Conflict Resolution Using Games

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I SHOULD GO TO

CONFLICT RESOLUTION
Today’s Schedule

1. Intro/Outline
2. Theoretical Foundation
3. Case Study
   a. Student Learning Outcomes
   b. Discussion prompts
   c. Sample Gameplay
   d. Discussion
4. Adapting for your campus needs
Theoretical Foundation
Kolb’s Learning Styles and Experiential Cycle

- **Concrete Experience**
  - Prior conflicts
  - Prior gameplay

- **Reflective Observation**
  - Discussion questions
  - Written reflections

- **Abstract Conceptualization**
  - Discussion questions
  - Definition writing

- **Active Experimentation**
  - Gameplay
  - Roleplays

(McLeod, 2017)
Dave Eng’s Lenses of Gameplay (Eng, 2017)

1. Built on Kolb’s foundation
2. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)
   a. Qualitative, based on experiences
   b. Seeks to understand how people make meaning of events
3. Found four themes around student’s making meaning of games
   a. Structure
   b. Self-Determination
   c. Social Interaction
   d. Strategic Reasoning
1. Applied Experiential Learning
   a. Gameplay, relationships, & Discussion → Knowledge generation
   b. Scaffolding low-risk to higher-risk experiences
   c. Malleability: Shift from “observer” to “participant” learning

2. Focused Approach
   a. Learning: Not testing mastery, but continual improvement & agency
   b. Person: Self-determination supported through communication
   c. Experimental: New ideas, meaning, and relationships built each play

3. Educational Gaming
   a. Socialization and bonding
   b. Flow state: Where challenge and skill maximize growth
   c. Tying game language and design to other topics
Why Board Games?

1. Familiar to students
2. Designed to be interesting and fun
3. Self contained
4. Accessible (Shout-out to “Meeple Like Us”)
5. No “content master” required
6. Students can purchase and play with friends or family
What questions so far?
Case Study:
RA Conflict Resolution Training

Items with “BTS” are “Behind The Scenes” and not included in the RA training.
Goal: Train leaders to use games as a shared experience to navigate conflicts and resolution

As a result of this workshop, you should be able to:

- Identify some of the root causes of conflict
- Identify at least 3 strategies for mediating conflict
- Determine when a game is useful for conflict resolution
- Identify at least 1 game useful for preventing or resolving conflicts
Outline

- Presentation (25 Minutes)
  - Discussion of conflict, what it looks like, and why it happens
  - Discussion of how conflict in games mirrors real-world conflict (or not)
  - Short discussion of a few game types, playtime, and “genre”
  - Discussion of ways to resolve conflict
- Play time (10-15 Minutes)
  - Brief overview of basic rules for game you’ll play
  - Break into groups of 6-8 and play a quick session of game provided
  - We will hover and discuss/answer questions
- Discuss and Debrief (20-25 Minutes)
  - What conflicts existed/came up, and how were they resolved?
  - When/How would you use this game with students?
  - What are some conflict resolution techniques you plan to use with students this year?
Part I: Conflict
BTS: 4 Discussion Questions

Reflection
Abstract Conceptualization

Main Goals: Define ‘conflict’, ID sources of conflict, ID mediation techniques
What is conflict?

BTS: Abstract Conceptualization
Memes used to break ice and prompt conversations

YOU THINK CONFLICT IS BAD
FALSE. IT'S NATURAL
Why does conflict happen?

BTS: Reflective Observation.

Spot to introduce themes/topics we will discuss in the “Games” portion.

“Miscommunication” is common on my campus, so I bring it up here.
What does conflict look like?

BTS: Reflective Observation and Abstract Conceptualization

Asking for examples of conflict can help students “stuck” on this one.

Good place to point out that WWII and passive-aggressive notes are both forms of conflict.
How do you like to resolve conflict?

BTS: Reflective Observation.
Highlights student agency and self-determination.
Primes participants for Part II with a game and conflicts from it.
Part II: A Game
BTS: Gameplay Moment(s)

Active Experimentation
Concrete Experiences
Conflict In Games

Player(s) vs. Player(s)  Chess, board games
Player(s) vs. Enemy    Role-Playing Games
Player(s) vs. Game     Solitaire, puzzles
BTS: Youtube is great for quick 3-5 minute videos of game rules.

Codenames Pictures used because miscommunication is a prominent theme

Other games can address other roots of conflict
Game Time (Codenames: Pictures)

1. Break into 6-9 groups
2. Make 2 teams/group (Red and Blue)
3. Layout a 5x4 grid of picture cards
4. Pick 1 player on each team to be “spymaster”
5. Arrange so spymasters are sitting next to each other, and no one can see over their shoulder
**Codenames Rules Basics**

**GOAL:** Have your team pick all your colored cards before the other team does

1. Spymasters take turns giving clues of 1 word and a number. IE: "Cats, two"
   a. The number is the how many guesses your team is allowed this turn
   b. These 2 word clues are all you may say as a spymaster. No winks, nods, etc.
2. The spymaster’s teammates touch a card they think matches the clue
3. The spymaster puts the appropriate color token on the card
   a. If the card is your team’s color, you may pick again (Up to the number given)
   b. If the card is not your color, your turn ends and the next team goes
   c. If a team picks the “Assassin” card, they lose immediately
4. First team to pick all their color cards wins
BTS Quick Sample of Gameplay

Active Experimentation
Concrete Experiences

Tip: Select games that your facilitator(s) are familiar enough with to answer questions
Part III: Debrief
BTS: Debrief

Reflective Observation and Abstract Conceptualization

Discussion can use Eng’s lenses: Applied Experiential Learning, Focused Approach, and Educational Gaming
What conflicts came up? How were they resolved?

BTS: Reflective Observation

Eng's Malleability idea is here. Students become the content experts because they played and made it Their game.
When/How would you use this game with students? How would you use other games?

- Before conflict
- During conflict
- After conflict

BTS: Eng’s Focused Approach and Scaffolding. Person Focused Approach on the RA, and their agency. Scaffolding from a training seminar to work with students, and from a “new” game to others.
What are some conflict resolution techniques you will use in your life?

BTS: Preparing for concrete experiences

Focused Approach from Eng. Person focused, and Experimental focus on the students’ new ideas
Closing Thoughts/Questions?

DONE WITH MY PRESENTATION

NOW I HAVE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
Adapting For Your Setting and Closing Thoughts
Adapting For Your Students

● What leads to conflict for our students most often?
  ○ Miscommunication
  ○ Unequal access to, or lack of, resources
  ○ Credit/Kudos sharing
  ○ Other?

● What game(s) let you all address and experience those sources of conflict?
  ○ Miscommunication → Codenames, Pictionary, charades
  ○ Resource struggles → Splendor, Scrabble
  ○ Cooperation/Collaboration → Pandemic, Avalon, Hanabi, Role-Playing Games
  ○ Others? → Use your judgement, ask a board game fan

● What’s the goal of the program?
● Are you augmenting existing work, or starting from scratch?
● What are games that your facilitator(s) are familiar enough with to answer questions?

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Slides and RA training slides available on request.