

# **MASTER'S DISSERTATION**

## **The Use of Gamification to Improve Students' Engagement in Cooperative Work and Vocabulary Learning**

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Education and Upper Secondary Education, Professional Training and  
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## **Abstract:**

Gamification is currently a popular methodology and the research in this field has increased significantly during the last few years. There are different factors that make gamification to be as an efficient or inefficient methodology, for instance, the level of engagement of the students and their behavior (Hamari, et al., 2014). For this reason, this study aims to investigate if this methodology is efficient in general, but especially regarding cooperative work and vocabulary learning. Therefore, a didactic sequence involving those issues has been implemented in a specific group of students with different characteristics. This study of case research provides students' and teacher's perspectives through notes and exit tickets, in order to show their individual and group performances and demonstrate that gamification is an efficient methodology. However, the results do not show a clear improvement in the students' performances toward cooperative work; although they show that students retain more information for a longer time in terms of vocabulary.

*Keywords: gamification, cooperative work, vocabulary learning, teaching-learning process*

## **Resumen:**

La gamificación es actualmente una metodología muy popular y es por ello que los estudios sobre este campo han incrementado significativamente en los últimos años. Hay diferentes factores que hacen de la gamificación una metodología eficiente o ineficiente, como por ejemplo el nivel de participación y el comportamiento por parte del (Hamari, et al., 2014). Por esta razón, este estudio tiene como objetivo principal investigar si dicha metodología es eficiente en general, pero más específicamente en lo concerniente al trabajo cooperativo y el aprendizaje de vocabulario. Así pues, se ha implementado una secuencia didáctica que abarca todos estos aspectos en un grupo específico de estudiantes con diferentes características. Esta investigación de estudio de caso ofrece las perspectivas tanto del profesor como de los alumnos a través de notas y *exit tickets* que muestran el rendimiento del alumnado, tanto individual como en grupo, para probar que la gamificación es una metodología eficiente. Sin embargo, los resultados no presentan una mejora clara en el rendimiento de los estudiantes en lo referente al trabajo cooperativo. En cambio, sí que demuestran que, en lo concerniente al vocabulario, la gamificación ayuda a los alumnos a retener más información por un período más largo de tiempo.

*Palabras clave: gamificación, trabajo cooperativo, aprendizaje de vocabulario, proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje*

## **Resum:**

La gamificació és actualment una metodologia molt popular, per la qual cosa, s'ha esdevingut un increment significatiu en les investigacions sobre aquest tema. Hi ha diferents factors que fan de la gamificació una metodologia eficient o ineficient, com per exemple, el nivell de participació i el comportament per part de l'alumnat (Hamari, et al., 2014). Per aquesta raó, aquest estudi té com a objectiu principal investigar si aquesta metodologia és eficient en general, però concretament en l'àmbit del treball cooperatiu i l'aprenentatge de vocabulari. Així doncs, s'ha dut a terme una seqüència didàctica, la qual abasta tots aquests aspectes, en un grup específic d'estudiants amb diferents característiques. Aquesta investigació és un estudi de cas que presenta les perspectives tant del professor com dels alumnes mitjançant notes i *exit tickets* que demostren el rendiment dels alumnes, tant individualment com en grup, per tal d'evidenciar que la gamificació és una metodologia eficient. No obstant això, els resultats no presenten una millora clara en el rendiment dels alumnes en referència al treball cooperatiu, però sí ho fa en referència a l'aprenentatge de vocabulari. Els alumnes retenen més informació per un període més llarg de temps gràcies a l'ús de la gamificació.

*Paraules clau: gamificació, treball cooperatiu, aprenentatge de vocabulari, procés d'ensenyament-aprenentatge*

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## 1. Introduction

Studying a foreign language and reaching a high level of proficiency is a complicated task, for this reason, students need to take different courses throughout their academic career to be able to control a foreign language. In Spain, it is typically to take English as a Foreign Language courses. By the end of students' secondary education, they are supposed to have a high-intermediate level of English proficiency. However, in most cases, students do not reach the level they are required. This is due to different causes, although one of the most common is their lack of motivation. Moreover, as English differs from their native language, learning and remembering vocabulary is arduous. Consequently, this study aims to enhance students' engagement in cooperative work and vocabulary learning with the use of gamification as an educative methodology.

### 1.1. Needs detection and problems to solve

The intervention is going to be in a class of 1<sup>st</sup> of *ESO*. Due to the background of the center and the neighborhood, the students present a low level of English proficiency. Therefore, it is complicated to focus only on one problem. For this reason, the learning situation is going to be created considering different aspects of English. However, the main aim will be to improve students' engagement in cooperative work.

Besides, as previously mentioned, this study aims to improve students' vocabulary learning skills. Nevertheless, as the class group has some students with special needs and some disruptive students, the challenge will be to maintain the attention of all students when doing the activities of the learning situation.

### 1.2. Justification for the innovation proposal

As previously mentioned, there are different profiles of students in the class and, sometimes, engaging all the students in doing certain activities is challenging; that is why the methodology chosen for creating the learning situations is gamification. This type of methodology, as many others, has advantages and disadvantages. Using this methodology, the students might be attentive and carry out the activities efficiently; however, it might be also the case that they become too excited with some activities, which makes it impossible to accomplish the exercises. Additionally, these students are used to doing cooperative and collaborative working, as they are placed in groups and the teaching-learning process is based on projects, at least once every term, gamification will offer them another perspective in this sense. The cooperative and collaborative work will still be present, but this time posed in a different way.

Gamification is currently a popular methodology and the research in this field has increased significantly during the last few years. Empirical

studies about this issue show the negative and positive results of this methodology. There are different facts that contribute gamification to be as an efficient or inefficient methodology, for instance, the level of engagement of the students and their behavior. (Hamari, et al., 2014). Accordingly, gamification works, nonetheless, this is not always the case. Additionally, gamification must not be confused with game-based learning, because the first one has to do with “the adoption of games for educational purposes” (Caponetto et al., 2014, p. 55), and the second one has to do with “the application of game mechanisms to educational interventions [...]” (Caponetto et al., 2014, p. 55). Moreover, gamification is related to autonomy and community, among other concepts such as independent learning and cooperation. (Peterson et al., 2021). Autonomy and a sense of community are essential elements when creating competent students, which is the base of the new curriculum. In addition, the new curriculum emphasizes the fact that the student is the protagonist of the teaching-learning process, and with this type of methodology this is accomplished. However, it increases the teacher’s amount of work, but it is not more work than planning a subject for the first time. (Serrat, et al., 2016).

Lastly, even though gamification has some disadvantages, it is a magnificent methodology to implement the new curriculum. It allows students to work on their own and at the same time collaborate with

their classmates. Students' cognitive development is broadly affected by gamification. It also affects the emotions and the socializing processes that occur during the learning situation carried out. (Ortiz-Colón, et al., 2018). Consequently, gamification is a good option for this class group since, as mentioned, there are different types of students who might be more engaged with this methodology.

## **2. Literature review**

Using different strategies when teaching and/or learning a second or foreign language is important because "its integration into the L2 learning programme can contribute to increase both teachers' and students' awareness of the different strategies"(Martinez et al., 2016). Moreover, learning strategies contribute to an improvement of the linguistic skills of those students who practice and constantly train them (Jaime, 2000). Apart from learning strategies, different and new methodologies allow the students to make improvements in their learning process. As a result, the election of gamification as a second or foreign language methodology of teaching has been increasing considerably during the last few years. Consequently, as already pointed out, this study deals with this educational methodology.

### **2.1. Gamification**

Gamification "consists of introducing game mechanics in non-game environments to promote motivation and engagement"(Azzouz

Boudadi & Gutiérrez-Colón, 2020). However, this is one of the many definitions of this term, which “vary and usually focus either on game elements and mechanics or the process of gaming and gameful experiences in serious contexts” (Krath et al., 2021). Nonetheless, gamification is not only a methodology used in an educational context, but also used for different purposes and in different contexts:

Gamification is a potential approach to foster motivation, engagement, behavioral changes, friendly competition and collaboration in different contexts such as employee performance, social loyalty, customer engagement or students learning achievement, which popularity in the recent years has encouraged its application in a diversity of domains, including health, education, business, society or tourism. (Trinidad et al., 2021)

This statement is also supported by other authors who say that “[g]amification is a relatively new concept related to several fields, including but not limited to business, training, social policy, and education” (Abdeen & Albiladi, 2021). Nevertheless, some authors argue that this methodology of education is not so new. (Thanh Thuy & Quoc Hung, 2021).

This methodology seems to have positive results, according to Azzouz Boudadi & Gutiérrez-Colón (2020), analysis outcomes demonstrate

that gamification makes the students of a second language have, in general, a positive experience when learning the language; even though more studies on the issue should be done. Nonetheless, based on Thanh Thuy & Quoc Hung, (2021), it is favorable for the students that teachers use mixed methods; for this reason, they can use traditional activities as well as the usage of technology as a way to motivate the students.

Additionally, teachers are receptive regarding the usage of gamification as their methodology because they think it can cover different necessities as it could be seen in *Teachers' beliefs about gamification and competencies development: A concept mapping approach* research:

[T]eachers believe that gamification can be used to develop a high number of competencies. These competencies include: teamwork/collaborative learning, self-regulation, critical thinking, oral communication skills, self-motivation, social skills, and learning to learn. [...] [P]articipants in our study do not limit the use of gamification to those competencies but expand it to develop critical thinking, self-regulation, and self-motivation. [...] [O]ur results provide an optimistic outcome suggesting that teachers serving in Higher Education institutions find suitable the

use of gamification as a tool to develop students' competencies.  
(Martí-Parreño et al., 2021)

## 2.2. Cooperative learning

According to different authors, cooperative learning is an extremely useful study approach. This strategy is used in different types of educational institutions at different levels, it requires the students to be arranged in groups, and it allows the acquirement of content by helping each other (Slavin, 2014). Apart from that, cooperative learning is beneficial regarding diversity as it implies interaction among different students' profiles. Therefore, cooperative learning is essential in education as "cooperative experiences [...] promote the most desirable values for the future well-being of students and the future well-being of society" (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). According to Al-Yaseen (2014), this study approach is effective and beneficial for both students and teachers. The author also explains the benefits of cooperative learning in EFL courses:

For EFL learners, cooperative learning creates a positive learning environment for students to practice their English. It can help students develop skills in communication and improve their motivation to learn. Cooperative learning also has positive effects on student achievement, increases student relationships and increases self-esteem. These benefits of cooperative learning

help EFL learners improve efficiency in their language learning. Cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy in foreign teaching (Al-Yaseen, 2014).

### 2.3. Vocabulary learning

When learning a second or foreign language, learning vocabulary is a crucial process to acquire a high level of proficiency. Ghazal (2007) states that vocabulary is fundamental in terms of language and feats of great importance to language students. The author explains that this is because words are fundamental components to labeling different items such as objects, actions, or ideas, and meaning cannot be transmitted without using them (Ghazal, 2007).

Additionally, there are different strategies and techniques for vocabulary learning in EFL courses. Nevertheless, it is important that "language learning programs should [...] promote teaching of vocabulary learning strategy use" because, although being seen as efficient, students do not use certain of these strategies to acquire vocabulary (Çelik & Toptaş, 2010).

## 3. Research proposal

Students are used to work in groups since the use of cooperative work as a method in educations has increased during the last years. However, it is difficult for some students to engage cooperative work, and one of the reasons is the lack of motivation. Additionally, some

students prefer to do individual work rather than teamwork for several reasons. Apart from this fact, one of the features of cooperative work is that students help each other realizing the tasks; nevertheless, this is something that does not occur often. Therefore, the aim of this study is to verify if it is possible to achieve students' engagement in cooperative work through gamification, as well as to increase their vocabulary repertoire in English.

### 3.1. Research questions

1. Does gamification enhance student participation in cooperative work?
2. Are students working more effectively in groups using gamification as the teaching methodology?
3. Does gamification help in vocabulary learning in EFL courses?

### 3.2. Hypotheses

This study will demonstrate that gamification helps to achieve a higher degree of students' engagement in cooperative work, as well as an increment of motivation and participation from the students in general. Students will work better as a team due to the implementation of gamification as a methodology. Additionally, students will help their teammates if they struggle with the realization of the proposed tasks. Finally, students will remember the vocabulary items worked on in class during the implementation after it is already finished.

### 3.3. Aims

#### 3.3.1. General aims

- To investigate if gamification is an effective methodology in education.

#### 3.3.2. Specific aims

- To investigate if gamification is a useful tool for increasing student involvement in cooperative work.
- To examine if by using gamification students help each other and work better in teams.
- To examine if by using gamification students are able to retain a larger amount of vocabulary items.

### 3.4. Research design

The research focuses on a class group behavior towards English learning with a certain methodology; consequently, this is going to be a qualitative study. In this type of study, the process is as important as the final product. Therefore, the data is going to be collected through the notes of the investigator's observation, as well as through students' work, which will be consisted of self and peer assessment rubrics and a questionnaire. Finally, as a class group is going to be examined, this qualitative study is going to be a case study.

## **4. Educative intervention**

### **4.1. Justification**

The language focus of the didactic unit was chosen according to the student's content schedule, in order to not confuse the students and make the unit useful for their next test, as well as their future. Therefore, the language focus is Fashion Vocabulary and Present Continuous because, by the time this didactic unit was being implementing, students should be working on that. Besides, the educative methodology chosen is gamification because students are used to working in groups since the use of cooperative work in education has increased during the last few years, as pointed out above. However, it is difficult for some students to engage in cooperative work, and one of the reasons is the lack of motivation. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, some students prefer to work by their own rather than being part of a group. Apart from this fact, cooperative work allows students to help each other when completing tasks, which is an action they are not used to performing often. Nevertheless, it is one of the keys to dealing successfully with diversity. Moreover, learning new vocabulary is an important step when learning language, which for some students is an arduous task. In this sense, gamification is a useful tool to help students acquire new vocabulary.

## 4.2. Didactic Unit

### UNIT 4: FASHION

#### CLEARFIELD FASHION SHOW: A MYSTERY TO SOLVE

Students will learn different aspects of English through gamification, and they will have to solve a mystery: Clearfield is going to hold a fashion show. Two designers who are rivals are going to participate in the show, competing against each other with their last creations. For this reason, they have hired the most famous models in the fashion industry. The person in charge of retransmitting the show is a well-known and famous journalist. However, the lights go off when the designers are giving their creations their final touch. When the lights turn on, one of the designers notices that her work has disappeared.

In groups, students will have to complete different activities to get hints for solving the mystery. The groups are heterogeneous, as they were previously arranged by their tutors.

ESO YEAR	TEMPORISATION	TERM	FIELD	SUBJECT
1	UNIT 4	2	Foreign languages	English

**Methodology:**

Gamification

Communicative approach

**Language focus (specific content):**

Present Continuous. Vocabulary on fashion.

COMPETENCIES	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT		
			1 (Excellent)	2 (Good)	3 (Satisfactory)
<p><b>READING COMPREHENSION</b></p> <p><b>C2</b></p> <p>To comprehend and interpret oral/multimodal texts in the standard language, picking up the general meaning and the most relevant information, as well as its form and content, to construct knowledge, form an opinion, and widen their possibilities of enjoyment and leisure.</p>	<p>To comprehend short texts related to the given content and be able to select the most important information.</p>	<p>To reproduce a written text (a character's description) according to their classmates' dictation and produce a drawing according to its description.</p>	<p>Students reproduce the text with no errors, and the drawing is accurate to the description.</p>	<p>Students reproduce the text with a few errors, and/or there are some missing elements on their drawings.</p>	<p>Students reproduce the text with some errors, and/or the drawing is not accurate enough to the description.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>C3</b></p> <p>To produce coherent, comprehensive, and register adapted oral and multimodal texts, taking into account conventions related to different discursive genres, and to participate in different oral interactions autonomously produced to execute ideas, feelings, and concepts. In addition, to build knowledge, and establish personal relations.</p>	<p>To produce short oral and written texts using all the aspects of the English language discussed in class.</p>	<p>To produce short oral and written sentences (descriptions of pictures) using present continuous and vocabulary related to fashion (clothing).</p>	<p>Students produce short oral and written texts or sentences without problems, and they show commitment toward speaking activities.</p>	<p>Students produce short oral and written texts or sentences with some problems and/or show little commitment toward speaking activities.</p>	<p>Students produce poor oral and written texts or sentences, and they do not show commitment toward speaking activities.</p>
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<p><b>PERSONAL AND SOCIAL</b></p> <p><b>Learning to learn</b></p> <p><b>C2</b></p> <p>To develop skills and attitudes to face the challenges of learning throughout life.</p>	<p>To be able to work in a group and be respectful, empathic (tolerant), collaborative, and responsible.</p>	<p>To show commitment and interest towards group work and be respectful, empathic (tolerant), and collaborative.</p>	<p><b>HARDLY EVER</b></p> <p><b>SOMETIMES</b></p> <p><b>OFTEN</b></p> <p><b>ALWAYS</b></p>
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**DIDACTIC SEQUENCE**

**SESSION 1**

<b>TIMING</b>	<b>PHASES / STAGES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	<b>MATERIALS &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<b>GROUPING</b>
15'	INTRODUCTION	The teacher introduces the activity and gives the students the instructions for the game. They have to complete activities to win points and get hints to solve the mystery.	Whiteboard Projector Internet connection	Whole class

		Students have to choose a nickname for their team (related to fashion, if possible).		
15'	PRACTICE	Students have to complete interactive worksheets related to fashion (clothes and accessories) vocabulary. They win points if the whole group finishes their activities on time. The teacher corrects the exercises aloud.	Tablets Internet connection Point cards	Individual
10'	WARM-UP	The teacher shows flashcards with pictures of clothes, and the students have to say the name of the object appearing on the card. There are at least five rounds done with a different student from each group every time to assure participation. The quickest student to clap their hands has the chance to answer. If they get it right, they win points for their team. If they get it wrong, they have the chance to consult their team. If they still get it wrong, another student from another team has the chance to answer it without the possibility of consulting their team.	Flashcards	In groups

10'	EXITKET	Each student has a questionnaire about their experience working in a group. They also have some space to develop their answers by writing about their experiences and feelings toward group work. After that, the team with the highest score will have the chance to see a hint to solve the mystery. They have to remember the hints, as the teacher keeps them until the last session.	Point cards Envelope with a hint Teams ranking poster Tape Rubric	Individual
<b>SESSION 2</b>				
<b>TIMING</b>	<b>PHASES / STAGES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	<b>MATERIALS &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<b>GROUPING</b>
15'	INTRODUCTION	The teacher quickly reviews the previous session and the verb "to be." After that, the teacher shows an image in which people appear doing different activities. The teacher explains the present continuous theory using the image and makes students participate by asking questions about what they observe in the picture.	Whiteboard Projector Internet connection	Whole class

20'	PRACTICE	Students complete interactive worksheets about the present continuous. They get points for their team if they complete the activities on time, so they have to help each other.	Tablets Internet connection Point cards	In groups
5'	WARM-UP	Each student has a flashcard with either an image or a sentence on it. They have to find the classmate that owns their complementing flashcard to match images and sentences. If they get a sentence, they have to find the flashcard with the image, and vice versa. If they get it right, they win a point for the group.	Flashcards	Whole class
10'	EXIT TICKET	Each team has to assess their performance in cooperative work with a rubric. The team with the highest score will have the chance to see a hint to solve the mystery. They have to remember the hints, as the teacher keeps them until the last session.	Point cards Envelope with a hint Teams ranking poster Tape Rubric	In groups
<b>SESSION 3</b>				

<b>TIMING</b>	<b>PHASES / STAGES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	<b>MATERIALS &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<b>GROUPING</b>
5'	INTRODUCTION	The teacher makes a quick review of the previous session.	Whiteboard Projector Internet connection	Whole class
35'	PRACTICE	The teacher hangs five descriptions of the five characters in the mystery on the blackboard. Students have to split their teams into two. Some of them are in charge of rewriting one of the descriptions, while others are in charge of drawing the character. The ones rewriting the descriptions have to do so in turns. One of them is dictating what is on the board, and the other is writing it down, and in the next sentence, the one describing is the one who was previously writing. Students get points if they complete the activity. If they make no mistakes in writing and if they draw the character according to their descriptions. Each group has a rubric to assess their classmates' work.	Blackboard Character's description Tape Point cards Paper Pens Rubric	In groups

5'	WARM-UP	The students stand up in a circle. Each of them has to say a word from the fashion vocabulary without repeating it. If a student does not know what to say, they have to say "BUZZ," and the game starts again. If they repeat a word or do not say "BUZZ," they are out of the game. The students who will last longer will win points for their teams.	Point cards	Whole class
10'	EXIT TICKET	Each team has to assess their performance in cooperative work with a rubric. The team with the highest score will have the chance to see a hint to solve the mystery. They have to remember the hints, as the teacher keeps them until the last session.	Point cards Envelope with a hint Teams ranking poster Tape Rubric	In groups
<b>SESSION 4</b>				
<b>TIMING</b>	<b>PHASES / STAGES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	<b>MATERIALS &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<b>GROUPING</b>

10'	INTRODUCTION	The teacher quickly reviews the previous session and explains negation and question formation with the present continuous.	Blackboard Chalk	Whole class
15'	PRACTICE	Students play three different online games (Wordwall) to practice the negative form of the present continuous, question formation, and short answers.	Tablets Internet connection	Individual
15'	PRODUCTION	The teacher gives each group a picture, and the students have to describe it to their classmates using the present continuous and vocabulary about fashion. At the same time, a copy of all the pictures is hung on the blackboard for everybody to see. Then, the students who are not describing a picture have to guess which picture belongs to their classmates' descriptions. If they get it right, they get points for their team.	Blackboard Tape Pictures Point cards	In groups
10'	EXIT TICKET	Each team has to assess their performance in cooperative work with a rubric. The team with the highest score will have the chance to see a hint to solve the mystery. They have to	Points cards Envelope with a hint Teams ranking poster	In groups

		remember the hints, as the teacher keeps them until the last session.	Tape Rubric	
<b>SESSION 5</b>				
<b>TIMING</b>	<b>PHASES / STAGES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	<b>MATERIALS &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<b>GROUPING</b>
10'	INTRODUCTION	The teacher makes a quick review of the previous session.	Whiteboard Projector Internet connection	Whole class
15'	PRACTICE	The teacher gives each group a picture with different actions. Then, they give each student a secret flashcard with one of the actions. After that, students have to guess their classmates' actions by asking questions using the present continuous. Once they finish, each student has to write three sentences using each action and the present continuous: an affirmative sentence, a negative one, and a question with its possible short answers.	Pictures	In groups

15'	WARM-UP	Students play 'Pictionary'. One of them picks a flashcard with a noun related to fashion and they have to draw it on the blackboard, the rest of the students have to guess what it is. There are at least as many rounds as teams in the class. The students who guess it right win points for their team.	Blackboard Chalk Flashcards Points cards	Whole class
10'	EXIT TICKET	Each team has to assess their performance in cooperative work with a rubric. The team with the highest score will have the chance to see a hint to solve the mystery. They have to remember the hints, as the teacher keeps them until the last session.	Points cards Envelope with a hint Teams ranking poster Tape Rubric	In groups
<b>SESSION 6</b>				
<b>TIMING</b>	<b>PHASES / STAGES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	<b>MATERIALS &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<b>GROUPING</b>
10'	INTRODUCTION	The teacher goes over the previous session quickly and reads the mystery again.	Whiteboard Projector Internet connection	Whole class

15'	PRACTICE	Each team has to complete three games (Wordwall) of different levels of difficulty to directly get a hint. One of them has to complete the easy level, two of them the medium level, and the other two the difficult level. If they get more than half the scores right, they can see the final hint. If they finish their game, they can help the other members of the group.	Tablets Internet connection	Individual / Groups
15'	CLOSURE	Students have to decide if they want to solve the mystery all together or just with their team. If they decide to solve the mystery with the whole class, they have the chance to read the characters' descriptions one more time, reveal all the hints, and discuss their final answer. If they decide to solve the mystery only with their team, they do not have the chance to see the hints again, but they can read the characters' descriptions. They have to write their guess down on a piece of paper and give it to the teacher with their team's nickname on it. The teacher reads the answers, and if there is no right answer, they have to solve the mystery	Character's descriptions Hints Ranking posters Paper Pens	In groups / the whole class

		together. If there is only one right answer, the teacher reveals the team but not the answer, and the rest have to solve the mystery together. If there is more than one right answer, the teacher reads the answers aloud in order according to the ranking of points, and the first team with the right answer wins the game.		
5'	WARM-UP	The answer to the mystery is given throughout the game. The teacher gives a piece of paper with a letter on it to six students, and the rest of the class has to arrange for them to form the name of the character who is guilty of stealing the designs.	Papers with letters	Whole class
5'	EXIT TICKET	Each student has the same questionnaire the have session 1 about their experience working in a group. They also have some space to develop their answers by writing about their experiences and feelings toward group work. The answer should be considering the whole didactic unit.	Exit ticket sheet Pencil or pen	Individual

<b>CATERING FOR DIVERSITY</b>		
<b>UNIVERSAL</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL</b>	<b>INTENSIVE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher guidance</li> <li>- More time is given if needed (in certain activities)</li> <li>- Different ways of assessment according to each student's abilities</li> <li>- Visual and short worksheets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individualized attention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support from a member of the SIEI</li> </ul>
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>		

**Formative assessment:**

Exit tickets (peer and self-assessment)

Rubric to assess the reproduction of a text and a drawing of its description (peer assessment)

Teacher's observations and notes

**Summative assessment:**

Oral performance (in group and individual) – descriptions/questions

Reproduction of a text and a drawing of its description

Teacher's observations and notes

**VECTORS**

This unit deals with the curriculum's universality vector, as it is inclusive due to students having the same opportunities, working in groups, and helping each other during the lessons. It also addresses the vector of language education quality, as students are required to use a foreign language, which is usually their third or fourth language. Therefore, it is inevitable to have a plurilingual atmosphere in class.

## **5. Methodology**

### **5.1. Background and participants**

The participants of this study are part of a group class of 1st ESO. Due to the background of the center and the neighborhood, the students present a low level of English proficiency. However, this group class presents different profiles of students. Some students reach the competencies without difficulties, others have some difficulties, and others need extra support. They are between twelve and thirteen years old. These students have different backgrounds and cultures, and for this reason, not all of them share the same first language. Due to this fact and since they are studying in a bilingual community, they are bilingual and multilingual students. They speak Catalan and Spanish, but some of them also speak Arabic. As mentioned above, they do not have a high level of English proficiency; nonetheless, they are studying English as a foreign language, so they will be able to speak English in the future. They are supposed to reach a beginner level equivalent to an A2 (basic user) of the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) at the end of their secondary educational period. Apart from that, it is important to point out that the whole group of 1st of ESO will be part of this study, as it is linked to a didactic unit implemented in their class.

## 5.2. Method

This study's investigations involve students' engagement and participation; thus, teacher notes are required to collect and analyze results. Additionally, some in-class activities done by the students also help to do so. The teacher's notes provide valuable insights into the students' behavior and learning patterns. Moreover, the in-class activities done by the students can reveal their strengths and weaknesses. These activities correspond to exit tickets for each session related to their experiences working in cooperative work previously and during this didactic unit. The students share their experiences by rating some statements with emojis and writing some comments to justify their choices. Additionally, they are provided with a questionnaire regarding vocabulary in order to collect more data to determine if the methodology used during the sessions helped them learn and internalize the content given.

As previously mentioned, this study involves an examination of the behavior of a group class when doing cooperative work; hence, it is a qualitative study. Nonetheless, the results are presented in both qualitative and quantitative formats, with the former being the preferred method, particularly for analyzing the results. However, all the outcomes are described in a qualitative way. This approach allows for a more in-depth understanding of the results and provides a richer

description of the findings, which can be useful for further research and practical applications.

The teachers' notes are analyzed first to give an overall perspective of the outcomes. Following that, the participants' visions are displayed. Later, both perspectives are compared to see similarities and differences. Finally, the questionnaire results are analyzed to see if one of the study's goals was met and if the methodology used helped the students work cooperatively, help each other, and learn and internalize the didactic unit's language focus.

### 5.3. Variables

This paper's principal aim is to investigate gamification's efficiency as an educational methodology. Therefore, the independent variable of this study is the use of gamification as a new methodology. Consequently, this research presents two different dependent variables. The first deals with students' engagement when working cooperatively; hence this dependent variable is the increase in students' engagement in cooperative work. Lastly, the other dependent variable deals with vocabulary learning; thereupon, it is the increase in items in the students' vocabulary repertoire.

## 6. Results

This investigation features different instruments to gather data. The first one mentioned above is the teacher's notes. These notes show

disparate results. It makes a notable difference between the first and the last session of the didactic unit implementation. As previously mentioned, this class group was already arranged in groups of five students who were used to working cooperatively; however, their productivity was not always satisfactory. This fact was shown during the first sessions. The students were unfocused, and the methodology used did not cause them any difference in their usual behavior in class. Consequently, their cooperative work was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, their behavior and engagement changed whenever they were involved in activities that required movement and a certain degree of competitiveness. Nonetheless, as already mentioned, this changed throughout the implementation of the didactic unit.

By the last sessions, the students were more focused, motivated, and engaged with the content. Moreover, their cooperative work was more effective than in the previous sessions. Besides, regarding vocabulary, gamification was an effective method; hence, most of the students were more comfortable using the concepts learned in class.

Apart from the teacher's notes, the results were collected from the students' exit tickets. The exit ticket from the first session (see Appendix D) showed the students' perspectives on working in groups. It is important to highlight that not all the students handed out their exit tickets, as there were some missing students and students who

did not do so for other reasons. Nevertheless, the majority of the students collaborated and filled out the first exit ticket. This questionnaire showed that nearly all the students had a positive perspective on group work. Only one student was reluctant to work in a group. It is important to notice that, although the students are willing to work in groups and enjoy it, many think it is harder to focus on the lesson. They also pointed out that their results are worse when working in groups. Apart from that, some students do not think that there is an equitable performance from all the members of a group in terms of work.

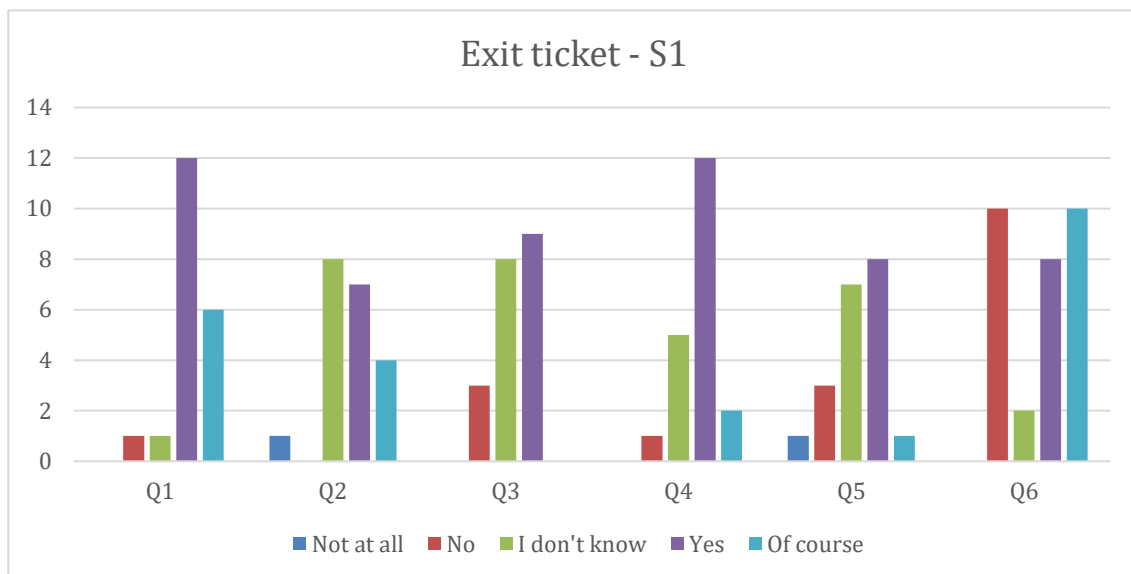


Figure 1: Results from the exit ticket of the session 1

Additionally, the students could write some comments about this issue. Their comments were very revealing, as they pointed out that the fact that made them unfocused when working in groups was talking to their classmates about non-content-related topics. Apart from that, they

highlight the fact that when they work in groups, they are able to help or ask for help from the rest of the group.

The exit tickets from the second session to the fifth session (see Appendix F) were self-assessment rubrics for each team. According to the students, during these sessions, the five groups followed the teacher's instructions and helped each other when needed. However, these rubrics showed that not all the students did the same amount of work (in certain sessions), and not all the groups completed the given tasks. Apart from that, it is important to point out that some groups had discrepancies and could not always resolve their conflicts reasonably and/or talk to each other with respect. Nevertheless, all the groups gave themselves positive marks every session.

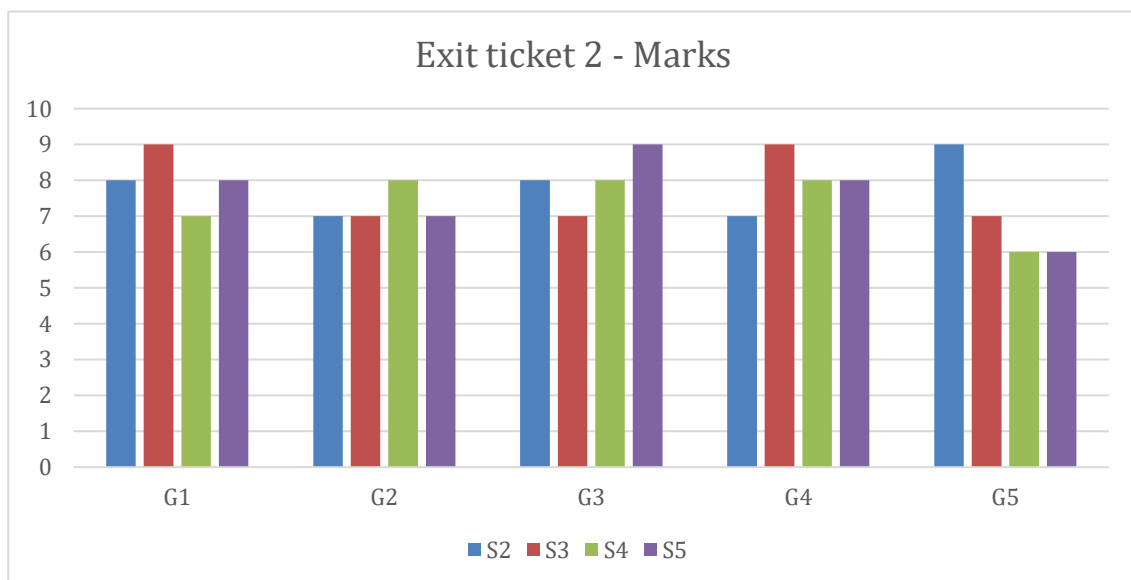


Figure 2: Marks from the Exit ticket from session 2 to session 5

The exit tickets from the last sessions were the same as the one from the first session. However, in the first session, they had to complete it

thinking about them working in groups in general terms, while in the last session, they had to think about the work in groups during the implementation of the didactic unit. Nonetheless, the results from this exit ticket were not any different from the first one. All the students liked and enjoyed working in groups, even if that meant that they would face some obstacles in the process.

Finally, the questionnaire on vocabulary showed that some of the students were able to remember a great amount of vocabulary. Nevertheless, it also proved that some of the students, even though they were taught with the same methodology, they still had some problems remembering certain concepts.

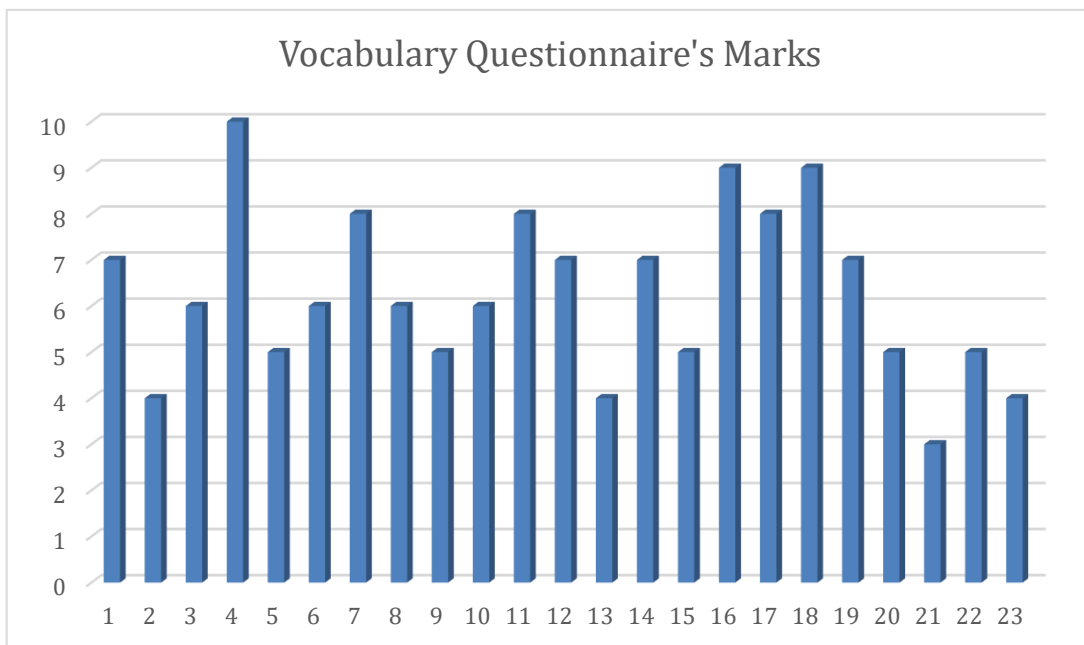


Figure 3: Students' marks from the vocabulary questionnaire.

## **7. Discussion**

The main aim of this research, as previously mentioned, was to investigate the efficiency of gamification as a methodology in education. After the analyzed data, it can be said that gamification is in fact an effective educational methodology in a certain way. Regarding the specific aims of this study, it can be said that gamification is effective in terms of vocabulary learning, however, it is not that effective in terms of students' engagement in cooperative work. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the fact that students were more motivated and engaged in the tasks as time passed, as pointed out above.

As already discussed, the participants were used to working in groups, but it was observed that their performances were not accurate enough for cooperative work. Students seemed to be open and willing to work in groups, but the obtained results were not as good as expected. Students seemed to be aware of this fact as shown in the results, as well as the fact that it is more difficult to follow the lesson when working in groups. Despite that, the usage of gamification did not show a great change regarding this issue.

Finally, there were some limitations that need to be mentioned. This group of students has different profiles and backgrounds, which sometimes is a handicap when arranging the students in equitable groups and this affects their performance, both in group and individual.

Apart from that, most of these students present a lack of motivation for their studies in general. This matter complicates the teaching-learning process and makes more difficult the implementation of any type of educational methodology. These students present a high level of disinterest. Moreover, some of them are also disruptive students, making the tasks arduous for the rest of the class. In addition, due to special needs, some students need to attend extra tutoring sessions, which interfere with the cooperative work as some groups miss some members during some lessons.

## **8. Conclusion**

In conclusion, gamification is useful regarding vocabulary learning. It helps students to retain more information for a larger amount of time. Besides, students feel more comfortable using the new vocabulary items thanks to this methodology. However, it would be interesting to use another type of investigation than the study of a case in future studies. As the first and last exit tickets showed (see Appendix D), there were no differences in the students' responses. Therefore, it should be better for example to get a control and an experimental group. Working with two different groups would have given more extreme and accurate results. By doing so, it would have been easier to analyze data regarding students' engagement in cooperative work.

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## 10. Appendices

### Appendix A

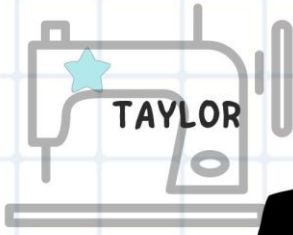
#### Story





## CLEARFIELD IS HOLDING A FASHION SHOW!

Two famous designers who are rivals are participating in this fashion show. They are competing against each other. They are going to show their last creations.



## TWO FAMOUS MODELS

The designers hired the most famous models in the fashion industry to show their creations.



RITA



ROGER

# A WELL-KNOWN JOURNALIST



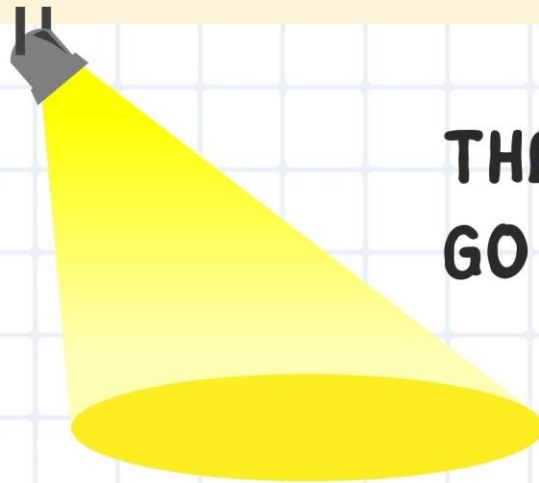
There will be a well-known and very famous journalist retransmitting everything that happens at the show.



**HARPER**



The designers are giving now the final touch to their creations, but suddenly ...



## THE LIGHTS GO OFF!

# EVERYTHING IS DARK

FOR A FEW MINUTES UNTILL...

## THE LIGHTS GO ON AGAIN!

TAYLOR LOOKS AROUND AND NOTICES THAT HER CREATIONS ARE NOT IN THE ROOM.

**THEY HAVE DISSAPPEARED!!!!**



Everyone starts looking for Taylor's creations, but they do not appear. For this reason, the security staff is checking the cameras to help Taylor.





The cameras were not working when the lights went off, HOWEVER, the technician mentions that he bumped into somebody when he was going to fix the problem with the lights.



The technician claims that this person was suspiciously running and immediately hide in the restrooms.

Then, everyone goes to the restrooms



**TAYLOR FINDS HER  
CREATIONS HIDDEN IN A BOX  
BEHIND THE LAST TOILET.**





The designs are still here, so that means that the thief is among us.

When the designers, the models, and the journalist go back to the backstage area, they find six envelopes with six hints. There is a WITNESS to the crime!!



The witness is scared and for this reason she or he does not want to reveal her or his identity.



# CAN YOU DISCOVER WHO STOLE TAYLOR'S CREATIONS?



## Appendix B

### Instructions



### Clearfield Fashion Show

**OBJECTIVE:** Discover who stole the creations.

**HOW:** Get points by completing activities to reveal hints to solve the mystery.

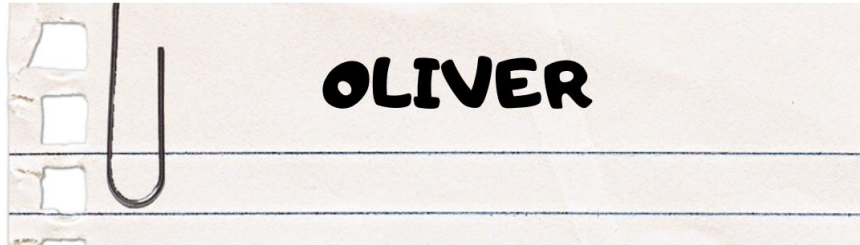
**ELEMENTS:** Points, keys, and hints.

### RULES

1. Each student must **HELP** all the members of their team. **HOWEVER**, telling the answers to your classmates without any explanation will be penalized.
2. Speaking English is a **MUST**. Your team will win points for speaking English as much as possible.
3. **RESPECT** each other. You must speak with respect, or your team will lose points.
4. Do not **CHEAT**. Your team will lose points if one of the members cheats.
5. Hints must be kept a **SECRET**. You cannot share information with other teams.
6. You **MUST** know how to **LOSE**. You cannot get angry if your team does not win, or your team will lose points for the next session.
7. You **MUST** know how to **WIN**. If your team is the winner of the session, you cannot make fun of the rest of your classmates, or your team will lose the opportunity to reveal the hint. Then, it would be all the teams but yours that would reveal the hint.

## Appendix C

### Characters' descriptions



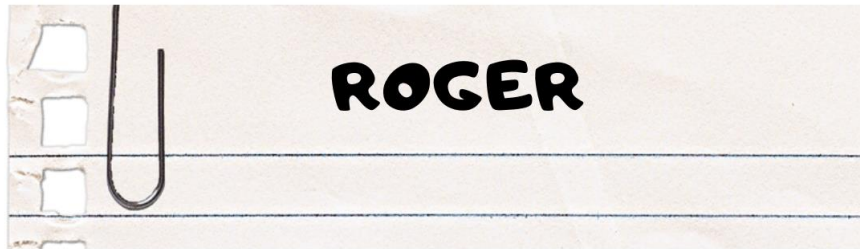
Oliver is another fashion designer. He is participating in the Clearfield Fashion Show, just like his workmate Taylor. Today, Oliver is wearing a suit. Unlike Taylor, he only wears black because he thinks it is elegant. He is wearing glasses and a hat. His shoes are shining as well as his big watch. Taylor and Oliver do not get along with each other.





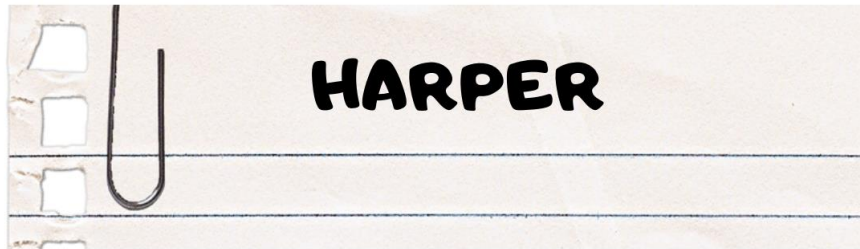
Rita is a model. She is working for Oliver and is appearing on the catwalk with his designs today. For this reason, Rita is wearing a long black dress. She is not wearing glasses, but she is wearing a pillbox hat with a veil. He is also wearing high boots. She is happy to work with Oliver because she likes him. However, she does not get along with her workmate Roger.





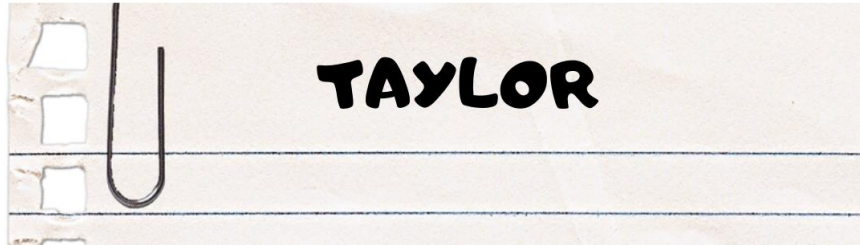
Roger is a model and is participating in the catwalk of the Clearfield Fashion Show like Rita. However, he is wearing Taylor's designs. For this reason, Roger is wearing a yellow suit and extravagant glasses. He is also wearing a purple shirt with white dots on it. His shoes are also purple as well as the silk scarf he is wearing around his neck. Roger is taller than Rita. He is a brunette and has got blue eyes.



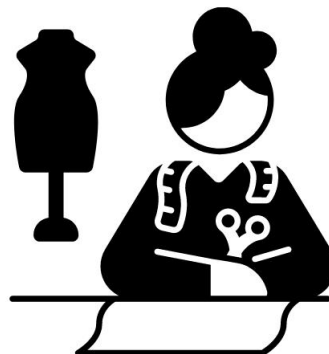


Harper is a well-known and famous journalist. She is an expert in fashion because she loves it. She is Taylor's cousin. They are working on the same project for the first time in their lives. Harper has got green eyes like her cousin, but she is not as tall as Taylor. Today, she is wearing an elegant black and white suit. She is wearing big black glasses too.





Taylor is a fashion designer. She has a new collection to participate in the Clearfield Fashion Show. She is very tall. She has got red hair and green eyes. She likes to dress in different colours. Today, she is wearing a colourful dress. She is also wearing a big hat and extravagant sunglasses. She is wearing high heels and a tiny purse too.



## Appendix D






### Exit ticket- S1 & S2






GROUP:






# EXIT TICKET






## SESSION 1






- 1 Do you like working in a group?






    
- 2 Do you feel more comfortable working in a group?

    
- 3 Do all the members of your group work equally?

    
- 4 Do you enjoy the lesson more when working in a group?

    
- 5 Do you get better results when working in a group?

    
- 6 Is it easier to pay attention when you work in a group?

Write about your experience working in  
a group in class:



A large rectangular box with a solid black border, containing 18 horizontal dashed lines for writing.



## Appendix G

### Peer-assessment (adapted format for the TFM)

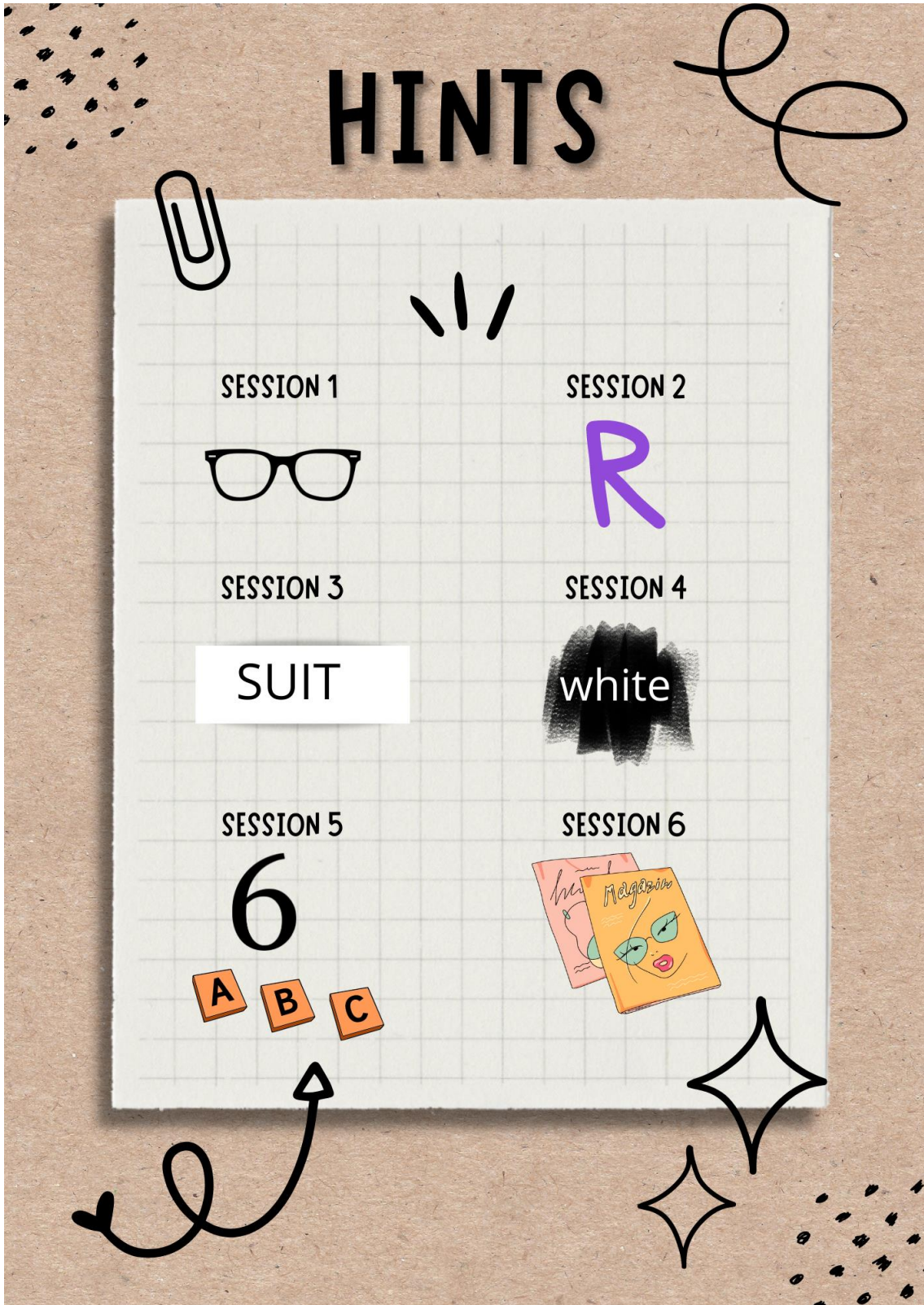
## Running dictation! Who did the best job?

Now, it's time to assess your classmates' work with this checklist. Write a tick or a cross to answer the questions. At the end, you have to rate your classmates' work with points from 1 to 5.

Checklist	Group:	Group:	Group:	Group:
Is the text completed?				
Are there any mistakes?				
Is the text clear and neat?				
Is the drawing finished?				
Is the drawing accurate to the description?				
Is there any element missing in the drawing?				
Is the drawing clear and neat?				
<b>POINTS (from 1 to 5)</b>				

Appendix H

Hints (adapted format for the TFM)



## Appendix I

### Solution

# SOLUTION

HARPER

Harper is guilty of stealing her cousin Taylor's creations. She did it because she was jealous of her. She dreamt of becoming a fashion designer like Taylor. Unlike her cousin, Harper could not make her dream come true because her parents did not want her to be a fashion designer. For this reason, she wanted her cousin to lose the competition, and hiding the designs was the best way to achieve it.

**Appendix J**

**Point cards**



## Appendix k

6/10/23, 6:48 PM

Vocabulary Questionnaire

### Vocabulary Questionnaire

Let's see if you have a good memory! Answer the questions below by choosing the right option.

\* Indicates required question

---

1. Group \*

---

2. Is he wearing a scarf? \*

1 point



*Check all that apply.*

- Yes, he is.
- No, he is wearing a hat.
- No, he is wearing glasses.
- I don't know.

3. Choose the items that you can see in the picture. \*

2 points



Check all that apply.

- Coat
- Trousers
- Wallet
- Necklace
- Flipflops
- Sandals
- Shirt
- Jeans
- T-shirt

4. What would you wear to this place? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- A coat.
- A tracksuit.
- A sweater.
- A swimsuit.

5. What is this? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- A belt.
- A tie.
- A cap.
- A bracelet.

6. What would you wear to this place? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- A sweater, a coat, trousers, socks, boots, and gloves.
- T-shirt, shorts, and sandals.
- A shirt, a watch, a skirt, glasses, high heels, and a bag.

7. What is she wearing? Choose the items you can see in the picture.

2 points



*Check all that apply.*

- Leather trousers
- Denim jacket
- Cap
- Necklace
- Plaid shirt
- Striped t-shirt
- Watch
- White t-shirt

8. What is this? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- Jeans
- Denim pants
- Overalls or dungarees
- Dress

9. What is the name for the clothes one must wear to certain jobs and schools? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- Tracksuit
- Suit
- Pyjamas
- Uniform

## Appendix L

Figure 1:

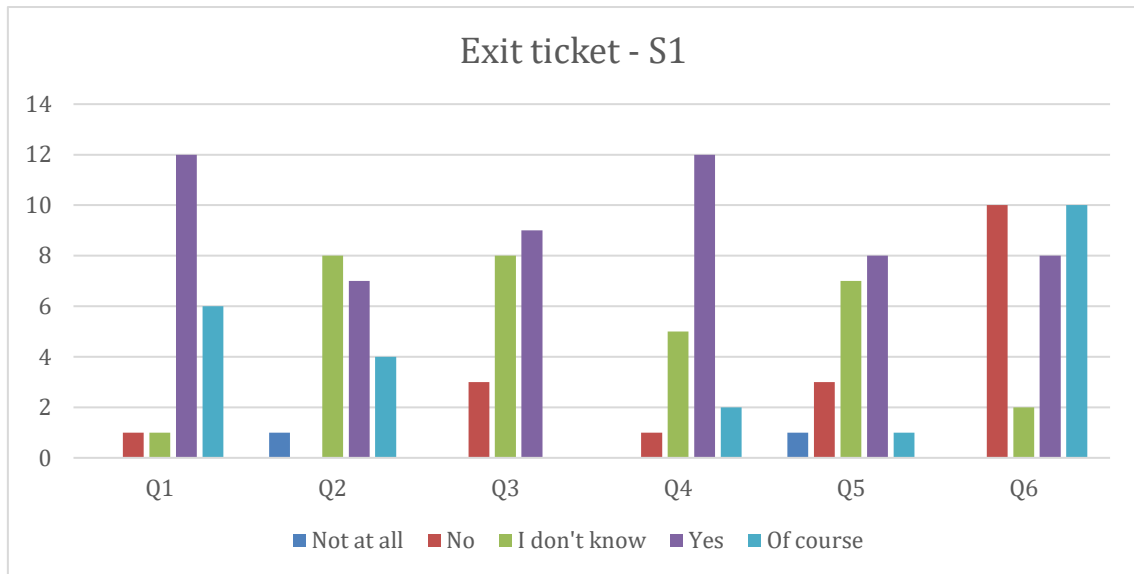


Figure 2:



Figure 3:

