

# Pedagogical Toolbox

## Gameplay tools

### Game mechanics: Alliance, cooperation, trade

#### Explanation of the mechanics

Creating a gamified activity that requires group work can be tricky but has many advantages, especially fairness, inclusivity, and interactivity. Even in a game where players are in competition against each other, there are still possibilities of alliance, cooperation, or trade to ensure that all players can efficiently progress and learn, especially if some get stuck or struggle more than others. Peace treaties and collaborations can be instated at certain points of the adventure where each party benefits from the process. Thus, the players may decide to:

- **Join forces:** If players need to face a common enemy, solve a complex riddle, or obtain an object that's hidden or difficult to reach, they could become temporary allies and profit off of each other's skills or abilities, joining their strengths and wits in order to reach a common victory for one step of the adventure and move forward individually.

Such a dynamic can be imposed on the players, with a point in the story where they all struggle with a similar element, losing energy, time and resources if they don't collaborate to overcome a common obstacle.

- **Trade resources:** If a player finds that another has something that they need and they themselves have something another player could need, a fair deal or equal trade of a resource can be performed to ensure that each player can move forward instead of being stuck without the necessary elements that another already has.

This could mean exchanging cards, clues, information or items, transferring points or attribute statistics, switching positions on the board or steps in the story – each solving the other's riddle, question or task, etc.

- **Share resources:** Less direct than a trade, after accumulating a certain amount of resources, items, information, or points, the players could come to an agreement and divide their findings equally or proportionally based on each player's needs and thus gain from each other fairly. If each player has a certain number of cards or clues, they may all show what they have gathered and benefit from everyone's efforts in order to move forward based on, now, common knowledge.

This could be especially encouraged for groups of students with varying prior knowledge or skill levels and if some players struggle with learning disorders and other issues that could make the game unequal and exclusive, accentuating the gap between them.

This process may be met with opposition if the players refuse to share what they have gathered through their efforts, which is why the possibility should be considered of imposing cooperation and solidarity for some steps or points of the story, making it so that some parts cannot be overcome if the students play individually, or allowing for more than one final winner.

While competition can be healthy and bring challenge and interest, it should remain fair and inclusive, and it is also important to encourage solidarity and a sense of community and teach collaboration, communication, and cooperation skills.