



My Top 5 On-line Games on Social and Global Issues

by David Deubelbeiss <<http://ddeubel.edublogs.org/category/games/>>



Introduction

On-line games on global issue topics are something that students really get interested in. They are very motivating for language learning, they help bring the learning focus into the wider world and they get kids thinking. Critically thinking. Even active.

Further, these games are for the most part authentic. That can pose a challenge for many language learners. However, because of the strong context provided through visuals / text / audio in these games, that isn't a big problem. One other feature of these games is that they take time and are, for the most part, script based.

Below are my personal "Top 5" favorite games on social and global issues. All of these games - and many more along the same lines - can be found on the game page of the website EFL Classroom 2.0 <<http://eflclassroom.com/>>.

1. Darfur is Dying

A game where students live the life of a refugee camp member and have to make decisions in order to survive.



Overview: *Darfur is Dying is a viral video game for change that provides a window into the experience of the 2.5 million refugees in the Darfur region of Sudan. Players must keep their refugee camp functioning in the face of attacks by Janjaweed militias. Players learn about the genocide in Darfur that has taken the lives of 400,000 people, and find ways to get involved to help stop this human rights humanitarian crisis.*

www.darfurisdying.com

2. Sim's Sweatshop

Students learn about life as a sweatshop worker. Attractive and well put together. Students actually work, gain a wage and get to feel what life might be like for those working in a sweatshop.

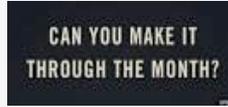


Overview: *You're invited to enter the world of the sweatshop and become a factory worker. Do you accept the challenge? Can you tirelessly make sports shoes for less than \$1 an hour as you struggle to support your family? Let the game begin...*

www.simsweatshop.com

3. Spent

The player must make spending decisions as an unemployed worker and then try to survive what life throws at them.



Overview: *Work hard. Do the right thing. Homelessness is something that will never happen to me. Sometimes, all it takes is one life-changing experience to land you on the streets: a job loss, death of a loved one, divorce, natural disaster, or serious illness. Next thing you know, a chain of events sends things spiraling out of control... How would you cope? Where would you go? What would you do?*

<http://playspent.org/>

4. Finding Zoe

In two age levels, students try to find Zoe and deal with all the social relationship problems that come along. The game promotes tolerance and good relationships between girls and boys.



Overview: *Finding Zoe is an online game that addresses gender stereotypes and abusive teen dating relationships. Geared towards youth aged 8-10 and 11-14, Finding Zoe explores root causes of violence against women and girls, challenges gender stereotypes, instructs on warning signs of violence, and introduces community services.*

<http://takeactiongames.com/TAG/ZOE.html>

5. Student Survivor

Students navigate through the quagmire that is university life and try to survive.



Overview: *Create a student and help them graduate from university while keeping on top of their health, social life, studies and finances.*

<http://www.studentsurvivor.org.uk/2/>

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Fair Play
gameslearningsociety.org

A game where players become an African American graduate student and are forced to deal with common racial biases.

Ayiti: The Cost of Life
<http://ayiti.globalkids.org>

An on-line game in which players work to manage a rural family of four in Haiti over a period of 5 years.

Trace Effects
americanenglish.state.gov

An ESL game where players learn English while exploring social activism, conflict resolution & empowering women.

The Migrant Trail
www.theundocumented.com

A game in which players take on the roles of undocumented migrants and patrol agents along the US - Mexico border.

Electrocity
www.electrocity.co.nz

An on-line game in which players become mayor of a virtual town and work to create a sustainable city.

Free Rice
<http://freerice.com>

A vocabulary game in which 10 grains of rice are donated to the World Food Program for every correct answer.

Amazon Trail
www.freegameempire.com

A game in which players travel up the Amazon River and learn about the Amazon rainforest, its plants, animals and people.

Other Good Games to Check Out

*Peacemaker (Israel-Palestine)
 Minecraft (Undugu Playground)
 Play the News
 Where in the World is Carmen*

Grand Theft Childhood
www.amazon.com

Read this book from Harvard Medical School about violent video games and their impact on children and young people

GAMES FOR CHANGE
 < www.gamesforchange.org >

Mission: Catalyzing Social Impact Through Digital Games

Games for Change was founded in 2004 and facilitates the creation and distribution of social impact games that serve as critical tools in humanitarian and educational efforts. We aim to leverage entertainment and engagement for social good. To further grow the field, *Games for Change* convenes multiple stakeholders, highlights best practices, incubates games, and helps direct investment into new projects.

TAKE ACTION GAMES
 < <http://takeactiongames.com> >

Mission: Innovative game design that intersects art, activism, ethics & documentary

Take Action Games was founded in 2006 and specializes in games for change. Our goal is to address significant social and political themes via innovative game design that traverses the intersection of art, activism, ethics and documentary. TAG strives to create interactive experiences to issues of social justice in hope of expanding the expressiveness of games towards diverse experiences and audiences.

Shin-Eiken Association
 < www.shin-eiken.com >

新英語教育研究

Shin-Eiken is a dynamic high school English teachers group in based in Japan which works to promote global awareness, peace, international understanding and humanistic education. Check out its Japanese website, subscribe to its magazine or attend one of its many regional events in Japan.

“Shin Eigo Kyoiku” (New English Classroom) Magazine
 Sanyusha Press <www.sanyusha-shuppan.com>

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