"The brick is on the table": learning foreign languages through Minecraft

Description	This activity uses the multiplayer nature of Minecraft to invite teenagers to practice one or more foreign languages.
Tag	• Social Media • Videogames • Web
Skills	**PERFORMANCE** • Play videogames **SOCIAL MANAGEMENT** • Collaborate **MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY** • Evaluate and reflect • Apply
Learning areas	• Foreign Languages
Card language	• Spanish • English

Structure

Sessions	2
Duration	120' (Variable)
Number of participants	10-30
Age	• 10-13 • 14-16
Materials	• Computer • Minecraft (multiplayer version)

Process

Key questions	• What do I think and know about people I meet online? • Can I develop friendships and meaningful social relationships by playing online? • Can I interact with foreign people about one or more topics?
Development	**SESSION 1** Students are invited to play in Minecraft with the aim to meet one foreign speaking person and, during the game, collect information about her/his life. Students are invited to inform the player about the nature of this interaction as "informal homework". They thus ask the player to give them information about her/his life. Each student can decide to gather information and structure this collection of information according to the methods she/he wants, such as asking for information while playing, asking for a final interview at the end of the game, or collecting information by chat or email. The aim for the participants is to overcome the simple interactions performed during the game and, by using language abilities, create a deeper interaction and knowledge about the other person online. Depending on the teachers' choice, a list of defined information can be required, or, instead, students can be free to collect different, non-structured information, about the players they meet. **(60'**). **SESSION 2** After a week, students are asked to present their Minecraft friends that they met online. They need to describe the person through the information they have collected during one or more Minecraft sessions. (Where do they come from, school, his/her daily life and so on… depending on each interaction). They have to present this information in the foreign language they used to interact. The teacher can also ask the students' experiences about online meetings: Did they have any bad experiences? What did they like and what didn't they like about online meetings during the games? **(60').**
Evaluation	The teacher can evaluate the quality and quantity of information students have collected through their online interaction. The teacher can also take into account the ability to go beyond "standard" information and to connect to deeper and unconventional knowledge about the other person by performing unstructured interactions in a foreign language.
References for professors	• Minecraft Education Edition: https://education.minecraft.net/ Activities using Minecraft (Commonsense): https://www.commonsense.org/education/search?sq=minecraft&searchType=flow&page=1&sort= Miller, J., & Fornell Scott, C. 2016. *The Unofficial Minecraft Lab for Kids: Family-Friendly Projects for Exploring and Teaching Math, Science, History, and Culture Through Creative Building*. Quarry Books.
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