

Games in the Classroom

a product guide for teachers

Games, like civics, are about navigating a system to get things done. This guide will walk you through the variety of ways iCivics games can be used in your classroom, what iCivics offers in addition to the games, and why games work for your students.



Learning Objectives for Games

- Motivate students to learn content, concepts, and systems
- Simulate real world environments and challenges
- Make learning fun

Prerequisites

iCivics games do not require any preparation, students will learn just by playing the game successfully. iCivics provides pre- and post- game questions and activities that help you scaffold students through the learning and playing process.

USING ICIVICS GAMES

We design our games with the knowledge that each classroom is unique. Teachers know their students and learning environments better than anyone, so we strive to provide tools that can be used in classrooms regardless of access to technology and gaming expertise of students.



- iCivics games have been designed to be playable within a 45 to 55 minute class period or less. Some games are as short as 10 minutes long.
- Each game is supported by a teacher game guide, and some games come with pre- and post- game PowerPoints.
- Games can be used to introduce, reinforce, or review concepts covered in class.
- iCivics games are assignable, and you can track student performance with online reports and printable certificates.
- Games can be played:



- ◇ In a 1:1 classroom, with students playing at their own computers
- ◇ In pairs or small groups, where discussion adds to the learning experience
- ◇ As a whole class, with the game projected on a wall or interactive white board
- ◇ As homework to introduce and/or practice concepts covered in class



HOW TO USE SUPPORTING CONTENT

Each iCivics game is supported with a new resource page just for teachers. Here, you will find what you need to know before you use the game in class or assign it to your students. Here is how the page works:

Read the **game description** here. If the game has several versions, they will be listed here as well.

Download the **Teacher Guide PDF** that provides step-by-step play instructions, pre- & post-game discussion questions, and activity ideas. Some games also come with PowerPoints that support the game's learning objectives.



Play: Go directly to the game page, where you can try the game out on your own.

Assign: If you have an iCivics class, you can assign the game from this page.

Share: Love it? Tell your friend down the hall or across the country.

These **assignable resources** consist of iCivics games and webquests. Each is related to the game you are viewing.

WHY GAMES WORK

Whether it is the silence that falls over a computer lab full of engaged students or improved test scores on units that include games, we know that good games do so much more than entertain. Here are a few reasons games work for students:

- Games are goal-oriented, they provide immediate feedback, and they inspire inquiry—all of which are shown to be motivating to the 21st Century learner.
- Games allow students to *do*, not just see or hear. Simulating roles makes the systems and processes they learn more relevant and memorable.
- Students are much less risk-averse in a game-based learning environment. Taking risks in a game is what a player is *supposed* to do.



... and a note on why games work for educators:

Games require little preparation from busy teachers. Teaching with a game means being a facilitator of learning rather than an imparter of information. Teachers can explore the content along with the student and need not be a master of it before teaching with it.

