

2.3. GAMIFICATION AS A BOOSTER IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

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2.3.1 Introduction: the new reality of teaching as the starting point

Updating in high education is not only related to the materials we offer our students but also to the teaching tools we use. Nowadays we need to face the importance of making our lectures more than just a monologue. The old-style sessions where the professors would offer the information and the students would memorize it, are doomed to disappear. In this sense, there seems to be a new trend that understands the learning process as an active one, so the student would be considered as a creator of knowledge being the owner of their learning process. This is intended to build a class session that could be perceived as a context where we create knowledge in a collaborative and active way.

It is also important to take into consideration the impact ICTs have made in the education system. Thus, the use of this kind of technology in the class couldn't be understood as something extraordinary, but as a tool to be used on a daily basis for our teaching. Overall if we aim to achieve what has been called "the 21st-century skills": communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative thinking. Beyond that, if we take advantage of the ICTs to offer our students appealing materials and interesting ways of learning, the combination is a win-win. Also, we need to bear in mind that these techniques have shown to be highly efficient when talking about grades, interest, commitment, and skills acquisition.

Taking all of the above under consideration, I am sharing here my experience with the *Kahoot* platform and app whose motto is "Make learning awesome". The use of this platform is related to gamification as a teaching/learning process. Conceived as a kind of trivia, you can apply this tool for designing questions around a specific case law study as it will be exemplified in the teaching material. This particular initiative was implemented in a Master's Degree Program in *Water Coastal Management*, specifically in the *Conflict Resolution* subject. Although this was a postgraduate program, students weren't used to legal terms and vocabulary as the Master's Program was on water management, and their backgrounds were so diverse. Taking this under consideration, the level of difficulty couldn't be extremely demanding, in that case, the group would have lost interest. So, the concepts needed to be addressed in a challenging but available way. I strongly recommend using this tool in first courses, but it can also be applied in higher courses though in specific circumstances such as the ones in my experience. As for the level of difficulty you can tailor it to your own scenario, context, and level. It is a very flexible tool so you can adjust the setting from a base level to an

extremely difficult one, it will depend on the kind of questions and the matters you are addressing.

Regarding the schedule to prepare the materials, it would be advisable to compose the questionnaire once you have explained the whole lesson and you have had the opportunity to test the level of comprehension and the times of study of your own group. Designing the questions and uploading them to the platform wouldn't take you more than an hour, depending on how long you would plan the test to be. In class, it would also depend on your specific schedule, you can choose the time for questioning, for answering and I also add extra time after each question to explain and discuss the answers, not just the right ones but overall all the incorrect ones.

The learning outcomes projected are mainly related to involving students in their own learning process, so they can be active figures in the class. By considering so, another of the goals would be to ease and simplify the process of comprehension for difficult terms and concepts from Law that students may have not heard before. Last but not least, there is a strong commitment to collaborative work lying below this proposal, as the students would need to make groups to answer the test on *Kahoot*.

2.3.2 Methodological Guidelines

1.- Creating your account: You can use the app or the web, both are very friendly and intuitive interfaces. One key aspect you need to know is the difference between *kahoot.com* and *kahoot.it*. The first one is the platform for teachers to design the quiz and the second is the one for joining an existing game that has already been designed. So, taking the web as the guiding example, the first step would be to get into *kahoot.com* and sign up. The platform would ask you which type of account would you like to create. Four options would display on your screen (teacher, student, personal and professional), you may go for the teacher one. Then you would be asked about your education organization, again four options to choose from (school, higher education, school administration, and business), so in our case, it would be higher education. And the last step would be the usual creating an account process, signing up with your email, and setting a password. To make the process easier you can log in with your Google, Microsoft, Apple, or Clever account.

2.- Designing the teaching material: once you have logged in, you'll find in the upper right corner the *create* button, which will give you two options *kahoot* or *course*. This time we will go for the *kahoot* and you can start a design from scratch or use a template to guide you. I encourage you to use the blank canvas as it is a very friendly and easy process that will give you the opportunity to customize and adapt the quiz for your class requirements. Once you have chosen that, you'll find a three-part screen (Figure 1).

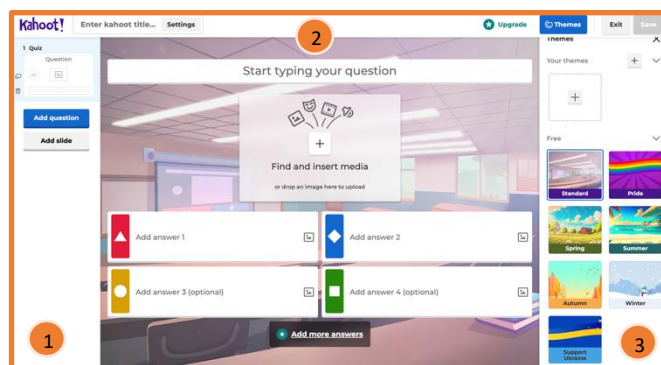


Figure 1. Kahoot! and the K! logo are trademarks of Kahoot! AS

In screen 2 you have the view of the question you are designing at this very moment. You have the start typing your question panel and you can also add some media. By default, four options of answer will display, but you can delete or add more as long as you have at least two answers. Once you write the answers you can click on a circle that will appear, to let the system know which one is correct. As an extra feature, you can add pictures to each answer, if you want to make the options more attractive or visual to your students.

Moving into screen 2 you have the general overview of your quiz and quick access to easily add new question slides by pressing the add question button. The system will ask you which kind of testing would you like to add, showing an example. You have a quiz, true or false, type answer, slider, puzzle, or quiz + audio, note that only the first two are for free, the others are premium features. My experience is based on true or false, and quizzes, as they are quick, fun, and keep this resemblance with a TV contest show. You'll find two more tabs: question bank and question generator. The question bank is a very useful tool if you become a regular *kahoot* user, so you can save your questions by categories and use them in any other test. You can also have access to public question banks.

Screen 3 is for special settings. If you click the upper button "themes" you can customize the wallpaper for your quiz by using the free ones provided by the platform or even uploading your ones. If you click screen 2 the setting would be for the specific question displayed, so you can establish the time limit for answering (I usually use 20 seconds, depending on the length of the question), the points (standard, double, or no points), and the answer options (single or multi-select). At the lowest part of this screen, you'll find the *duplicate* button. This is a very helpful option that will allow you to create all your slides having one of them as the sample or model. This short route will save you some time in case you count on using the same general scheme for your questions and answers. There is also the option to *delete* the slide, next to the *duplicate* button. Once you're done you shall title your *kahoot* in the upper left part of the screen, so you can find it easily in your folder, and then save it in the upper right part.

Back in the main menu screen, you'll find in the right part, all of your *kahoots* (Figure 2).

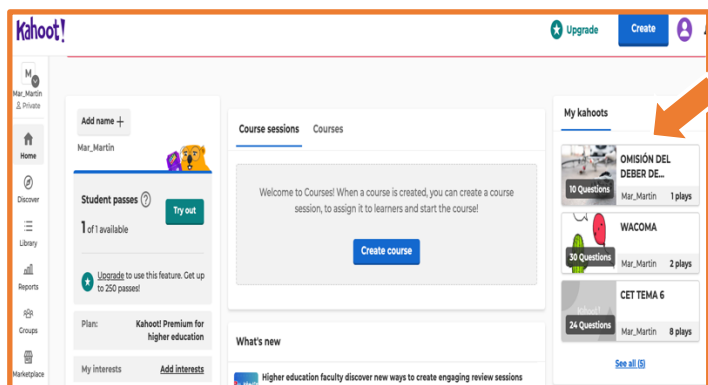


Figure 2 Kahoot! and the K! logo are trademarks of Kahoot! AS

3.- Learning by playing: now that you have your quiz fully designed, it's time for the students to prove their knowledge and skills. They can play in groups or individually, it's up to you depending on your interests. As for my sessions, I prefer the group option, as they can exchange points of view and different readings on the same item. The first thing you need to do is to go to your *kahoots* and click on the start button (Figure 3). An automatic screen will pop up and ask you if you prefer the single or the team mode. Remember there's only room for 10 players (or 10 groups) in the free version. Then you need to choose if they will be playing on personal or shared devices.

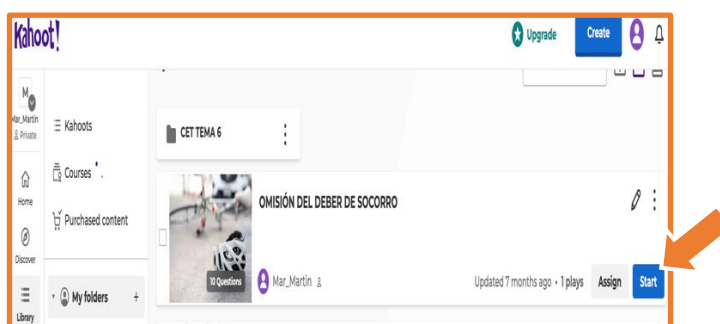


Figure 3 Kahoot! and the K! logo are trademarks of Kahoot! AS

Then an automatic screen will pop up again with a QR and a PIN code you will display in the class so the students can join the game. They can join on *kahoot.it* or via the app, in any case, all they need to do is to introduce the pin or use the QR code. The students can use a nickname of their choice, or pick one provided by the app. Here I recommend they use their real name as you can later download the results and use them for evaluation. The question will be displayed on the screen and then the

answers will appear (Figure 4), and the students will have a fixed time (by you) to answer.

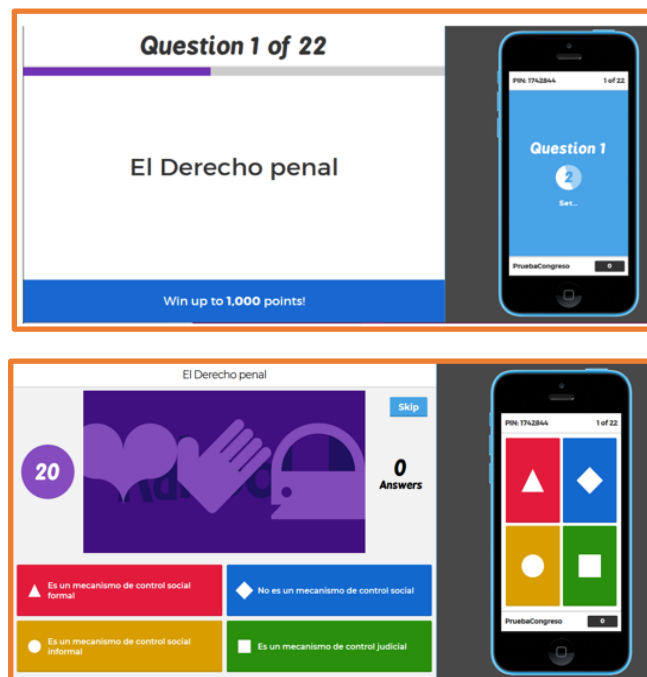


Figure 4 Kahoot! and the K! logo are trademarks of Kahoot! AS

The system points you back taking under consideration not just your answer but also the timing. After the time is over, *Kahoot* would show you the correct answer but also a top 3 ranking. When the answer is incorrect, the student's screen will display a motivational message such as "There are no wrong answers, only new lessons". And I really think this is very encouraging for students, so they don't feel disappointed and also to create a good environment in the class (Figure 5).





Figure 5 Kahoot! and the K! logo are trademarks of Kahoot! AS

Finally, the platform or the app would ask for feedback on the experience not just in statistics terms but also for the student to check if they have accomplished the learning goals. And as I said before the teacher can download the results in case they would like to use it for evaluations or grading.

2.3.3. Evaluation

I really think asking your students back after these kinds of experiences is a must. So whenever I have had the opportunity to use *kahoot* in my sessions I have asked my students what they thought about it. In general terms, I must say that they really enjoyed this activity. In some degrees (not the case for the Master's Program I am using for this shared experience) they have even proposed to create their own *kahoots* for next sessions in order to better internalize the contents of the course. Your students would benefit not just from a new tool but also from a new way of learning, considering it as a process that doesn't need to be something boring or dreary. Regarding how I specifically score this case study, in this Conflict Resolution course, participating in the *kahoot* was a part of the practical activities and it would be rated up to 1 point (out of the 3 points established for the practical part). In this sense, 1 point would be for a full correct test and the rest of the punctuation would be given proportionally. You can download the scores of the students directly after the *kahoot* has finished. That's why I strongly recommend encouraging our students to use real names, so you don't need to ask one by one whose behind the nickname. Another idea for evaluating this case study, is considering it as extra points or even creating a series of 10 easy tests and score them up to 0,1 point so they can have up to 1 point.

Level of difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

Duration: ★★★★★

Main teaching objectives: To involve students in their learning process, to ease the comprehension of essential concepts, and to encourage collaborative work.