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Escape! Using an Escape Room to Promote Active Learning and Clinical Outcomes

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Background

Escape rooms have become a global phenomenon since this form of entertainment gaming was introduced in Japan in 2007 (Nicholson, 2015). According to Wise, Lowe, Hill, Barnett & Barton (2018), escape rooms can provide an avenue for “moving away from ‘information transmission’ models of induction and towards a student-centered approach, resisting the temptation to tell students everything we want them to know” (p.88). The rooms can engage students, promote critical thinking and team cooperation by solving real-life puzzles (Hermanns et al., 2018). Puzzles are solved by finding clues to combinations which can be used to unlock a series of locks which then can solve the puzzle. Escape rooms are gaining popularity worldwide and can now be found internationally as a form of entertainment.

Purpose: Teaching the generation Y (millennial) students complex skills can present challenges to faculty to create engaging and innovative activities which can engage affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains of learning (Hermanns et al., 2018). Measuring cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills, can be also present challenges, especially in the clinical setting (Baumlein, 2015). According to Nick (2015), students are more likely to learn if they are enthusiastic about participating in the learning activity. Research has demonstrated that the use of serious gaming (escape rooms) can promote student engagement and persistence on task, both which can foster deep, rather than superficial learning (Cain & Piascik, 2015). Escape rooms can offer an innovative solution to engage students with creative scenarios and promote excitement about learning new concepts and problem solving.

Methods: Most escape rooms have a central theme in which the puzzles and clues are built around. This escape room was created as part of a learning activity in a mental health course. (INSERT QSEN KSA’s) The theme is built around a senior residing in an assisted living residence. The puzzles require use of cognitive and psychomotor skills, many of which are essential nursing student skills (dosage calculations, identification of classes of medications, and selecting the correct antidote for the client’s deteriorating condition). The challenge of this innovative gaming strategy is to solve all of the puzzles and obtain the antidote to reverse the resident’s symptoms (in this case, the students must unlock the box which contains a vial of sterile water which is labeled “Naloxone”).

Students will be provided game rules, a narrative script, and a time limit of 60 minutes. The room is not ‘locked’ and students are able to leave the room at any time. The learners will complete a pre and a post survey to gather quantitative data on the student’s perception of this learning activity. Two teams of students (n=8+7=15) will participate in this activity that require students to solve a series of puzzles which unlock boxes in the room. Once a box is unlocked, it provides additional clues for additional puzzles which must also be solved within the room. If the team solves the mystery of “what is wrong with our resident” (by unlocking the final lock and selecting the correct medication) within the 60-minute limit, they can ‘escape’ the room. Once the puzzle is solved or time expires, the students will debrief and qualitative data will be obtained.

Results: To be determined when this teaching and learning strategy is implemented in early December 2018, and will be included in the presentation, if selected.

Conclusion: Quantitative data will be analyzed using a one-sample t-test. Qualitative data will gathered while debriefing, post activity.
Title:
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Keywords:
Clinical Outcomes, Escape Room and Innovative strategy

References:


Abstract Summary:
Faculty are encouraged to develop innovative strategies which engage students. Escape rooms have become a popular activity in which the participants work as a team to solve puzzles in a limited amount of time. This project developed an escape room for a mental health class to promote clinical outcomes.

Content Outline:

1. Introduction  
   1. Faculty are encouraged to use innovative strategies which engage students and result in active learning________________________________________
   2. Escape rooms; History and background________________________________________

2. Method  
   1. Innovative Gaming strategy to promote active learning  
      1. Supports student-centered Learning
         1. a) Team work, collaboration
         2. b) Critical thinking, communication
      2. Gaming Details
         1. a) Rules, script, time limit
         2. b) 10 unfolding puzzles and locked boxes
   2. Data collection________________________________________
      1. Pre and post surveys-quantitive data
1. a) Student perceptions before and after the activity

2. Debriefing- Qualitative data based on Q&A
   1.
   2.

3. Conclusion
   1. To be determined after implementation
   2. Quantitative and qualitative results

Author Summary: Janet has been teaching at Purdue University Northwest, and has researched teaching and learning strategies which promote critical thinking and active learning since 2010. Janet's focus of her dissertation for her Doctoral of Nursing Practice (DNP) at PWL, is the use of concept maps in nursing education to promote critical thinking. Janet has been invited to speak at several international nursing conferences on the topic of concept maps and topics related to nursing education.