

Curriculum For The Future

THE GAME

They'll learn in the future...
But what will they learn?

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New Zealand Council for Educational Research

Version 2.0

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Welcome to Curriculum For The Future: The Game.

This role play game (RPG) invites you to take on responsibility for shaping the future of curriculum in your region. Please read all the instructions before you start. Allow at least 45-60 minutes to complete the game, with additional time if you want to follow gameplay with a discussion session (recommended).

What you need to play

- Players. Recommended minimum of 10 players but you may also be able to adapt the game for a smaller number of players. Can be played by very large groups (100+).
- Game rules and instruction sheets (included)
- The Storyline (included)
- Proposition Cards (included)
- Constituent Questions (included)
- A six-sided dice (Supply your own)
- A timekeeping device (Supply your own)
- Pens and paper for all players (Supply your own)
- A Scoreboard (supply your own - a whiteboard will do, or a piece of paper on the wall)
- Theme music (Optional: Supply own sound system)

Preparation before the game

In order to play the game, one person must take on the role of Game Moderator (GM). **Decide who will be the GM before you begin the game.** This person is in charge of organising the game, keeping time, and is the official arbitrator for any questions about rules or protocols for game play. The GM should have good facilitation skills and a sense of humour, and should read through all the instructions before the game begins to ensure they are familiar with the game. The GM should also:

- decide how to organise the **physical space and context** for the gameplay in order to support maximum engagement and enjoyment.
- print out materials and ensure there are sufficient copies of **instruction sheets** for all players.
- place **Proposition Cards** face down on the table or in an envelope so their contents can't be seen by players.

The **appendix** provides more explanatory notes that may be useful for the GM.

Roles

All other players will be divided by rolls of the dice into either Curriculum Committee members, or members of Advocacy Groups. The instructions for this are given after the introduction of the Storyline.

The Storyline

The Game Moderator should read this aloud to the group to begin the game..

Option: Set the scene with theme music before you begin.



What will the future of learning look like?

That's the headline in every major newspaper in Europe today. Reports say that a diverse and dynamic group of thinkers have come together in Helmond to debate bold, compelling ideas for redesign of the curriculum.

Educational leaders and the general public are intrigued. They are eager to hear from the bright minds that have assembled in this room today. However, we have declined their requests for live coverage of today's workshop - we don't want cameras in here distracting us from our deep thinking - at least, not yet.

Instead, I have agreed to a request from leaders in your region to elect a Curriculum Committee. This committee will listen carefully to the ideas put forward here today. They will vote on proposals, and make recommendations to policy leaders, students, teachers, and the general public on which ideas should be implemented as soon as possible.

We will now roll the dice to find out which players have been elected onto the Curriculum Committee. [Roll dice]

*GM: Consider the total size of the group and decide how many members of the Curriculum Committee you will need for the game (refer to the next page). Ask each player to roll the dice. Each player who rolls a six is "elected" onto the Curriculum Committee. **Stop rolling** when the required number of Committee members has been reached.*

After the roles have been allocated, say this:



Congratulations to the newly elected Committee members! The rest of you are now members of different Advocacy Groups. Please take a few minutes to read the instructions for your respective groups. I will check that you understand your roles before we begin the game.








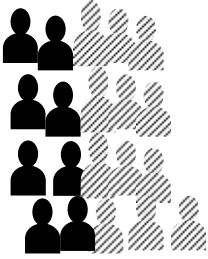
Elected members of the Curriculum Committee, today you will listen to the different ideas that are presented by the Advocacy Groups. You will ask probing questions, vote on the ideas you like best. Finally, you will make recommendations to leaders, governments, and the public in your regions, based on what you hear today.

Advocacy Groups – you will each be arguing the case for one particular idea for the future of the curriculum. You must do your best to answer the Committee’s questions as well as you can, and persuade them that your idea is the best idea presented here today.

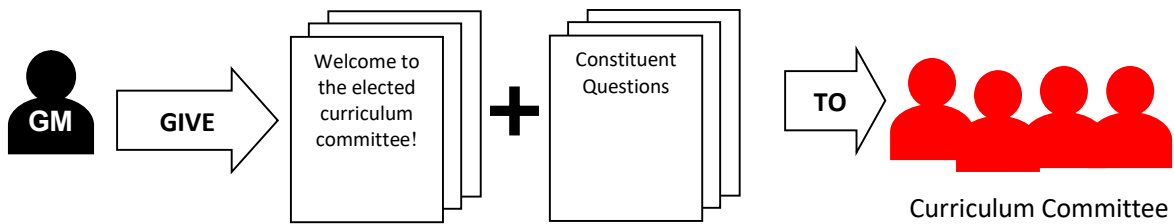
I will give you further information about your roles in a moment.

Deciding how many players to allocate to each role

Use these guidelines to help you decide.

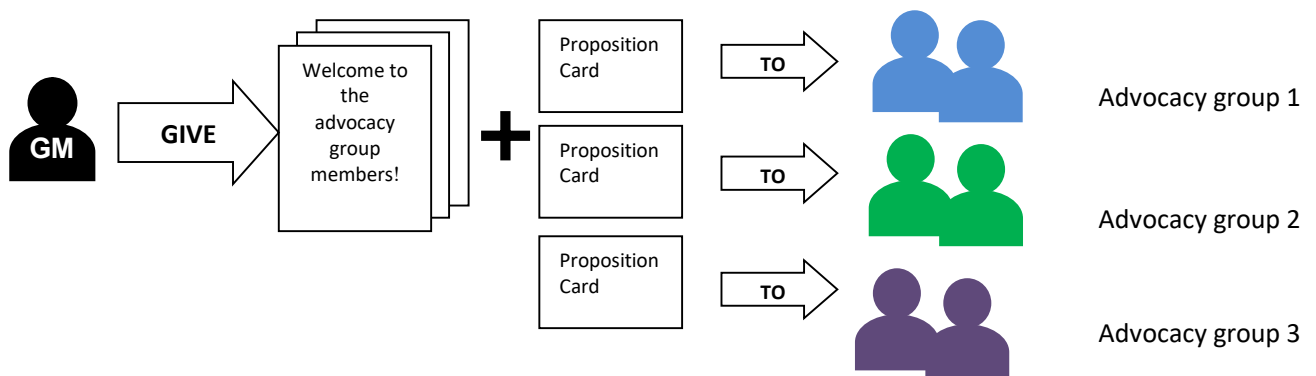
	Curriculum Committee	Advocacy Groups	Public Gallery
Small group (3-8 players)			N/A
Medium group (9-15 players)			 Optional
Large group (15+ players)			

Preparing the Curriculum Committee



The Curriculum Committee's first task is to elect a Chair, as explained in their instructions. Give the Committee enough time to read their instructions and look at the constituent questions.

Preparing the Advocacy Groups



Each Advocacy Group receives one Proposition Card which they will use for the whole game. As GM you decide whether the Proposition Cards are allocated at random or whether you will assign specific Proposition Cards to specific groups. Before the game, you may also decide to create new Proposition Cards to use in addition to, or instead of, those provided. In any game, only some of the Proposition Cards will be used. Give the groups enough time to read their instructions and become familiar with the position they will be arguing for.

Preparing the Public gallery

These players do not need any further instructions. They can sit and observe the game play. At the GM's discretion, members of the Public Gallery may be invited to vote by a show of hands at the end of each playing round.

When all groups are ready, the Committee is in Session and gameplay officially begins.

How the game works:

Round		Description	Scoring
1	Introductory round	Chairperson asks each group to stand and <i>briefly</i> introduce their idea.	This is a non-scoring round. The committee will listen without asking questions
2	First Question is announced	The Committee selects their first question , which is read aloud. All the groups have a few minutes to think about their answers.	
3	First question is answered	Each group takes a turn to publicly answer the question. Set a time limit (e.g. 2 minutes or less) for each group.	This is a scoring round. After the committee has heard from all the groups, each committee member will privately vote for <i>one</i> group (secret ballot). Their ballots are passed to the GM for counting.
4	Second question is announced	The Committee selects their second question, each group has a few minutes to think about their answers.	
5	Scores from first round are announced	The GM will announce scores after the first question round	
6	Second question is answered	Repeat as above (Row 3)	Committee votes by secret ballot
4	Third question is announced	Repeat as above (Row 4)	
5	Scores from second round are announced	Repeat as above (Row 5)	
6	Third question is answered	Repeat as above (Row 3)	Committee votes by secret ballot
		Final scores announced, discussions, and final comments by the Committee.	

Welcome to the elected Curriculum Committee members!

Congratulations on your election to this important Committee!

Your first job as a Committee is to elect a Chairperson. You can either call for a volunteer from your Committee, or roll the dice. The first person to roll a six will be your elected Chairperson. Select your Chairperson now.

In a few minutes your Committee will hear from a range of Advocacy Groups who want to tell you their ideas about a curriculum for the future. **We recommend that all Committee Members have pen and paper to make notes about what you hear.** The Game Moderator will be responsible for keeping time.

When the groups are ready, the first introductory round will begin.

The chairperson of the committee will ask each group to *briefly* introduce the idea that they will be putting forward in today's debates. (No more than 1 minute per group)

After all the groups are introduced, the chairperson will announce the **first question**. The question is read aloud, and all the groups have a few minutes to prepare their responses to the first question.

After you hear from each group, each member of the Committee will vote by secret ballot for the group they thought provided the best answers to that question. Pass your secret vote to the GM for counting.

The game will continue for two more rounds i.e. **three questions will be asked and answered** before the game ends.




At the end of the game the Committee will be asked to sum up the key ideas from today that they will be taking as recommendations to the public, and to educational leaders in your regions.




Listen to your Game Moderator for further instructions.

Constituent Questions

On the next page you will find questions gathered from the public and educational leaders in your region. It is your job as a committee to decide which **three questions** you will ask the Advocacy Groups during the game. It is recommended that you decide on your **first question** now. You can choose your subsequent questions during the game.

THESE PAGES ARE FOR THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

 <p>Category 1 Employment and economic productivity</p>	 <p>Category 2 Learning and assessment</p>	 <p>Category 3 Teaching</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How will this curriculum prepare students for work, and what kinds of work might they do? What are the short and long-term economic impacts or benefits of this curriculum, for your region? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tell us a compelling story about one particular learner, and what this curriculum means for them. How will you assess learning? How will you report to parents on student progress? What will you report? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What support will be needed for teacher professional learning, as schools transition to this new curriculum? What are the implications for the future teaching workforce, and initial teacher education? Tell us a compelling story about one particular teacher, and what this curriculum means for them.

 <p>Category 4 People and communities</p>	 <p>Category 5 Local and global environment</p>	 <p>Category 6 Equity</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How will this curriculum contribute to community cohesion? What role do families and communities have this curriculum? How does this curriculum contribute to human wellbeing? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What impact will this curriculum have on local environments in your region? How will this curriculum help learners to deal with global environmental challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss? How will this curriculum contribute to the wellbeing of the planet? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Are any learners or communities likely to be disadvantaged in any way by this curriculum? How do you propose dealing with this? How will this curriculum support learners with special educational needs? How will this curriculum reduce or eliminate existing regional and global inequalities?

<p>Category 7 Tools, environments, and resources</p>	<p>Category 8 Knowledge and expertise</p>	<p>Category 9 CREATIVE</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where will learning happen? What kinds of physical and digital resources will learners need, and what environmental impacts will these have? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What forms of knowledge (subjects, disciplines, other forms of knowledge) are important within your curriculum, and why? What kinds of deep expertise will learners need access to? How will they access that expertise? 	<p>Pick any question, and ask the groups to present their response in a creative way, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw it Act out a short “scene” Choose <u>one word</u> to capture the essence of your answer (then explain why that word was chosen) Committee’s choice! (Any other ideas you have)

Welcome to Advocacy Group members!

Congratulations on your willingness to argue for bold new ideas for a curriculum for the future!

In a moment you (or your pair/group) will draw a Proposition Card that explains your Advocacy Group's key ideas. Please take time to read through your Proposition Card to ensure you understand your Advocacy Group's position.

Round 1

In the first round, each Advocacy Group will be invited to give a short oral presentation to the Curriculum Committee (no more than two minutes). Your goal is to present your position clearly. This is a non-scoring round.

Q & A Rounds (Scoring rounds)

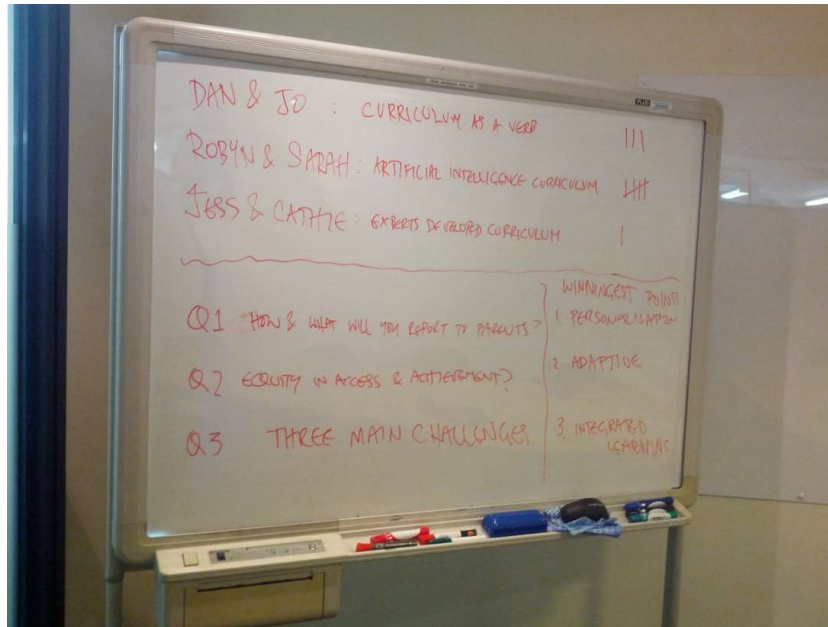
After Round 1, each Q&A round will be a scoring round. In each round the Curriculum Committee will ask each Advocacy Group a question. Your group will have a few minutes to plan your response to the question before you are called on to present to the Committee.

At the end of the round, the Game Moderator will ask each Curriculum Committee member to vote by secret ballot for the Advocacy Group they believe gave the BEST response to the question during that round.

The GM will randomly select which order the Advocacy Groups will present in for each round, and he/she is responsible for timekeeping and will tell you when your time is up.

When you have read these instructions, please ask the GM for your Proposition Card.

Example Scoreboard



To end the game

After the desired number of rounds (we recommend a minimum of 3 Q&A rounds), tally the scores to determine which team won the most votes from the Curriculum Committee and/or the Public Gallery. This team may be declared the "winning" team.

However, this is not the end of the game. The final act of the Curriculum Committee is to confer for a few minutes and make an announcement about which **THREE KEY IDEAS** they will carry forward in their recommendations to the Government regarding the future of the Curriculum. These three ideas could be drawn from any of the Advocacy Group presentations or from the combination of ideas presented.

The game ends when the Committee has announced and explained their three favoured key ideas.

At this point we recommend opening up the space for an out-of-role debriefing session and discussion of ideas that have been generated through playing the game.

PROPOSITION CARDS

"The artificial intelligence curriculum"

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.

OUR POSITION


We believe that the curriculum should be developed by artificial intelligence systems. There is so much knowledge in the world now. It's too much for human curriculum designers to process. Let's give the human minds a rest, and harness the power of artificial intelligence to shape better learning systems.

Just think how much the social media algorithms already know about each one of us! They want to use their technology to sell us products, but we want to use the technology to shape better learning.


Technology makes it so easy to track and record every learners' progress, interactions, habits, from the earliest age. An artificial intelligence curriculum system will be able to predict what will interest and motivate the learner at any point in time.

The system we propose will constantly search the global pool of human knowledge and match it with each learners' needs, interests, and prior knowledge. Learning will "just in time" rather than "just in case". The system learns from billions of interactions with billions of learners – no human could do that.


(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)



Artificial Intelligences are the way to go. These systems are perfect for lifelong learning. Learners can have a personalised curriculum generated for them for the rest of their lives, not just when they are at school. (Josh)



We humans built these systems. Now they're smarter than us. Let's harness their power to help us learn in ways our parents could never have imagined! (Nicki)



The curriculum developed by A.I. will never be out of date, because it's adaptive and highly personalised. Learners are always connected with the global pool of human knowledge. Basically the whole world is learning together and teaching each other and themselves – all enabled by smart technologies that also learn. (Tobi)

"The sustainable planet curriculum"

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.


OUR POSITION

We are listening to the pleas of our children. They say we must take urgent action to ensure that they will *have* a future. Scientists have been warning us for years that our societies are not sustainable. We are consuming the Earth's resources too fast. We are putting too much CO₂ and methane into the atmosphere. Our climate is warming. The earth's biodiversity is on the brink of collapse. We could lose millions of species before the end of this century. The human species may not survive either – for what will we eat, how will we live, on a planet where we have destroyed the natural systems on which we depend?

Scientists tell us we have only a few years to make massive changes to our ways of living on this planet. We are calling for a re-orientation of the curriculum so that the central goal of *all learning* is based on how we can live sustainably on this planet.

We see this as an opportunity to get creative, and return to happier, healthier ways of living. There is nothing better than learning to live well, build healthy communities, and take good care of this beautiful blue planet.

(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)





We can't make choices today that we know will cause harm to future generations. We have tried to live outside the limits of the natural world for too long. (Raven)

We have a saying around here:

"We need to plan for the child who is born in 100 years".

Actually, what about the children that will be born in 1000 years? They will still be living with the CO₂ we are putting in the atmosphere today. Is that fair? (Mikaere)



Young people will learn from their environments. They will grow their own food, use resources sparingly, and living in healthy, low-carbon communities. We'll reconnect with Mother Earth. We will also be more connected to each other. Doesn't that sound a lot better than how things are today? (Liesje)

"The arts-based curriculum"

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.

OUR POSITION

We promote an arts-based curriculum.

We believe that the arts provide opportunities to develop embodied, aesthetic, emotional, social, and intuitive ways of knowing. These ways of knowing are necessary for living and learning in a complex and dynamic world.

Through the arts students can develop, not just their knowing but also their being – a sense of themselves in the world. Creative people are our future. We believe there is creative potential in everyone, it's time we did a better job of helping learners find the artistic power inside themselves.

Learners will still learn different knowledge like science, mathematics, history, languages, and technology, but everything will be woven together through the creative arts .

(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)

The arts are necessary for intellectual, affective, perceptual, and imaginative development. All of human history shows us that this is true. (Daniel)

Far too much attention is given to logico-mathematical thinking at the expense of other ways of knowing – perceptual, embodied, aesthetic, emotional, social, and intuitive. (Jessica)

The arts provide ways of expressing things that cannot be said in words. That opens up a whole new way of thinking (Talitha)

Artists can change the world, because they can dream and imagine and create. Who else is good at that? Children. Let's grow that potential in our kids rather than drive it out of them (MaiLynn).

"The global elite curriculum"

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.

OUR POSITION

We believe that to compete in the global economy, we must develop a top tier of professionals to work in and develop the technological and creative industries of the future. We propose developing an 'elite' curriculum for those students identified as having the potential to become part of the global talent pool.

We don't need everyone to achieve this level of education. Many people would be happier and better off if they didn't have to go to school. They could just stay in their communities and help their families, grow food, or whatever.

(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)

By investing in those with the capacity for innovation in technology, science, and the creative industries, we will not only enhance our competitiveness in the global market place, but will increase the quality of life for everyone.
(Tyron)



The world's challenges can only be solved by applying the best minds to our problems. Let's make sure that the leaders and decision-makers of the future have been rigorously educated, using the best resources. (Shelagh)



We need to dominate the field of knowledge work by developing a top tier of designers, inventors, researchers, and professionals.
(Greg)



Some people are good at learning, and some people are good at other things. Why should we force everyone to be educated, when they might want to do other things instead?
(Chaz)



"The localised curriculum"

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.

OUR POSITION

We want a locally-developed curriculum that connects learners with the knowledge, people, and resources in their community. This curriculum will help learners find their interests and passions as well as contributing to the overall economic and social viability of the community.

Every community is different, and local decisions can determine what will work best in each place.

Students could be out learning in local environments or with local businesses. They might even spend some time participating in local government matters.

The era of the industrialised, globalised, inefficient carbon-based society is over. We believe in integrated planning systems for education, transport, housing, and health services that help communities to flourish in all ways.

(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)

People come and go, but we want our community to be here and flourishing for hundreds or maybe thousands of years. Children should have the opportunity to learn from this place, and all the people and resources that we have right here on our doorstep. (Shayne)



It's crazy that we have stuck with this Industrial Age "one size fits all" curriculum mindset for so long. The future is going to be about localised sustainable communities that are healthy, happy, productive, and efficient. (Ayesha)



We know that kids won't necessarily stay in one community their whole lives. We're not saying they should. Our kids will be adaptable, because they'll have such rich connected learning opportunities. They'll take that adaptability with them even if they do end up living, studying, or working somewhere else. (Chiara)



"Co-development with learners"

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.

OUR POSITION

We strongly believe that curriculum should be co-developed with learners. We believe that failing to involve learners in this way is a breach of Article 12 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children have the right to express opinions and have their views taken into account in any matter impacting on their wellbeing.

It's time we stopped creating the curriculum *for* them and started creating the curriculum *with* them. We believe this can be done with learners of any age.

(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)

Children aren't just vulnerable people in need of care and protection by adults - they are people with rights. They can form and express opinions, participate in decisions, and help to develop solutions to problems that affect them. They have the right to be involved in all educational decisions, including the most important decisions of all - what they should learn. (Himani)



We aren't saying that children know everything or that they can make all their learning decisions for themselves. What we're saying is that they must have the right to participate alongside adults in shaping not just how they learn but what they learn. As adults it's our job to ensure that children and young people are able to exercise this right. How else can we expect them to develop as fully participating citizens and members of their communities? (Jillian)



That's right, we're saying it's time to share some of that power with the learners. I suppose some people might find that a scary thought but I think they aren't giving the learners enough credit - when we give them this chance to shine and lead they're amazing! (Aaron)



The "let's stick with what works" curriculum

Remember, your job is to convince the committee that your idea is the best idea. You are not limited to what is written on this page – use it as a starting point for building your case.

OUR POSITION

We've heard all the talk about redesigning the curriculum and doing things differently, but we really can't see the point.

What's wrong with the curriculum we've got? All this questioning and change, all it does is waste time that people could spend learning.

(Here's what some of the people in your community say. You might like to use some of their quotes to strengthen your case)



If it ain't broke, don't fix it. (Lorna)



I can't believe this is what taxpayers money is being spent on. Aren't there more important things to worry about than what's in the curriculum? (David)



Asking everyone's opinion is just a big waste of time. You might as well just let teachers get on with the job and stop messing around with these questions. There are just too many interfering pointy-head types wanting to control society with their ideas. (Clint)



Where's the common sense? That's what school taught in my day. (Leigh)

Appendix: Explanatory Notes from the Game Creators

What kind of resource is this?

Curriculum for the future is a set of resources designed to support open-ended, thought-provoking conversations about learning and curriculum today and into the future. The three resources can be used separately or together, and in any order.

- Part 1 is a workshop resource designed to support modular activities and discussion.
- Part 2 (this resource) is the *Curriculum for the future* live action role play game.
- Part 3 is the *Curriculum for the future* digital game.

All of the resources can be found online at <http://www.nzcer.org.nz/research/curriculum-future>.

What is the intention behind this game?

We created this resource in the form of a game with the intention that it should be provocative, challenging, strange, and fun. The game is modelled on other tabletop role-play games (RPG), where "players act out their role by deciding and describing what actions their characters will take within the rules of the game"¹. Dungeons and Dragons is a famous example, but there are hundreds of other games in this style, set in a variety of contexts from the fantastical to the mundane. Although not everyone likes role-play games, many people do, and it is a format that invites creative exploration within a tried-and-tested blueprint.

The role play game *Curriculum for the future* gives players permission to suspend some of their own ideas and assumptions about curriculum (and many other things) in order to playfully explore the question "what *could* the curriculum be?" Players can try out ideas that might seem outlandish or unworkable in current real life. They can argue for positions that they may or may not really agree with, or even fully understand. It's safe to do this kind of exploration in a game because there are no real or serious consequences - there are no ways to "get it wrong", and the curriculum ideas that the group of players collectively generates or imagines do not necessarily have to be acted on. The worst case scenario is that the game is boring or pointless - but since so much of the game's success depends on what players put into it, we think the chances of this are small.

What if people don't want to play?

Some people just aren't into role play games, we understand. If people in your group say they don't want to play, you could suggest they "observe" in the role of members of the public gallery. They won't have to do much, but can still be part of the game and hear what others have to say.

You might also like to check out the digital game version of *Curriculum for the future*.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabletop_role-playing_game

Thanks for using this resource!

We'd love to hear your comments and feedback.



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