

Games in the classroom and the boardroom: How 'serious games' are helping us learn

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A team of researchers is encouraging us to swap textbooks for games, as they drive the application of games in learning, engagement and research.

Known as '[serious games](#)', these games are designed for more than just

entertainment. Ranging from digital applications to physical board games, they are developed for learning, [problem-solving](#), raising awareness, research, and stakeholder engagement—with potential in both schools and workplaces. A key application will be for educating people on sustainable development and climate change.

Experts leading in the field at the Universities of Warwick, Cardiff, York, and Sussex, have teamed up for this project, known as GamEngage, to help implement gaming across many sectors. They are bringing together serious game researchers, developers, and practitioners to explore new opportunities in using serious games.

The academics have put together a 'Serious Games Cookbook', which aims to support beginners in using and designing serious games by presenting a resource full of detailed guidance. The cookbook will support beginners who are new to the idea of serious games, especially those with specialist knowledge, who want to explore how to apply that knowledge within games.

The Cookbook addresses key considerations in using serious games, including establishing play goals, selecting the most suitable game for these goals, and facilitating gameplay within a session. It also discusses crucial aspects of serious game design, covering content and themes, mechanics, player engagement, and strategies for influencing attitudes.

Associate Professor of Global Sustainable Development, Dr. Feng Mao, University of Warwick, said, "The cookbook offers a practical guide to help beginners designing serious games, as an emerging and promising tool for learning, engagement, and research, especially in the context of [sustainable development](#) and [climate change](#)—though we hope it will also be applied more broadly too. We hope to inspire and empower the Cookbook's readers to meaningfully engage with serious games."

Dr. Katarzyna Stawarz, co-author of the Serious Games Cookbook and Senior Lecturer in Human-Computer Interaction at Cardiff University, added, "The Cookbook and its parts can also be used as a [research tool](#), for example as part of co-design workshops as it would help to engage general public with serious topics through the medium of game design: rather than playing games designed by others, they could explore topics important to them that could be introduced in future games or even inform other types of projects."

"We are hoping to encourage and help readers to explore the different ways in which games and [game design](#) could be used."

More information: Cookbook: publishing.warwick.ac.uk/index.../uwp/catalog/book/31

Provided by University of Warwick

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