

Quickstart Role-Play #1

Online Role-Play

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Introduction

If the learning task is to find out what perspectives and issues surround a process then a role-play might be a useful strategy. This is a simple role-play design which can be quickly developed to increase students' familiarity with a range of issues which relate to the positions people have in a group or organization.

Assumptions

- Topic is one which has to be researched by individual participants.
- Participants have to use the rules that would exist in the real world.
- The role should not require any special background knowledge.
- Total time is constrained to about 16 days.
- Learning task is to produce a collaborative document or a shared task which is also the final assessment for the role-play.
- Each participant writes a brief role description for public consumption.
- Each participant provides moderator with any additional thoughts about intended approach for agreement before beginning.
- Participants sign up with a free email provider as the role they have and send the address to the moderator to ensure anonymity.
- After running the role-play, participants are asked to reflect on the successes and failures of the group to get the task completed.

EXAMPLE: Generating an IT plan at Wolly Primary School

Scenario:

The development of a school IT plan which will integrate a series of management and leadership strategies to form an integrated development strategy for the school.

Rules of contribution:

1. In your e-mail Subject headers start with the three letters WPS; this means you can see at a glance what emails are relevant and if in monitoring them you can file them into one folder.
2. I have written today to each participant with their role. You will need to send to the rest of the group your public personality. Use the "reply all" function on the list of recipients. Also you might like to give yourself a first name at least but my suggestion is to keep your surname in the role so it makes it easier to remember.
3. Send me a private email about your personality if you want to add colour to the public person. Remember you will need to be consistent with your public and private personalities.
4. The member of the group who has the role as principal of Wolly Primary will send a brief description of the School to everyone by next Monday.
5. The school term begins on September 17th. I am assuming that the first email will be from the District Super calling for the IT plan for the school.
6. There is a new teacher joining the school next term; she is the grade 5 class teacher Helen Mason. Please keep her informed also.
7. In your role, you are at liberty to take initiative, etc., as the IT plans are required to be notified to the District Super by September 28th.

Addresses for all people:

- The Principal <email Address>
- The Technology Coordinator

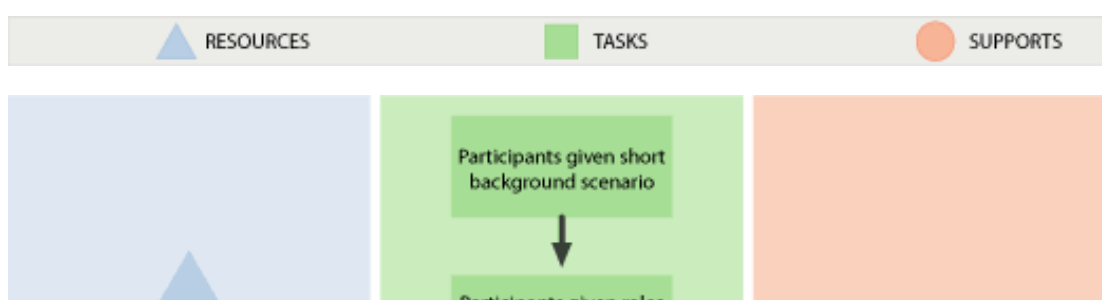
- The President of the P&C
- The Teacher-Librarian
- The Grade 5 Teacher
- The District Super, etc

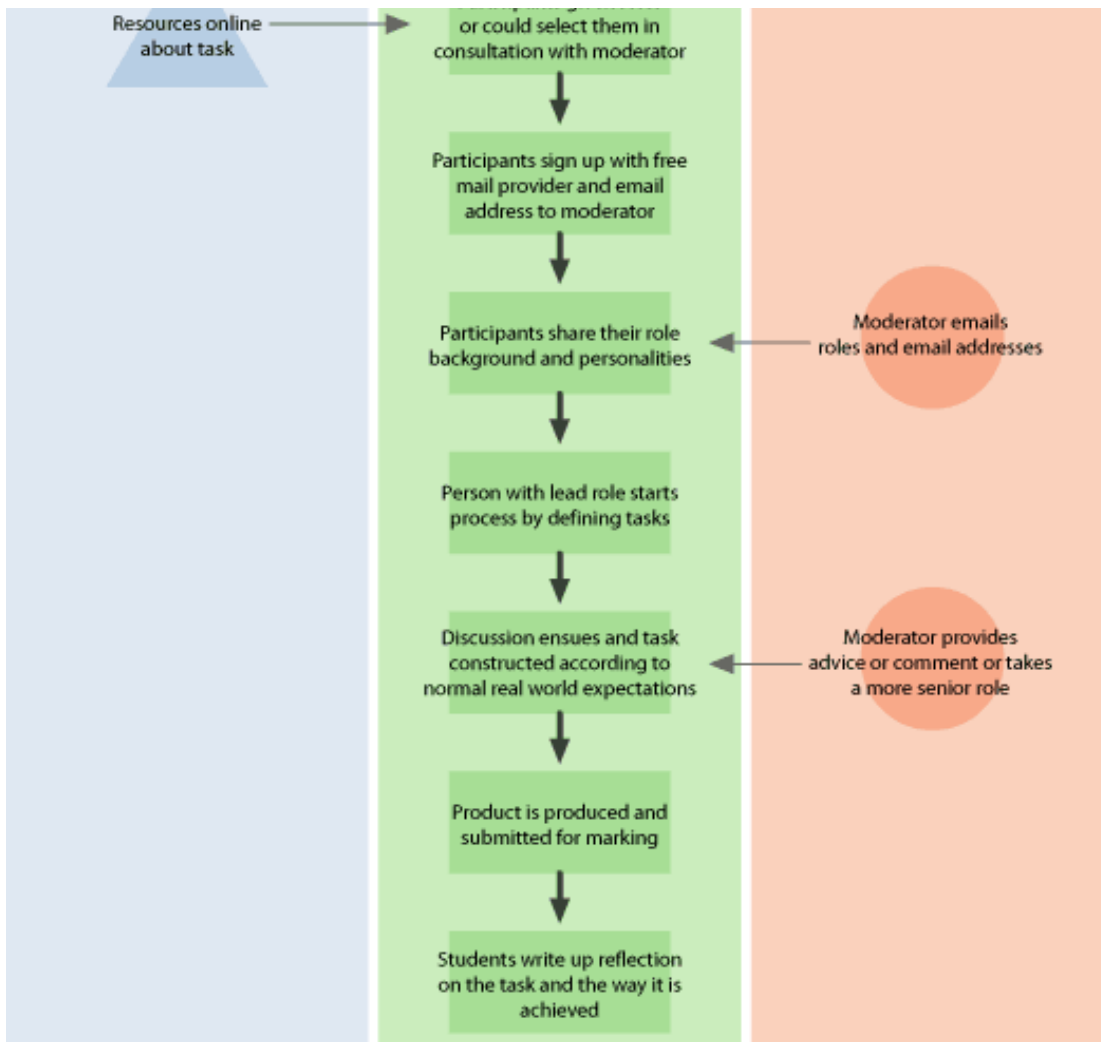
Structure

The following structure provides a series of events which are designed to help the student identify the aspects of the role, and how that role influences the outcome.

Timeline	Activity	Resources
Days 1-3	Give students the general scenario and their specific roles. They are asked to research their role and what their approach to the scenario might be. For instance, the principal of the school might have some particular issues that are most important in terms of budget and requirements. Teachers might have other issues. Department of Education people have different sets of concerns. The Minister of Education might have a set of political issues related to using ICTs in the schools. Note, the role of the new teacher, Helen Mason, can be played secretly by the moderator in order to create perturbances and to provide alternative perspectives, depending on how the role-play is progressing.	Document outlining the scenario
Days 4-6	Either individual students or groups of students research their role and collect useful documents related to their role and the scenario.	Html format document to present roles
Day 7	Students put a public description of their role on the website for everyone to review. Students also submit a private description to the instructor about particular motivations that they think are important for their role. If there are any concerns about private roles then the instructor can talk about it directly with the student. If the class is large then a small group of students might play their role together.	Students upload their role
Days 8-15	Role-play proper starts and is held in a discussion forum space. Should small group play a role closed discussion spaces for that group will be provided and when a response is agreed it will be posted to the main discussion site. During the play it would be expected that some Press Releases from the Minister would be fed into the information available. Several interventions might happen during the play. Play might extend over two weeks if the topic and scenario iare sufficient.	Students develop responses
Day 16	Students meet for a debriefing session about what they thought and what had been accomplished.	Document to suggest methods and what is needed if something is sensitive or contentious
In the following week	Students' assessment task is to discuss the processes through which a plan was formed and what they thought were the pressures on the production of a working and generally useful IT plan.	Criteria for assessment of reflection should be provided

Learning Design Sequence





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