Design a board game

An interdisciplinary school project to help young people gain accreditation with Dynamic Youth Awards or Youth Achievement Awards.

Suitable for:

- Dynamic Youth Awards
- Youth Achievement Awards

In this interdisciplinary project, pupils are asked to work in groups to design their own board game. They will investigate what makes existing board games a success before making choices about what to make for their own game. Suggestions are included, although pupils are encouraged to follow their own interests. Once a design has been decided upon, focus groups look for improvements before the final version is created.

Following that, a marketing campaign is then embarked upon, covering television, radio and print.

Approximate number of learning hours: 10

(actual number of hours depends on choices you make during the project)
Introduction

In this series of lessons, pupils get to work in groups as they look at successful board games, decide what makes them a success, then design their own board game based on a theme of their choice.

The lessons allow pupils to work alone, or, preferably, in groups. The lessons follow the ethos of Dynamic Youth Awards by being as open as possible to allow the creativity of the pupils to take hold. At some stages suggestions are made in order to help spark ideas. Teachers can use their discretion when it comes to adding more ideas, or even when showing the pupils ours.

There is scope for these lessons to be considerably expanded depending on the materials and time available, and depending on the enthusiasm of the pupils. For example, once an idea for a board game has been established and a prototype has been made, it would be possible to create a finely polished, finished version, complete with wooden or cardboard box.

When working in groups in order to collect an individual Award, it must always be made clear how each member of the group contributed. Annotated and individualised evidence is key.

Suggested forms of evidence

We have included an evidence workbook which should be given to each young person. This provides tips for what sort of evidence to collect, and includes a board game-style evidence collection sheet. This sheet should be filled out when you feel it is suitable for the young people to do so. It does not rigidly match the sessions because the sessions have been designed to give the worker and the young people the freedom to be creative.

You can visit the Youth Scotland website to download a greater variety of evidence collection templates if you wish.

Core skills developed

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Working with Others

Resources required:

- a few board games for inspiration
- craft materials

Suggested Dynamic Youth Award targets

- Working well in a group
- Designing a board game
- Playing different board games
- Making a TV advert
- Drawing posters for a board game
- Listening to others’ views
- Improving my communication skills
- Problem Solving
- Working with others
- Having fun
### Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While working through a design process in response to a design brief, I can develop and communicate imaginative design solutions.</td>
<td><strong>EXA 3-06a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role and use contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking.</td>
<td><strong>LIT 3-02a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can:</td>
<td><strong>LIT 3-09a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Communicate information, ideas or opinions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Explain processes, concepts or ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Identify issues raised, summarise findings or draw conclusions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Throughout the writing process, I can check that my writing makes sense and meets its purpose.</td>
<td><strong>LIT 2-23a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider the impact that layout and presentation will have and can combine lettering, graphics and other features to engage my reader.</td>
<td><strong>LIT 2-24a</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can explore and use the features of a variety of familiar and unfamiliar software to determine the most appropriate to solve problems or issues.</td>
<td><strong>LIT 3-03a</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can select and use a range of media to present and communicate business information.</td>
<td><strong>TCH 3-07b</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can build a digital solution which includes some aspects of multimedia to communicate information to others.</td>
<td><strong>TCH 3-08b</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having evaluated my work, I can adapt and improve, where appropriate, through trial and error or by using feedback.</td>
<td><strong>TCH 2-11a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can apply skills of critical thinking when evaluating the quality and effectiveness of my own or others' products.</td>
<td><strong>TCH 4-11b</strong></td>
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</table>

### More project ideas

Youth Scotland has produced a series of interdisciplinary project ideas and toolkits suitable for use in school and in youth groups. Visit our website to discover more: [www.youthscotland.org.uk](http://www.youthscotland.org.uk).

### Youth Scotland

This teaching resource was produced by Youth Scotland. Youth Scotland is the largest non-uniformed youth organisation in Scotland and one of the key providers of information, training, advice and support to part-time and voluntary youth workers.

Dynamic Youth Awards and Youth Achievement Awards are offered by Youth Scotland as a way to accredit individual achievement. Find out more about Youth Scotland and their learning Awards on their website: [www.youthscotland.org.uk](http://www.youthscotland.org.uk).

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19 Bonnington Grove
Edinburgh
EH6 4BL
Tel 0131 554 2561
office@youthscotland.org.uk
SESSION 1

Investigate existing board games

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED**
- Several well-known board games
- Pens
- Blank paper
- Flipchart paper
- Computer with internet connection

**PREPARATION**
Divide each group’s sheet of paper into four sections, giving each section the headings ‘describe the rules’, ‘how is the winner decided?’, ‘best points about the game’ and ‘worst points about the game’.

**Purpose**
In this lesson you will need a handful of well-known board games in order for the pupils to analyse the relative merits of each of them.

By investigating the pros and cons of existing board games, young people should have a good idea about what makes a successful board game and which pitfalls there are to avoid.

**Step-by-step**
1. Break the pupils into small groups and give each group some blank sheets of paper. Ask them to divide their sheet into four sections, giving each section the headings ‘describe the rules’, ‘how is the winner decided?’, ‘best points about the game’ and ‘worst points about the game’.
2. Rotate the board games around the groups for five/ten minutes at a time, asking the pupils to complete a new sheet and make notes about each board game.
3. Each group could present their findings back to the rest, or the teacher could have one sheet of flipchart paper for each game, onto which they’ll write the feedback from each group.
4. **OPTIONAL:** You will be able to find advertising videos about board games on YouTube. Search for, for example, ‘monopoly board game’ for a list of likely results. Watching these videos could provoke further discussion about games you don’t have to hand.

**Evidence**
Young people need to be collecting evidence in folders in order to demonstrate their individual achievement. Great evidence for Dynamic Youth Awards in this session would include: each young person’s notes (or perhaps a photocopy of group notes with each individual’s contribution highlighted), annotated photographs of them at work, a daily diary sheet; class register.

**Summary**
When the group has finished, look over the sheets and discuss the responses.

Do they prefer group games or 1v1 games? Do some games have rules that are too complicated? Are some games more likely than others to create disagreements? Do some games require a higher level of brain power than others? Is that a good thing?

Every board game has qualities people like and dislike. The groups should now be thinking about how they can design a game based on their preferences and which should appeal to others.
SESSION 2

Start to design a game

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED**

- Worksheet, ‘Game Design’
- Pens
- Blank paper
- Notes from last session
- 10 stickers per pupil

**PREPARATION**

Set the room up so groups can work comfortably together.

**Purpose**

Now that the pupils have listed the pros and cons of a selection of different board games, they can collaborate to begin the design of their own game. The first step is to decide upon a theme for their game. Use the worksheet *game design* to help the thinking process. Following the ethos of Dynamic Youth Awards, pupils should be free to choose the subject matter of their board game.

**Step-by-step**

1. Ask someone to summarise the class’s thoughts about each of the games from the last session.
2. Ask someone to read aloud the worksheet ‘Game Design’. Discuss any points that arise.
3. Break the pupils into their small groups and give each group some blank sheets of paper. Make sure they have their notes from last time out.
4. Ask the groups to come up with several ideas for a board game. Remind them that their first idea will not necessarily be the best! Make sure each game idea is clearly explained as others will be reading about it soon. Give them 20 minutes to come up with ideas.
5. Give each pupil 10 stickers. Ask them to move around the class reading each group’s notes about their game ideas. At each station, rate each idea by giving it as many stickers as they like.
6. Back at their tables, each group should think about the voting procedure and ask themselves which game idea they want to proceed with.

**Evidence**

The pupils could put the following into their folders: each young person’s notes about possible games (or perhaps a photocopy of group notes with each individual’s contribution highlighted), annotated photographs of them at work, a daily diary sheet; class register.

**Summary**

Each group has come up with ideas and received feedback from the rest of the class. Did everyone feel their ideas were listened to? What did everyone think about rating each other’s games and having their own ideas voted on? Was it the case that they didn’t explain their game well enough?

The groups should now be thinking about how they need to adapt their game based on their ideas and the preferences of their peers.
Handout - Game design

So you are going to design your own board game? As you know, there's plenty of competition out there so your game is going to have to stand out against the crowd. You need to think about the thing marketing boys call USP: unique selling point. In plain English, a product's USP is what makes it different from the crowd.

Think about a Nintendo Wii: what's its USP?

Right, back to your board game. There are some suggested themes for your game below. You can choose one of these, or come up with your own idea. If you choose one of the suggested themes, don't feel you have to completely copy the idea.

Suggested ideas for a new board game

- **Teen life** – guide teenagers around the board as they overcome hurdles placed in their way.
- **Around the world in 80 days** – race around the world and get home before your rivals. What hurdles will be placed in your way as you visit different continents?
- **World Cup** – will your country win the World Cup? They will have to win a lot of games along the way as they attempt to beat their opponents to the prize.
- **Carbon footprint** – reduce your dependence on fossils fuels and become an environmental hero, beating your rivals to become the first person to become carbon neutral.
- **Fashion Show** – design your clothes, book venues, arrange advertising and select models.
- **Dr Frankenstein** – who will be the first to create a monster from the body parts you assemble on your journey around the board. Look out for the Police!
- **Formula One** – beat your opponents to the finish line, being careful to avoid pit stops and crashes along the way!

Your ideas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How the winner is decided</th>
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</table>

TIP: include this sheet in your evidence for your Dynamic Youth Award.
SESSION 3

Make a prototype

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT YOU WILL NEED</th>
<th>PREPARATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Notes from previous sessions</td>
<td>Set the room up so groups can work comfortably together. Easy access to craft materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Craft materials – coloured pens, cardboard, glue, scissors, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paper and pens</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Purpose

Once the groups have decided on the theme for their game they need to seriously consider the rules and layout of the board. This stage has them working on these issues as they create a prototype for their board game.

NOTE: This is a stage that could take more than one session to work on.

Step-by-step

1. Give the groups five or ten minutes to discuss any new ideas they may have had about their game.
2. Explain that they are now going to make a prototype of their chosen game. It’s important they know this will not form the finished version of their game, so not to spend too much time making a finely polished version.
3. Remind them they will need to produce a set of rules.
4. Give them to the end of the session to have made a completed prototype.

Evidence

The pupils could put the following into their folders: annotated photographs of them at work, the actual prototype could be used as evidence (with notes about who did what), a daily diary sheet; class register.

Summary

What was it like making a real version of their idea? Did this design stage through up new problems about the rules of the game? Did everyone feel their contribution to the design task was valued?
SESSION 4

Test with a focus group

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED**
- Prototypes from the previous session
- The worksheet, ‘focus group’
- Paper and pens

**PREPARATION**
The set-up of the room depends on the number of groups you have. Arrange the space so that groups can present their games to each other before they are played.

**Purpose**
Every successful product has to have happy customers, and your pupils' board games are no different. Once the prototype has been developed it's time to give the product a test drive. This way the creators of each game will gain some valuable insight into the clarity of their game's instructions, the fairness of the game and the all-important enjoyment each group gets out of it.

**Step-by-step**
1. Inform everyone that each group will present their game to another group who will then go on to play it.
2. Give each group a copy of the worksheet ‘focus group’ for each game they will test, and explain to them what they have to record. Make it clear that this is not a competition between each game, but instead a chance to offer constructive feedback on each other’s games.
3. Give two minutes for each presentation and ten minutes for each game (time- and number-dependent).
4. At the end of the test drives, groups should go back to their game and discuss the feedback they have received.
5. Ask each group to suggest five changes they should make to their game based on the feedback they have received.

**Evidence**
The pupils could put the following into their folders: annotated photographs of them at work, copies of the feedback each individual gave, a daily diary sheet; class register.

**Summary**
How did each group feel about having their game played? Have they realised their game is missing some crucial elements? Did they make the rules and the purpose clear enough?

What was it like playing each other’s games? Did the class learn from the games they played?
Handout - Focus Group

You have an important job at hand: testing other people's board games. Every product goes through a stage of testing like this so that the manufacturer of the product can see if it has any faults, as well as see what people like about the product.

Please complete this form for each game you play.

GAME: ____________________________

The instructions are clear
YES/NO
Explain

It's clear to see how someone can win this game
YES/NO
Explain

The board is easy to understand
YES/NO
Explain

The board game is attractive to look at
YES/NO
Explain

I would improve this game by

Two things I like about this game

TIP: include this sheet in your evidence for your Dynamic Youth Award.
SESSION 5

Make the final version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT YOU WILL NEED</th>
<th>PREPARATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Prototypes from the previous session</td>
<td>Set the room up so groups can work comfortably together. Easy access to craft materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feedback they received about their game from other groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notes about the five changes they have suggested for their game</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Craft materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose

Now that each group has received feedback about their game, it’s time to make a final version. They need to bear in mind all of the problems highlighted by their focus groups and make adjustments accordingly. This stage is open to a great deal of creativity as the groups could make their finalised board game using any available materials. It could, for example, be finished off in a craft and design class.

This should take more than one class session. It is suggested you set a deadline for a finished version in order to keep the tempo up.

Step-by-step

1. Introduce the session by reminding the class about the issues raised in the feedback session.
2. Ask the groups to discuss possible changes to their game before starting to make the final version of their board game.
3. The groups should then start to make their final version of the game.

Evidence

The pupils could use the following as evidence for their Dynamic Youth Award: annotated photographs of them at work, the final board game they produce, a daily diary sheet; class register.

Summary

Is everyone working well together in your group? Has everyone been given enough work to get on with? Does someone need extra support?
SESSION 6

Marketing the board game

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED**
- Final version of their board game
- Paper and pens
- Computers with internet access
- Video cameras (if possible)
- Audio recording equipment (if possible)
- Magazines or newspapers

**PREPARATION**
- Set the room up so groups can work comfortably together.
- You will require internet access and a projector.
- Find a suitable board game advertisement on YouTube to show to the class.

**Purpose**

Once the final version has been completed, it’s time for the groups to advertise. They should create a three-pronged marketing campaign: television, radio and print. For inspiration for the television campaign, why not have a look at advertisements for existing board games on YouTube? Also, they could draw ideas from the focus group session completed in an earlier step: what was it that other groups liked most about their game?

We suggest that each pupil submits their marketing campaign as evidence for their Dynamic Youth Award. Make sure it is clear who took responsibility for what or we will not be able to give the pupils the credit they deserve.

This should take longer than one class session.

**Step-by-step**

1. Show the class an advertisement for a board game on YouTube.
2. Hold a discussion, or break the class into their small groups and ask them to discuss the following points: what did they like about the advert? How did the advert try to convince people to buy the game? What crucial information did the advert give the viewer? How could the advert be improved?
3. Ask the groups to discuss making a 30-second TV advert for their own game: what information do they need to convey?
4. The adverts could be recorded on mobile phones if the school is short of video equipment. We suggest editing the video using free software such as Movie Masher, which would enable the pupils to insert text into the advert.
5. Next, ask the groups to think about how a print advert would differ. Give them magazines and newspapers so they can take notes about what makes successful advertisements in print form.
6. Their advert could consist of drawings, photographs and text, and could be put together using a free graphics program like Inkscape or, of course, hand drawn.

**Evidence**

The pupils could use the following as evidence for their Dynamic Youth Award: annotated photographs of them at work, notes they created for their advert (with each person’s input highlighted), the final adverts they produce, a daily diary sheet, class register.

Youth Scotland
Balfour House, 19 Bonnington Grove, Edinburgh, EH6 4BL
0131 554 2561 www.youthscotland.org.uk
SESSION 7

What next?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT YOU WILL NEED</th>
<th>PREPARATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final version of their board game</td>
<td>Set the room up so groups can work comfortably together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper and pens</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Purpose

The final step in this process is up to the pupils: are they finished with their board game project? Do they want to produce multiple copies and sell them? Whatever they choose to do, make sure it is evidenced properly so they can collect a Dynamic Youth Award for it!

Step-by-step

1. This is an optional open session where the pupils can come up with ideas about how they can finish their Board Game project.

Evidence

Make sure each pupil has their own individualised folder of evidence and has completed a Dynamic Youth Award Challenge sheet for the work they have done on this project. This will all eventually be submitted to Youth Scotland for external moderation.

Summary

We hope your class enjoyed working on this project! Soon they should collect a Dynamic Youth Award for their work. Why not arrange for a presentation ceremony for when they receive their certificates?
Collecting Evidence for your Dynamic Youth Award

In order to receive a Dynamic Youth Award, you need to collect evidence which shows:

* you have been working towards the targets you set on your DYA Challenge Sheet
* you have worked the amount of hours you claim to have worked
* you have taken on the responsibility level you claimed on your DYA Challenge Sheet

Here are some tips for collecting evidence:

- **Tell us which person you are in the photo, and what you’re doing!**
- **Made posters? Keep them and include them in your evidence.**
- **Keep everything that has something to do with your project: including post-it notes. Tell us what everything was used for!**
- **A diary is a great way to keep a running track of what you’ve been doing.**
- **Ask someone else to write something about what you’ve done. Ask a mate, a parent, youth worker or a teacher.**
- **It’s essential we see evidence of the number of hours you have done. Class/club registers are great for this.**
- **Your evidence doesn’t have to be presented in a folder: stick it on a CD if you like. Include any videos you make.**
- **You’ve made a board game, right? That can be included as evidence, too! Don’t worry: you get all evidence back.**
Board Game Project - reaching my goal!

Use this sheet to record your journey through the Board Game project.

Fill out one pentagon for each step that you complete on the board game project.

Dark squares are to be filled out by your peers. They should use those spaces to write something positive about what you have been working on.

Use this sheet as evidence to help you collect your Dynamic Youth Award when you have finished the project.

1. Your first step is to complete your DYA Challenge Sheet planning section.
2. what did you do today?
3. what was the best idea you had today?
4. ask a peer to write something here about what you’ve been doing
5. what is the hardest thing about making your own game?
6. ask a peer to write something here about what you’ve been doing
7. what evidence have you collected so far?
8. what has been the best thing about this project?
9. why will people want to play your board game?
10. what was your biggest achievement today?
11. what is your role in advertising your board game?
12. Complete your DYA Challenge Sheet.
13. Peer statement

Your name: __________________________________________________

START HERE
Dynamic Youth Awards

Keeping Track of Time

Record how much time you spend on each activity.

Name: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Confirmed by</th>
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Total Hours