Gamilab : It's Not Just About Games!

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Amidst the Covid-19, online distance learning (ODL) is no longer considered novel in higher institutions. With this sudden shift away from the physical classroom to virtual space, some are wondering whether the adoption of this online learning will continue to persist post-pandemic, and how such a transformation would impact the worldwide education market.

However, the imposition of ODL sessions for three semesters in a row has already raised red flags among Malaysian university lecturers and students. It appears that instructors are losing students' interest and involvement, while students find online learning laborious and time-consuming. To deal with the dilemma, educators should devise new ways to make learning more exciting and enjoyable.

Educators also have long understood that the interactive dynamic of games has potentially benefit teaching and learning. In these recent years, people at large have witnessed considerable activity surrounding the use of game mechanics in higher education. According to Alonso-Fernandez et al. (2020), educational games could greatly improve students' engagement as well as sustain their motivation in learning. Hence, incorporating games in teaching and learning is highly effective because it could help to provide greater learning experience to students and at the same time may help to achieve the designated learning outcomes. Thus, students and lecturers are compelled to adapt the learning method and recognise that it is the most effective way to sustain education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

One alternative is to use Gamilab to break up the monotonous and repetitive pattern of the online classroom. The good news about Gamilab is that instructors can use it for free. Suppose educators' primary concern about making games is related to codes. In that case, they need not worry, as Gamilab does not require any coding abilities, and the process of creating games is straightforward. Creators can use one of three modes to build quizzes or online games: 'Explore', 'Game Race', or 'King of the Mountain'. Each mode is pre-loaded with ready-made backdrop and theme options for creators to choose.
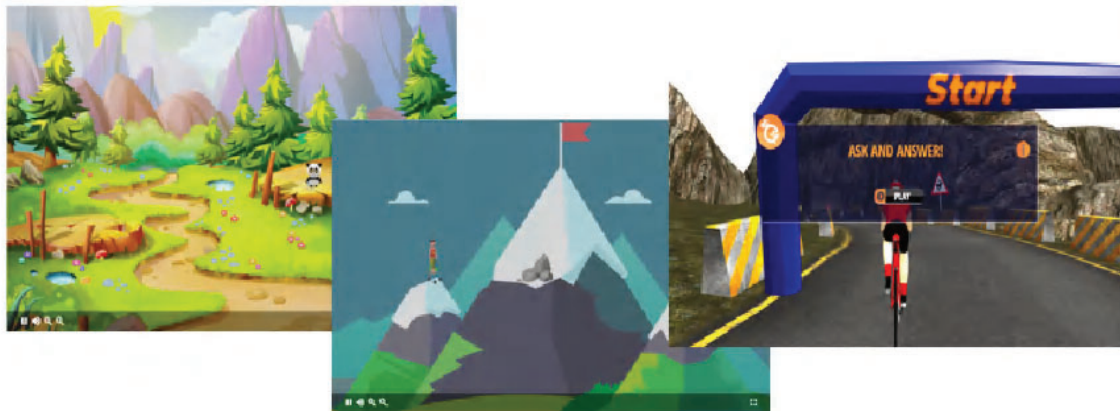

The Modes Offered in Gamilab

Additionally, Gamilab is a platform that promotes not only entertaining but also educational games. The aspects of the games, such as high scores, stars, and avatars, will assist players in learning while also encouraging them to participate in the process. Additionally, the aspects can help connect the players to the classroom lessons. Meanwhile, educators can use time-based activities to inspire learners to concentrate, compete, and have fun at the same time.

Furthermore, Gamilab gives creators the ability to apply numerous forms of content. There are about 40 content types available. In addition, educators can experiment with content kinds other than multiple choice and fill in the blanks. For instance, if educators wish to teach students proper pronunciation, the 'Speak the Words' content type is appropriate. In addition, creators can consider the games related to the purpose of setting or hosting. The consideration can be done following the lessons' subjects and objectives. Thus, instructors are no longer afraid to incorporate game activities into their classes because they can still assess students' engagement, achievement, and input.
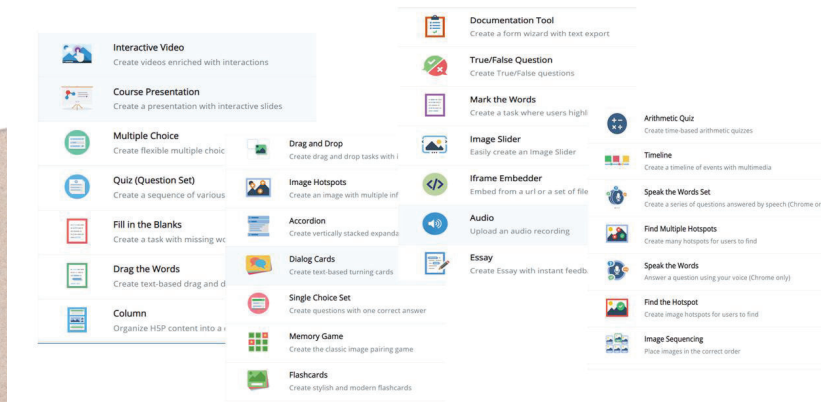
Types of Content

Thinking of having collaborative teaching in the classroom? Gamilab may be worth considering, as it enables teachers to ask more partners to help create the games. The collaboration allows instructors to share and use the games in the classes. It saves educators' time since customising the games accommodate students with varying levels of skills. Besides, questions available in the shared content serve as the question bank for the creators to consider when coming up with the list of the items. The more content educators upload or create games, the more options are made available in the bank. Thus, more creators can benefit from it, especially those who are still new in teaching or who have run out of ideas.
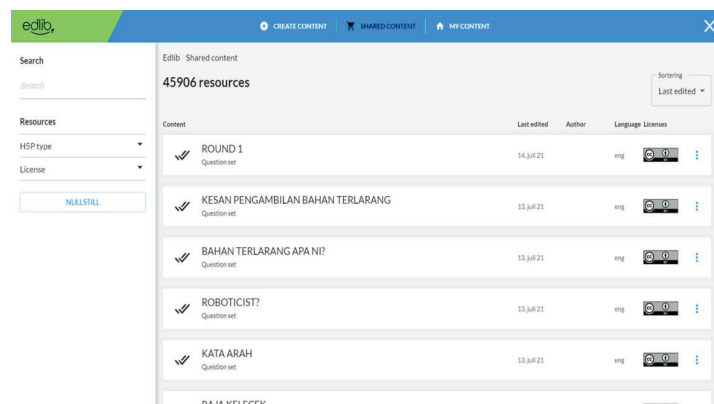
Shared Content to Create Questions

Gamilab's features can help not only instructors but also learners. Therefore, educators should seize the chance to use Gamilab to enhance their teaching and learning activities. What else is difficult during a pandemic? However, developing strategies for coping with a circumstance is an investment in achieving good outcomes. Hence, educators are urged to set aside time to design, run, and observe the impacts of Gamilab implementation in the classroom. It's worth a shot!

References

Alonso-Fernandez, C., Martinez-Ortiz, I., Caballero, R., Freire, M., & Fernandez-Manjon, B. (2020). Predicting students' knowledge after playing a serious game based on learning analytics data: A case study. Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 36(3), 350–358. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12405.

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