape the deep forest. This adventure will show how fun learning can be and why learners need to know and learn this topic, where this knowledge can be applied in their life.

The game will create a focus on working together which will motivate, improve communication skills, develop logical thinking and cooperation skills. The method offers learners the opportunity to work together in a diverse team and provokes understanding of the value of diversity. They take responsibility and contribute to solutions in an engaging and inclusive way

This game can be integrated in a learning lesson (school setting) or in a workshop (youth work setting)

Learning objectives

Learners will

- Improve their ability to self-direct their learning and critical thinking;
- Improve their ability to collaborate with others
- Value the diversity of the group and understand that being different is
- Improve their knowledge of geography (geographical coordinates, orientation in nature and survival skills.)
- It also will show students that learning can also be fun and creative

General Overview of the adventure

The main story is that the players need to help to find their fellow friends who lost themselves somewhere in the woods. Players will get the help of an expert named Bear Grylls. He helps but also challenges the players by preparing a letter that might lead to finding the missing persons as soon as possible.

The team of players' most important task is to find the lost group of fellow students (or friends), who decided to go on adventure, but weren't prepared for that. Their families are really worried because they can't contact them for over 12 hours

The lost group did not leave any message to no one about where they planned to go, the only thing that their families know is that they went somewhere in the woods. Families contacted the local police office, but the response of the police was that they will only take action after people are missing for more than 24 hours.

One of the family members has contact with the world famous survival specialist -Bear Grylls. Unfortunately he won't be able to come to find them, but he sends a strategy of tasks, which can help solve this mystery.

The learner group splits into 4 teams and they go into 4 corners. In each of those corners learners will find one envelope with a letter from BG containing a puzzle that they have to solve. The letter and a puzzle for each team is different. The time is limited, as their fellows are in danger and therefore, it is important to finish the puzzles within the time limit. After the time finishes they receive a final letter according to whether they did or did not manage to solve the puzzle on time and save their friends.

Guiding the process

All processes will be guided by a facilitator. The facilitator will be in the same space, where the game will take place. The facilitator gives as much as possible responsibility to the learners and supervises them, letting them go through the learning process.

Facilitator also gives some clues when learners ask for it.

Level of ownership

The game is designed so that the whole group works towards one common goal. In the start when you split a big group into 4 smaller groups, and put them in 4 different corners it will create the feeling that they are alone and not that much engaged as a big team, but this will provide better focus on the tasks. If a group unlock the box into their corner they can go and help other corner groups and work together in puzzle solving.

Level of inclusion

During this method, you can notice that everyone is included in the puzzle solving process. Everyone finds a way to be part of a team because it is unusual, something different from what they experience in a usual school day. Curiosity is one way of motivation.

Game is created in a structure where all groups of students are split into smaller teams. Each team is solving the puzzles in a different corner of the divider. This gives an opportunity to involve a bigger group. Each team also has an opportunity to help the other group in another divider corner, if they need help.



THE INTRO

Dear readers, dear educators

Welcome to the second part of our Starterkit for Inclusive Escape Adventures in an educational setting.

After the Handbook (where we shared some concepts on escape adventures, learning environments, inclusion and various essential aspects of learning) and the Toolkit (with 8 fully designed copy-paste Inclusion escape adventures) we arrived at the Tutorial. Here we explain various aspects related to actually making a useful and usable escape adventure for your school, your youth centre, your NGO, or any place where you create educational activities for young people.

To keep it compact and readable we have collected here the main information and we will give you links to more specific parts or background information, that could increase the quality of your escape adventure. We wish you good reading, a lot of fun during the process and success with the result for the learners and your team.

The background features several large, thick, teal-colored arcs that sweep across the page from the top and right sides, creating a sense of movement and design.

PART III:

TUTORIAL

step by step explanation

for

creating inclusive

educational

escape adventures



This Tutorial is set up in four main chapters:

CHAPTER 1 - BEFORE THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE: PRECONDITIONS AND SETTING UP THE ADVENTURE

- 🔒 Escape adventures as an innovation of your practice
- 🔒 Mapping out the target group and their needs
- 🔒 Mapping out conditions and choose your adventure format
- 🔒 Preparation of learners

CHAPTER 2 - THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE ITSELF - DESIGN THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

- 🔒 Setting up the escape adventure: timeline
- 🔒 The story and the ambience of the adventure
- 🔒 Designing the flow
- 🔒 Designing the tasks, puzzles and/or codes
- 🔒 Using the right materials
- 🔒 Designing the visuals
- 🔒 Dealing with technical issues
- 🔒 Creating safety and clarity

CHAPTER 3 - DURING THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE - PLAYING THE ADVENTURE

- 🔒 Monitoring
- 🔒 Group and individual dynamic (readiness and emotional aspects)
- 🔒 Supporting learning & role of the educator

CHAPTER 4 - AFTER THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE - COLLECTING THE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND FOLLOW UP.

- 🔒 The end of the escape adventure: closing the experience
- 🔒 Debriefing & reflections + conclusions/ impact
- 🔒 Evaluation of the adventure and how to improve your practice
- 🔒 Follow up for learners and for the team

These four chapters will guide you through the process of creating your own inclusive and educational escape adventure. The process is not necessarily linear, even though we call it a step-by-step process. In this tutorial we describe all possible steps, but it is not absolutely necessary to do each and every one of them. We invite you to read this tutorial and decide for yourself which steps you will use.

This Tutorial is part of the Starterkit, therefore we will regularly refer to chapters or elements of both the Handbook and the Toolkit (and the Inclusion modules) for clarification. In the Handbook, you can read background information about the concepts on creative learning environments, inclusion, and escape adventures (related to game design). The Toolkit has 8 modules that are developed by teachers and youth workers. The Toolkit is not only for use of copy-past escape adventures, but can also be used as an inspiration and examples of development of escape adventures. We recommend you to take a look at those modules to have a better insight or understanding of the escape adventure design.

And remember: you are also learning. Learning by doing!

The best way to become a great escape adventure designer is to actually design them, get some feedback from the learners and use the feedback to grow. All the good designers become good at it after designing, failing and re-designing them!





CHAPTER

01

**BEFORE THE
ESCAPE ADVENTURE:
PRE-CONDITIONS
AND SETTING UP
THE ADVENTURE**

CHAPTER 1: BEFORE THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE - PRE-CONDITIONS AND SETTING UP THE ADVENTURE

Before you start developing the actual escape adventure, there are a few things to consider.

Firstly, about the reason you want to develop this escape adventure:

What are your needs?; What are your learners' needs?; What do you have to work with? and Who can be involved? Analysing the following aspects are the first steps to have a CLEAR step for yourself/selves.

ESCAPE ADVENTURE AS A INNOVATION OF YOUR PRACTICE

You probably have not used educational escape adventures before, maybe not even with escape rooms in your practice. But... There is a reason why you are interested in trying out something new and innovating your practice. An escape adventure is a nice way to do that.

To start: have you ever played an escape room or escape game? If you haven't it would be wise to go and experience one or two yourself or with your team!

When you go and play an escape room or game it would be good to (on a personal level) experience it, to feel it, to really live it and (on a professional level) to analyse how it could work for your target group, how inclusive or exclusive that escape room or game is and how it can support learning.

You (and your team) could start to analyse your needs and reflect on that by answering the following questions:

- 🔒 Why are you looking for a new method?;
- 🔒 What could it bring, what you don't have now?;
- 🔒 What would it solve for you? What process could start by using educational escape adventures?;
- 🔒 Are you ready to try something new and uncertain? It might bring uncertainty as it is something new and it is also a method that requires educators to let go of control. Are you up for it?

Your answer will organically give you the first directions for your escape adventure.









MAPPING OUT THE TARGET GROUP AND THEIR NEEDS

One of the main questions to start with is: Who is my target group and how many are they? Do they know each other and what is the dynamic in the group?

In order to make the escape adventure work as a learning experience it is useful to map out the needs of your target group. How could this escape adventure contribute to their learning and curriculum?

In a school setting, it could be about relevant knowledge or skills that you want your students to have on the subject you teach and to follow the curriculum.

You could also identify social or behavioural topics that are relevant to your school or youth work environment and approach, like bullying, autonomy, discipline, entrepreneurship, etc. Other needs could be (21st century) life skills, like:

-  Problem solving;
-  Working together with others;
-  Communication;
-  Inclusion and diversity;
-  Dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity;
-  Sense of initiative;
-  Emotional balance and setting boundaries;
-  Self confidence, self value.

In order to have a good starting point it makes sense to map out the needs, see how the escape adventure could address them and create opportunities for your learners to develop competences based on those needs.

It is also good to look at the composition of your target group. The number of people will determine your choices, but also the uniqueness of your target group. What kind of learners are you working with? Analyse the specific composition of the group and see if you can tailor the adventure on them (and their specific skills, their intelligences, the group dynamics, their history, etc. Having your target group clear for the game or adventure, will make it easier to make decisions about designing it.

THE EXPECTED IMPACT OF THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE

IMPACT ON LEARNERS:

After you have analysed why you want to do the escape adventure, the next logical step is to look at the expected learning outcomes. What should the impact of completing the escape adventures for your learners be? The outcomes on an individual level could be about knowledge or skills, but it could also be about their own emotion, self-confidence, curiosity etc. The outcomes on a group level could also be interesting, like respect for each other, understanding the advantage of diversity and complementary talents or inclusion.

IMPACT ON THE ORGANISATIONS AND EDUCATORS:

An additional layer could be the impact on schools and youth organisations and their professionals, like educators, teachers, youth workers, boards, social workers involved etc.

The impact is the more systemic and structural change that you are thriving for. What will be the consequence for the relationship between educators and learners, how does it influence you and your team? Which competences will you develop on the way and what will it bring you when it comes to the purpose of education, joy of the work, challenging yourself as a professional, discussions on learning and education. On the level of the whole school or youth work place, what could be the impact on a systemic level? What will change in your school, your youth centre, your workplace because of this escape adventure?

As you can see, starting to develop an escape adventure has a significant potential to contribute to the innovation and systemic change in education.

MAPPING OUT CONDITIONS AND CHOOSING YOUR ESCAPE FORMAT

Now that you know the who, why and what for, it's time to focus on creating the basic conditions for the escape adventures. What do you need to make it happen? Let's take a look what are the conditions you need to map out:

RESOURCES & RESOURCEFULNESS

For creating a good learning environment it is important to know your team. Who is primarily involved, who will be in the base team? And who could help you out with some specific skills or competencies (like technical or digital skills or building up the ambience, etc.)? Look around and be resourceful also when it comes to involving externals in your escape adventure, like parents or external experts.

One of the main aspects is the financial resources that you have available. Usually schools and youth organisations do not have much money to spend. One important thing that is good to know is that escape adventures can perfectly be made with smaller investments, depending on your design and plans. It is true that having a bigger budget means that you have more possibilities, but it doesn't automatically create a better escape adventure.

Most of the escape adventures we have made, have been made with a budget of only 20 - 100 euro. This is possible by being creative, working with second hand material, and making most of the things ourselves. Some things are worth buying for yourself. Buying locks and some escape material, like UV light and invisible ink, are an initial investment, but can be used many times.

THE TOPIC

As this escape adventure will be played in an educational setting, it is essential to choose an educational topic. What will be the theme and why? The topic should be based on the needs of your target group and maybe also the needs of you, your school, and the school curriculum.

- 🔒 Based on school subjects: In some cases it might be related to a subject as part of the curriculum, and all subjects could be addressed in escape adventures;
- 🔒 Based on issues related to school (culture, history, etc.) and municipality;
- 🔒 Based on more general life or societal and civic issues: climate (change), democracy, civic education, etc.;
- 🔒 Based on social, intrapersonal or interpersonal issues: bullying, cooperation, sustainability, future, self-care, employability , expression, identity, self-confidence, dealing with uncertainty, autonomy, and many more;
- 🔒 Sometimes teams work on a series of topics that are connected. Or design a series of escape adventures at a bit more advanced level.

The topic could be an easier one when you start, and could be more complicated as you advance in creating escape adventures. What exactly is easier or more advanced depends on your own experience and self-confidence to deal with certain topics. For sure there are very sensitive topics, like self-mutilation, depression, bullying, that might be more challenging. |

Important to mention is that making an escape adventure on a school subject in a school does not necessarily make it educational. It becomes educational when the narrative and the game flow are giving opportunity for new understandings, insights, learning together and when there is a good reflection on the experience afterwards.

SPACE:

Defining the available space has a big influence on what you can do and how. Where could they play it? Indoor or outdoor? In a school classroom, the aula, the attic or cellar, the kitchen, in nature, the forest, in the city or neighbourhood? Or in a specific external place, like a cafe, town hall, gym, church, cellar, swimming pool, train station? Will there be other people around? The choice will have an important influence on the ambience of the escape adventure. Why should it be there?

Does it have to do with the topic you choose? Or do you just want to take them to an 'independent', new or exciting space? You might also consider multiple spaces, for example parts of the adventure indoor, other parts outdoor.





Also for the space of your escape adventure the following rule applies: The more experience you have, the more complex you can go with your adventures.

If you are more advanced, you could think of a longer lasting adventure (for example, if learners have to find answers outside of the adventure itself, like in a library, in school books, or on the internet and come back with that knowledge to continue). One could also think of an evolving adventure. But that needs expertise and might need multiple spaces or a space that is available for a longer time. One other element concerning space that you should take into consideration is, if you plan a long-lasting adventure, which means that it needs to stay for a longer use of the space. Does it stay, or is it flexible and movable? All things considered, make sure you know what are important aspects that define the best space for your escape adventure and make your choice accordingly.

TIME

Time is an important aspect that we need to keep in mind when designing our escape adventure.

Before starting the design or development of your escape adventure, we invite you to take a look at the following time aspects that might influence the design of your escape adventure.

-  Date to play: When would you like to do it? Is there no specific date or is there a special occasion (project week, exams, availability of educators, space, etc.) that defines the date to play? In case the escape adventure will be used to start a conversation on the topic it is good to plan it in the beginning of the project period, the training, the school year, etc. If it will be used for testing the knowledge after working on the topic for a certain time, then maybe the best moment is at the end of a period, youth project or training;
-  Time to prepare: How much time do you need to prepare? Is the suggested date for playing the escape adventure realistic? What does the timeline of preparation look like?;
-  Time to play: how much time is there for playing? Does it need to fit in a school hour? Or in a specific project time or are you free to choose any time you want or need? Does it fit the attention span of learners? In case of a short attention span, instead of one long adventure, you could also design it in a few separate parts in order to fully engage the learners.;
-  How you design the escape adventure will have an effect on the timing. What about the sequence?: Do you want a one-off activity or repeat it several times, one in steps or a series of connected topics at different moments?

When you know what time-related elements you need to take into accounting, you can choose the best time and timing option for your escape adventure.



CHOOSING THE FORMAT:

When you have all the things clear for yourself, your next step is to choose the best fitting format. Within this project we have developed several escape adventure formats and we have defined all the characteristics and potential of these formats for diverse educational settings. In order to define which format you would like to use, you could take a look at the overview of the characteristics of the formats in the **Handbook page 37**

Or you can read the more detailed description of each of the escape formats in our other Intellectual Output of this Escape Exclusion project: **"Find your way!"**

Once you have decided about your resources, the topic, the space, time and the format to use, you have identified the base for your escape adventure and you can get started!

PREPARING YOUR LEARNERS

1. WORKING WITH THE ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT - KNOWING YOUR PLAYERS

Humans are curious by nature and willing to learn. You can take advantage of that curiosity. Young people, especially in a formal school setting (where often memorising, performing and delivering is the goal) could feel insecure about a setting that is unfamiliar to them. Therefore, it is important that you take the insecurity that blocks learning away and put focus on the trying out and even that the possible failing as a positive outcome. If curiosity leads to trying out, then that means they are learning. You can prepare your learners by sparking their curiosity and giving them the self-confidence to follow this curiosity inside of themselves. That is similar to what game developers also do. For this you need to know your 'players'. What would they like, what would spark their interest or curiosity? Think how you can make this learning experience an exciting adventure, something that they want to dive into and explore.

2. PREPARING LEARNERS FOR AN EXCITING LEARNING EXPERIENCE

While creating your escape adventure, you can already think about how you can prepare your learners for the learning experience: getting into a story sometimes means to have a preparatory introduction or that the learners need to do some 'homework'. But also preparing them that this alternative way of learning and competence development needs a willingness for trial and error. Being afraid to make mistakes is not bringing learners anywhere. Trying again and again in different ways and not being successful immediately is an essential element of the learning process. In order to create the safety for a true exploration, educators invite learners upfront to work together. The aim is to see how they can use each other's qualities, instead of looking at who is not so good, and who is the best. Each learner can contribute in their own way and that is the only way a collective of learners can go through an escape adventure. Learners benefit if they feel motivated and playful. Educators can provoke that feeling of having fun and playfulness during the preparatory phase. If you want to know more detail you can find more specific info in the Handbook, chapter 4. Building a creative learning environment.





CHAPTER

02

THE ESCAPE

ADVENTURE ITSELF:

DESIGN THE ESCAPE

ADVENTURE &

LEARNING

EXPERIENCE

CHAPTER 2: DESIGN THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE AND THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

SETTING UP THE ADVENTURE: TIMELINE

With practice comes experience! Experienced escape adventure designers can set up these adventures in a short time. But if you are new to the field, it might need some time. Therefore, it is recommended to plan and design your escape adventure and make a clear realistic timeline to prepare, design and set up the whole escape adventure. This will support you to keep track of the diverse elements that are connected to the management of these adventures. Be realistic and don't plan too tight!

THE STORY AND THE AMBIENCE OF THE ADVENTURE

Creating the narrative, in other words the story line, will give the context and the story they will step into. The ambience is the atmosphere of the experience, which usually refers to the historical time, the location, the mood, the time of year, time of the day, etc. The ambience is very important in supporting learners to get into the story and therefore it has strong links to the story line. Make sure there are logical links between narrative and the topic and ambience.

For games like the escape adventures, it helps to step out of reality and get into an imaginary scene, where the learners have to solve or do something together for the (greater) good. It does not necessarily have to be something with murder, spies, crime, death or catastrophes (like usually in escape rooms). It can also be a personal story, a community that needs help etc. It is important that you yourself believe the story. Examples of imaginary narratives are Little prince, Harry Potter, Alice in Wonderland; all stories that take us into a special world of fantasy and human interaction. You can create something similar as well!

The narrative will guide the learners through the process, from beginning to end. In order to get them fully engaged, it is useful to have a strong introduction that explains how they can reach the goal and how escaping the bad or difficult situation can contribute to the wellbeing of a certain person, their community, humanity as a whole, to the place, country or world. In order to get the learners into the story, you need to set up an introduction. That can be done in various ways. Think about what would help your learners? Is a video something that would spark their interest, or would a strange person telling them a story or for example a mysterious 'old' letter work better? Would a role play with people dressed up work or make it more exciting, or would it be too much? Examples of the introduction you can find in our **TOOLKIT**, where the modules have various introductions developed, that you can use as an inspiration.

We love things that make sense! Whenever we look around us, things have to make sense to us. That is how we approach the ambience in escape adventures. The ambience is setting the tone, reinforcing the narrative and engaging learners into the experience. Everything we include in our escape adventures should be connected and help to identify all the parts as a whole. Therefore, when we are creating the ambience we have to be sure all elements are coherent and matching the same idea (for example the Historic time in which the adventure takes place, the design, colours, typographies, visuals, etc). These elements will not only make the players feel being part of the story but also motivate them to keep going forward.

Of course all parts of the ambience (the place, the materials, the room, the lights, the textures, the smells, the sounds, music, noises) should be designed to cover all the different senses! Everything can be adjusted to match the flow, which will help the players to get immersed in the experience of the great escape. As you design the story and the whole game flow, these elements will come up naturally along the way and will bring you to the process of escaping. The better and self-explanatory the design of the ambience, the better game-learning experience you will have. Just check out if the materials look like being part of a whole and it is coherent with the narrative and the subsequent steps.

Some elements to keep in mind when designing the ambience:

- 🔒 **Invitation to the game experience;** Do you have some preparatory communication with your learners? Will you inform or trigger them upfront? How will you do that? Handing some invitations, leaving some exciting clues around the classroom? Make a small presentation?
- 🔒 **The Welcome:** This can be a letter, a leaflet, a message on whatsapp, a video or audio message, a person asking for your help, a person in a certain role (tv-show with the president announcing the emergency state, etc. You can make it as exciting as you want, just make sure it fits your learners.
- 🔒 **Explanation of the rules:** What can be done, and what cannot be done? What can be touched or moved, what not? What if people need to go to the toilet, or want to quit, or when learners arrive at the end, etc.? Rules can be written down, or announced together with the intro message. It could also be done with a bit of humour and drama by using for example 'official police or ministry signs'. Of course it is good to mention to the learners what the consequences are if they break the rules.
- 🔒 **Possible costumes or attributes** for the players or the educators involved, in order for learners to feel more real in the story. These can be simple things, like a stick or wand, a wig, or a flute, hat, etc. but also be complete costumes. If you have a story from Roman times, it might be nice to give people laurel wreaths, or some big white blouses with belts. It is not needed, but it can really add to the experience and the level of involvement of the learners!

- 🔒 **The escape:** The end of the game, when players have solved the problem and escaped the risk or helped others to escape from a large threat. This is an important moment in the game flow and it deserves some special attention. Designing this escape moment could be a bit theatrical, while it acknowledges and celebrates the completion of the challenge. For this you could use party sounds, confetti, small sweets or chocolate, a group picture or a certificate. More about this, you can find in **CHAPTER 4**.

Possible reflective questions for your: design:

- 🔒 Is the narrative appealing to young people? Why?
- 🔒 Does the narrative support learners to get engaged in the main topic?
- 🔒 Do the story (narrative) and the ambience match? Do they strengthen each other?
- 🔒 Are there other attributes, props, objects, colours, lights, sounds that could add to the ambience and make the experience emotionally stronger?

DESIGNING THE GAME FLOW

To understand the design of the game flow, it is good to first take a look at the emotional flow we want to achieve. Human nature is to feel and experience first and then to think. This is a fact. We discover the world through all our senses and emotions and we incorporate the discoveries to our knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to survive and grow. When we sense positive things, we want to stay, we want more of it, we keep going on. When we sense negative things, we are more likely to give up, and feel insecure, incompetent and sad.

We want our learners to feel engaged and go forward. Therefore, we are designing an emotional flow for our adventure that brings them into a functional and engaging feeling. We aim on positive feelings, but sometimes a sad image or movie can also have positive results. An example of a strong negative emotion that is very powerful, you can find in our Modules: A gift to Francesca and MonoMazi.

We want to provoke feelings in a specific way in specific moments, in order to reach a better understanding or bigger learning impact. We should not expect our learners to stay highly positive all the time. What can help us are surprises and unexpected events to increase the emotional rhythm and keep the attention and excitement in the adventure.

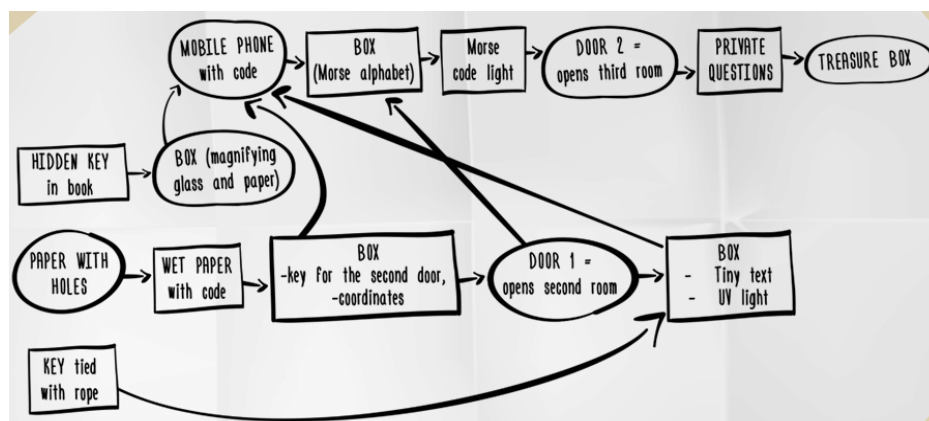
You can map out the emotional flow by following these aspects:

- 🔒 How do you want them to feel at the beginning?
- 🔒 What emotions do you expect them to experience?
- 🔒 How will you manage the possible frustration? How will they?
- 🔒 Will the motivation increase during the adventure? How can you make that happen?
- 🔒 How will you ensure they finish the game with a feeling of achievement?
- 🔒 How will you debrief what happened (in the game and in the group)?

When you have a clear image of what the emotional flow should look like, you can start designing the game flow, or in our case, an escape adventure. The design of an escape adventure games is to design a challenge for the learners. The challenge requires a mental effort to solve a problem or problematic situation with logic. Like a good story, a good challenge has some form of conflict. In escape adventures the conflict arises from the players wanting to make a crucial change, remove or escape a threat or gain access to something that at the present moment is still being blocked. The challenge can be to find a key to escape or to find the answer to a riddle. Without a clear challenge, players won't have the motivation to finish it and maybe they won't know when they have finished it. It is important to communicate this before they start the escape adventure.

An escape challenge can be an unique activity or a series of activities reaching a conclusion. It can be a linear flow (one clue leads to another puzzle or task) or it can be parallel (several things have to be done or found simultaneously, and at the end these clues have to be combined for the next step). Of course it can also be a combination, starting with a linear flow, then at a certain moment, it becomes parallel and at the end again linear. Linear works usually well for smaller groups, parallel could work well for bigger groups, because they can work and find the clues simultaneously.

The game flow is the final combination of challenges, which brings the players from the beginning to the end. It is the game journey that ends with the great escape!



It is a logical sequence of the challenges, where certain clues lead to new challenges. As said, this can be a linear flow, or parallel flow.

An escape adventure usually has a main challenge and other smaller challenges that need to be solved. The puzzles' logic is related to the theme of the escape adventure or space. One puzzle in itself might seem illogical or meaningless in the story line, but once solved it could make sense in combination with the other puzzles or tasks.

The participants are the protagonists (the main characters) of the escape adventure and they must act as protagonists from the very beginning. They are the heroes of this adventure. Usually, a good narrative and ambience is more important than a supercool puzzle design. If the ambience is good, the players don't mind a simple puzzle design (the things to do, and how complex it is to do them). Sometimes the experience of just being inside a magical story, a submarine or a spaceship is already good enough for many.

The flow of the game puzzles is the incorporation of some factors:

- 🔒 **The approach and needs of the learners:** You must know them in order to create something meaningful for them and oriented to their specific learning objectives. As we said before, you know best your learners and what keeps them interested and willing to continue going through the adventure. If they are people that like to do things with their hands, then make a game flow of tasks that requires physical action and using motor skills. If they are more cognitive, you could go more with intellectual, logical or abstract tasks. Cooperation tasks, where several or all learners need to work together, will be helpful to keep them all involved. Collective tasks will decrease the feeling of being lost or stuck. If one of the needs of the group is to be more inclusive and supportive, this could also work.
- 🔒 **The tempo of the adventure:** This refers to the planned or available time, but also to the type of tasks: quick tasks, like finding some jigsaw puzzle pieces in different locations, or more slow or more complex ones that require time (like reading a longer text, figuring out a list of codes and transform them to words, text or numbers), tasks that need communicating in order to succeed, or specific cooperation from every member of the group, etc. Depending on the available time and the type of learners, you can design your adventure;
- 🔒 **Difficulty level:** You can design a simple linear flow with a series of easy tasks that match their minimum knowledge or capacity. You can also design more difficult and complex tasks, with more challenging links between puzzles, riddles, etc. It must be tailored to your learner group and adequate to maintain the interest. In some cases you could consider a combination, when your group of learners is very diverse;

- 🔒 **Content logic:** In some escape adventures it is clear what has to be done: participants just have to find the key or the code to unlock something at the end. All the clues are there to find that key or code. In other cases, the content slowly reveals the situation. The whole adventure is a journey related to the educational content. Every step should contribute to reaching the understanding that you have designed it for. An example could be a story with a mysterious disappearance of someone, and by finding the clues (for example diary pages with personal information) participants will slowly understand more about what happened to this person and what is needed to escape the difficult or risky situation.

As we have mentioned before: Surprises and unexpected events can help to increase emotional engagement. Finding unexpected things has always been a curiosity trigger and many games use it to increase the motivation of the players. It prevents the learners to feel that 'they already know it' and the brain and heart get new adrenaline to go on. Surprises are part of all entertainment, it is at the basement of humour, strategy and problem solving. Brains are hardwired to enjoy surprises, so let's use them!

In order to incorporate them, you might ask yourself these questions:

- 🔒 What will surprise the players when they play the escape adventure?;
- 🔒 Does the narrative contain surprises? Are the puzzles solved with an unexpected solution or reaction?;
- 🔒 Does the design have any unexpected surprises that are not noticeable at first sight?;
- 🔒 Do the puzzles include some inclusivity surprises?

DESIGNING THE CHALLENGES: GAME MECHANICS

Escape adventures are often composed of various tasks, codes, riddles, clues and puzzles. We use the word 'challenges' as an overall description of riddles, tasks, codes, and puzzles. It makes sense to first clarify in short how we use of these terms in this Tutorial:

- 🔒 Clue is something that has to be found and guides through a procedure of difficulties; a piece of evidence that leads one toward the solution of a problem. The clue is the result of a puzzle, riddle, task or code. The clue is then needed to be used for a lock or for finding something in the space. The clue of a puzzle can be "under the surface" and then they will find a piece of paper that has been stuck underneath the table;

- 🔒 A task is something that has to be done or undertaken. It can be an individual or group task. When an action has been taken, something changes or something new can be found. Examples: Finding a screwdriver and pulling out screws from a wooden door, is a task to open a door that holds new information. Finding a uv-light pen is the task in order to later find the code or riddle written with invisible ink on the chair. Building a human tower to reach something that is stuck to the ceiling is a group task;
- 🔒 A puzzle is a problem difficult to solve or a situation difficult to resolve, that involves a mental or physical challenge. Puzzles take a lot of thinking and involve putting things together so they make sense. Labyrinths, maths, scientific puzzles, marking on maps or objects are all different forms of this.
- 🔒 Examples: getting a cork, that is attached to a key, out of a narrow vase by pouring water into the vase so it floats up. Or a map on the wall that has locations marked with pins, that you need to decipher in order to find the clue to a number lock. A route between marked places that they have to follow can be the clue for the directional lock. A jigsaw puzzle of various pieces found in the room, might hold a riddle in the image, or even a hidden image at the back side;
- 🔒 A riddle tells more of a story that you have to think about to solve, and most of them are logic. Usually riddles are written or audio texts that hold a clue. Anagrams, cryptograms, crosswords, or actual riddles, like "I am always hungry, I must always be fed. The finger I touch will soon turn hot and red. What am I? " The answer would be Fire! And it can lead the learners to the next clue near a candle or a fireplace;
- 🔒 A code is to put in or into the form or symbols of a code. This usually works with patterns. Transforming morse coded into letters, will bring you new information on where to find something or where to go. Collecting different colour pencils, according to a colour code or according to the length of each pencil, might give a new number combination (that they find somewhere on a piece of paper). Deciphering a musical tune could bring a number code, or the other way around, numbers could create a musical tune.

We have given you some examples of challenges, but you can find hundreds of them on the internet. When designing and choosing the types of challenges, the participants will have to solve or complete in your escape adventure you must keep in mind their different learning styles, needs and preferences, in order to make the experience accessible for all.






In the Handbook you can find a complete description of how to design the combination of challenges, which we call game mechanics.

In order to be inclusive and engage all learners we recommend you to design a combination of challenges that refer to all the intelligences, as we explained in the Handbook. Here is an overview of what kind of challenges fit with type of intelligence:

TYPE OF INTELLIGENCE	GOOD AT	TYPE OF CHALLENGE THAT FIT THEM:
Logical-mathematical	Numbers and logic, recognizing patterns	Codes, logic and numbers, linking numbers with other things, concepts, recognizing patterns, finding sequences.
Linguistic	Language, expressing thoughts	Reading texts, word riddles, cross words, memorising text.
Spatial	Visualising, orienting	Maps, orientations and directions, charts, videos, and pictures, jigsaw puzzles.
Musical	Thinking in patterns, rhythms, and sounds	Musical patterns, recognizing sounds and sound patterns, reproducing musical patterns, recognizing melodies, songs, etc.
Bodily-kinesthetic	Body movement and physical control	Tasks with hand-eye coordination and dexterity, handcrafts, fine and strong motoric activities, climbing, sports, tactile tasks.
Intrapersonal	Emotional awareness feelings, motivations	This intelligence is very much focused on the self and is used for reflection and debriefing. We have no examples for this.
Interpersonal	Understanding and interacting with other people.	Teamwork tasks, inclusion challenges, linking people and clues together.
Naturalistic	In tune with nature nurturing, exploring the environment	Challenges involving nature, plants and animals, biology, subtle changes to their environments.

Finding the right way to design is challenging and requires knowing your learners, good thinking, creativity and developing experience. But you can start with an easy one, or you can start with designing an escape adventure for your colleagues for trying out and feedback. We recommend you to go and play existing escape rooms with your colleagues, and use the experience to understand the game flow and game mechanics that are used and analyse how they could work for you in your educational escape adventure. The challenge is of course to create a balance between being challenging and solvable, creative but logical and engaging but not frustrating.

Some questions that could be helpful:

-  **Level:** Are the tasks, riddles, codes, and puzzles adapted to their level? (In terms of knowledge, cognitive capacity, attention span, abilities);
-  **Variety:** As we explained in the Handbook, a good educational escape adventure is responding to all human intelligences (chapter 4: creative Learning Environments) in order to engage all learners, not only the fast mathematical thinkers. Did you have enough variety, and can you imagine all your learners to have a successful contribution to the final escape? You can do this by requiring different types of skills, approaches such as logical challenges, physical challenges, musical quests, word riddles, tactile challenges, patience tasks, etc.;
-  **Inclusivity:** Are the challenges we are using inclusive? Make sure the challenges are accessible to all players, regardless of their abilities, capabilities, or limitations;
-  **Timing:** Consider the amount of time required to solve or finished each challenge, and test it so players can complete the whole escape adventure;
-  **Originality:** when you are a starting game designer, you might use existing challenges that you have done yourself, or you find in books, in our Toolkit modules you can find specially designed inclusive challenges for our project, or on the internet. Make sure the clues for your locks (f.e. The number and type of letters in a letter lock or cryptex, or the limits of directional locks) fit with the challenge. Are they logical and fit the narrative and ambience?
For those who have considerable experience in game development, you can take on the challenge to try to create original puzzles so they are not so commonly used on popular escape games, that will make them never forget this adventure and the learning!

USING THE RIGHT MATERIALS

Opposite to common leisure time escape rooms, our escape adventures don't need fancy and expensive materials. Still, it is important to use the right material and pay attention to these resources, as they make or break your adventure.

When designing your game flow and your game mechanics, you will need to collect your resources: all the material and equipment you need. You will need to design your adventure with the appropriate materials for and use your imagination and creativity to come up with low-cost useful things you can use.

LOCKS

Locks are basically a security device that prevents people from opening or giving access to an object unless they have the 'key'. This aspect of locks is what makes them an essential element in escape adventures: They make sure that not everything within the adventure is immediately accessible and creates milestones and sub-achievements in the adventure. The key to a lock can be: a physical (metal) key, or a clue to be able to open the lock: a number for a number keypad, a letter or word. There are many locks available: a letter keypad, directional, number turn, face recognition, magnetic, electric, bicycle or scooter lock/ chain, fingerprint, sound, card reader, nfc chip, magnet, shape drawing, camera, weight scale...and many more. Here we explain the use of some of the basic locks;



REGULAR KEY-LOCK WITH KEY:

The key can be hidden somewhere. The lock opens by turning the physical key. The lock can be very small to very large and have various shapes.

Some of these locks have extra long metal brackets.



NUMBER OR LETTER LOCKS:

The lock opens by the right combination of 3,4 or 5 numbers (number lock) or letters (letter lock). There are many types of these locks. They have a little mark on the lock, of the right place of these numbers or letters. You can set the lock to the combination that you want (in case of a letter lock it could be a word). Make sure the combination is set on that mark.



DIRECTIONAL LOCK:

This lock opens by pulling the central knob into a series of directions. The right combination will open, for example: Ex: Left, Left, Up, Up, Up, Down, Right. This lock is mostly linked to when it comes to directional. Commonly used within a story line, several movements in directions open them and you can programme them according to your needs.



COMBINATION LOCK:

Very common lock that needs a series of numbers introduced in the right order to open it. There are different types with wheels, buttons and in different shapes and sizes.



MAGNETIC LOCKS:

These locks use a magnetic mechanism to keep a door or container closed. They are often used in combination with an electronic keypad or a proximity sensor.



PUZZLE LOCKS:

These locks require the player to solve a puzzle in order to open them. The puzzle may involve arranging objects, matching shapes or deciphering a code.

In the internet and in many internet stores you can find hundreds of locks. Some sites: www.amazon.com (buy cheap locks) and www.exittheroom.co.uk/blog/types-of-escape-room-locks



ELECTRONIC LOCKS:

To open this lock you can use an NFC Chip, which is very cheap to obtain, and program it in advance with any smartphone (and the app NFC Tools). You can find this chip inside of a card too, or any other material, and you can also install this type of lock inside drawers and door handles. They will open just by approaching the chip.



KRYPTEX:

The word Kryptex was invented by the author Dan Brown for his 2003 novel *The Da Vinci Code*, denoting a portable vault used to hide secret messages. It is a word formed from Greek *kryptós*, "hidden, secret" and Latin *codex*; "an apt title for this device" since it uses "the science of cryptology to protect information written on the contained scroll or codex". When the right code - which is often a word- is found, the container will open and the learners can find the hidden object.



BICYCLE OR SCOOTER CHAIN LOCK:

The bicycle or scooter chain lock usually works with metal keys, and sometimes with a number lock. The chain or steel wire is long and can be used to wrap around an object or furniture, hold bigger objects together or hang things on the ceiling, as it can hold quite some weight.



INTEGRATED LOCKS:

Some locks are integrated in an object or container. Examples of that are: suitcase, diary, chest, money box, drawer, closet, safe, etc. Sometimes it is interesting to add such an object to your escape adventure.

THE GAME FLOW: CONTAINERS:

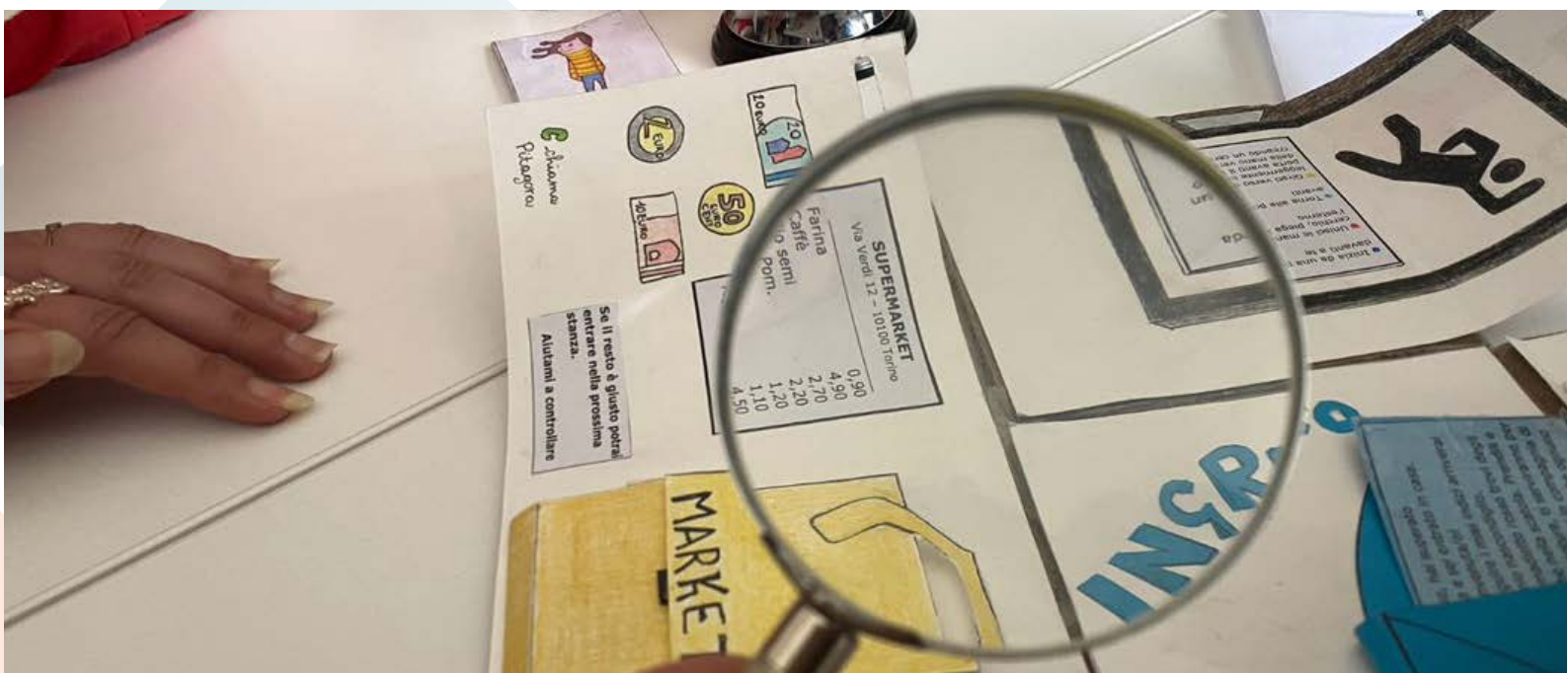
Containers are used in escape adventures as a way to store or hide information, messages or objects, An educational escape adventure should provide information within the game itself, and this information can be contained in boxes, drawers, diaries, cabinets, notebooks and papers, digital devices (computers, smartphones, tablets, tv's...), Make sure there is a good variety of containers, to keep the adventure interesting.

Remember that the key to providing information effectively is to make sure players can find it without too much difficulty, but not too easily that they solve the puzzles without effort or by not having to apply their knowledge. The information should be well hidden, but not impossible to find, so players feel challenged but not frustrated.

Hiding messages in your escape adventure will add an extra layer of challenge and intrigue. Be creative! Once you have the idea of your escape adventure you can find unlimited places to hide your message, surprise yourself to surprise them!

Ideas for hiding messages, objects or information could be:

- 🔒 **The unusual places:** you can leave messages where people don't expect it. Under chairs, under tables, behind mirrors, posters, art work, on the ceiling or on the floor.
- 🔒 **Hidden compartments:** You can hide messages in secret compartments that are disguised or hidden at first sight. This could include a drawer that only opens if a certain object is moved around them (by using the electronic locks explained before) or a basic hidden paper that appears when pulled from an object.
- 🔒 **Books and documents:** You can hide messages in books, documents or newspapers in your escape adventure game.
- 🔒 **The container:** If your escape adventure is a box, a puzzle or a deck of cards, you can include some hidden messages on the container itself, in the walls of the box, or under it, or between the cards. Even a hanging umbrella can function as a container, or a coat that is hanging on a coat rack.
- 🔒 **Videos & Audio:** You can hide clues in a video, or an audio, so players need to pay attention to in order to progress and solve a puzzle. This could include some symbols in a video (like on an e-pocket format prototype in IO1 guidelines: link) or a sound clip that contains a message played backwards.



THE GAME FLOW: SCIENCE:

Scientific challenges are interesting to implement in your escape adventure, especially when you do an escape adventure that is related to science, like biology, physics or chemistry. For that you often can use common materials, like mirrors, scissors, compass, ruler, cork or rubber (for floating), magnets (for moving small objects) that you otherwise could not move. For more specific materials, substances or equipment you can best contact the science teachers in your local school to ask them for support. They know best how to deal with safety issues when it comes to science tasks.

THE GAME FLOW: SOUND AND MUSIC:

Sound and music can give an added value to your escape adventure. It can add to the experience itself, like supporting the ambience. You might know the screams and high sounds in horror movies, heavy music in case of dangerous moments, and quick high harmonies in movies to create lightness and happiness. The ticking of a timer, gives a feeling of urgency and stress.

But sounds and music can also be used to allow learners that have auditory learning intelligence to be engaged. For that, we can use musical instruments, recordings and melodies connected to codes and hidden messages.

Sounds complicated? It does not have to be! Here are some examples to inspire you:

- 🔒 **Melody:** You can record a 4 notes melody leading to 4 numbers connected to the musical notes on an instrument by using a phone recorder, or any device to record sound. You play it and learners have to find the clue (f.e. a piano keys have been numbered or for other instruments they just use the musical tone letters (c,d,e,f,g etc..))

- 🔒 **Sound and lyrics:** Some songs can also be used to send a message that is related to the lyrics of a song. You could for example say that the word they need is the 18th word of the lyrics. They have to listen to the music and count the words.
- 🔒 **Recordings:** You can also include small speakers and mini SD Cards (less than 5€) to enrich the experience. In this project we included some audio files in a website that they had to access through a QR Code. (https://www.asociacionpromesas.com/escape/josue_escape.html)
- 🔒 **Guess the sound:** from guessing the sound of animals, or sounds of certain things (transport , machines, birds, landscapes, etc.),. By listening to a series of sounds, they can compose a word or a number that is the clue to the next challenge.

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING:

Although escape adventures are designed for learners to finish the escape adventures as autonomously as possible, communication between you, the educator and supporter of learning, and the learners. Before thinking about which communication devices you need, it is good to think about how you want or need to communicate with your learners. It is clear there has to be communication from the educator to the learners to introduce the escape adventure, and invite them to the adventure.

But you might also want to have communication during the adventure.

Will you be in the same room? Will the learners be close to you or will they be far away (for example in an outdoor escape adventure)? Be creative to use communication devices that can deliver the learning content and the messages in a way that is connected to the narrative and the whole experience.

Some of these devices might be: a screen, an old telephone, notes on paper sliding under the door, messages in a window, bird notes, invisible ink written on walls, walkie talkies, instruments, audio recordings, visual clues, art, black lights, etc. Try out what works for the space and for you!

DESIGNING THE VISUALS (INCLUSIVE DESIGN)

The look and feel of a game is defined by its Aesthetics, which are the elements responsible for the sensory experience of perceiving and evaluating the beauty of objects, the composition, the colour palette, the rhythms, environments, and other phenomena.

Some game designers have considered them as mere “surface details”, but you have to keep in mind you are not just designing a game mechanic but an entirely inclusive learning experience. Therefore, aesthetics are part of making any experience more enjoyable and will impact learners. If your game is full of beautiful artwork, handcrafted materials made with passion, then every new thing that the player gets to see is a reward in itself.

Our minds are fond of visuals as it strongly supports the understanding of the space and topic. We all perceive reality in different ways so once your design is ready, you have to test if the players are seeing what you really want them to see and understand from the visuals.

Your visuals should support you to:

- 🔒 Make the idea clear to everyone;
- 🔒 Let people enter the story and stay in the story;
- 🔒 Excite and engage players to play your game;
- 🔒 Excite and engage players to solve your challenges;
- 🔒 Support learners to remember their learning results;
- 🔒 Attract new players to play it.

When we look at the inclusivity aspect, visuals are also a great tool to include participants of the adventure. Especially those who are not developed on language level, images and visuals can help them to be involved and to understand. That is why we use pictograms, signs and lots of visuals on the street, on airports or stations, etc. Inclusion is a good additional reason for you to use visual material.

DEALING WITH TECHNICAL ISSUES

Escape adventures allow educators to put into practice some of their passions. Escape adventures can address their love for art, literature or technology. This means educators can also make the development of this tool a nice adventure for themselves. In our Escape Exclusion project, this aspect has been very much appreciated by educators.

Some escape adventure elements might look challenging, but they are made based on the designer's experience and for that reason some technical aspects might arise. Whereas traditional escape rooms often have quite some technical elements, the majority of the escape adventures do not.

Possible technical elements are:

- 🔒 Monitoring - in case you don't want to stay in the room (which often is better for the process and experience of the learners), but observe or monitor from outside, you will need a camera and audio connection to the room or space. Sometimes the connection is with bluetooth or the internet. Make sure they are stable.
- 🔒 Using a computer is a nice option, because it can be interesting for a task and work as a 'lock'. With a password participants could access important information, or even access the internet to find some specific information (like in an escape adventure on history, it could be that they need to find the answer in wikipedia, or some other website. An escape adventure about media literacy could also be more interesting by using tablets and computers, where learners could experience different risks in media.
- 🔒 Additional technical equipment: audio, sounds, timer, lights, scientific equipment, etc.

Sometimes we see escape adventures, as we explained in the previous chapter, where scientific or technical tasks or codes are being used, like black light (making certain text visible), magnets to make things move, adding things to liquid, to make things float, using radio waves to hear some audio message, etc. Think about all the things you could use, because it could have great additional value to your escape adventure.

Possible measures in order to deal with technical issues:

- 🔒 Make sure you have people in your team who know how to deal with technical issues.;
- 🔒 Less is more! If you struggle with technology or some devices and you can't find someone to help you with, you can always try to substitute that step with some other or remove it entirely. It's more important that you can make sure of the success of the learning experience than to focus on aspects that you fear might fail.;

- 🔒 You might also think of actually involving some of your youngsters to deal with the technical issues. Also by creating escape adventures, young people can learn a lot about the subject or content of the adventure.;
- 🔒 Have a plan B: Make sure you know what to do if it does not work. Know who can make personal hotspots if the internet does not work.

In general, one of the risks of the escape adventure design is overcomplication, because we want to make it really exciting and fill it with all kinds of information and cool things happening. Just be aware that the more intricate things you add where something can go wrong, the more often it will go wrong. It is better to add one good working technical thing instead of multiple ones that are likely to fail.

CREATING SAFETY AND CLARITY:

Especially because such an escape adventure is not an usual learning environment that young people are in, the safety issue needs your attention. Here we talk about both physical and emotional safety. Physical safety refers to the space and the materials we use. Emotional safety refers to feeling at ease during the adventure. Creating safety is an essential element to be able to learn, as the learning in itself is unsure and complex. For that you need to create a safe learning environment in which the rules and behaviour are explained. For that you need a plan and dedicate time for a proper introduction, including safety rules and agreement on behaviours that are related to safety issues.

Aspect to take into consideration:

- 🔒 How does it work? Explain the structure and timeline.
- 🔒 When does the adventure end?
- 🔒 What can they do and what can't they do? Use of phones, touch or move stuff, behaviours between each other, attention to an inclusive and supportive climate, etc.)?
- 🔒 What to do when emotions get (too) strong?
- 🔒 **What to do if someone:**
 - 🔒 ...needs to go to the toilet?
 - 🔒 ...wants to stop, is not interested?
 - 🔒 ...is stuck, doesn't know how to go on (individual or whole group)?
 - 🔒 ...feels excluded or not useful?



The background is a solid teal color with a white maze pattern. The maze consists of thick white lines that form a complex, winding path. The path starts from the top left and winds towards the bottom right, with several dead ends and loops. The overall effect is a sense of mystery and challenge, fitting for a chapter about escape adventures.

CHAPTER

03

**DURING THE
ESCAPE
ADVENTURE:
PLAYING
THE
ADVENTURE**

CHAPTER 3: DURING THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE - PLAYING THE ADVENTURE

MONITORING

The escape adventure is set up as a learning experience, where next to reaching the result (get an understanding of the topic), also the process is worthwhile to witness. When people are really engaged in an (educational) game, they will be behaving in their most natural way, and probably in a more extreme version of it.

Here we can see how the 4 gamer types of Bartle (for more information see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartle_taxonomy_of_player_types) could behave in an escape adventure and what would be the risk for that:

- 🔒 The 'killer' types might become annoyingly fanatic and will not have an inclusive attitude;
- 🔒 The 'socializer' type might completely loose themself in the group dynamic, be invisible in the game itself and lack to contribute to solutions of the challenges and the success to escape;
- 🔒 The 'explorers' (who are interested in the novelty) might be focussed only on some exciting new thing and then forget about everything else;
- 🔒 The 'achievers' might get frustrated when things don't work out and behave negatively.

Some groups do wonders when it comes to collaboration, other groups are falling apart into individual players, who want to do things their own way. Anyway, it is an interesting process to watch and observe. This observation is what we call monitoring and can be essential for debriefing or reflecting afterwards.

In order to capture everything that happens, we advise you to have more than only one observer, if possible. We recommend taking notes, or even video/pictures (if regulations allow it, but maybe make an agreement with participants about the use of pictures or video, because it can also limit their active participation):

Some things to observe and keep in mind for the debriefing:

- 🔒 How are they cooperating? What are the roles in this team? Are they effective as a team? Do they use the skills of each member of this team? Is the ending a result of them as a group, or of only a few individuals? What could they improve?
- 🔒 Are there any interesting comments they make? What does it tell about them, the subject, the topic, or the adventure itself?

- 🔒 Can you recognise their “aha moments”? What were crucial turning points in the process?
What happened?
- 🔒 Are they getting stuck? Why, what is the situation? Did they involve everybody to try to solve it?
Did they give up at some point?
- 🔒 Are all ideas listened to or asked for? Were there ideas that were mentioned, but nobody listened?
How could that work better in future?
- 🔒 Do they find any barriers (psychological, physical, etc.)?
- 🔒 What was triggering their emotions? Were there any conflicts during the experience?
What happened and how did they deal with it? Was it a good solution for everybody?
- 🔒 Did the escape adventure provide enough space for thinking or wondering about the subject,
the topic? Did they learn what you planned for them? How do you know?

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL DYNAMIC (READINESS AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS)

Escape adventures usually are designed to be played as a group, and as such, they provide an opportunity to observe and study various group dynamics. Some of the group dynamics that can be observed in an escape adventure include:

- Communication:** Communication is critical in an escape adventure, and players must work together to share information, ideas, and strategies to solve puzzles and progress through the game. Observing how players communicate with each other can reveal individual communication styles and how the group functions as a whole.
- Leadership:** In an escape adventure, some players take on leadership roles naturally, by taking charge of certain tasks or puzzles. Observing how players lead, delegate tasks, and motivate others can reveal leadership styles and dynamics within the group. In case someone does this regularly or strongly, the educator can discuss this topic of leadership in the preparation, and ask them to give space to others also.
- Problem-solving:** The primary objective of an escape adventure is to solve puzzles, codes and the situation in general. Observing how the group approaches problem-solving, divides tasks, and collaborates can reveal how they work together to achieve their goals. Reflecting on this could support their competence development in general.
- Conflict resolution:** As with any other human group activity, conflicts can arise in an escape adventure. Observing how the group handles conflicts, resolves disagreements, and reaches consensus can reveal individual conflict resolution styles and how the group navigates challenging situations.
- Trust:** Trust is an important factor in any group activity, and it is particularly important in an escape room where players must rely on each other to succeed. Observing how the group trusts each other, delegates tasks, and communicates can reveal levels of trust and how it affects group dynamics.

All this group dynamics can be and will be highly influenced by the emotional flow you have designed for your escape adventure. Educators can work with that.

Question: How do you want them to feel at the beginning, during and after the adventure? Including specific tasks will increase their motivation if you know them well and have included space for all to be the main character even for a few moments.

SUPPORTING LEARNING & ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR

Guiding the learning process is a crucial aspect of the educational escape adventure. In the Handbook we dedicate various chapters on this, as supporting the learning process makes the difference between the usual escape games and our educational escape games.

Except for the way educators can support the process during the game, you can also support the learners through the game itself. The advantage of not interacting as a facilitator is that they are more likely to stay in their game and not get taken out of the ambience of the adventure. Keep in mind that everytime you interact with the participants you are interrupting their learning process, so these interventions should be reduced to as minimum as possible. So it sounds unattractive, but your goal is to make the learners independent from you. If they don't need you, you have done a good job!

But they still might need support and you can give that in another way by creating a support system. So how to make that support system? You could already think about implementing self-help tools, to give your learners autonomy and self-direct their learning, like help lines, or supportive material (written, audio, small video, an object, etc.). Like a hint booklet or hint cards, that they can open when they feel the need for support. The hints could be simple hints, or could be hints on multiple levels, (First small hint, if needed next bigger hint, if needed next: the solution). That way they still feel they are advancing by themselves, not because the educator is telling the solution.

Ownership is an important element of educational escape adventures. As the educators from the democratic school of the Vallei wrote about the escape adventure:

“Do not force students to play the game. Rather ask them if they're interested in playing. Try not to meddle too much with the gameplay. Leave the students to it. Help when needed, but never too much, and remember it's the game of the players, not the game of the educator.” and “You can never guarantee ownership, because like feeling included, ownership is something they have to take for themselves.”

Now that you have finalised the design of your complete escape adventure, this could be a good moment to cross-check your set up. You could check out if this escape adventure is still matching the needs of your learners, you and your place (school centre, club, etc.). Is it educational, is it inclusive, is it suitable for all your learners? If it does not, you might need to change some things. This is the right moment for a change.



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CHAPTER

04

**AFTER THE
ESCAPE
ADVENTURE:
LEARNING
OUTCOMES AND
FOLLOW UP**

CHAPTER 4: AFTER THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE - LEARNING OUTCOMES & FOLLOW UP

THE END OF THE ESCAPE ADVENTURE: CLOSING THE EXPERIENCE:

And then there is the end! The game is finished, the problem is solved, and they have escaped.

That sounds wonderful, but after being in the escape adventure, learners come out with very different emotions which need to be acknowledged. They usually are happy when they hear from the educator that they have done a good job and what the positive results were of their accomplishment according to the storyline (did they save the world, did they ban out exclusion, did they manage to find out what happened to their friend, etc.).

Feedback: you as an educator should provide some feedback on the performance, so it's clear for them on what they have succeeded. This could be a message appearing on the phone, receiving an email or even the educator dressed in a specific way and entering the room to congratulate the players. Make it fun!

Celebration: It's important to create a feeling of celebration and accomplishment at the end of the game. This might involve playing a victory song, taking a group photo or giving them a small prize or souvenir and challenging the participation of others. This is all good before the official reflection or debriefing.

After that: Time for blowing off steam! Give them 5 minutes to tell you or others what happened to them, let them go to the toilet, and have a small break.

DEBRIEFING & REFLECTIONS + CONCLUSIONS/ IMPACT:




To make an educational escape adventure reflecting on the experience is essential. We combine the experience with acquiring new understandings.

"Learning is the process on which knowledge is created from the transformation of the experience"

David Kolb

One of the main differences between regular escape games and educational escape adventures is that the educator is analysing the whole process during the game. The role of the educator gets manifested in this point by grabbing the best of their experience by making the right questions to learners, so the learning outcomes come from them.

You can do the reflection or debriefing as you usually do, if you have experience in this. If not, you can follow the 4 F's debriefing process which involves:

-  **Feelings:** After going through a learning experience like this, participants experience a set of emotions and it's important to dedicate time to analyse them. As a first step, you have to let people blow off steam, and get control over their emotions. But it is also good to express these emotions, and share them within the group. Well guided, this is a very valuable process of the escape adventure (and any learning experience). On the first round of: How do you feel in one word, usually helps to hear all learners to express this and is also a quite inclusive way. How did they feel during the experience? Try to ask deeper about what caused these emotions. Ask them and take some notes on the different emotions so you can later analyse why going through the same provoked such different emotions in them.
-  **Facts:** When they are a bit more calmed down, they are ready for the second step: a rational analysis of the journey or the experience. It's the moment to go back to various elements of the experience and ask them what happened, what they did, what were their favourite puzzles or challenges and what they enjoyed the most. It is important that they stay factual and if someone has strong interpretation, you stop that. What did you see, what did you hear, etc. For them it is good to hear experiences of the other learners, things that they might not have seen or heard. Besides that this is valuable for the learners, it also provides you very valuable information to adapt your escape adventure and improve it.
-  **Findings:** What did they learn in the experience? What do they understand now about the topic, about cooperation, about inclusion? Etc. What do they know now, what changed in them and what will they remember? Encourage them to make daily life situations on which they can apply what they have learned. How can they use these new insights?
- Future:** In this last step we can brainstorm about what will happen next, will they tell others about this experience? Will they incorporate that new learning to their lives? How can we make this have a bigger impact?

In order to facilitate a good debriefing or reflection, you should prepare some written questions for yourself and also have someone making notes. In the Toolkit you can find examples for debriefing questions.

You know your learners best. Think about how you can do this reflection. In certain cases it could be better to have this reflection in 2 or 3 separate parts. It is good to have the Feelings and Facts soon after the experience. Of course it would be best if you can continue, but if your target group does not have such an attention span, then you can divide this in separate sessions.

EVALUATION OF THE ADVENTURE AND HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR PRACTICE:

Evaluation is looking back on the experience and making it your own learning experience. For this you can use different feedback or assessments:

FEEDBACK OF LEARNERS:

In order to get feedback on your escape adventure, maybe you want some feedback. You can do that during the reflection, but you could also ask your learners to fill in a little questionnaire. This could give you good insight for your work as an educator, and potentially new escape adventures. Your players could give you interesting things to work with. In case they have very good ideas how to do it better or what to change, you might even think how you could involve them in the further development of this escape adventure, or to support you with new ones. This is also a way to give more ownership to young people.

EDUCATORS EVALUATION OR (SELF-)ASSESSMENT:

You and your team can sit together and reflect yourselves on the experience. Take the time that is needed for that.

ASPECTS FOR EVALUATION:

- 🔒 Did the escape adventure work? Did it work as you had planned? Why?;
- 🔒 Did the learners get engaged by the story and the intro to the story? Why?;
- 🔒 Was the adventure appealing to your learners? Why? What would you change, what would you keep?;
- 🔒 How do you evaluate the learning outcomes of the learners?;
- 🔒 How do you assess your own role as a learning supporter? Did you interfere when it was needed? Who's need, yours or theirs?;
- 🔒 Would you be willing and ready to develop a new escape adventure? What would you need to take into account for that?;
- 🔒 In case of teamwork, how did you work together as a team making this escape adventure? Maybe it is time for feedback to each other.;
- 🔒 Which competences did you show or develop during this process?;
- 🔒 Which new insights do you take personally and professionally from this experience?

FOLLOW UP FOR LEARNERS AND FOR THE TEAM:

After the experience, we all go back to life as usual. Life goes on, both for you and for your learners. It is interesting to see how the escape adventure is affecting the behaviour or thinking of some learners. Make space for coming back to the experience at a later stage, give space for further reflections if needed. And if they ask for a new adventure, just make a new escape adventure.

Depending on the type of escape adventure, you might need to make a strategy on how to go about it. If you have an adventure with a sensitive topic, like bullying, homosexuality, self-mutilation, loneliness, etc. you might need to come back to it with your learner group. Other learners just say a boring “whatever!” and others get very excited about ‘playing an exciting game’ in the classroom or the youth centre. As said before, when young people get the intrinsic motivation to do something with the experience, you might have found yourself a good companion(s). We have seen some examples of young people who wanted to be involved in designing and building escape adventures, and they learned even more by making it, than by participating in one.

GOOD LUCK AND ENJOY THE PROCESS AND THE RESULTS!







CHAPTER

05

**ESCAPE FILES:
A PRACTICAL
TOOL FOR
GENERATING
ESCAPE
FOLDERS**

CHAPTER 5: THE ESCAPE FILES: A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR GENERATING ESCAPE FOLDERS

WHAT IS THE ESCAPE FILES?

The escape files is a practical and complete guide for building customisable and educational escape games in folder format. You, the educator/builder, can create your own educational escape games for your students/players to enjoy, by following a series of simple steps and picking and choosing your puzzles. All you require is some basic computer skills, a printer, an ordinary folder and an envelope.

The guide comes complete with all the other materials to create endless possibilities. Building and preparing the game can be done within an afternoon. The game can be played with up to five players or be played with the whole class by dividing the class into smaller groups. The players will hone their 21st century skills by unravelling mysteries, solving puzzles and working together. The puzzles are varied and fun for all learning styles and ages (starting from 11). Anyone can play!

The Escape Files were made by partner organisation VO De Vallei as an additional output and that's the reason why it has received its separate place within our tutorial.

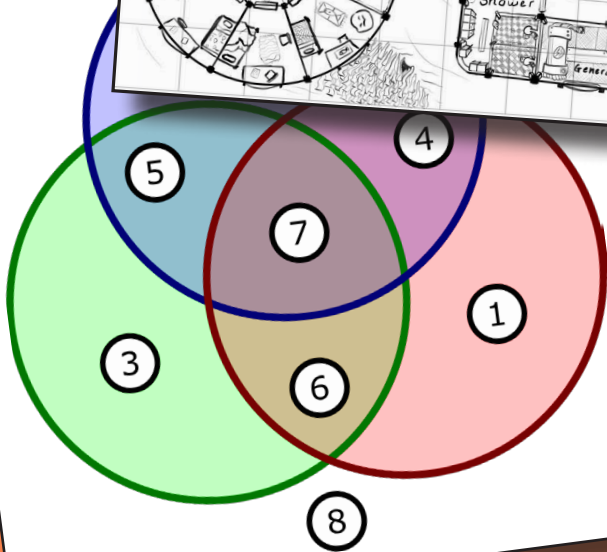
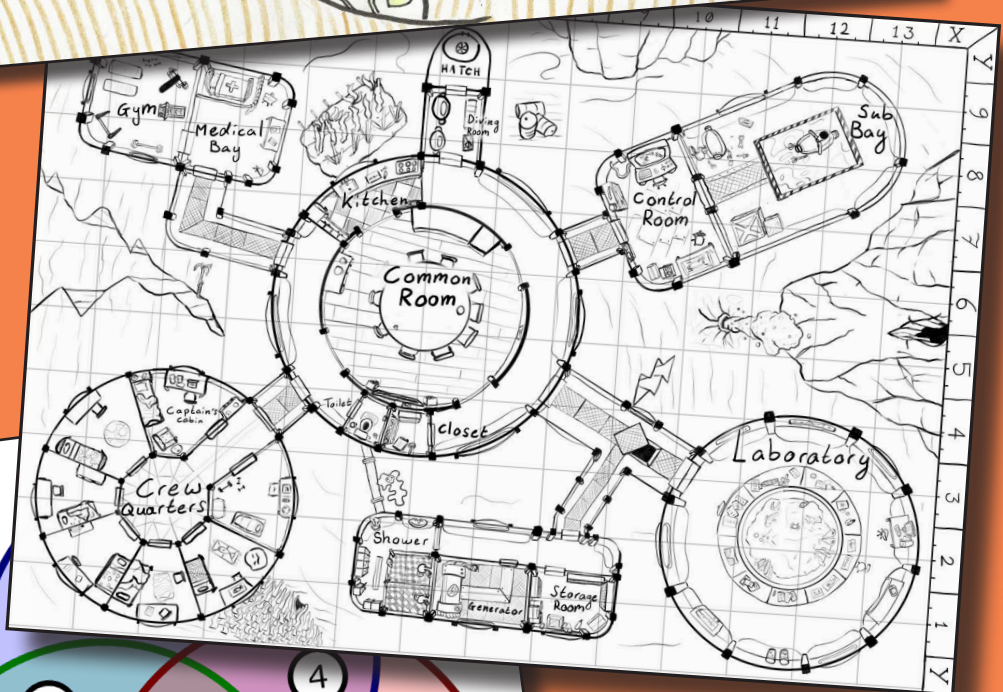
HOW TO BUILD

Building is easy and relatively quick. By following six steps you'll be guided through the process, making all kinds of choices along the way. You won't have to come up with fanciful stories, intriguing puzzles or overarching structures: that has already been taken care of. The only thing you really have to consider is what the players you have in mind will enjoy the most playing and what you fancy building. If you are a more experienced (puzzle) maker, you can of course alter or bolt on any elements to your liking, but we advise not to strain too far from the six steps.

Here is an overview of the steps:

1. picking the theme
2. deciding on the question
3. picking the puzzles
4. deciding on the conclusion
5. building the puzzles
6. finishing up

So if you have gotten interested in this "escape adventure" generating tool, then click [here](#) and try it out for yourself!





The right side of the page features several large, teal-colored arcs that curve from the top right towards the bottom right, creating a sense of movement and design.

GLOSSARY

THE PARTNERSHIP

CLOSING WORDS

COLOPHON

GLOSSARY

Glossary: Terms we use in this Starter kit:

Creative Learning Environments

There are several definitions of learning environments. In the state of art research “The First Looking at Learning,” a learning environment has been defined as an environment of a particular educational establishment characterised by social components, special objects and matters as well as interpersonal relationships. These factors influence and complement each other and affect every person involved. A learning environment additionally specifies an educational environment; it always implies an organisational process. It ensures correlation of material, communicative and social conditions in the learning process and beneficial circumstances for the development of learners’ creative potential. By using different sources of knowledge and various learning methods, the learner constructs their knowledge, skills and dispositions on their own.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines “**learning environment**” as an **organic, holistic concept – an ecosystem that includes the activity and the outcomes of the learning**. The creativity aspect is hidden in the ‘organic’ and ‘holistic’. The creative environment allows learning to be expressed in many (creative) ways and it uses all senses and all intelligences. In order to understand the “creative learning environment”, it is crucial to focus on the dynamics and interactions between four dimensions – the learner (who?), educators (with whom?), content (learning what?) and facilities and technologies (where? with what?). In order to create a creative learning environment, it is vital to rethink and look differently at any of these 4 elements that are mentioned above.

Competences: Skills, Knowledge & Attitudes

Competences are the “abilities to do something successfully or efficiently”. The term is often used interchangeably with the term ‘skills’, although they are not the same. Two elements differentiate competence from skill, and make competence more than skill. When one person is competent, they can apply what they know to do a specific task or solve a problem and they are able to transfer this ability between different situations. In youth work, competence is understood as having three interlinked dimensions:

Skills: This dimension refers to what you are able to do or what you need to be able to do to do your youth work. This is the ‘practical’ or skills dimension of competence. It is commonly associated with the ‘hands’.

Knowledge: This dimension refers to all the themes and issues you know or need to know about to do your work. This is the ‘cognitive’ dimension of competence. It is commonly associated with the ‘head’.

Attitudes and values: This dimension of competence refers to the attitudes and values you need to espouse in order to do your work effectively. This dimension of competence is commonly associated with the 'heart'.

Diversity

Diversity is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. Diversity basically means 'being composed by different elements'. If we look at groups of people in a broader term diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences.

Educators: Teachers & Youth Workers

An **Educator** is broadly defined as anyone in an educator role. In the context of Erasmus+ it's everyone who intentionally is supporting learning and is providing learning opportunities or is creating learning environments for learners. This can be in a formal setting, but also outside of it. It is a broader concept than only people who have a paid or official function. You can be a voluntary educator and a peer can also be an educator when they intentionally take that role.

A **teacher**, also called a **schoolteacher** (or formally called educator), is a person who helps students to acquire knowledge, competence, or virtue, via the practice of teaching. In the context of this project we are referring to teachers as the educators who provide educational services within a school setting.

A **Youth worker** is a person that works with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development through informal education, care (e.g. preventive) or leisure approaches. The basic principles of youth work are respecting young people, providing accessible and value oriented opportunities (genuinely useful) for voluntary participation, accountability, being anti-oppressive (e.g. social model of disability, unconscious bias training) in processes, confidentiality, reliability, trustworthiness, and being ethical in keeping boundaries. In the context of this project we are referring to both youth workers who have an official title or education as a youth worker and people who are providing (educational) activities for youngsters outside of a school setting.

Erasmus+ Programme & European Solidarity Corps

The Erasmus+ programme is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport. It is a follow up of the Youth for Europe, Youth and Youth in action programmes and is designed for the period of 2021-2027. Education, training, youth and sport are key areas that support citizens in their personal and

professional development. High quality, inclusive education and training, as well as informal and non-formal learning, ultimately equip young people and participants of all ages with the qualifications and skills needed for their meaningful participation in democratic society, intercultural understanding and successful transition in the labour market. This project is carried out and co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

The **European Solidarity Corps (ESC)**, known until 2016 as European Voluntary Service (EVS), is an international volunteering program by the European Commission for young people to go individually or in teams to another country, usually from one European country to another, to work for a non-profit cause. Since 2017, the program also offers opportunities for European youth to get engaged as volunteers in their own communities.

Escape Adventure, Escape Format & Escape Module

Within this project we have taken the concept of the Escape Room and looked in which way we could implement some of its characteristics into other forms of games than only the escape 'room'.

An **Escape Adventure** covers every form of game that uses some elements from the Escape Room concept. It uses elements like 'escaping from somewhere or something (in the broadest sense of the word. It can also be solving a big challenge or getting into somewhere), a variety of different types of puzzles and riddles to solve and some form of flow or order in which the adventure has to be solved. It uses a specific escape format (see below), but also has a complete narrative and puzzles and riddles.

When talking about an **Escape Format** we mean the form of the game in which the Escape Adventure is presented. In this project we looked at the following Escape Formats: the Escape suitcase, Escape box, Escape Book, Escape board game, Escape card game, Escape space divider, Escape folder, Escape puzzle, Escape map and a Digital Escape adventure. To test the usability of these formats we had to make complete escape adventures (including narratives and puzzles) to be able to test to which extent the Formats in itself are inclusive for learners.

The **Escape Modules** are completed Escape Adventures on the topic of inclusion, made by using different Escape Formats and creating a narrative and puzzles connected to different themes which all deal with the topic of inclusion. They are completed and fully described, so that interested people can just take an Escape Module, print out and gather all the necessary materials and try it out for themselves.

Formal, Non-Formal & Informal Education

Formal, non-formal and informal education are complementary and mutually reinforcing elements of a lifelong learning process:

Formal education refers to the structured education system that runs from primary (and in some countries

from nursery) school to university, and includes specialised programmes for vocational, technical and professional training. Formal education often comprises an assessment of the learners' acquired learning or competences and is based on a programme or curriculum which can be more or less closed to adaptation to individual needs and preferences. Formal education usually leads to recognition and certification.

Non-formal education refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum. Non-formal education is what happens in places such as youth organisations, sports clubs, art groups and community groups where young people meet, for example, to undertake projects together, play games, discuss, go camping, or make music and drama. Non-formal education achievements are usually difficult to certify, even if their social recognition is increasing. Non-formal education should also be:

- 🔒 voluntary
- 🔒 accessible to everyone (ideally)
- 🔒 an organised process with educational objectives
- 🔒 participatory
- 🔒 learner-centred
- 🔒 about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship
- 🔒 based on involving both individual and group learning with a collective approach
- 🔒 holistic and process-oriented
- 🔒 based on experience and action
- 🔒 organised on the basis of the needs of the participants

Informal education refers to a lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in their own environment and from daily experience. People learn from family and neighbours, in the marketplace, at the library, at art exhibitions, at work and through playing, reading and sports activities. The mass media are a very important medium for informal education, for instance through plays and film, music and songs, televised debates and documentaries. Learning in this way is often unplanned and unstructured.

Gamification & Game Mechanics

Gamification refers to the application of game mechanics in a context which is not a game. Authorities, companies, schools and many social environments have been gamifying their processes in order to get users engaged, increase participation, perform better and get better results and make content more.

enjoyable and engaging.

In education, gamification refers mainly to the use of games or game-like elements in the learning process. This can include the use of points, rewards, challenges, and progress tracking to make learning more engaging and enjoyable.

Game Mechanics is “how a game works”, what you have to do and how you have to do it to play. The game mechanics are the central axis around which the experience turns. It connects the elements with the players and makes dynamics possible. In tabletop games and video games, game mechanics are the rules or ludemes that govern and guide the player’s actions, as well as the game’s response to them. A rule is an instruction on how to play, a ludeme is an element of play like the L-shaped move of the knight in chess. A game’s mechanics thus effectively specify how the game will work for the people who play it.

Inclusion & Exclusion

Inclusion, the act of including everyone, is a deeper shift towards welcoming and valuing people exactly as they are. It means embracing and celebrating the diversity of experience and capabilities of people. It means encouraging people to bring their “whole self” to their communities and workplaces, accepted and welcomed for their depth and breadth of knowledge. In short, the meaning of inclusive is that everyone, regardless of their mental or physical abilities, is understood, appreciated, and able to participate and contribute meaningfully.

Exclusion is the opposite of Inclusion. In the context of this project it means that the activity, methodology, adventure, topics or content is not accessible or not everyone is able to participate. Of course this does not have to be taken to an extreme, some activities or methods by nature focus on a certain aspect (e.g. visual or physical activities). You don’t have to create something that is always accessible and useful for everyone. The important thing is that everyone within your target group can fully participate in it.

Innovation In Education

To innovate means to make changes or do something a new way. To innovate does not require you to invent. Creativity and adaptability are embedded in innovation.

Innovation in education isn’t a specific term with fixed definitions. The spirit of innovation education is an openness to looking with fresh eyes at situations and to address them in different, new ways. It is a recognition that we don’t have all the answers and are open to new approaches to improve such as methods of knowledge transfer with innovative teaching strategies.

Innovation in education can be:

- 🔒 Recognizing that students are better served by a flipped classroom where they watch lectures at home and complete assignments in the classroom.
- 🔒 Introducing more technology in the classroom to create a blended classroom where students experience technology as they would in the real world.
- 🔒 Providing greater ways to facilitate clearer and better communication between school districts' parents with powerful video tools.

Innovation in education comes from identifying challenges and problems, watching and learning from others, developing new methods to address these problems, and iterating on them when these experiments don't necessarily give the results you need.

Interpersonal & Intrapersonal

As the term, 'intra' means 'within', so the communication that takes place within a person is called intrapersonal communication. On the other hand, the term 'inter' means 'between', so when the communication occurs between two or more persons, it is said to be interpersonal communication.

Interpersonal skills include verbal and nonverbal communication, the ability to handle conflict, teamwork, empathy, listening, a positive attitude, being flexible and positive, able to listen and communicate well.

Intrapersonal skills relate to the self-awareness of our strengths and weaknesses. Intrapersonal skills are a form of self-communication because it relates to what happens within one's inner self.

Intrapersonal skills are what help you manage emotions and cope with challenges you may face at different times in your life. Similar to emotional intelligence, intrapersonal skills include: self awareness, self-confidence, persistence, being open to change and new ideas, ability to overcome distractions, time management, resilience, self-discipline, etc.

Learning, Learner & Learner-Centered

Learning is the process of gaining new skills, knowledge, understanding, and values. This is something people can do by themselves, although it's generally made easier with education: the process of supporting someone or a group of others to learn. With educational support, learning can happen more efficiently or effectively. Learning is not only about the end result, but just as much about the process itself. In learning there are no mistakes or failures, just expected and unexpected results. Also the unintended or unexpected results have in them important learning. People learn in a lot of different ways and individuals can have big differences in the modality and conditions they need for effective learning.

A Learner-centred approach views learners as active agents. They bring their own knowledge, past experiences, education, and ideas – and this impacts how they take on board new information and learn. It differs significantly from a traditional instructor-centred approach. Traditional learning approaches were informed by behaviourism, which sees learners as ‘blank slates’ and instructors as experts who must impart all the relevant information. This approach sees learners as respondents to external stimuli.

Participation

At the most basic level, participation means people being involved in decisions that affect their lives. Through participation people can identify opportunities and strategies for action, and build solidarity to effect change.

Participation matters as a core value in open and democratic societies, and increasingly is recognised as a ‘right’ through global human resource documents. Participation challenges oppression and discrimination, particularly of the poorest and most marginalised people.

Meaningful participation is dependent on people being willing and able to participate and express their voice. However, this may be challenging where people feel intimidated, lack certain knowledge or relevant language to understand and contribute, or even feel they may not have the right to participate.

In addition, practicalities often mean that representatives of a particular group will participate rather than each individual engaging directly, which raises risks that some interests will not be represented or processes will be co-opted by elites or by certain groups.

A very useful and well known model to work with participation is Roger Harts model called ‘**The ladder of children’s participation**’, which is based on the well known model of Arnstein. Hart’s typology of children’s participation is presented as a metaphorical “ladder,” with each ascending rung representing increasing levels of child agency, control, or power. In addition, the eight “rungs” of the ladder represent a continuum of power that ascends from nonparticipation (no agency) to degrees of participation (increasing levels of agency). It should be noted that Hart’s use of the term “children” encompasses all legal minors from preschool-age children to adolescents.

Peer Learning

Peer Learning is a reciprocal learning activity, which is mutually beneficial and involves the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience between the participants. Peer learning practices enable them to interact with other participants, their peers, and participate in activities where they can learn from each other and meet educational, professional and/or personal development goals.

Soft Skills

Soft skills are non-technical skills that describe how you work and interact with others. Unlike hard skills, they're not necessarily something you'll learn in a course, like data analytics or programming. Instead, they reflect your communication style, work ethic, and work style.

They include the ability to think critically, be curious and creative, to take initiative, to solve problems and work collaboratively, to be able to communicate efficiently in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment, to be able to adapt to context and to cope with stress and uncertainty. These skills are part of the key competences within the Erasmus+ context.

THE PARTNERSHIP:

PROJECT PARTNERS

We had a base to construct our partnership and invited two schools that were very interested in this project and competent in certain fields, which meant they could make a valuable contribution to the already existing cooperation between the other 5 partners.: Our partnership consist of 7 project partners:

ITALY:



Stranaidea Cooperativa Sociale is a social cooperative type A (personal services, social, health and educational services) aimed at promoting the welfare of people and the prevention of risk situations. Stranaidea works with a broad range of individuals and groups, like disabled, refugees, gypsy groups, children and families at risk, homeless, and other fewer opportunity groups. The objectives of the various services are pursued through the methodology of community development.

www.stranaidea.it, teatrodigionnata@stranaidea.it

Authors: Chiara Bechis, Marco Fiorito, Marta Sartorio, Katerina Nastopoulou

LATVIA:



Gulbene municipality (GM) consists of 13 villages and Gulbene city administrative territory. The main aim is to provide the community for the needed services and to represent the interests of the local residents. GM initiates different social and educational activities that address the needs of the different local population groups, among them youth, disabled and disadvantaged people to help them carry out their ideas and ambitions to improve quality of life and to facilitate their active civil participation.

www.gulbene.lv, dome@gulbene.lv

Authors: Anita Birzniece, Jana Kalnina, Gunta Gruniere, Zita Grinberga, Vita Mednieve



Jaunpils Secondary School is the only educational institution in the district of Jaunpils that is comprehensive educational institution, which provides several educational programmes: Preschool education program (for 2 to 6 years old children), Basic education program (1st-9th class), General secondary education program (10th-12th class), Basic education program for children with learning disorders. The school also provides a wide variety of interest and after-school programmes for pupils of all age groups:

www.jaunpils.lv

Ieva Zagmane, Jurgis Kuksa, Inga Abula



NETHERLANDS:

VO De Vallei is a school for Democratic Education and thus has a different educational approach than 'conventional' formal secondary schools. The school offers education based on the learning goals and learning needs of each student, not divided by age groups in classes. The school has subject teachers for most of the conventional subjects and students can choose to attend classes being organised by these teachers. The main governance model being used is Sociocracy and decisions are being made through the Sociocratic decision model.

www.vodevallei.nl, info@vodevallei.nl

Authors: Inge van Es, Lex Eijt, Taco Ritsema van Eck, Jelle Klijn



Youth Exchange Service (YES!) gives young people the opportunity to explore the world and the possibilities the world has for them. They empower people by giving them space to develop themselves on a personal and professional level. Their target groups are young people in the age of 14-30, in mixed groups of young people with various social- economical level, educational level religion and cultural background. They work mainly on a European level and have developed various Erasmus+ projects.

www.yesnow.nl, gabi@yesnow.nl

Authors: Gabi Steinprinz, Konstantina Korai, Dani Korai

SPAIN:

Asociación Promesas is a Promoter of Methodologies in Education for a more Sustainable and Alternative Society and has been set up in order to find alternative solutions to the current situation of our European society regarding youth issues and education. Promesas acts on the lack of individualization of learning processes for learners and other problems as a result of current forms of education. Promesas is a platform to work for and with the citizens, through the implementation of different educational activities and projects to contribute to their self-development, in order to create an alternative and better society.

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Authors: Ruta Kronberga, Nacho Salgado, Esther Bombín, Javi Quilez



La Milagrosa y Santa Florentina school is a bilingual school using English as a second language in both primary and secondary education. It is a christian based educational centre that is approached not only academically, but relentlessly angling our educational approaches towards defining and developing responsible, critical, solidary and Christian citizens in our society. The school targets children and young people in a broad range: first and second year of kindergarten, primary and secondary education, middle professional training towards assistance to individuals in situations of dependency, high professional training towards social inclusion. In different levels their methodology is based on project based learning.

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CLOSING WORD OF THANKS

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COLOPHON

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