

Boardgames - Unlock!

Unlock! is a series of escape games that take the form of a cardgame or boardgame, also known as an escape box. The players need to solve a series of enigmas in a set time.

Particularities

These games are made to be used like classic board games, that is to say around a table, and sometimes in parallel with an application or a website.

Why is it relevant to teach languages

- **Light logistics:** these games are simply played out around a table and do not require to print or prepare items. It is even more the case for the Unlock! games that consist in a deck of cards, which tend to be less expensive and easy to carry around.
- **Can be coupled with an application or website to accompany the game:** for time calculation, background music or for validation of certain puzzles.
- **Sometimes there are non-reusable clues:** manipulating, folding, tearing game elements to find clues is an advantage in terms of puzzle possibilities. On the other hand, it makes the game unusable afterwards with the elements provided in the box.
- **No Game Master:** the fact that there is no Game Master makes the game much more complex because the slightest blockage can block the players for a while. The use of the application helps to overcome this weakness.
- **Text material:** these games use cards with instructions or characters' journals and logbooks to provide elements for the scenario and enigmas. You could try to use one of the games in a foreign language, or write text material in foreign language if you are creating your own game.
- **Detailed scenario and game elements:** the scenario and game elements tend to carry cultural references, which could be a nice cultural immersion for your students.



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Bottom line

- Easy to set up, requires little preparation before and after the session.
- You can add a Game Master to supervise the game and overcome player blockages.
- If the game contains clues that need to be destroyed, make a copy before students play so that another group can play it as well.

Reference

Unlock!, Published by SPACE Cowboys. Available at: URL <https://www.spacecowboys.fr/unlock-english> (Accessed: 26 February 2021)

