

Teacher's guide: Playing for free?

Consumer education about playing online

A product from the European Consumer Centres



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Task

About the material

A lot of kids play games online today. And in this material, we will talk about situations that might happen when you are online, on your phone or computer.

The material is about situations that might happen when you are playing online. The movie and guides are for kids with about two to four years of experience of reading English.

It contains:

- A teachers' guide with different exercises to do in class
- A pupils' guide (including words to know to understand the movie)
- A presentation to show in the classroom
- A movie; [Playing for free?](#) On YouTube

In the movie, we follow three kids and what happened to them while they were playing games online. This guide aims to help pupils consider what they think and feel about what can happen when they are playing games online. There are no right or wrong answers, but it is important to reflect on different situation that might occur.



First episode: Playing for free?

1:53 minutes

To understand the content of this episode your pupils need to understand the following words. Translate the words into your own language.

Words to know in the first episode:

- Wood
- Buy
- Bucket
- Designed
- Spend
- Developers
- Apps
- Currency
- Weekly allowance
- Downloaded
- In-game currencies



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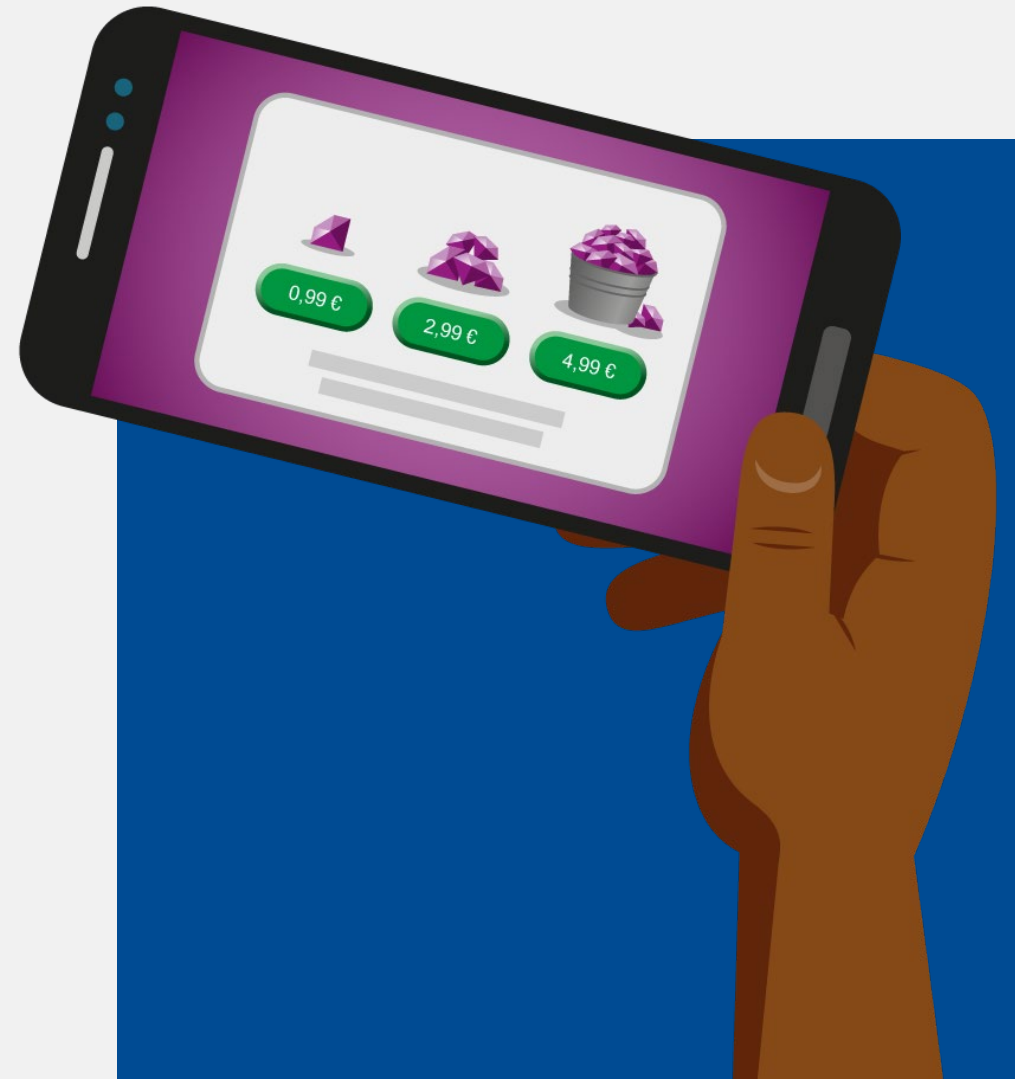
Choose side

First episode

1. Start by showing the first episode of the movie Playing for free? Stop at the pause sign.
2. Tell the class after you watched the first part: The movie that we just saw is about Theo and he is playing a game. To continue he needs to spend money.

Tell the pupils that they now will have a few different choices.

Tell them that you will ask three questions and depending on what they think, they have to choose the left or right side of the classroom.



Ask the class the first question; What do you think Theo should do? Should he buy the purple diamonds?

First episode

Left side of the classroom:

Yes, Theo should buy the purple diamonds



Right side of the classroom:

No, Theo should not buy the purple diamonds



If you want to, you can discuss why they made their choices after they picked a side of the classroom with the whole class.

Ask the pupils the second question. And ask them to once again choose the right or left side of the classroom depending on what they think.

Question: Do you think it is okay to spend money in a game to continue playing it?

First episode

The left side of the classroom

Yes, I think it is okay to spend your own money to continue to level up in a game.



The right side of the classroom

No, I don't think it is okay to spend your own money to continue to level up in a game.



If you want to, you can ask the pupils in the groups why they made their choices and ask them to elaborate on why

Ask the pupils the final and third question from episode one. Once again ask them to choose the right or left side of the classroom depending on what they think. Question: Have you ever bought things in a game?

First episode

The left side of the classroom

Yes, I have bought things in a game



The right side of the classroom

No, I have not bought things in a game



- Ask the group that said that they had bought things in a game if they think it was expensive.
- Ask the group that said I have not bought things in a game what they think is a lot of money.

Discussion

First episode

Play the rest of episode 1, stop at the pause sign.

Have a discussion with the class. Ask them the questions below and let them discuss in smaller groups for one minute.

1. Many games are designed to make you spend your money. Do you play games where you have to spend your own money to continue playing the game?
2. Would you spend your whole allowance on a game like Theo did? Why or why not?

Ask the groups what they discussed in their group.



Second episode: Subscription traps

1:45 minutes

To understand the content of this episode your pupils need to understand the following words. Translate the words into your own language.

Words to know in the second episode:

- Getting trapped
- Subscriptions
- Repeated payments
- Browsing
- Advertisement
- Popped up
- Downloaded
- App
- Payment card
- Validate
- Free trial period
- Bank account
- Signing up
- Terms and conditions



Two and two discussions

Second episode

1. Show the second episode of the movie Subscription trap. Stop at the pause sign.
2. Tell the class: The movie that we just saw is about Andreas that wanted to play a cool game that he found online. To play the game his mom had to fill in information from her payment card to validate the free trial period. But in the end, it turned out to be a subscription that she didn't want.



Pair the pupils two and two and let them discuss together for one minutes:

1. Tell the class: If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is just that, too good to be true. That means that is something is said to be free of charge, do you ever reflect on if you pay for it in some other way?

Question: Is there such a thing as a “free” trial?

2. Tell the class: A subscription can be something good and fun, but if a game company tricks you into subscribing to something like Andreas and his mom, it can cost a lot of money.

Question: Do you think it is okay for a game company to use (hidden) subscriptions?

Have a quick group discussion about what the pupils answered.

Discussions

Second episode



Play the rest of episode 2, stop at the pause sign. Have a discussion with the whole class:

- **Do you or someone you know subscribe to anything?**
 - It can for example be a magazine or a tv subscription like Netflix or Disney or maybe a game that you like.
- **Have you ever been offered a free trial of a game or something else?**
 - Explain to the pupils; a free trail isn't always free. There are of course games that you don't have to pay money to play, but instead you might have to look at advertisements to keep playing.
- **Do you know what terms and conditions are?**
 - Explain to the pupils; when you sign up for something, online or in real life, you must often agree to the terms and conditions that the company has if you want to try out their product. It is important to read the terms and conditions so that you know what you agree to. If you are unsure, ask an adult for help.

Third episode: Buying a game – with what?

2:21 minutes

To understand the content of this episode your pupils need to understand the following words. Translate the words into your own language.

Words to know in the third episode:

- Advertisement
- Skip all the ads
- Connects
- Social media account
- Reinstalls
- Personal data
- Gaming company
- Analyzing
- Selling



Group discussions

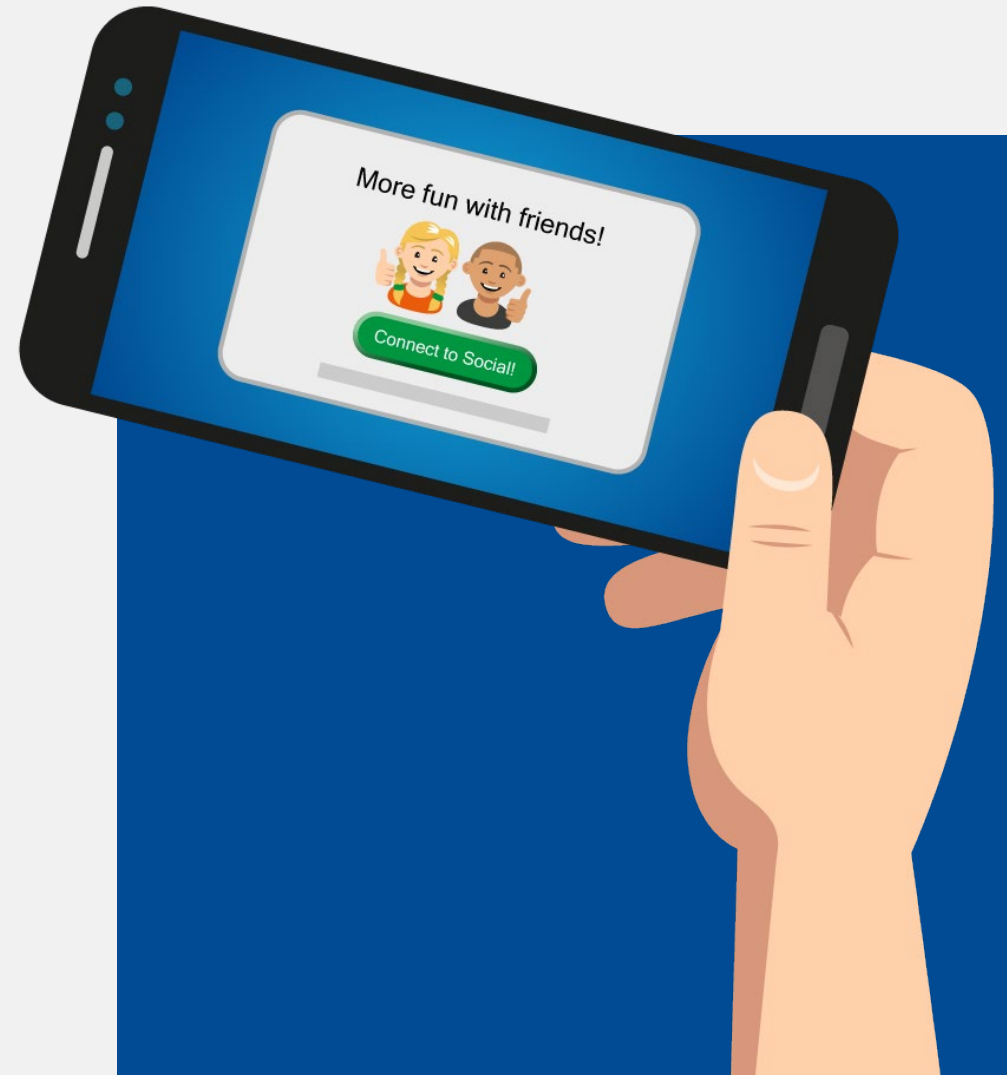
Third episode

1. Show the third, and last, episode all the way to the end.
2. Repeat to the class: The movie is about Anna who plays a game, and to continue playing in the game she must watch an ad, or she can pay a few euros to skip the ads. The game also suggests that she should connect her social media accounts so she always can skip ads in the future.

Let the pupils discuss in groups of four or five, for two minutes:

- What did Anna really pay for the game?
- Do you ever think that there are different ways of paying for a game?

After the discussions; ask each group to present what they discussed to the whole class



Debate in two groups

Third episode

Divide the class in to two groups.

1. Let the first group be in favor of paying for games, they don't mind sharing their personal data or spending time on watching ads. Let them come up with arguments to sustain their point of view.
 2. Let the other group be against paying for a game with both money, time and personal data. They think all games should always be for free. Let them come up with arguments why you should never have to pay for a game in any kind of way.
- First let both groups discuss what their arguments are for a couple of minutes.
 - Let the first group start. Ask them to explain why it's good to pay for a game in any kind of way. (2 minutes)
 - Let the other group speak. Let them explain why you shouldn't pay for anything in a game ever. (2 minutes)
 - Let the groups discuss together and defend their point of view. (2 minutes)



Exit-ticket

What did you learn?

Tell the pupils: Playing online can be a lot of fun. But as the movie showed, there are some things to look out for.

Let the pupils write their answer to the question below on a piece of paper:

- Did you learn anything new from the movie?



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