

Junior B, Round One

TOPIC: *that we should embrace video games as an educational tool.*

1. Type of Topic

This is a normative/model debate. This means that the Affirmative should propose a 'model' (a policy on how this idea would be implemented). This model should be clearly described to outline what changes the Affirmative team will make to the status quo, and how these changes will be enacted. The Negative team can either support the status quo (that is, the current education system and attitude towards the purpose of video games) or propose a counter-model. This counter-model must be different from the status quo, but also different from the model the Affirmative team is suggesting. The Negative team should ensure they clearly identify whether they are supporting the status quo or proposing a counter-model.

2. Background / Context

Schools in Australia and around the world have 'gamified' education in a number of ways, which is predicated on the assumption that children can learn effectively through play. The Australian F-6 Curriculum, whilst providing general capabilities statements about what content/skills are to be learnt by students, rarely dictates methods of teaching (e.g., direct instruction, classroom play, video games) and leaves it to the role of schools and teachers to make those decisions.

There has been a moving trend towards video game developers creating what they market as educational games, such as *Minecraft Education*. However, many teachers have been hesitant to adopt these games in their classrooms as 'creative' approaches to teaching can be stifled by pressure on teachers to teach for tests (like NAPLAN) and concerns about backlash due to the controversial nature of video games.

3. Questions for Consideration

- What is the purpose of the education system?
- What factors motivate students to succeed?
- What specific skills are required for 21st century jobs, and how might these be targeted in schools?
- What are the benefits/drawbacks of screen time generally?
- How might access to technology impact this debate?