## Template for Creating and Implementing Escape Room Activities

Below is a template to help you to create your own escape room activity and prepare for using it with your students. In each section, write notes and ideas to plan your activity.

# Step 1: Reflect on Course Context

Describe your context. The following questions will guide how you design and construct the game and puzzles.

* Is your class online or in-person?
* What are your students’ levels and backgrounds?

# Step 2: Plan for Curriculum Integration

Think about the course calendar and outline. Decide when within the course to have the escape room activity and how it will fit within the curriculum.

1. What module will you have the escape room activity in? (ex. *Module 4* or *Week 5*)
2. What is the topic for that module? (ex. *tourism*)
3. What are the module objectives? (ex. *use present perfect in the context of traveling*)
4. How long should the activity be? (ex. *45 minutes*)
5. Will the activity be fully online, in-person, or hybrid?

# Step 3: Choose a Theme

Think about your context and curriculum. Choose a theme for the escape room that would work well for the module topic and objectives.

Describe a brief story idea.

* *For a module on tourism:* The escape room is set in a travel agency where students need to find missing information on a boarding pass.
* *For a module on jobs:* The escape room is a career fair mystery where students solve challenges at each booth to complete a job application.

# Step 4: Decide on the Final Task

Think about the escape room theme or story and determine the final task for the escape room.

1. What is the final task? (e.g., *complete missing information in a boarding pass, complete a job application*)
2. Think about how much time the activity will take. How many pieces of information will be needed to complete the final task?
3. How many puzzles will students need to solve to find the information?

# Step 5: Design the Puzzles

Think about the escape room final task. In the table below, list the pieces of information needed to complete the final task, potential puzzle types you could use for finding each piece of information, and notes for connecting with your module objectives. Decide if the puzzle will be fully online or use in-person materials.

**Suggested Puzzle Types**

* Riddles – answering short word or logic challenges
* Word Puzzles – solving anagrams, crosswords, word searches
* Math/Logic Puzzles – completing number sequences, simple equations, pattern recognition, logic grids
* Codebreaking – decoding messages using ciphers (e.g., Caesar shift, Morse code, symbol substitution)
* Physical Puzzles – manipulating objects or paper (e.g., folding clues, assembling cut pieces)
* Hidden Clues – finding messages in images, texts, or around the room
* Sequencing/Sorting – putting steps, timelines, or items in the correct order
* Matching – connecting related items
* Pattern Recognition – identifying visual, numerical, or positional patterns

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| **Missing Information** | **Puzzle Type** | **Module Objectives** | **Online/In-Person** |
| *arrival time* | *sequencing of events* | *identifying the present perfect* | *in person: slips of paper with sentences* |
| *trip budget* | *math/spreadsheet* | *n/a (not connected directly to one of the module objectives)* | *online: Google Sheet* |
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| (add more rows as needed) |  |  |  |

# Step 6: Build the Escape Room Materials

After you have planned your escape room theme, final task, and puzzles, your next step will be to build the materials. Below are some suggestions and tips for building your materials.

1. Create a digital module in your learning management system or a Google Drive folder where you will collect all of the materials for this activity. Even if your escape room puzzles use in-person materials, creating an online module or folder for the escape room introduction and puzzle instructions will keep you organized and facilitate the implementation.
2. Build materials for (1) preteaching vocabulary, (2) introducing the escape room concept and the theme/story for your escape room, and (3) giving general instructions for the escape room activity. These may include mini-lessons, instruction sheets, assignments, and more.
3. Design the materials for each of the escape room puzzles and the final task. Refer to your notes about which puzzles will be online and which in-person. These materials can include handouts, readings, sentence slips, maps, images, and more.
4. Write clear, direct instructions for each puzzle.
5. Prepare any in-person materials (cut paper sentence slips).
6. Test the escape room puzzles to make sure they function as intended. For example, go through each puzzle in student view.

# Step 7: Implement the Escape Room Activity

Your last step is implementing the escape room with your students. Below are some suggestions and tips for implementation.

* Create student groups before class. Think about student personalities, home languages, and other criteria. What grouping method will work the best for your particular set of students?
* Prepare for addressing student questions. Think about how to give hints or help without giving answers to puzzles.
* Set up a timer displayed in front of the class.
* Arrive early if possible to set up the classroom, especially if using in-person materials.
* Plan an activity for groups that finish early.