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"IN BETWEEN WORDS AND PHRASES: ESCAPE ROOMS AS AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN SECONDARY EDUCATION"

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MASTER'S DEGREE FINAL PROJECT IN COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION, TEACHER TRAINING, UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING, LANGUAGE TEACHING AND SPORTS TEACHING

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Abstract

An innovative educational project for first-year secondary students studying English as a foreign language is presented in this master's thesis. As an engaging and significant educational experience, the proposal suggests a twelve-session didactic unit centred on the design and construction of historical escape rooms. In order to promote inclusive, dynamic, and individualised instruction, the plan incorporates project-based learning, cooperative work, and Universal Design for Learning, drawing on constructivist and communicative techniques. Based on various historical figures, such as Queen Victoria, Sir Isaac Newton, The Beatles, and William Shakespeare, each escape room serves as a communicative framework to foster critical thinking, teach useful language, and scaffold written and spoken expression. Students engage in contextualised assignments and guided vocabulary sessions before the final game session, which equips them both linguistically and intellectually to accomplish their missions. A mix of formative and summative methods, including as instructor observation, peer review, self-assessment, and digital portfolios, are used to evaluate students. The initiative also considers how it aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 4, and emphasises how it may boost student motivation, enhance language use in everyday situations, and foster a more vibrant, welcoming classroom environment. To sum up, the thesis promotes the use of innovative and immersive teaching strategies that put students at the centre of their education and turn the conventional foreign language classroom into a setting for play, cooperation, and deep conversation.

Keywords: Cooperative learning; task-based approach; inclusive education; student motivation; 21st-century skills.

1. Introduction

The need for more student-centred pedagogical approaches and ongoing technological advancements have been the primary drivers of significant changes in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction in recent years. As the world grows more interconnected, English continues to be the most widely used language, facilitating cross-cultural communication, access to global academic resources, and global employability (Jenkins, 2017; Rose & Galloway, 2019). Learning English is not only a curriculum goal but also a social and cultural requirement because of its significance on a global scale. However, traditional teaching methods frequently fall short of meeting the complex needs of students in the twenty-first century. The need for pedagogical innovation is highlighted by persistent problems like low student motivation, little exposure to real-world language contexts, and traditional assessment's limited ability to gauge communicative competence (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Reinders, 2022).

The "The Time Machine: Escape Room" project is marketed as a cutting-edge learning opportunity that blends cooperative challenges, holography, and virtual reality. Its goal is to promote learning English in culturally, meaningfully, and experientially rich environments. Based on current theories of game-based learning (Qian & Clark, 2016) and gamification (Caponetto et al., 2014; Sailer & Homner, 2020), this proposal seeks to boost intrinsic motivation and student engagement. It is made to satisfy the demands of the modern educational system, which emphasises competence-based curricula, meaningful interaction, and increased autonomy.

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in using escape rooms in educational settings. According to research, these resources are useful for encouraging active learning, teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Veldkamp et al., 2020; Fotaris & Mastoras, 2019). These characteristics are especially pertinent to language learning, where contextualised communication, cooperation, and interaction are crucial. By making students feel more present and immersed in the target language, immersive technologies like virtual and augmented reality have also been shown to improve students' motivation and language proficiency (Parmaxi, 2020; Lin & Lan, 2021). These settings give students the chance to practise the language in contexts that are safe, significant, and emotionally compelling—all of which are critical for helping them internalise grammatical rules and increase their vocabulary.

Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, which maintains that students learn best when given tasks they can complete with the assistance of more seasoned peers or

scaffolding materials, forms the theoretical basis of this project. In this sense, the escape room's layout encourages group communication and cooperative education, enabling students to work together to negotiate meaning and create knowledge. This viewpoint has been broadened by the incorporation of digital tools into the ZPD framework, which shows that technology can act as a mediating tool for language acquisition (Kukulska-Hulme et al., 2021). In order to promote flexibility, independence, and contextual learning opportunities, the project also incorporates elements of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL).

The communicative approach to language learning, which is still the most common paradigm in language pedagogy, serves as the foundation for the design of the suggested activities (Ellis, 2016; Richards, 2015). A fundamental element of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the use of language as a tool for meaning construction and real-world interaction. The escape room's activities are intended to mimic actual circumstances where students would need to collaborate and use English creatively. In accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020), the suggested activities include interaction and mediation as well as the four fundamental skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), which are crucial in today's multilingual and multicultural societies.

The project's adherence to project-based learning (PBL) principles is another essential component. This approach fosters deeper understanding and boosts motivation by presenting students as active participants in the creation of their knowledge (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021). When PBL is coupled with gamified structures, the growth of student autonomy and engagement has demonstrated especially favourable outcomes (Aguayo et al., 2022; Barata et al., 2019). Students are more likely to pay attention and take intellectual chances when they are involved in challenging and meaningful stories. In this way, by fusing historical research, language use, and group problem-solving into an entertaining experience, "The Time Machine: Escape Room" offers the perfect setting for PBL.

Along with their cognitive and linguistic advantages, gamified learning environments have been demonstrated to improve intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, two important components of long-term language learning (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Pupils who participate actively in their education and are emotionally invested in narrative and challenge-based experiences are more likely to retain knowledge (Kim & Park, 2021). These advantages are particularly pertinent in secondary education, where there is frequently a noticeable break from the conventional

curriculum. Students are put at the centre of the educational process and their imaginations are stimulated by the use of storytelling in conjunction with digital and physical challenges.

Additionally, the need for inclusive and differentiated instruction is successfully met by the escape room model. According to studies on multimodal environments (Cope & Kalantzis, 2020) and Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2018), it is critical to offer a variety of access paths for students with different backgrounds, styles, and abilities. By combining kinaesthetic, logical, auditory, and visual elements, the escape room makes this accessibility possible. For students who struggle with learning, non-traditional formats are especially helpful because they reduce cognitive overload and enable flexible demonstration of understanding. Furthermore, peer scaffolding is made easier by the cooperative nature of the tasks, which helps students with lower language proficiency.

Nowadays, one of the main goals of language instruction is to foster intercultural competency. Students must develop not only language proficiency but also the capacity to comprehend, interpret, and interact with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, claims Deardorff (2020). Reflecting on diversity and dispelling stereotypes is made possible by "The Time Machine: Escape Room's" narrative structure, which combines elements from various historical eras and cultural contexts. In keeping with the more general objectives of global education, this fosters empathy, critical thinking, and a greater comprehension of social complexity. When incorporated into emotionally charged experiences, intercultural learning enhances communication effectiveness and promotes long-lasting attitudinal changes (Porto & Byram, 2015).

The goal of this master's thesis is to contribute significantly to the ongoing discussion on innovation in teaching English as a foreign language by presenting a novel and replicable proposal that integrates cooperative learning, emerging technologies, and narrative frameworks. The project was implemented with a group of first-year Compulsory Secondary Education students who demonstrated a high level of openness to creative and technological activities based on pre-intervention surveys and preliminary observations. In order to customise the learning environment to the group's interests and preferences, the data gathered from these early tools was crucial. The study's empirical foundation is the assessment of the intervention's impact on students' motivation, communicative proficiency, and language engagement.

In conclusion, the results of this study lend credence to the idea that the development of linguistic competence in the twenty-first century depends on dynamic, inclusive, and responsive

instruction that is in line with the needs of modern students. "The Time Machine: Escape Room" makes it easier to investigate novel ideas that connect language learning to innovation, teamwork, and cultural exploration. These results encourage more research into the pedagogical potential of immersive and gamified learning environments in foreign language instruction.

2. Objectives

The design and execution of The Time Machine Escape Room, a cutting-edge educational exercise intended to teach English as a foreign language within the framework of Compulsory Secondary Education, is presented in this Master's Final Project (TFM). Gamification is promoted as a successful method of grabbing students' attention in an educational setting where their motivation and engagement are crucial to learning success. In order to promote the development of linguistic, cognitive, and social skills, this proposal aims to change the classroom into a dynamic, participatory environment where learning English occurs naturally and contextually.

The general objectives of this project are:

- To encourage students' motivation and active participation in the learning process by using a novel, game-based approach to English.

- To improve communication skills in English through decision-making, problem-solving, and interaction in a dynamic, team-based environment.

The following particular goals are set:

- To improve reading comprehension by deciphering English-language texts, messages, and hints in order to progress the task.

- To develop deductive and logical thinking by solving related problems and challenges that promote critical thinking and judgement.

- To increase vocabulary in various historical contexts, making it easier to learn particular terms from each era by immersing oneself in the escape room's story.

- To improve oral expression in made-up scenarios in order to support impromptu and contextualised English communication within the game's dynamics.

- To promote cooperation and teamwork since these qualities promote group problem-solving and collaborative learning.

- Students are encouraged to plan ahead and make calculated choices in order to finish the task within the allotted time, which fosters independence and time management skills.

By combining lexical, grammatical, and communicative elements into an exciting and captivating learning environment, the integration of these goals aims to improve students' English language proficiency. It is anticipated that the use of gamification and immersion in historical contexts will create a vibrant and stimulating learning environment, which will increase students' self-assurance in their language proficiency. Additionally, the escape room approach encourages the growth of cross-cutting abilities like critical thinking, problem solving, and productive teamwork that are thought to be crucial for students' academic and personal development. In addition to improving students' English language proficiency, this proposal aims to foster more independent, imaginative, and significant learning opportunities.

3. Contextualization

3.1. Characteristics of the school environment

The school under scrutiny is a Christian school located in one of the most significant towns in El Aljarafe, which is a region of Seville, in a semi-rural municipality with a population of approximately 15,000 inhabitants. The town is characterised by a river and green spaces, which are located in a peripheral position to the population centre. These areas are often utilised by families for social gatherings and meals.

The town boasts a rich historical tapestry, with origins dating back to the time of the Visigoths in the province. This is evidenced by the remnants of the town walls that are still in existence. The municipality also boasts a rich ecclesiastical history, exemplified by the presence of three significant churches within the town centre. These churches vary significantly in architectural style and period of construction, featuring one notable example being an ancient Arab temple complete with a minaret, a structure that has been meticulously preserved to the present day.

The municipality boasts a plethora of amenities, including green spaces, parks, health centres, schools, institutes, supermarkets, bars and restaurants, libraries, employment support centres, support centres for people with SEN, children's centres, stationers and small local shops.

However, despite the presence of these infrastructures, the village exhibits a medium-low socio-economic level, which exerts a significant influence on the socio-economic status of the centre in question.

The population is characterised by significant diversity in terms of nationalities, religious affiliations and economic levels. A notable influx of foreign families can be observed, with a significant presence of individuals hailing from Eastern European countries such as Romania. Additionally, there is a notable presence of individuals from African countries, further contributing to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the city.

In terms of economic levels, it should be noted that the majority of the population has a medium-low socio-economic level; as previously mentioned, however, there are families that stand out and have a medium-high or even high socio-economic level.

The educational facility under discussion is situated within one of the most prosperous neighbourhoods of the town. The neighbourhood boasts a variety of amenities, including the offices of the State Public Employment Service and the Andalusian Employment Service, the Early Childhood Care Centre, notaries and notary offices, nurseries, old people's homes, bars, small food shops, the village train station, and two state-subsidised educational centres of different stages, from nursery education to compulsory secondary education. The predominant housing typology is single-family dwellings, typically comprising one or two floors, often arranged in semi-detached or attached configurations. These dwellings are characterised by modest gardens or yards at the front and rear, which are commonly inhabited by families of a medium-to-high socio-economic status.

3.2. School

The school is an educational centre of reference within the foundation's subsidised centres. It is characterised by its commitment to educational quality and the integral development of its students. It combines tradition with the teaching of Christian values, incorporating elements of innovation to offer an education adapted to the needs of the students.

The school's infrastructure is notable for its austerely decorated environment. It boasts spacious classrooms equipped with projection equipment, science and technology laboratories, arts and music workshops, a fully equipped gymnasium, and a well-stocked library that fosters reading and independent learning. The school also boasts a church on the premises, catering to the spiritual development of students, in addition to outdoor spaces that encourage physical activity

and contact with nature, both of which are considered integral to students' personal balance and development.

The Institute also offers a school canteen programme that guarantees a balanced and healthy diet, adapted to the nutritional needs of the students. The school pays special attention to academic guidance, through a specialised department that guides students in their educational path and in the choice of their professional future.

The institute is affiliated with numerous educational networks and programmes, which serve to enhance the educational experience of students. Furthermore, the school is committed to inclusion and equal opportunities, participating in initiatives for the promotion of diversity and the cultivation of a harmonious environment.

The educational stages offered by the school range from kindergarten to the Compulsory Secondary Education stage.

In summary, the school presents itself as a comprehensive educational centre, combining quality services with a wide and diversified educational offer. Its commitment to excellence and inclusion positions it as a noteworthy option for the educational and personal development of its students.

3.3. Classroom

The school under scrutiny, situated in El Aljarafe, in Seville; is distinguished by its provision of a comprehensive and high-quality education to its student body. In the final year of Compulsory Secondary Education, students prepare themselves to face new academic challenges, and the classroom environment plays a crucial role in this process.

The classroom is equipped with a projector and a sound system, ensuring optimal presentation of audiovisual materials. The classroom is also equipped with a wireless internet connection, facilitating access to online resources for both teaching staff and students.

The class group to which this classroom belongs usually consists of 30 students. The desks are usually distributed in groups of five throughout the classroom space, encouraging group participation and helping and collaboration between students, although for exams they are placed individually.

The materials most frequently used during the English language sessions include contemporary textbooks that adhere to the official curriculum, as well as bilingual dictionaries to enhance the pupils' vocabulary. Furthermore, digital resources such as online educational platforms and

mobile applications are utilised in select sessions to augment traditional learning methodologies by offering interactive exercises and educational games that facilitate the enhancement of language comprehension. The integration of laptops or tablets in these classes facilitates activities, research, and collaborative work among students.

Oral activities are also frequently incorporated into English sessions, with the aim of enabling students to practise their pronunciation and improve their fluency in the language.

In summary, technological equipment is combined with a pedagogical approach that emphasises interaction and the use of a variety of resources, with the aim of ensuring that students are well prepared for future academic and personal challenges.

3.4. Students

This Secondary School is an educational establishment that is distinguished by its commitment to diversity and its provision of a comprehensive education for its students. The student body of Compulsory Secondary Education reflects a richly diverse composition and a varied socio-cultural profile.

Each group consists of 30 students. The gender distribution is fairly balanced, with a similar number of boys and girls, which facilitates an inclusive and equitable learning environment. This diversity is further enriched by a range of socio-cultural characteristics, contributing to a rich educational experience for all students. The students hail from a variety of family backgrounds, thus providing a rich tapestry of cultural perspectives that fosters an environment of tolerance and mutual respect.

In the case of students for whom English is a first foreign language, the diversity of the course as a whole is representative, with students hailing from a variety of backgrounds and levels of ability. The English language teaching programme is designed to enhance communicative competence and equip students with the linguistic skills necessary to succeed in future academic or professional pursuits where English proficiency is paramount.

Within this group, some students are identified as having specific educational support needs and others as having special educational needs (SEN). These diagnoses may include learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, or physical disabilities that require curricular adaptations or additional support. The institute is committed to the principle of inclusion, as reflected in its provision of resources and specialised support services. These measures are designed to ensure that all students have access to a quality education. This personalised

attention enables students to develop their abilities to the fullest, respecting their individual learning paces and needs.

The students in this group are characterised by a wide range of characteristics, which are themselves indicative of the diversity of their backgrounds. Some students demonstrate a keen interest in technology and science, while others excel in artistic or sporting domains. This diversity of interests is indicative of the personal and academic development opportunities afforded by the institution.

The families of these students also play a pivotal role in their children's education. In general, these families are committed to the educational process and value the importance of academic training. A significant number of these families actively engage in the school's activities, contributing to the establishment of a cohesive and supportive educational community. The diversity of family structures, cultural backgrounds and socio-economic situations contributes to a more enriching educational environment, fostering an atmosphere of respect and mutual learning.

Consequently, the student body of this school reflects the diversity and cultural richness of today's society. The school adopts an inclusive and personalised approach to education, with the objective of providing a quality education that prepares students to face the challenges of the future, whilst respecting and valuing individual differences.

4. Curricular Description

4.1. Subject or Area

The Time Machine: Escape Room is taught at the first level of Secondary Obligatory Education, under the English language category as a Foreign Language, even though the design integrates concepts and information from other subjects like history, biology, music, and literature. This decision reflects the notion that learning is a global, interconnected process in which languages serve as both an efficient means of acquiring knowledge about other fields and a means to an end in and of themselves.

In this sense, English serves as a means by which students can immerse themselves in different historical periods, get to know important figures, and understand the social, cultural, and scientific contexts of each period. As a result, it departs from the artificial and decontextualised learning that is frequently connected to conventional teaching and is instead portrayed as a

dynamic and useful tool that makes it easier to explore, uncover, and solve complicated problems.

Both pedagogical and psychological factors were taken into consideration when selecting the first-year secondary education course. Students are at the height of adolescence at this point, which is characterised by robust affective and cognitive development. They frequently exhibit a high capacity for assimilation, a natural curiosity, and a positive attitude towards activities that break the routine. These qualities are supported by the use of cutting-edge formats like escape rooms in conjunction with immersive technologies like virtual reality and holograms, which promote engaging, experiential, and meaningful learning.

The design of the escape room combines digital components with tangible materials (like pens, paperboards, pencils, and maps) to produce a multisensory learning environment that appeals to different types of intelligence and learning styles. Each student can find a place in the group effort thanks to the variety of channels and resources that come from their unique cognitive and emotional strengths.

The plot of the escape room is based on an intriguing idea: students virtually enter a particular era of history and are given important information by a mysterious figure. But something has changed in history—a pivotal moment has taken place. After that, in addition to the knowledge they have gained from the materials, students must successfully complete a number of linguistic, logical, musical, and scientific tasks using English as their primary language of communication. In order to accomplish this, you must:

- Identify the historical period in which they are located.

- Identify the speaker and their part in the narrative.

- Identify the changes and their impact on the present.

- Restore history and return to the present by resolving the tests and mysteries.

This dynamic promotes complete engagement in a realistic and gamified learning environment that tests higher-order cognitive abilities like cooperation, inference, synthesis, critical thinking, and emotional control in assessment situations in addition to theoretical knowledge.

Additionally, the project is a part of a larger vision of integrative knowledge that eliminates traditional disciplinary boundaries in favour of interdisciplinary education that is in line with

contemporary pedagogical trends and the LOMLOE's tenets. Instead of being isolated or compartmentalised tasks, the activities are envisioned as global experiences that call for the mobilisation of diverse skills and knowledge to solve a central problem.

Students in the first year of secondary education not only gain language proficiency but also learn how to think, work together, and value knowledge as a tool to change reality thanks to The Time Machine: Escape Room, which totally changes the English language classroom into a place for exploration, introspection, communication, and teamwork.

4.2. Alignment with the Official Curriculum

The current project complies with the English language extracurricular area's order for the first year of secondary education, as well as the official curriculum set by the Andalusian Junta for the mandatory secondary education phase, as recognised by Decree 102/2023, dated May 9. The LOMLOE serves as the foundation for this regulatory framework, which promotes a competitive, global, and meaningful approach to education that is centred on the holistic development of the student and their readiness to be an engaged and responsible citizen.

The project's internal coherence and educational validity are guaranteed by two evaluation criteria that describe the recommended methodology. First, the primary evaluation criterion is set as recognise the general meaning, key ideas, and specific details of oral texts in a foreign language that are presented in a variety of media and cover common subjects pertaining to social, professional, educational, and personal spheres.

Since the student must first comprehend the escape room's initial information—which is provided by the virtual characters in English—orally, this criterion is central to the project. To advance in history, this understanding requires processing, analysing, and interpreting spoken messages rather than merely passively listening. In addition to understanding what is being said, the student must also be able to read between the lines, infer meanings from context, identify idioms in language and time, and work with others to develop hypotheses.

Second, the following has been selected as the secondary evaluation criterion: to engage in guided participation on familiar or personal interest topics in straightforward and contextualised communication situations, while adjusting the text to the communicative situation with fluency, coherence, and a cooperative attitude.

Because the game requires students to interact with one another, share ideas, make decisions together, and verbally express their hypotheses in English, this second criterion is essential to its development. As a result, the language is used for a sincere goal—advancing the mission,

unravelling the mystery, and "saving" the past—in a meaningful and authentic communication exchange.

Here, the use of English is motivated by a practical and emotional need rather than by mechanical or decontextualised exercises, which encourages the language's organic and sustained acquisition.

Both requirements pertain to a set of core concepts that are described in the official curriculum and are also an important part of the project's design. Of these, the following are particularly noteworthy:

- The use of auditory comprehension techniques, such as context-based inference, anticipation, and key word identification.

- The ability to comprehend and use thematic language in historical, cultural, and scientific contexts as well as in daily life.

- The application of basic expressions for cooperation and oral communication.

- The efficient administration of digital tools for creating and retrieving spoken or written communications.

These abilities are not isolated; rather, they are incorporated into a learning environment that demands the student to use the knowledge in a real-world context while simultaneously following an interesting and demanding story. The fragmentation of the curriculum is thus addressed, and strides are made towards a more unified teaching methodology that satisfies the needs of the twenty-first century.

Additionally, the project supports the development of a number of critical competencies, some of which include the following:

- Linguistic communication proficiency (interaction and comprehension in English).

- Proficiency with digital tools, such as holograms, virtual reality, and interactive materials.

- The capacity to learn by doing (by taking on tasks that call for introspection, autonomy, and self-control).

- Social and civic competence, which includes respecting word turns, listening to others, and cooperating with others.

- Cultural expression and awareness (through analysing and valuing relevant historical and cultural events).

Thus, the escape room promotes students' academic, social, and personal development in addition to helping them acquire language skills. Additionally, it invites students to think critically and openly about the past, as well as its relationships and implications for the present, by connecting them to a historical and cultural narrative that spans multiple eras and disciplines.

Last but not least, The Time Machine: Escape Room is characterised as an entirely cohesive educational proposal that adheres to the official Andalusian curriculum. Through creative methodology, immersive technology, and a competitive focus, this project fosters values, competencies, and behaviours crucial to the overall development of the first-year secondary education student while promoting deep English language learning.

5. Design of the Teaching Innovation Project

5.1. Methodological Approach

The Time Machine: Escape Room project is based on an active learning methodology that combines project-based learning (PBL), gamification, collaborative learning, and heavy use of emerging technologies like virtual reality (VR) and holograms. This approach encourages meaningful and motivating learning, where students become active participants in their own knowledge construction process (Thomas, 2000).

The following reasons justify the selection of this methodology:

- The Project-Based Learning (PBL) allows for the articulation of curriculum content in various areas (English, music, biology, history, and literature) within a common narrative.
- Virtual reality and holograms increase immersion level, making it easier to understand complex historical and scientific contexts (Radianti et al., 2020).
- Through challenge and problem-solving, gamification and the Escape Room format improve engagement and retention of knowledge (Deterding et al., 2011).
- Collaborative learning enables students to work together, developing critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills.

This approach, which is highly motivating and student-centred, proves particularly advantageous to the current educational environment, which is characterized by the need to create more inclusive, participatory, and student-interest-adapted learning experiences.

5.2. Description of Activities

Twelve one-hour sessions are used to develop the current project. From an initial phase of familiarising students with the escape room concept to a final phase where problems must be solved independently, cooperatively, and communicatively, the didactic sequence is carefully crafted to support students. Every escape room serves as a didactic pretext for purposeful language learning and symbolises a distinct historical and cultural background.

The first sessions' main goal is to give students the theoretical references, linguistic structures, and vocabulary they need to successfully navigate escape rooms. As a result, sessions 1 through 9 concentrate on the gradual acquisition of important terms, working on communicative activities (with context, interaction, and intention) after working on controlled exercises (without context or communication). Students can comprehend the game's texts, instructions, and tests thanks to this preparation, which promotes engagement and meaningful learning.

An overview of the escape room industry is provided in the first session. Students are given an explanation of the elements of this methodology as well as the types of dynamics that will be employed in the project. The introduction of general terms such as clue, puzzle, code, key, challenge, mission, team, solve, search, escape, lock, and room is justified by the fact that they can be used in any project task. After a brief visual presentation, students work through term recognition exercises that include thematic crucigrams, image-word associations, and phrases like "To escape you need a...." A brief communication exercise is then conducted in which groups are required to solve a hypothetical classroom problem using the vocabulary they have learnt. In a linguistic and practical context, this first exercise promotes motivation, cooperation, and language contact.

The Beatles' escape room is the focus of the second and third sessions. Teaching students the precise vocabulary and basic structures required to comprehend and pass the course's tests is the primary objective. The vocabulary words covered in session two include band, concert, fan, lyrics, microphone, record, album, message, guitar, stage, audience, clue, contextualised through pictures, song snippets, and brief videos. Activities like matching, colouring-in letters, and structuring phrases pertaining to the group's life are carried out. Understanding the vocabulary and using it in basic sentences is the aim for the students. Students participate in more communicative activities in the third session. For example, vocal songs are performed, short letters are exchanged among Beatles fans, and a card featuring English lyrics for a Beatles concert is made. A small group puzzle that mimics the dynamics of an escape room is also solved using coded messages.

Students get ready for Sir Isaac Newton's escape room during the fourth and fifth sessions. Session 4 introduces the following scientific and discovery-related terms: gravity, apple, force, motion, scientist, experiment, telescope, prism, discover, fall, observe, and law. Videos, pictures, and a simple story are used to provide context for Newton's life. The exercises include organising experiment phases, finishing texts about his biography, and using graphic aids to define basic terms. Students engage in exercises like acting out the burial's discovery, facilitating discussions like 'why did the apple fall?' and providing succinct explanations of everyday occurrences that can be explained by science. Students can manage the deduction, classification, and resolution tasks that come up in the escape room by using these strategies. With the help of these strategies, students can more securely complete the deduction, classification, and resolution tasks that come up in the escape room.

William Shakespeare's escape room will be the subject of the following two sessions. The terms "play," "actor," "stage," "costume," "monologue," "script," "audience," "curtain," "scene," "director," "tragic," and "comedy" are introduced in the sixth session. Highly adapted passages from plays such as Romeo and Juliet are used, along with short films about the Elizabethan theatre. There are exercises to finish dialogues, categorise terms as either tragic or comedic, and understand short theatre summaries. The seventh session focusses on oral and written production. Students write advice for actors using imperatives and suggestive phrases (You should..., Don't forget to...). The audience is then prepared for the corresponding theatrical test of the escape room by solving puzzles based on theatre scripts, acting out short scenes in groups, and mimicking actor interviews.

Queen Victoria I's escape room is set up in sessions eight and nine. Session eight introduces the context of Victorian England and includes terms like corset, train, invention, queen, empire, colony, servant, chimney, palace, revolution, and train. Visual aids, historical maps, and succinct descriptive texts are employed. The exercises include timelines, true/false, and matching. In the ninth session, students participate in facilitated conversations about life at the time (was it better then or now?), act out scenes from daily life, and work together on a project that covers historical changes during Victoria's reign. This method equips them to deal with comprehension, deduction, and association issues with short historical texts in the escape room.

In the tenth session, the classroom's four escape rooms were created. Each of the four groups—Queen Victoria, William Shakespeare, Isaac Newton, or the Beatles—must figure out a different escape room. There are five tests in each escape room:

- Filling in words and translating phrases are examples of vocabulary tests.

- Organising messages, combining ideas, or deciphering codes are examples of logical tests.

- Short texts with instructions or questions serve as comprehension assessments.

- Physical tests: searching for hidden symbols or objects.

- Writing a note, making a poster, or representing something are examples of production tests.

Each team has an hour to complete all of the tests. Teamwork, English communication, and the group's capacity for conclusion-making are all important for success in addition to the knowledge acquired in earlier sessions.

Following the completion of the escape room, the teams create a visual presentation (using Canva, cardboard, or another tool) in the penultimate session that presents the information learnt, the tests completed, the content of the escape room, and the overall value. The preparation and delivery of oral presentations are the main focus of this session, which promotes introspection, and the ludic style of consolidating learnt content.

The project's overall assessment is the focus of the last meeting. Students rate their performance, engagement, and learning on an individual self-assessment. They also participate in a teacher-led hetero-evaluation and a group evaluation with their peers. Lastly, a group reflection exercise is conducted to collect ideas for improvement as well as opinions on the benefits and drawbacks of using escape rooms in the classroom. By strengthening metacognition, promoting critical thinking, and making learning visible, this session makes it possible to finish the project with a shared evaluation.

5.3. Organizational Criteria: Spaces, Scheduling, and Other Necessary Elements

To ensure its viability and the accomplishment of the proposed goals, the Time Machine: Escape Room project needs to be carefully planned in terms of time management, material resources, and space use. This section describes how these elements are arranged to meet the needs of the students, the structure of the centre, and the prerequisites for every activity.

Both real and virtual spaces

The project's development mostly occurs in a typical English classroom, which is occasionally adjusted to accommodate the engaging and interactive nature of escape room-style activities.

It is feasible to reorganise the classroom space to create gaming areas, clue areas, and themed environments that replicate the historical periods covered in each session because the centre has mobile equipment and technological resources like projectors and assistants. Common spaces like the library or the multiple-use classroom may also be utilised in some pivotal sessions to encourage a more collaborative and immersive learning environment.

Visual components, theatre, and digital resources such as audio, video, or interactive presentations are used to reenact each historical period: Victorian England, the Scientific Revolution, the Elizabethan theatre, and the 1960s. Some of the project's resources can be transformed into a hybrid or virtual format if needed, even though the entire project is meant to be completed in person.
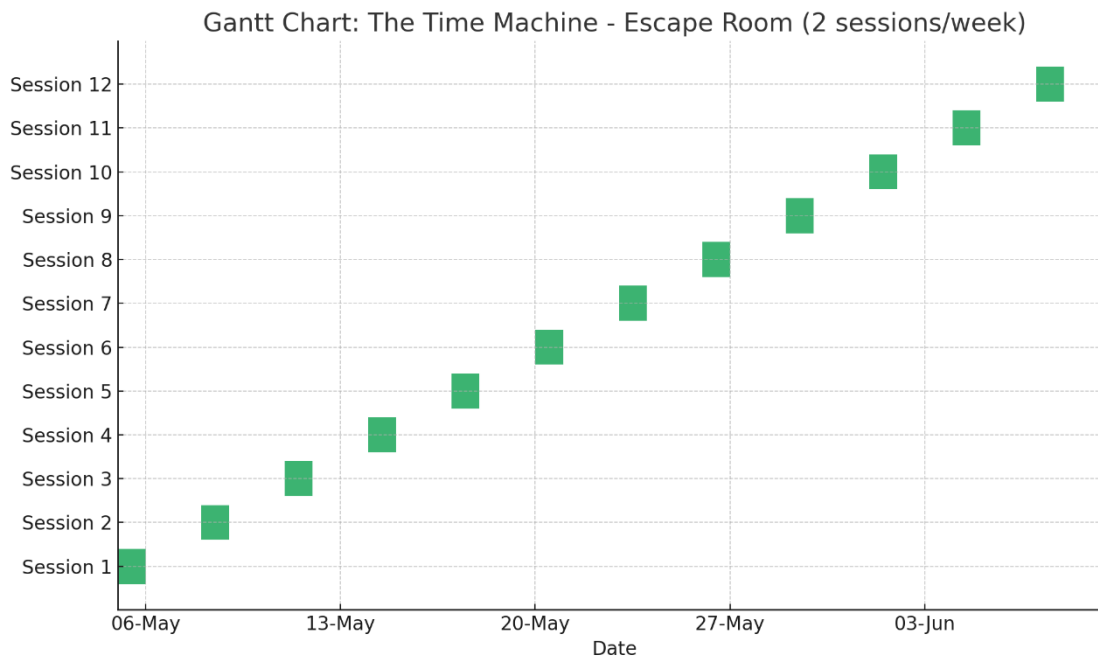
Planning and scheduling a project.

Depending on the centre's hours and the didactic programming of the course, the project is divided into twelve sessions, each lasting approximately sixty minutes, and is spread out over six to eight weeks. There are four main stages to the planning process:

- The first session is the introduction and familiarisation phase - Students are introduced to the concept of an escape room while working on the basic vocabulary required for the subsequent exercises.
- Phase of thematic and multidisciplinary learning (Sessions 2–9) - Each pair of sessions incorporates linguistic, cultural, and other content of different historical eras.
- Phase of cooperative application (Session 10) - Students put their newly acquired knowledge to use by working in groups to solve themed escape rooms.
- Phase of presentation and assessment (Sessions 11 and 12) - The groups participate in a thorough project evaluation, exchange experiences and insights, and consider the process.

Without having to be extended over the course of the academic course, this distribution enables the project to be fully integrated into a didactic unit.

Figure 1: Gantt Chart of The Time Machine: Escape Room project.

Gantt Chart: The Time Machine - Escape Room (2 sessions/week)

5.4. Required Materials and Resources

For the Time Machine Escape Room project to be implemented correctly, a variety of didactic materials that foster the atmosphere of the sessions as well as the development of language-based and cooperative activities are required. These resources can be divided into three primary categories: teacher-created resources, digital resources, and physical materials.

Materials in physical form

With the help of these elements, the classroom can be converted into an engaging and useful setting for escape room dynamics. Among them, take note:

- Small boxes, chests, padlocks, and envelopes will be used to hold hints, puzzles, or "treasures" that the student must find.
- Pictures, sculptures, and artefacts related to every historical era (such as Queen Victoria's portraits, antiquated scientific artefacts, theatrical costumes, wine bottles, or concert tickets).
- Paper, scissors, markers, sticky film, and post-its are common teaching tools used to create and complete written or visual assessments.
- Examples of actual or simulated objects from each historical setting that aid in scene reconstruction include a cardboard microphone, a crown, a compass, a toy telescope, etc.

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Digital resources

The use of technology is crucial in bringing diversity and energy to the educational process.

- The sessions and historical contexts are introduced using interactive presentations (PowerPoint, Genially, Canva).
- The setting for oral comprehension exercises is created by carefully chosen audio and video, such as Beatles songs, interviews, or scenes from plays.
- Tablets or classroom phones can access digital keys with QR codes, which offer instructions or answers.
- To incorporate gamified tests with immediate retro feedback, online games or interactive formulas (like Google Forms, Kahoot, or Wordwall) are used.
- Teams use collaborative documents, such as Padlet or Google Docs, to record their progress, generate content, and share solutions.

Resources developed by the teacher

The design of the assignments requires the development of materials that are specific to the linguistic objectives and proficiency level of the students. Examples include:

- English-language puzzles and riddles that are tailored to the student's proficiency and the subject matter (e.g., crosswords, anagrams, riddles, maps with hints, etc.).
- Vocabulary target sheets that help students comprehend and apply the terms specific to each session by providing definitions and examples.
- Dramatic rules modified for the dramatizations (e.g., Shakespearean passages simplified).
- Instructions for each game or group activity, including missions, role-playing sheets, and game instructions.

When combined, these materials give the project coherence and diversity while also promoting student engagement and the growth of critical thinking abilities through a contextualised, ludic, and meaningful approach. The project can be altered for use in subsequent classes or with various student groups because the materials are made to be practical, easily accessible, and reusable.

5.5. Justification of the Innovation

The way that foreign language instruction is conducted in the current educational environment, which is characterised by an increasing need for inclusive, dynamic, and inclusive approaches that are adapted to the students' sociocultural and technological realities, must be considered. The Time Machine: Escape Room project is a direct response to these demands, combining pedagogical, technological, and methodological components that make it a highly innovative proposal in the field of elementary school English language instruction as a foreign language.

This design's methodological focus is its primary innovative contribution. This proposal is based on a combination of project-based learning (PBL), gamification, collaborative learning, and the use of immersive technologies like virtual reality and holograms, as opposed to traditional methods that emphasise content transmission and mechanical repetition of language structures. This approach not only fosters students' natural drive but also facilitates their acquisition of the language in a contextualised and meaningful way, allowing them to interact with the material in a genuine, imaginative, and emotionally invested way.

Gamification, which is the use of game dynamics and elements in educational contexts, is the central idea of the proposal. The narrative structure of the escape room turns learning into a group adventure where students must use functional English to solve puzzles and overcome obstacles because of its tension, increasing challenges, and ultimate goal. This instructional scenario simulates authentic communication scenarios in which language is used as a tool for decision-making and problem-solving.

By fusing digital and physical materials in a multisensory and flexible setting, the project demonstrates resource innovation. Emerging technologies (QR codes, interactive resources, digital presentations, virtual reality) complement the use of manipulative objects (padlocks, boxes, tracks, maps) and symbolic elements specific to each historical context, resulting in a learning environment that stimulates different forms of intelligence (Gardner, 1993) and learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, logical). This abundance of formats promotes a truly inclusive and individualised education by improving student focus, comprehension, and active participation.

From the standpoint of diversity awareness, The Time Machine: Escape Room conforms to the Universal Design for Education (UDL) principles while accommodating the diverse group-class characteristics through innovative proposals that provide for a variety of methods to access, represent, and express knowledge. In order to promote equity and educational success

for all students, including those with specific educational support needs, the activities are designed to consider different levels of difficulty and multiple paths to resolution.

In terms of interdisciplinarity, the proposal also exhibits innovation. By fusing literature, science, history, and music into a single story in which English serves as a vehicle language, the project defies the conventional division of knowledge. This curriculum integration supports the transfer of knowledge between subjects, promotes systematic thinking, and cultivates a more complex and interconnected view of reality—all of which are in line with the LOMLOE's recommendations regarding critical competencies and competitive learning.

Both English communication skills and cross-cutting abilities that are crucial in the twenty-first century, like critical thinking, creativity, time management, problem solving, teamwork, and digital literacy, have shown significant growth in terms of their influence on learning. The project's cultural component also facilitates intercultural and critical education by situating each unit within a particular historical era (Victorian Era, Scientific Revolution, Elizabethan theatre, the 1960s), encouraging students to appreciate diversity and consider the past as crucial to comprehending the present.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that The Time Machine: Escape Room satisfies the evaluation criteria and operational descriptions established for the English language content in the first year of Secondary Education, thus fully adhering to the Junta de Andalucía's official curriculum. The plan encourages a substantial change in conventional teaching methods while guaranteeing the curriculum's sustainability and alignment with the objectives of the educational system.

In conclusion, the project is an obvious attempt to develop more inclusive, motivating, engaging, and practically relevant education. It has the capacity to change the classroom into a place of inquiry, production, and introspection where learning English becomes a significant and fulfilling experience that goes beyond the classroom and supports students' overall growth as critical, self-reliant, and ecologically conscious people.

6. Attention to diversity

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A cross-cutting and crucial component of the planning and implementation of the educational innovation project "The Time Machine: Escape Room" is the emphasis on diversity. This project is predicated on the idea that inclusive education seeks to guarantee students' authentic engagement, sense of belonging, and meaningful learning regardless of their personal, social, academic, or emotional circumstances. This aligns with the educational principles advocated by the LOMLOE. It aims for more than just the physical integration of students into the typical classroom. In order to create a flexible, equitable, and thoughtful plan that takes into account the diversity of the students, this point of view requires a deep comprehension of the group-class reality.

Support and learning customisation are more crucial because the project is targeted at students in the first year of compulsory secondary education, which is marked by a wide range of profiles and a transition between primary and secondary education. The group-class that this proposal is intended for has a variety of student types that need special attention. Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which is characterised by impulsivity, difficulty maintaining focus, and occasionally hyperactivity, as well as students with level 1 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), which can include cognitive rigidity, hypersensitivity to specific stimuli, difficulty understanding key social concepts, and special needs in terms of temporal and communicative structure, are among these.

Similarly, there are intelligent students who are very creative, have high processing speeds, high cognitive agility, and a constant need for challenges to keep them from becoming demotivated because their abilities are underestimated. Conversely, there are repeat students, many of whom have a history of poor academic experiences that have resulted in low academic self-esteem, a lack of interest in assignments, and defensive behaviour during assessments. It is also recognised that some students have reading or listening difficulties without a specific diagnosis, as well as barriers brought on by complicated social and familiar situations, like the disorderly family environment, the parents' low educational attainment, or a lack of technology in the home. Students with low English proficiency, which may be the consequence of inconsistent previous curricula or a late entry into the educational system, serve as examples of this reality.

Because of this, the project is organised using a flexible and dynamic methodology that is founded on Project-Based Learning (PBL), gamification, cooperative learning, and the utilisation of cutting-edge technologies such as interactive resources or virtual reality. From their perspective and with the possibility of success, these techniques allow every student to engage in active, meaningful, and emotionally invested participation. Diversifying tasks, each with varying degrees of complexity and the potential to be solved using multiple intelligences and cognitive styles, is one of the adaptive strategies taken into consideration to accomplish this. The use of visual aids, written instructions, pictograms, and manipulative materials is crucial for students who require a visual aid to comprehend the material, such as those with attention disorders or ASD.

In terms of work organisation, diverse cooperative groups are established, with each alumnus or alumna taking on a particular role according to their areas of expertise (e.g., coordinator, spokesperson, editor, writer, researcher, creative, etc.). Through the development of self-

esteem, efficiency, and positive interdependence, this distribution fosters genuine inclusion by allowing all participants to contribute to the final product from their respective capacities. Visual aids are used to give clear, sequential, and reinforced instructions; prior to the start of activities, individual comprehension is assessed, and repetition is done as needed. For students who have trouble controlling their emotions, routines and preset structures are also introduced to promote self-control and reduce anxiety.

Functionality and accessibility were given top priority in the design of the materials. Digital resources (interactive presentations, videos, pictures with QR codes, and online gamified activities) are combined with physical resources (real objects, maps, pictures, and customs) to respond to different sensory entry channels. Students who struggle with reading or vision can benefit from the use of applications such as textual lecturers or auditory assistance during instruction. Furthermore, without altering the learning objective, the possibility of changing the texts—for example, by making them shorter, using simpler language, or adding visual aids—is taken into consideration.

A variety of modified tools, including checklists, observation scales, differentiated rubrics, learning diaries, and guided self-evaluations, are employed from an evaluation standpoint. This diversity enables the process, participation, effort, and tactics employed to be valued in addition to the finished goods. Peer co-evaluation is suggested as a means of encouraging metacognition and shared responsibility. Conversely, the instructor acts as an observer and facilitator, offering continuous, personalised, and improvement-oriented retro feedback. Instead of merely confirming knowledge, evaluation seeks to promote intellectual, social, and personal development.

Another crucial course of action is teacher coordination. A team is formed to share relevant information about the student, adjust access measures, and help with non-significant adaptations in conjunction with the orientation team and other centre teachers. This partnership also reaches the family level, promoting informational sessions and open channels of communication with families, especially regarding students in vulnerable circumstances or with Specific Educational Support Needs (SEN).

The project draws attention to the classroom environment from a socioemotional perspective by promoting empathy, active listening, positive relationships, established norms, and peaceful conflict resolution. The escape room's storyline, which combines elements of mystery, retaliation, and teamwork, inspires intrinsic motivation and enables students to participate

organically, overcoming learning resistance. To help demotivated or low-self-esteem students regain a positive relationship with the school environment, strategies such as positive effort, celebrating accomplishments, and acknowledging individual efforts are recommended.

In conclusion, the educational proposal "The Time Machine: Escape Room" highlights diversity as a value and a motivator for learning. All of its organisational, methodological, material, and assessment choices are made with the goal of guaranteeing that every student, without exception, finds a vital space for growth, enjoys the educational process, and discovers their own abilities in a setting that values, accepts, and celebrates diversity. In this way, inclusion is the pedagogical core and rationale of the project rather than an addition to its design.

7. Project evaluation

Evaluation is a crucial part of this educational innovation project because it allows for the assessment of the planned activities' actual impact and suitability for the group-class characteristics, in addition to determining whether the suggested goals have been met. The evaluation process makes it feasible to learn more about the content learnt, pinpoint areas in need of development, alter the proposal, and improve instructional strategies from a transformative and reflective perspective.

The chosen evaluation techniques meet the need for an ongoing, worldwide perspective of the teaching-learning process. Both formative and summative evaluation methods are employed, and they are both in line with the broad and detailed objectives stated in this TFM.

The formative assessment is carried out at every stage of the project's development, enabling ongoing tracking of students' development, engagement, and participation levels as well as any potential problems. As the classroom is diverse, with students with different levels of motivation, specific educational needs, and English proficiency, this kind of assessment is particularly useful in tailoring the activities to the group's actual needs and guaranteeing inclusion.

On the other hand, the summative assessment is completed after the project is finished. Its goal is to evaluate the proposal's overall effects on students' perceptions of the experience, skills they have learnt, and competencies they have developed. The collection of thorough, contextualised, and pedagogically significant data is made possible by this dual approach, which spans the entire process and ends with a final evaluation.

Furthermore, self-evaluation and co-evaluation techniques are included since they are thought to be crucial for encouraging critical thinking, self-control, and learning accountability. These tactics improve students' engagement and awareness of their own learning process in addition to fostering the growth of autonomy.

As previously stated, the evaluation is ongoing throughout the project's two sessions, which are divided into four progressive phases. This method supports wise pedagogical decision-making and makes it easier to collect evidence in real time. In the final session, a complementary final evaluation is used to evaluate the learning gained and the products produced, as well as to promote group reflection on the experience.

An innovative and dynamic project, where it is necessary to evaluate both the process and the results, is ideally suited for this combination of ongoing and final evaluation.

The evaluation is carried out using a range of diverse and complementary tools, all of which are intended to be in line with the goals of the project, the selected methodology, and the traits of first-year Secondary Education students. Among the primary tools are:

- Observational criteria: These are used to assess things like group cooperation, task resolution, English communication, and participation. To guarantee inclusivity, the rubrics are modified for different performance levels.

- Self-assessment questions: Every student considers their participation, educational experiences, and the abilities they have acquired throughout the project. Metacognition and the application of knowledge to the actual learning process are promoted by this kind of tool.

- Checklists: These are used to record particular proof of language proficiency, vocabulary usage, oral comprehension, and task completion.

- Peer evaluation: Students evaluate their peers' and colleagues' contributions using co-evaluation dynamics. This tool encourages teamwork, empathy, and critical thinking.

- Group digital portfolio: Using collaborative tools like Padlet or Google Docs, each group gathers their responses to questions, works of art (cards, songs, texts), reflections, and documents created during the sessions. Both the process and the finished product are visible in this portfolio.

- Teacher field diary: Throughout the project, observations, incidents, necessary modifications, and pedagogical reflections are recorded. It facilitates the assessment of the project's development and provides methodical, reflective guidance for instructional practice.

Every tool has a connection to one or more particular goals. For example, the self-assessment questions relate to objective 6 (autonomy and time management); the checklists relate to objectives 3 and 4 (vocabulary and contextualised oral expression); and the portfolio and rubrics are particularly related to objectives 1, 2, and 5 (development of linguistic competencies, cooperation, and motivation).

It is thought to be crucial to evaluate the project itself in addition to the students. The appropriateness of the activities, the degree of goal achievement, the students' acceptance of the proposal, and the difficulties faced are all examined for this purpose. This assessment uses the previously mentioned resources in addition to a quick, anonymous last question that lets students share their thoughts about the experience. This makes it feasible to pinpoint areas that need work and modify the proposal for upcoming executions.

Finally, in accordance with the guiding principles, this project is assessed globally, inclusively, and participatorily. Finding out what students have learnt, how they have learnt it, how much they have learnt, and how the experience has affected their academic, social, and personal growth are all part of the objective. This all-encompassing strategy encourages continuous enhancement of instructional strategies and makes education more inventive, relevant, and meaningful.

7.1. Evaluation of the Innovation Project

The Time Machine: Escape Room project's potential as a methodologically innovative tool for teaching English as a foreign language has become evident since it was implemented in a first-year compulsory secondary education classroom. The design places the student at the centre of the educational process and empowers them to be active agents of their own learning through a combination of project-based learning (PBL), gamification, collaboration, and emerging technologies. Nevertheless, a detailed examination of its implementation also makes it possible to pinpoint some flaws and potential areas for development that ought to be considered for upcoming uses.

The project is generally designed to meet the developmental profile of the first-year student enrolled in compulsory secondary education. This student is in a cognitive development stage characterised by a high degree of linguistic responsiveness, a need for a variety of stimuli, and a preference for participatory dynamics. Utilising these attributes, the proposal immerses the student in a variety of historical periods and the cooperatively solved communicative conundrums. This method effectively raises motivation and reduces anxiety associated with using English by situating language acquisition in a context that is emotionally engaging and meaningful.

The project also has a well-organised plan with two sessions and four phases, which enables a smooth transition from introduction to assessment. In order to facilitate a seamless transition to increasingly difficult tasks, the initial sessions concentrate on the gradual acquisition of language and the structures needed to meet the challenges. Oral and written comprehension, puzzle solving, material creation, dramatization, and object search are just a few of the diverse activities that estimate different learning pathways and promote the inclusion of students with different skills, cognitive styles, or levels of linguistic competency.

But because of the project's complexity, there are also a lot of methodological and organisational requirements that need to be considered. First and foremost, especially in centres without extra assistance or prior experience in active methodologies, the coordination of cooperative tasks, the environment of the spaces, and the preparation of materials constitute a substantial workload for the instructor. One possible remedy might be the development of a bank of reusable materials and standard resources, as well as the addition of a thorough didactic guide that facilitates replication by other educators.

However, it has been noted that if the group moves quickly or the instructions are not explained clearly, some students who struggle with attention, lack autonomy, or have poor language skills may feel overburdened. More visual aids, step-by-step instructions, regular routines, and group revision times in between stages would therefore be prudent. Intermediate consolidation sessions could also be helpful, especially to reinforce language acquisition prior to the last challenges in the escape room.

In terms of temporalization, despite the project's two sessions, experience has shown that some tasks—like preparing for a presentation or resolving group tests—take longer than expected. Processes are often slowed down by cooperative learning dynamics, such as role-sharing, negotiation, and conflict resolution, particularly in groups that are unfamiliar with this kind of

work. Therefore, cutting the length of some necessary tasks or, at the very least, suggesting shorter and modified versions for circumstances with less hourly availability would be a workable improvement.

The mixed evaluation method, which incorporates observation, self-evaluation, co-evaluation, and a digital portfolio, is pertinent and aligned with the objectives of the project. However, it would be intriguing to add more precise indicators to these tools so that the actual development of communication skills and the transference of the learnt vocabulary to natural language use can be assessed. The evaluator's ludic and motivating dimension could also be strengthened by employing symbols, achievements, or a visual retro feedback system.

In terms of interdisciplinarity, the project is successful because it integrates aspects of history, science, literature, and music, which enhances and contextualises the educational process. However, it is recommended that additional work be done in conjunction with the orientation team and instructors from other fields in order to enhance the content and pay better attention to diversity. Involving families can also help strengthen the ties between the community and the school, especially when it comes to investigative or final presentation tasks.

To sum up, The Time Machine: Escape Room is a creative, engaging, and 21st-century educational approach. Because it effectively and contextually channels their energy, creativity, and need for interaction towards English language learning, it is particularly well-suited for first-year students enrolled in Compulsory Secondary Education. However, effective implementation calls for meticulous preparation, flexible scheduling of time and resources, and a practical, inclusive strategy that considers the diversity of the classroom. This project has the potential to become a potent, replicable, and transformative tool within the foreign language curriculum with a few minor organisational and methodological adjustments.

8. Contribution to the SDGs

Since the start of this educational innovation project, efforts have been made to make sure that its focus not only addresses the curriculum goals in the field of English language learning but also aligns with the values and principles outlined in Agenda 2030 of the United Nations. In particular, The Time Machine: Escape Room contributes in a concrete and justifiable way to a few of the Sustainable Development Goals (ODS), which are believed to be crucial for creating an education that is transformative, equitable, and focused on human development.

The following ODS are directly impacted by this project:

- ODS 4: Quality Education.
- ODS 5: Gender Equality.
- ODS 10: Mitigation of Disparities.
- ODS 16: Justice, peace, and solid institutions.

Because the project promotes an inclusive, creative, and competitive approach to English language learning, its relationship to ODS 4 (quality education) is especially evident. All students, regardless of their motivation, competitiveness, or educational needs, are provided with meaningful learning opportunities through a methodology that is founded on project-based learning, gamification, and cooperative work. While following the Universal Design for Education (DUA) principles and guaranteeing equitable and active participation in the process, the tasks are adapted to different learning styles and speeds.

On the other hand, the proposal supports gender equality from a transversal standpoint (ODS 5). Equal role sharing in collaborative teams, equal participation by men and women, and the visibility of historical female figures like Queen Victoria or female scientists and artists are all encouraged by the activities. In this sense, it promotes the growth of a critical awareness of gender stereotypes and fortifies female leadership in the classroom.

Finally, by incorporating components that promote contemplation on history, social conflicts, inequality, and human rights, The Time Machine: Escape Room also supports ODS 16 (peace, justice, and solid institutions). Students gain a critical mindset that helps them comprehend social reality and actively contribute to its transformation through the various historical periods that are covered, including the Scientific Revolution, the Victorian Era, the 1960s, and the Elizabethan Theatre. Cooperative dynamics, conflict resolution, and debate all subtly reflect a culture of peace and respect for one another.

Increased learning motivation, improved English communication abilities, and students' active engagement in relevant contexts are some of the project's immediate outcomes. Learning processes benefit from the approach's encouragement of increased emotional and cognitive engagement.

The project is thought to have the potential to support the development of a critical, inclusive, and participatory school culture in the medium and long term. Both students' academic development and their growth as citizens committed to social justice, equity, and global sustainability are enhanced when ODS is incorporated into educational practices. Instead of

being a stand-alone intervention, the proposal is meant to be a seed that can be copied, altered, and expanded in other educational contexts with the same transformative spirit.

9. Conclusions

The Time Machine: Escape Room project has given us a chance to think carefully about the opportunities and difficulties of teaching English as a foreign language in the context of secondary education. The main issue handled during the planning and creation of this creative proposal was how to make learning English a purposeful, welcoming, and inspiring experience that fits with students' actual interests and promotes the all-around growth of their abilities.

By carrying out this project, the goal is to accomplish a number of results that are directly tied to the original goals that were established. The proposal is anticipated to enhance communicative competence in English, specifically in the areas of oral comprehension, verbal production in real-world situations, and the practical application of language to resolve challenging issues. The escape room's gamified and narrative style facilitates meaningful language acquisition by allowing the use of the target language in intentional contexts.

Furthermore, it is expected that the project may have a positive effect on students' motivation and engagement because it is based on active learning, teamwork, and problem-solving. By putting students at the centre of their own learning, this method may improve self-esteem, independence, and classroom participation while also encouraging a more positive attitude towards English.

Additionally, by providing a variety of participation options, varying degrees of difficulty, and resources catered to classroom diversity, the proposal is designed to facilitate the development of a more inclusive learning environment. In this sense, the project aims to provide an equitable and individualised educational response by helping both high-achieving students and those who face barriers to learning or participation.

Furthermore, the proposal has the potential to revolutionise bilingual education by incorporating literature, science, history, and music from an interdisciplinary standpoint into the framework of English language instruction. In addition to enhancing language instruction, this interdisciplinary approach transforms the classroom into a setting for critical thinking, creativity, and practical application.

The project's design phase has emphasised how crucial it is to plan educational proposals thoroughly, considering students' linguistic skills, interests, emotional needs, and learning

preferences. By going beyond conventional educational boundaries, the escape room methodology has shown new approaches to teaching languages through play, emotion, and collaboration.

It has also been acknowledged that educational innovation is inherently complex, especially when it comes to the difficulties in addressing interdisciplinarity, inclusion, and the integration of emerging technologies. To ensure that these activities are interesting, accessible, and in line with curriculum objectives, their implementation calls for a great deal of preparation, ingenuity, and adaptability. This experience has strengthened the understanding of educators' roles as cultural mediators, critical thinking facilitators, and learning experience designers.

Even though the project has a strong foundation, some elements might be improved or changed for subsequent iterations. For example, since problem-solving may take longer than expected, it might be wise to extend the length of some sessions to better accommodate the working pace of diverse student groups.

Furthermore, adding a more gamified assessment system with badges or achievements could reinforce the project's ludic element and offer prompt, inspiring feedback. To improve the multisensory learning experience, it is also worthwhile to think about adding more interactive digital content, like immersive videos or collaborative platforms.

In order to more accurately modify materials for students with particular educational needs while maintaining the project's coherence, tighter cooperation with the guidance department and other educational specialists would be advantageous.

This proposal is highly anticipated as a component of future secondary education and bilingual teaching practices. Current issues in education, such as demotivation, curriculum fragmentation, learning homogenisation, and limited real-world application of learnt material, are thought to be effectively addressed by strategies like gamification, task-based learning, and interdisciplinary approaches.

The ongoing development of such proposals is intended to result in flexible and adaptable models for various educational contexts, materials, and student levels rather than the production of final products. The goal of this project is to lay the groundwork for upcoming studies or creative endeavours that use digital narratives, augmented reality, or escape rooms in language learning.

In the end, this experience strengthens the conviction that it is feasible to turn the classroom into a dynamic, inclusive, and authentic learning environment by paying close attention to

students, incorporating cutting-edge pedagogical techniques, and creating proposals that address present and future educational needs.
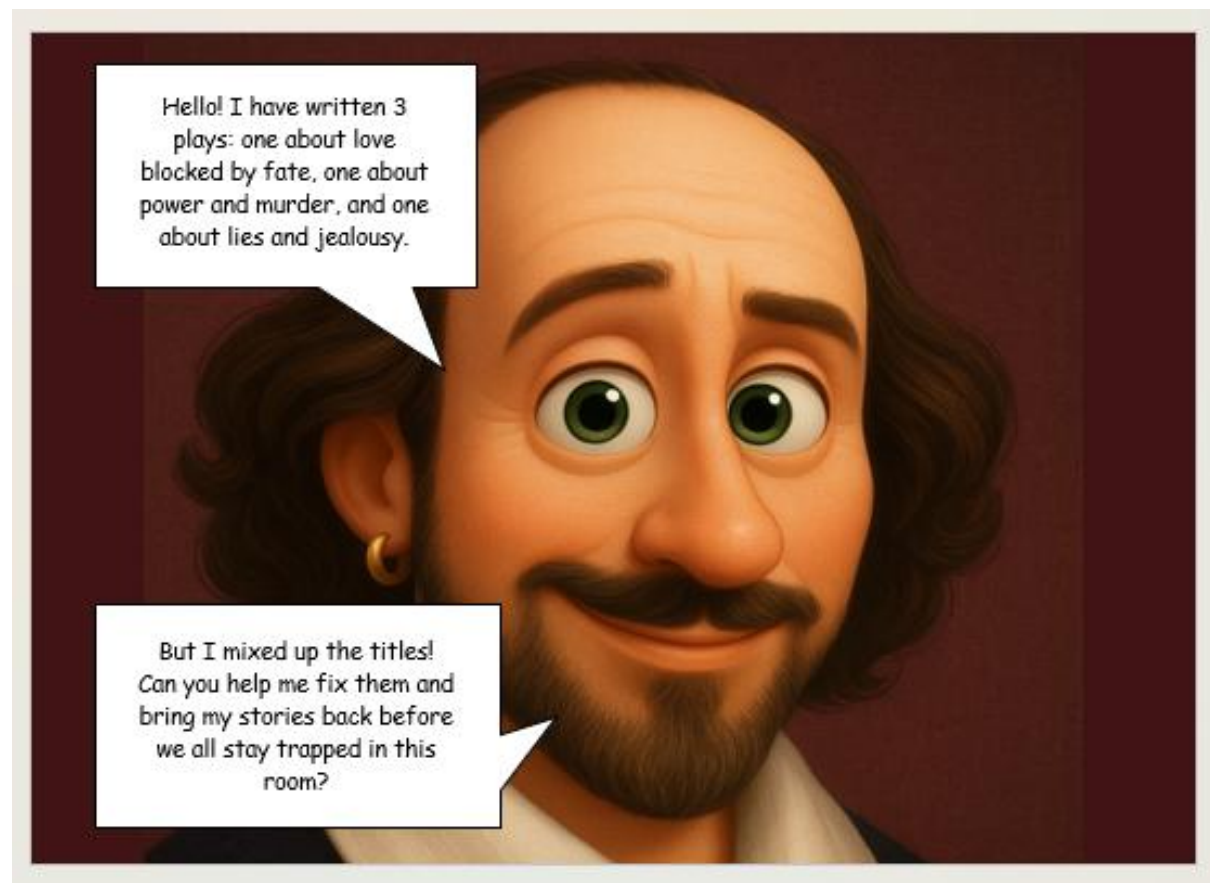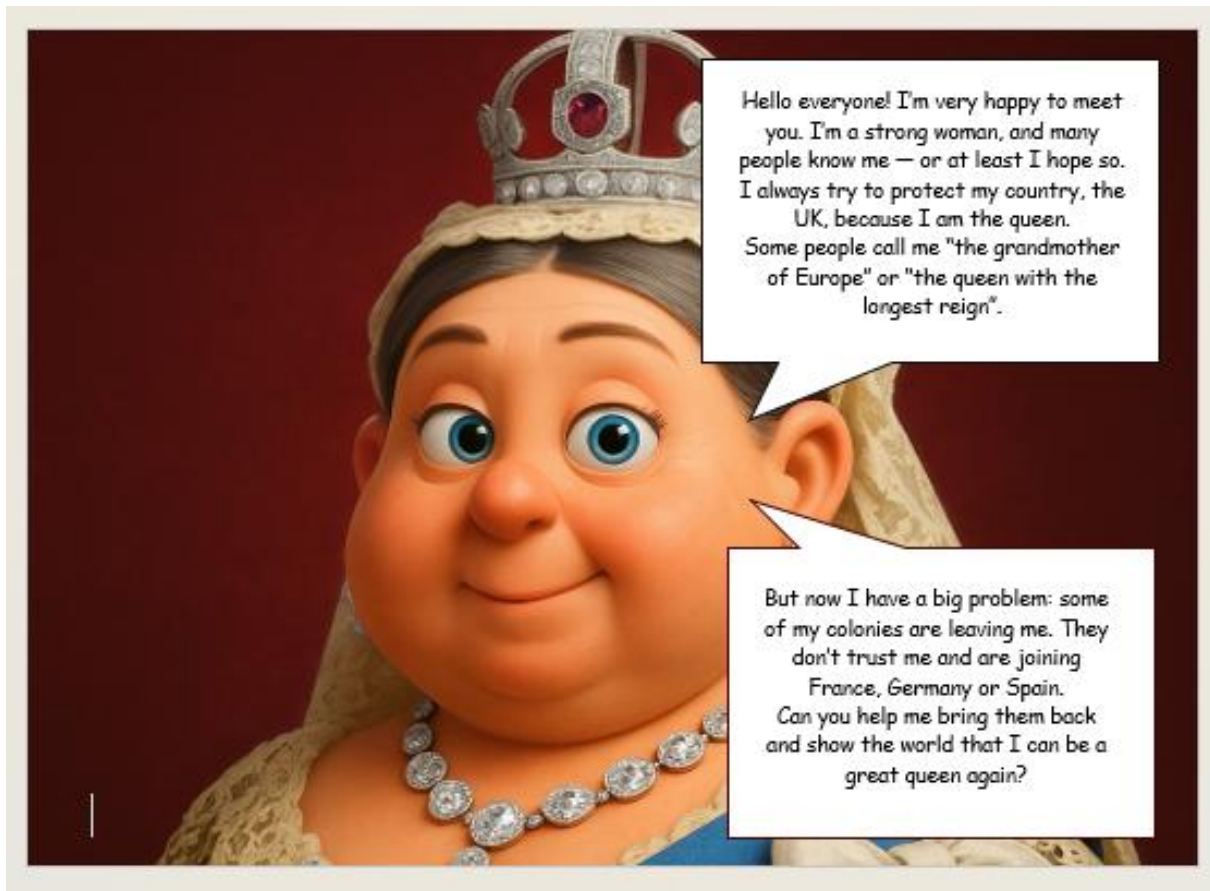
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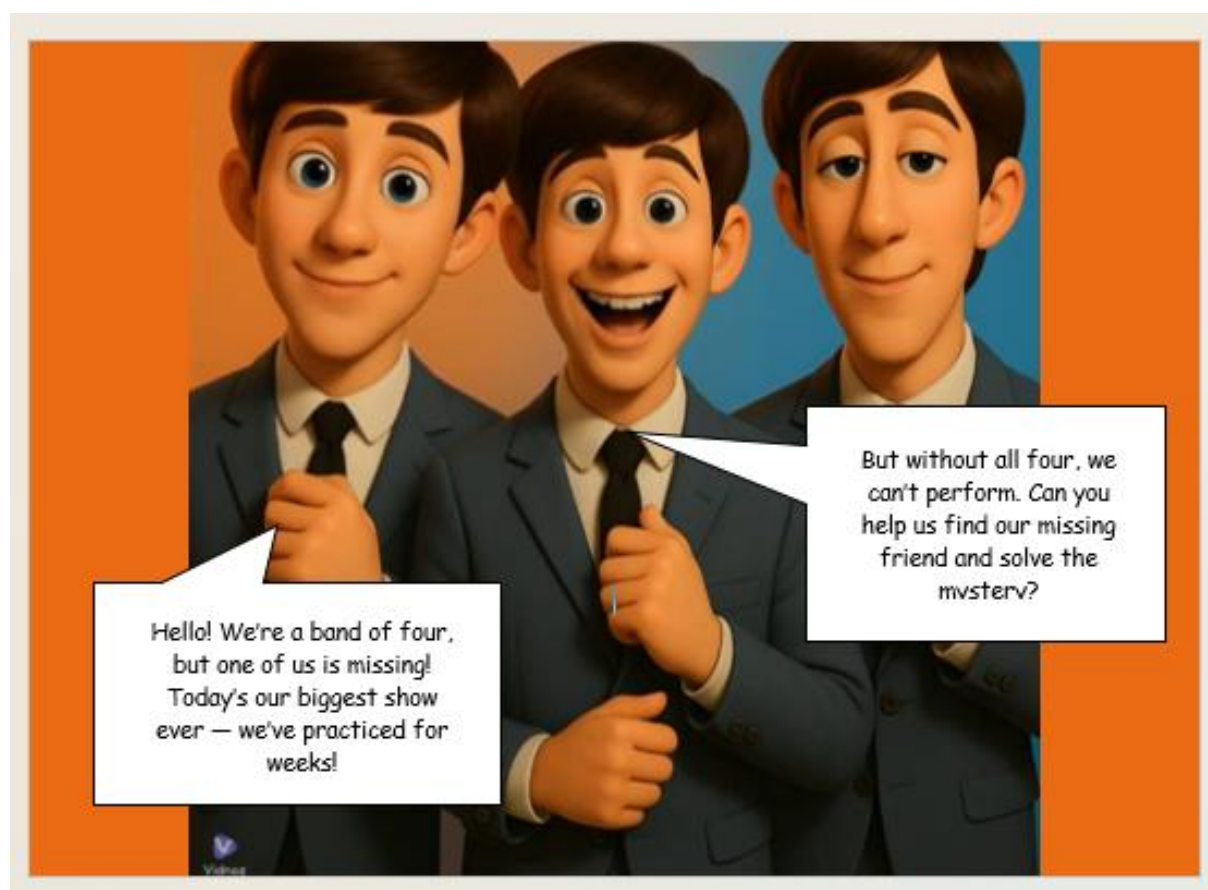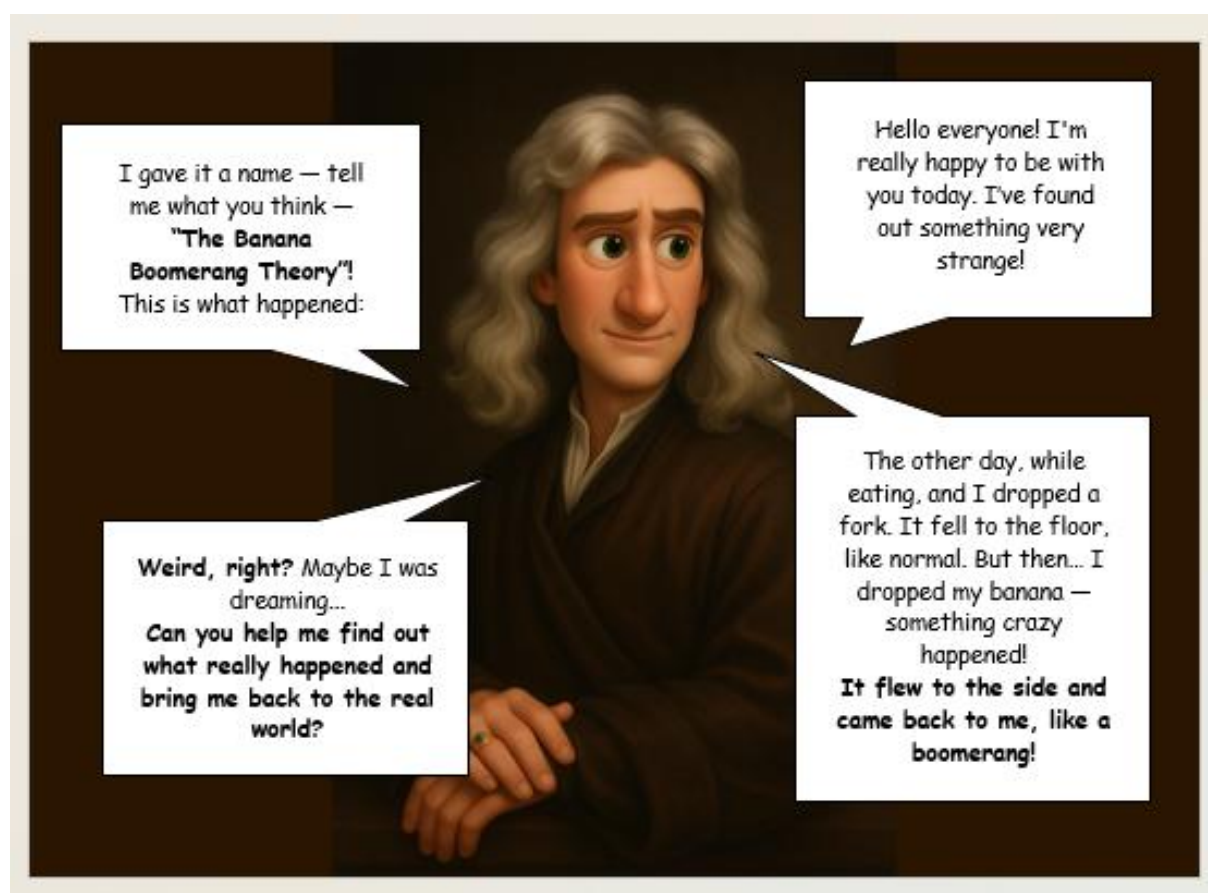Educaplay. (n.d.). Educaplay: Create educational games. Retrieved May 20, 2025, from https://www.educaplay.com/

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Annexes

Dialogues of the characters in the escape room' videos.

Hello everyone! I'm very happy to meet you. I'm a strong woman, and many people know me — or at least I hope so. I always try to protect my country, the UK, because I am the queen.
Some people call me "the grandmother of Europe" or "the queen with the longest reign".

But now I have a big problem: some of my colonies are leaving me. They don't trust me and are joining France, Germany or Spain.
Can you help me bring them back and show the world that I can be a great queen again?

Hello! I have written 3 plays: one about love blocked by fate, one about power and murder, and one about lies and jealousy.

But I mixed up the titles! Can you help me fix them and bring my stories back before we all stay trapped in this room?

Queen Victoria I of England Escape Room Trials

Test 1: Find out who the character that appears in the video is.

Test 2: Discover what is happening, the event described in the video.

I am Queen Victoria of England. Some of my colonies are leaving my empire. They want to be free and join countries like Spain, Italy, Germany, or France. I am not happy! These colonies want to leave me:

1. 9 - 14 - 4 - 9 - 1

2. 3 - 1 - 14 - 1 - 4 - 1

3. 11 - 5 - 14 - 25 - 1

4. 19 - 15 - 21 - 20 - 81 - 6 - 18 - 9 - 3 - 1

5. 1 - 21 - 19 - 20 - 18 - 1 - 12 - 9 - 1

Please, help me decode them!

Hint: Every number is its letter in the alphabet.

Test 3: Discover the century in which the escape room is based.

Now you must find out the century of the event that was mentioned in the video.

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				-							
				-							
				-							
				-							
				-							
				-							

Test 4: Give 5 tips to the character to avoid losing more colonies.

Now, for this challenge, you have to give to the character that appeared in the video, 5 tips to avoid losing any more colonies and to recover the ones he had.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Test 5: Solve the puzzle to discover the real information.

Queen Victoria and the British Empire

Queen Victoria was the queen of the United Kingdom from 1837 to 1901. She became queen when she was only 18 years old. Her reign lasted for 63 years, which was one of the longest in British history.

During her time as queen, the United Kingdom became very powerful. This period is called the **Victorian Era**. It was a time of great change. There were new inventions, trains, factories, and big cities. Life was changing quickly for many people.

Queen Victoria was also the head of a large empire. The **British Empire** had many colonies around the world. These colonies were in places like India, Canada, Australia, Africa, and the Caribbean. People said, "The sun never sets on the British Empire," because it was so big that it was always daytime in some part of it.

Even though the empire brought money and power to Britain, it was not always good for the people in the colonies. They often lost their land and were forced to follow British rules.

Queen Victoria died in 1901. She is still remembered today as a symbol of a strong and powerful time in British history.

The Beatles Escape Room Trials

Test 1: Discover the characters of the story.

Test 2: Match some concepts with their definitions.

Test 3: Discover the century in which the escape room is based.

Now you must find out the century of the event that was mentioned in the video.

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				-							
				-							
				-							

Test 4: Unscramble the letters to get the information.

Now, you have to unscramble the text to have the information and know what has happened.

Oh no!

Grgeoe Rrhsoina has disappeared!

A bad group with this logo has kidnapped him.

They took him from *vrelilpool* to the capital of the UK...!

Test 5: Solve the puzzle to discover the real information.

The Beatles' Rooftop Concert

On January 30th, 1969, The Beatles played a special concert. It was their last live performance together. The concert was on the roof of a building in London. The building was the office of their company, Apple Records.

The Beatles played five songs. Some songs were: *Get Back, Don't Let Me Down*, and *I've Got a Feeling*. People in the street looked up and listened. Some were surprised and happy. Others didn't know what was happening.

The police came and asked them to stop. The music was very loud, and the police said it was a problem. After 42 minutes, the concert finished.

The rooftop concert is very famous. It was something different and fun. Many people remember it as a great moment in music history.

Sir Isaac Newton Escape Room Trials

Test 1: Unscramble the letters to know the name of the character in the video.

Test 2: Answer the question by looking at the images.

Test 3: Discover the century in which the escape room is based.

Now you must find out the century of the event that was mentioned in the video.

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				-							
				-							
				-							

Test 4: Identify the truth among the lies.

Now, for this challenge, you have to discover the truth among the lies.

1. Newton pensaba que la gravedad solo funcionaba de día.

2. Newton fue el primero en explicar por qué los objetos caen al suelo.

3. Newton creó la gravedad usando imanes secretos.

Test 5: Solve the puzzle to discover the real information.

Newton's Theory of Gravity

A long time ago, a man named Isaac Newton made an important discovery. He was thinking about why things fall to the ground. One day, he saw an apple fall from a tree, and he started to wonder: *Why did the apple fall down?*

Newton realized that there is a force that pulls everything toward the Earth. This force is called gravity.

Gravity is what keeps us on the ground. It also makes things fall when we drop them. Without gravity, we would float in the air, like astronauts in space!

Newton's theory says that all objects with mass pull on each other. That means the Earth pulls on the Moon, and the Moon pulls on the Earth too! Gravity is stronger when objects are heavier or closer together.

Thanks to Newton, we understand why planets move around the Sun and why we don't fly off into space. His theory helps scientists study space, build rockets, and understand how the universe works.

William Shakespeare Escape Room Trials

Test 1: Solve the crucigram about the character of the video and his plays.

Test 2: Match the plays written by the character with their synopsis.

Test 3: Discover the century in which the escape room is based.

Now you must find out the century of the event that was mentioned in the video.

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				-							

Test 4: Give to the character of the video 5 tips for the premiere of his plays.

Now, for this challenge, you have to give to the character that appeared in the video, 5 tips for the premiere of his plays.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Test 5: Solve the puzzle to discover the real information.

William Shakespeare and His Famous Plays

William Shakespeare was a great English writer. He was born in 1564 and died in 1616. He wrote many famous plays. Three of his most important plays are *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*.

Romeo and Juliet is a love story. It is about two young people who fall in love, but their families are enemies. The play is very sad. It was first performed in 1597.

Hamlet is a tragedy. It is about a prince called Hamlet. He wants to take revenge because his uncle killed his father. The play was first performed around 1600. It is one of Shakespeare's longest plays.

Othello is also a tragedy. Othello is a soldier. He marries a woman called Desdemona. But a bad man, Iago, tells lies and makes Othello very jealous. The play was first performed in 1604.

These plays are very famous and are still performed today. Shakespeare's stories are full of emotions like love, sadness, anger, and jealousy.