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Leadership and Critical Thinking Skills in Escape Rooms: Observations and Assessment

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Abstract

Escape rooms are latest in Millennial entertainment (Graham, 2015). Escape rooms are "live action team-based games where players discover clues, solve puzzles, and accomplish tasks in one or more rooms in order to accomplish a specific goal (usually escaping from the room) in a limited time" (Nicholson, 2015, p. 1). But as these games have moved from on the computer to the real world, can they be transformed from entertainment to learning? Experts say that solving escape rooms require communication, teamwork, critical thinking, attention to detail, to name a few, and also the more diverse the team, the better they usually do (Nicholson, 2015). These requirements lend themselves to schools and businesses looking for experiential events to strengthen learning (Wiemker, Elumir, & Clare, 2015). The term game based learning (GBL) has been around for thousands of years, based on using games to represent real life conditions (Clarke, Arnab, Keegan, Morini, & Wood, 2016). This paper will look at escape rooms and the applicability for leadership and student development and the pedagogy behind the learning.

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