



PART 2

Read the text below and answer questions 14–26.

FROM THEORY TO CLASSROOM: APPLICATIONS AND CASE STUDIES

A

Educational gamification moves from theory to practice when teachers translate abstract ideas—feedback loops, progressive challenge, and autonomy—into routines that fit real classrooms. Case studies show that the same “game element” can produce opposite outcomes depending on what it signals: mastery or mere performance, collaboration or surveillance. Effective designs make the purpose of the mechanic explicit and align it with assessment, so students understand that the “game” is a structure for practice rather than a substitute for learning. If points mirror what the curriculum values, the system feels legitimate; if they reward easy behaviour, students treat it as a detour and may start “gaming” the rules instead of improving, particularly for students who start behind.

B

A common application is competency-based progression through “mastery pathways”. Instead of advancing a whole class in lockstep, teachers break a unit into levels and allow movement only after learners demonstrate competence. In one middle-school mathematics programme, short quizzes acted as gates that unlocked new problem sets, while students could repeat earlier levels without public penalty. The approach reduced embarrassment about being “behind” because progress was individual and largely private. However, it demanded carefully designed checkpoints: if questions were too guessable, students could leap forward without durable understanding. Some teachers therefore added brief error-corrections at the gate so progression required more than a lucky guess and misconceptions were addressed immediately.

C

Another approach is narrative immersion, which tries to give routine practice a purpose beyond compliance. In a language classroom, students adopted roles as “field researchers” who collected evidence, interviewed classmates, and produced short reports. Vocabulary lists became “toolkits”, and weekly writing tasks became “dispatches” to a mission coordinator. Teachers reported that students were more willing to revise drafts when feedback was framed as guidance from the coordinator rather than as personal criticism, and some quieter students participated more readily because the role offered social cover. Yet the story layer proved fragile: as workload increased, teachers struggled to provide timely responses, and without that rapid interaction the narrative felt cosmetic.



D

Leaderboards provide a contrasting case because they foreground social comparison. In a science course, points were awarded for speed, accuracy, and completion, and ranks were displayed publicly. High-performing students enjoyed the contest, but participation fell among classmates who viewed the top positions as unattainable or who feared being identified as “slow”. The teacher later shifted to a team-based format and rewarded improvement over raw score, which made engagement more even and reduced avoidance of difficult tasks. Still, some learners disliked public ranking in any form, suggesting that competitive mechanics require careful decisions about privacy and status, and about whether competition is zero-sum.

E

Digital badges are often used to recognise progress, but their instructional value depends on what they certify. In one primary-school setting, badges were linked to observable competencies such as “using evidence” or “explaining a method”, and students earned them only after demonstrating the skill in assessed work. Because criteria were concrete, badges acted like miniature rubrics that helped students identify what to practise next. By contrast, when badges were awarded for simple activity—logging in daily or accumulating minutes—students increased screen time without stronger learning. Once students realised badges could be “farmed”, credibility fell and motivation became more transactional.

F

Across these examples, a recurring barrier is administrative overhead. Tracking points, updating charts, and responding to requests for “unlocks” can consume lesson time and attention that would otherwise be used for instruction and feedback. The overhead also includes negotiation, because students often ask for exceptions or re-scoring, and inconsistent decisions can quickly feel unfair. Schools that sustained gamified routines tended to limit the number of mechanics and automate only what aligned with learning outcomes. Many found sustainability improved when teachers shared templates and agreed common rules for scoring and retakes, reducing workload and preventing mixed messages across classes. Some teams also compared cohorts across terms to see whether outcomes improved and which groups benefited.

G

Fairness issues extend beyond classroom rules to access and opportunity. Where students lack devices, reliable internet, or quiet space at home, gamified homework can widen gaps even if in-class tasks are equal, and it can damage classroom climate if “inactive” students are visibly flagged. One district responded by shifting most mechanics



into class time and offering optional “extension quests” that did not penalise students who could not participate outside school. In the strongest examples, gamification became an iterative design process: teachers treated mechanics as hypotheses, monitored effects on engagement and learning, and revised the system when evidence revealed unintended effects.

Questions 14–18

Complete the notes below. Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the text for each answer.

Examples of gamification in practice

- In mastery pathways, students advance only after demonstrating **14**, which reduces embarrassment about being behind.
- In the narrative example, motivation weakened when teachers could not provide timely **15**
- Students were more willing to **16** work when feedback was framed as guidance within the story.
- The leaderboard produced more even engagement when it became **17** and rewarded improvement.
- Badges were most useful when linked to observable **18** rather than simple activity.

Questions 19–22

Select the correct answer.

19 In the mastery pathways case study, checkpoints were needed mainly because they

- A** ensured students completed a fixed number of tasks before unlocking new content
- B** prevented students from progressing through levels by guessing on quizzes
- C** allowed teachers to rank students publicly without embarrassment
- D** replaced assessment with narrative “missions” to maintain engagement

20 Why did the narrative framing lose impact in the language classroom?

- A** Students stopped using vocabulary “toolkits” once reports were introduced
- B** The roles of “field researchers” were removed after complaints about workload
- C** Teachers could not provide feedback quickly enough as workload increased
- D** Weekly writing tasks were cancelled to reduce administrative burden

21 What adjustment produced more even engagement in the leaderboard example?



- A** Rewarding improvement rather than raw score, alongside a team format
- B** Removing points for accuracy so that speed became the only target
- C** Awarding badges for logging in daily to increase participation
- D** Increasing completion points to ensure the top ranks stayed competitive

22 What practice helped improve the sustainability of gamified systems?

- A** limiting mechanics by banning progress charts and unlock requests
- B** avoiding automation even when it aligned with learning outcomes
- C** making homework compulsory so all students practised equally at home
- D** sharing templates and agreeing on common rules among teachers

Questions 23–26

The text has seven paragraphs, **A–G**. Which paragraph contains the following information? Choose the correct letter, **A–G**. **NB** You may use any letter more than once.

23 A suggestion that schools should compare results between cohorts and identify which groups benefit.

24 An example where a reward system increased activity without improving learning.

25 A strategy used to reduce disadvantages linked to unequal access outside school.

26 A warning that maintaining gamified mechanics can consume teaching time.

Answer Key

14. competence

15. responses

16. revise

17. team-based

18. competencies

19. B

20. C

21. A

22. D

23. F



24. E

25. G

26. F