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**Lesson on Modifying Games**

Big Ideas for this lesson	Guiding Questions	Recommended Games
Games can be modified by making a change to one or more of its elements.	How do rules organize a game?  How do core mechanics and game space work together to create an experience of play?	Dominoes  Hopscotch  Scrabble

**What's on for today:**

Game designers often learn about games by modifying them. This might involve changing a rule or adding a new element to the game. In this lesson, students will explore how changing a rule can change the play of a game.

**What you need:**

- One copy of "Rule modification worksheet" per student
- One copy of "Presentation worksheet" per student

**What's attached:**

- Rule modification worksheet
- Presentation worksheet

**Pacing:**

- Total: 1 hour
- Play - 15 minutes
- Design - 15 minutes
- Circle Up - 30 minutes

**Lesson**

**Play 15 minutes**

The goal of the activity is to allow students to experience how different elements of a game can be modified to change its play. The more examples that come out of the activity, the better!

1. Have students play a group of non-digital games that have a simple set of rules. Choose a set of games that your class is already familiar with and ones that can be easily modified, either by making a change to a rule or to the materials used in the game. For example, Scrabble is a good choice because a simple change to a rule can radically alter play: adding a 26th letter to the game, for example, is an easy modification. On the other hand, Sorry is a game with an overcomplicated set

of rules for this activity, and is hard to physically modify. Other good choices include: Rock-Paper-Scissors, Hopscotch, Dominoes, and card games like Blackjack or War.

2. This activity is best done in small groups. Divide the class into teams of a size appropriate to the games being played. Feel free to choose a number of different games for the different groups to play.

**Design 15 minutes**

1. Challenge each team of students to come up with 2-3 new ways to play the game they have been assigned by doing one or more of the following:
  - a. Change one rule.
  - b. Change a material used to play the game.
  - c. Change the core mechanic, or play pattern of the game. For example, if the play pattern of Scrabble is building words, propose the play pattern to building towers of letters.

2. Ask them to document their changes using the worksheet provided. Encourage students to keep track of modifications that worked, modifications that "broke" the game, and those that didn't

- [Laws of the Jungle](#)
- [They're Quite a Pair!](#)
- [Wave Craze](#)
- [A Fine Balance](#)
- [A Thank You Gift](#)
- [Recipe for Disaster](#)
- [The Slopes of Mount Everest](#)
- [A Board Game Surprise](#)
- [Game Mechanics Revolt](#)

**Challenge Cards**

**Resources**

- [Creating Content for Classes](#)
- [Classroom Set Up](#)
- [Premium Teacher Features](#)
- [Optional Reading Resources](#)
- [Assessment](#)
- [Quest Guide](#)
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**The Team behind [Gamestar](#)**

seem to make much of a difference.

3. Emphasize the six core elements of game design—Components, Space, Rules, Goal, Core Mechanics, and Choice—to give students practice with this vocabulary in the context of this design activity.

**Circle Up**  
**30 minutes**

1. Have your class present their games to each other. You can use either a science fair model where students rotate from group to group playing each others games, or a presentation model, where each group presents their modified games to the whole class.
2. Ask the students to describe the play of the original game first, and then show the modifications they made in each category.
3. When presenting encourage the students think about the following:

- What kind of modification created the largest change in play? Why do you think this was the case?
- Did you have to change any of the other elements as a result? How did you know when to do this?
- Which new game was your favorite? Why? Do you think it is better than the original version? If so, why? If not, why not?
- What was challenging about this design activity?

**How did it go?**

Did students modify the game in ways that changed its play?

Did they gain an understanding of how rules in a game work?

**PREVIOUS**

**NEXT**



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