

# “BUILDING CHARACTER”: A NON-DIGITAL EFL CLASSROOM GAME TO TEACH GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

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*A Non-Digital EFL Classroom Game to Teach Global Citizenship*

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## Abstract

*This paper describes a 16 week-long, live-action experimental game in which English language learners at Universidad de los Hemisferios, a university in Quito, Ecuador, design an avatar and place him/her in an ethical dilemma. The aim of this game is to persuade students to have tolerance and empathy for those in different circumstances. Ian Bogost (2007) says that “procedural rhetoric” involves persuading by having people interact with a rule-based system. The challenge is to see whether the students are able to keep all aspects of the avatar’s identity in mind while role-playing the final game, for only in so doing can they make the leap from their own perspective to that of the “other”.*

## Introduction

The main question in this paper is “Do the game-rules provided enable students to create a non-digital avatar and respect all of its parameters throughout the game?”

The main concept on which this approach is based is Ian Bogost’s (2007) definition of *procedural rhetoric* as “the art of persuasion through rule-based representations and interactions rather than the spoken word, writing, images, or moving pictures” (p9). “Procedures” are parameters of action with rules saying what can or cannot be done in the context. “Rhetoric” refers to the art of defending, explaining or persuading someone of an idea. Thus, procedural rhetoric, according to Bogost, is the art of teaching through a rule-based medium such as, in this case, a serious game.

The players in this game are students at an Ecuadorian university in Quito. Though the country has a large number of indigenous groups, Quito itself is approximately 83% “mestizo” (citypopulation, 2017), and the university itself has very few people from other countries or other cultures. This game aims to allow students to explore ways in which people differ from themselves in terms of national, cultural and professional backgrounds as well as values, abilities and interests, and to consider how these people might act in a fictional setting.

Additionally, Ecuador is a developing country whose youth is only now beginning to aspire to travel and study abroad. Thus, they are aware that the study of English as a global language is now becoming more relevant and necessary, but many of these students will have had limited exposure in their formative years, and that mainly with teachers who themselves had little training in English language teaching. As of 2016, the country claimed to have only 8,000 qualified English teachers for 100,000

primary school aged children (noticias.universia.es, 2016). Many of the students in this study claim to feel anxious, bored and unmotivated by textbook-based courses; this project is an attempt to address that concern.

Therefore, the following sub-questions will be addressed:

1. *Do students use all of the characteristics of their avatar in the final course project? If not, which ones do they tend to focus on least?*
2. *Do students feel they improve their communicative competence in English through this type of course?*
3. *Do students find this type of live game more motivating than a “traditional” textbook-based course?*

### Literature Review



Diagram 1

The diagram above shows the connection between the different elements of this project. The three

outer triangles are all connected in the following ways. Motivation is necessary for learning English as a foreign language. English is a global language and hence an ideal vehicle for discussing global issues. Global issues are themselves intrinsically fascinating to students at this university, in particular issues related to identity and tolerance, and thus increase their motivation to learn.

Serious games, at the center of the triangle, are a well-documented approach to teaching. Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have long “gamified” their classrooms in various ways; more recently, organizations such as Games for Change (Games for Change, s.f.) have proposed that games, as interactive media, can make global issues come alive in ways that other media may fall short. Indeed, games do seem to fulfill much of the “best practice” criteria established by educational scholars such as Ken Bain (2004), including the ideas that “knowledge is constructed, not received” (p26), and “caring is crucial” (p31)

The serious game, though not a learning aim in itself, therefore forms the unifying point of the triangle, providing the vehicle to bring together the other three elements, because a well-designed game can be motivating as well as educational. Thus, the aim of this game is to address all three aspects of the triangle by means of a serious game. Therefore, in this section, games will be addressed first, followed by the others in turn.

#### *Serious Games*

Serious games are a branch of gaming that belongs less to the entertainment industry than the field of education. Such games are not necessarily “fun” in a frivolous sense (though there is no harm in their being so). Clarke Abt (1987), who developed the term *serious games* noted “...these games have an explicit and carefully thought-out educational purpose and are not intended to be played primarily for amusement” (p9). However, to students used to “traditional” teaching methods involving lectures, workbooks and tests, a serious game may be perceived as more interesting simply by virtue of the fact that a game is by definition interactive.

#### *Motivation*

By implementing a game-like approach to the teaching method, the students can be intrinsically motivated to learn English and enjoy class. According to Edward Deci and Richard Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (1985), the three essential elements without which intrinsic motivation cannot exist are a sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Since these elements are key to the “avatar” teaching method, let us examine them briefly.

*Autonomy:* Salen and Zimmerman (2004) define play as “the free space of movement within a more rigid structure” (p304). In the game described in this paper, the player/student has a certain amount of autonomy to make decisions within the space of possibility limited by the rules.

*Competence:* Standardized tests aim to compare students, whether within the classroom, or globally as in the case of international examinations such as the TOEFL. This can leave advanced students feeling overly complacent regarding their own abilities, while under-achieving students can experience discouragement and even “English anxiety”. Educators would do well to emulate game designers by providing interesting challenges for those who are able while simultaneously encouraging weaker students to achieve.

*Relatedness*: English is not merely a set of grammar rules or vocabulary lists to be memorized, it is a tool for communication. As such, it behooves language teachers to facilitate a sense of relatedness among the learners by ensuring that the work of one is crucial to the work of the other. This is the idea behind Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which Scott Thornbury (2006) explains as “strong form of CLT (which) led to the development of task-based learning with its emphasis on “deep end” communication” (p37)

Self-Determination Theory, then, is closely linked to the development of creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking which are the four skills proposed by Partnership for 21st Century Learning as being key for the future. In this project, students are encouraged to use their creativity to develop their avatar in any way they want within the given requirements. The other three skills come into play as they imagine their avatars interacting with each other in situations of their own invention.

The aim of this project is not merely to increase motivation however, for the novelty of the approach alone may be sufficient to achieve that. The other two aims of the project are to help the students improve their level of English and to consider concepts related to identity and empathy. A brief outline of these aims follows.

#### *English*

The first element this game aims to teach is the English language itself. The aim of the university is to have all students achieve a B2 level. However, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) definition of B2 is quite deliberately broad (Council of Europe), for different learners have different learning needs, particularly in a case such as this one where students are all following different programs of study and meet only for this class. The CEFR refers more to what the students can do with the language than with any specific knowledge sets. The approach to language teaching taken in this course is therefore accordingly broad. Rather than planning learning aims for grammar or vocabulary, the idea is to design a course where there is wide exposure to audio and visual texts and ample opportunity for speaking and writing practice. Therefore, the game requires the students to read, watch videos, and do other forms of research in order to synthesize the information in a clear, coherent writing style. Scott Thornbury (2005) and Guy Cook (1989) both present the idea of teaching discourse as going beyond the sentence in order to produce meaning in a context. It is precisely for this reason that the game is non-digital: on a computer-based platform such as Second Life (2003), the avatar is created and shared using visual media, without the need for language. Thus, the medium is essential to the learning.

#### *Identity and empathy*

The second game objective is to teach the idea of identity and empathy. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines Global Citizenship education as having “a sense of belonging to a common humanity, (...) empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity” (2015):. In order to achieve these goals, particularly those related to “interconnectedness” and “belonging” it is worth examining the related concepts of identity and empathy.

Chris Weedon (2004) says that “identity presupposes identification, often in relation to what one

is not". He cites Louis Althusser (1971) who points out that states maintain control by teaching people that their roles within the society are natural. Michel Foucault (1981) further affirms that since the self is a social construct rather than a fixed idea, the self is in continuing discourse with others; in other words, we learn to fit into society by emulating those who are similar to us while distancing ourselves from those we perceive to be different. "Any attempt to define the right to identity must begin with a nuanced understanding of the concept of identity itself. While there is no prevailing legal definition of identity, scholars of law, social science, and philosophy emphasize the importance of an individual's personal and social realities in the formation of a stable yet dynamic identity." (International Human Rights Law Clinic, 2007) Conceptualizing identity as a social construct rather than as a "natural" way of being can lead not only to tolerance of others who may think differently but also empathy for how they perceive the world.

#### *Procedural rhetoric*

Bogost states that video games teach or persuade through procedural rhetoric. However, if the rules cannot be imposed, it follows that the idea cannot be taught through those means. This project is an attempt to apply procedural rhetoric to a non-digital language class game which poses the following two challenges in particular.

*Avatar identity:* In a video game, the rules are built-in and can't be broken (other than by hacking or other illegal behavior). Thus, if the avatar has wings, it can fly, if it doesn't, it can't. At a more complex level, it is possible for the designer to create non-player characters (NPCs) that can respond in a specified way to the avatar to help shape the avatar's identity. For example, NPCs can be programmed to react in ways that demonstrate racism toward the avatar such as by using slurs.

*Language:* In text adventure games, such as *Zork* (1977), correct use of language is essential. In massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs), players from different countries and with different languages often quest together and must find a way to communicate. Since that language is often English, it becomes a *de facto* requirement to have enough communicative competence to play.

The English language classroom environment in which this project takes place is different in both cases.

*Avatar identity:* The avatar is purely imaginary rather than visually accessible as a digital image. This means that every aspect of each avatar must be kept in the minds of every player. This can be a challenge if the avatar is too different from the player. It is hard to imagine one's Ecuadorian classmate as Chinese or African without resorting to using potentially offensive stereotypes of accent or clothing. If the player does not act the role properly and consistently, it can be equally difficult to imagine her in a wheelchair or autistic. This means that some aspects of identity are easier to role-play than others.

*Language:* The students in this study are all Ecuadorian Spanish speakers. This means that the use of English as a means of communication is artificially imposed by the teacher, since they could all communicate in Spanish. Moreover, in a live game, there are other forms of communication: for example, friends have ways of communicating a great deal with very few words or gestures.

There are many role-playing games (RPGs) in which the players take on alter-egos during the game, from the classic non-digital Dungeons and Dragons (1974) to MMORPGs such as World of Warcraft (2004). However, these are commercial entertainment games. Therefore, to conclude this section, let us examine three examples of games where this approach is put to educational purposes, which in turn have inspired the project set forth herein.

*PeaceMaker* (2007) is an in-depth look at the Israel-Palestine situation (Burak & Parker, 2017). A two-state solution is envisioned as the winning state (by the designers' choice). The game is complex and includes such issues as honor, religion, history, land, opportunity, and relative military power among others. The perspective taken by the player is either that of the Israeli Prime Minister (a fictional character not based on anyone currently or previously in that position) or of the Palestinian authority (also fictional). Each decision the player takes in this role will be lauded by some and decried by others, and will often lead to violence. *PeaceMaker* inspired the idea for having students deliberately create characters that were substantially different from themselves (though not quite as radically so as in the case of Israelis and Palestinians) in order to learn empathy.

*Second Life* (2003) is not a game *per se* but a platform. Michele Ryan (Ryan, 2008) is conducting a study on the potential uses of *Second Life* in pedagogy, among which she includes role-play "as a way to practice the skill by taking on a role (...) However it can also be used to give a more tacit understanding of the course material. In this case the role playing activities are intended to provide an experience" (p4). As mentioned above, however, it is not only through the role-play itself that learning happens, but also through the act of developing the character, which is why a digital platform would effectively take that experience away.

Another interesting approach is the "Scottish Storyline" approach originally used with primary children in Scotland, and now all over the world (Mitchell-Barrett, 2010). This approach involves providing parameters within which children develop a clear story including setting, character, plot and episodes during the course of which they consider key questions meant to incorporate the elements of the national curriculum. The project outlined in this paper aims to operate along similar lines, though in this case the teacher's role is to provide the framework of the character through the instructions as well as assistance with English, but not to intervene directly in the development of the story.

The challenge, then, in a project of this nature is to design a clear set of rules, which will permit the learning aims to be achieved. In the following sections, the game rules will be outlined. Following that, samples of the student's work will be analyzed to determine to what extent the parameters of the avatar were kept to in the final game. Based on this, plans for a future game can be developed.

## Study

**Context:** In previous semesters, there had been seven groups of English learners at our University. This semester, it was decided to bring the three highest (B1-B2) levels together in order to have one mixed-ability group rather than three. The students are still required to take all of the credits corresponding to the original levels, thus, a student who is in the lower level this term will continue with another project next term. One group (60 students) met Mondays and Thursdays from 11am-1pm, while the second (20 students) met at the same hour on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The course is usually divided into three partials, each covering approximately one third of the semester with 30% of the final grade awarded in the first partial, 30% in the second and 40% in the third. For this project, grades are awarded according to a binary format: if all of the work is completed and corrected by the specified deadline, and a student has a minimum specified attendance record, that student will receive 100% for the partial, otherwise 0%. There are no other tests or forms of grading.

*Instructions*

The structure of the course followed the division of the semester into three partials. In the first, the students created and developed their avatar in pairs. In the second partial, the class was regrouped so that the pairs were split up. During this period, each group selected and researched a sub-culture to which their avatar would belong. In the final partial, the same groups helped each other make short videos in which each avatar was faced with a moral or ethical reason to either stay within the subculture or leave it. Each student then showed the videos to classmates outside of their own group. The viewers had to decide whether the character should stay or leave. (For the complete set of instructions given to the students, please see Appendix C.)

**Analysis and Discussion**

*Research approach and methods*

This project is an action research study, which means that it will be systematically planned, acted on and reflected on (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1992). *This project is the first in a series of experiments in which the teacher creates the parameters for student-created avatars.*

*Motivation and response to the new method: survey results*

Students were asked to compare this avatar method with the textbook-based methods used in other courses using the following chart. The numbers refer to the number of comments coded according to each category (see Appendix A)

	<i>Previous methods</i>	<i>Our method</i>
<i>Positive</i>	40	78
<i>Negative</i>	45	31

Table 1

**Discussion:** From this chart, it can be noted that this new method was generally well-liked and preferred to the more traditional teaching method. Many of the negative comments related more to the excessive group size than to the teaching method itself. Many of the positive comments related to greater autonomy and creativity. The results are generally encouraging and it does seem that students enjoyed the approach.

*Improvement in English: survey results*

Students were asked to evaluate their own gains in terms of English learning. The questions were designed to be deliberately wide and the answers were coded as follows. (Please see Appendix B)

**Discussion:** Many students claimed that their language skills did improve. This is corroborated by teacher observation, which took into account both performance in class as well as improvements in writing during the period in question. It must be noted that certain cultural expectations of a language course, such as the idea that it be primarily grammar-based, self-contained lessons, were not met. This is deliberate on the part of the teacher, as explained above, however, given that this novelty made some students uncomfortable and may have impacted their motivation, it may be worth incorporating more in the way of traditional grammar lessons in the future.

#### Analysis of the avatars

In this section, the focus will be on the first and third partials, specifically the characteristics the students chose for their avatar and whether or not these were evidenced in the final video. For this study, the assignments of ten percent (8) students were chosen randomly by selecting the first four male (M) and four female (F) students alphabetically by first name. The name of the avatar is in italics as is the avatar's gender. In the chart below is each characteristic of the student's avatar along with a Y (yes) or a N (no) to show whether the characteristics were evidenced in the video. (Please see Appendix C for an example of a student's written work.)

	CAREER	INTELLIGENCES AND TALENTS	ETHNIC OR CULTURAL HERITAGE	DISABILITY
Alexandra (F) <i>Breannona (f)</i>	Unemployed poor and lonely (Y)	Playing carnival games and sports (N)	Hillbilly (N)	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (Y)
Camila (F) <i>Emma (f)</i>	President of a Company (Y)	Piano, drawing (N)	Jewish (N)	Autistic (Y)
Cristian (M) <i>Marco (m)</i>	Commerical artist (N)	Microbiology (N)	Greek (N)	Addition to tattoos (N)
Diego (M) <i>Pepe (m)</i>	police officer (Y)	Spatial (Y)	Arab (N)	Mental illness (N)
Erick (M) <i>Elizabeth (f)</i>	Fashion designer (N)	Problem solver (Y)	Malaysian (N)	Deaf (N)
Emilia (F) <i>Willow (m)</i>	Artist (Y)	Linguistic and interpersonal (Y)	Turkish (N)	Addiction to marijuana (Y)
Gabriela (F) <i>James (m)</i>	Actor (N)	Excellent memory (Y)	Finnish (N)	AIDS (N)
Isaac (M) <i>Antonio Nijinsky (m)</i>	Pilot (Y)	Cello, believes in animal rights (N)	Danish (N)	Work addiction (Y)
Juan Carlos (M) <i>Dapa (m)</i>	Emergency service patrol (N)	Created a poetry magazine (N)	Arab (N)	Deaf (N)

Table 2

**Discussion:** The most interesting point to note is that cultural heritage played no part in the eventual



development of the game. There may be several reasons for this, the most obvious being that the final game was acted out by the students themselves in short videos filmed with cell phones; thus, in the absence of using makeup, costume, and/or accents to enact stereotypes (which, to their credit, the students didn't even suggest) there seemed no way to incorporate ethnicity. Therefore, the fault seems to lie more in the design of the course than in the students' intentions. Options to resolve this include requiring students to include an element of their avatar's geography or culture in resolving a problem. Children's stories such as *The Rescue Princesses* (Harrison, 2012), or the *Geronimo Stilton* (Dami, 2000) books do very well at incorporating elements of a culture into the plot of the story, whether it's as simple as hiding behind Chinese fans or as complex as returning captured wildlife to their natural habitat. Students in this project are not children, however, they may enjoy quoting cultural proverbs or explaining a solution to a problem with phrases such as "when I was young, my grandfather taught me..." This solution will not in and of itself teach the complexities of cultural identity, but it may raise awareness of elements of ethnicity and perhaps spark an interest in learning more.

Jobs and special talents did not seem to figure prominently in the final work, but perhaps these are not always essential components of a person's individuality.

Disabilities, particularly physical disabilities as in the example of deafness above, proved very difficult to incorporate. Addictions seemed easier and more fun. There may be a number of reasons for this, however one may simply be that a *dis*-ability is taken to mean the absence of an ability rather than a different way of using one's body to inhabit space. For example, few hearing people truly understand how deaf culture has a linguistic richness all its own. It may be that this game is not a good space to explore these ideas and is better left out of future projects.

What seemed to end up happening in the videos the students' made was that they invented ethical dilemmas and had their avatars resolve the issue on its own merits rather than taking the avatar's identity into account. For example, one student had her character consider leaving a feminist group due to a disagreement over abortion. The character was made to give reasons regarding the rights of the fetus versus the rights of the mother, but without taking into account ways of perceiving the nature of a woman's role during pregnancy in different societies (Catholic, Jewish, Chinese, etc.). In other words, the students demonstrated the ability to see two sides of a question, but not the fact that a person's identity may mean there are more possible ways to perceive the issue.

### **Conclusions and Further Study**

This approach to teaching seems worth pursuing and refining. The students seem more motivated to learn by doing this type of project as compared to more traditional textbook-based courses. This 16-week course incorporates the 21st century skills of creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. And, students' communicative competence in the English language is notably improved. Therefore, these objectives need few adjustments to be reached.

The challenge for future iterations of this course seem to lie mainly in the question of what elements of identity to incorporate into the project. There are better ways to have the students incorporate national and cultural heritage into the development of their avatars, and these should be attempted. The question of illnesses and disabilities would need to either be addressed far more carefully so

that the students can truly consider the lives of those with special needs, or, alternatively, abandoned altogether.

The key challenge remains: if the “rules” according to which the avatar operates, in other words, the character’s way of being cannot clearly be visualized at every step of the game, then the procedural rhetoric of the project will fail. If, on the other hand, the students can demonstrate awareness that the character’s identity impacts its subsequent actions in the game, then the aims will have been achieved.

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## **APPENDIX A: MOTIVATION SURVEY**

	<i>Previous methods</i>	<i>Our method</i>
<i>Positive</i>	Likes it x2 Prefers one levelx2 More organized x6 More grammarx20 Easierx5 Using a book More time to work More readings x2 Work by yourself	Learn to work in groups x5 Work without a book x2 More didactic x2 Interesting x6 Dynamic x9 Real language x3 Fun x4 Learn together x7 More speaking and listening x13 More writing Creative x5 Different topics Learn grammar in context x5 More vocabulary x3 Personalized learning x1 No homework x2 Speaking in public Apply what you learn You choose to learn or not Relaxing Really learning x2 I hate English but with your method I like it a lot x2 No stress about grades
<i>Negative</i>	Memorizing grammar x7 Boring x16 Too much work No speaking x6 No learning x2 Too slow x2 Test focused x2 Book focused x6 Not personalized Too theoretical Writing summaries and essays	Too many ss x13 Don't know exactly what I'm learning x4 Messy x2 Difficult to adapt to new method Too strict on grading Fast x2 Difficult to understand more advanced students x2 Not enough grammar x2 More complicated Not enough grammar Long activities Activities were too young

Table 2.

## APPENDIX B: LEARNING SURVEY

*What do you feel you have learned in this course?* (This question is to help students clarify their own gains during the course)

Speaking x29, vocabulary x17, teamwork x9, writing dialogues and paragraphs x7, improvise, listening x7, grammar x21, general knowledge/history/culture x3, organization, creativity x6, pronunciation x3, that people are complex, research, not be shy x5, think in English

*What do you wish you had learned more about?* (This question allows the teacher to plan improvements for the next cycle of study)

Grammar x13, vocabulary x7, movies, theoretical learning x2, listening x4, pronunciation x4, essay

writing x4, formal letter/application writing, speaking x2, interacting more with classmates, fluency, informal English

## APPENDIX C: INSTRUCTIONS

**First partial: Instructions** *(Note: These instructions were handed in written form to the students as they appear here. The book refers to a grammar handbook written by the teacher containing short descriptions and explanations of grammar points with emphasis on those presenting particular difficulties for Spanish speakers.)*

In pairs

1. The teacher will give you a text from “*Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*” by Studs Terkel (1974). This will tell you a bit about your avatar’s career and his/her opinions about it. You may change the name and/or gender if you wish. **Agree on your ideas.** Then you will **each** write about this in your own words in 5 sentences. Use 2 new words or phrases you found in the text. Use any two grammar tenses from the book.
2. Choose two numbers between 1-7. The teacher will give you two texts about special talents and intelligences, which you will apply to your character. **Agree on your ideas.** Then you will **each** write about this in your own words in 5 sentences. Use 2 new words or phrases you found in the texts. Use any two grammar tenses from the book not used in point 1.
3. Choose a letter of the alphabet. The teacher will give you an ethnic and cultural heritage beginning with that letter. You must research the country of origin and the religion, plus two interesting facts about the culture. **Agree on your ideas.** Then you will **each** write about this in your own words in 5 sentences. Use 2 new words or phrases you found in the texts you researched. Use two grammar tenses from the book not used in points 1 and 2.
4. Choose a letter between A-E. The teacher will ask you to research a particular disability. Consider how this disability manifests in your avatar. **Agree on your ideas.** Then you will **each** write about this in your own words in 5 sentences. Use 2 new words or phrases you found in the texts you researched. Use two grammar tenses from the book not used in points 1, 2 and 3.
5. Find the Myers-Briggs Personality test online at <https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test> Do the test together and invent answers for your avatar. **Agree on your ideas.** Then you will **each** write about your avatar’s results in your own words in 5 sentences. Use 2 new words or phrases you found in the personality test. Use two grammar tenses from the book not used in points 1, 2, 3 and 4.
6. Find 10-15 images related to your avatar. Create a 2-minute minimum video showing your avatar doing something he or she likes. Find a new partner. Watch each other’s videos, look at each other’s collages, and read each other’s work: write a short essay about what you learn about your partner’s avatar from the video, collage and text.

### Part 2: Instructions

Work in groups of 4-5 students. You may NOT work with the same partner as in the first partial.

1. As a group, choose ONE of the following subcultures: *Ana Mia, Punk, Hell's angels, LGBT, Feminist, Gamer, Survivalist, or Hippie*. Individually write 2-3 sentences explaining why you chose that subculture and what you find interesting about it.
2. Research your subculture. You are required to use *Google, Facebook and Twitter* for your research. Keep a bibliography with the link and the date you retrieved it. You may work together to share your information, then individually describe the subculture in 5 sentences.
3. Find an online forum for people belonging to your subculture. The forum may be on any social media site. Take at least 10 screenshots of real conversations and discussions on these sites. Share your screenshots with your group. Based on the screenshots, discuss the values and anti-values of your subculture with your group. As a group, describe these values and anti-values using quotes from the screenshots. Individually, keep a record of 10 new words or phrases you find, along with their explanations.
4. Individually, write a short essay comparing these values and anti-values with those of your avatar.
5. Explain how and why your avatar got involved in this subculture.

### **Part 3: Instructions**

1. As a group, you will help each member to create and perform (ie:speak) in three live-action cell-phone videos of 3-5 minutes each. Each set of three videos will be about one avatar, though naturally there may be several actors. (Therefore, if there are 4 members in the group, the group will have a total of 12 videos in which every group member performs or helps to film)

**Video 1:** Your avatar's values will come into conflict with the values of the subculture. At the end of this video the avatar will be faced with a choice to stay or leave the subculture.

**Video 2:** The avatar decides to stay. Show why he/she decides to stay and the consequences of that decision

**Video 3:** The avatar decides to leave. Show why he/she decides to leave and the consequences of that decision.

2. Video listening task: for each video, answer the following questions:
  - Why did the character consider leaving the subculture?
  - What was his/her final decision and what were the consequences?
3. Writing task: answering the following question: *In your opinion, what were the three most important values shown in the videos?*

### **APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE OF AVATARS**

First partial:

#### **Task 1**

Emma is working in American Corporation. She feels frustrated, because she doesn't have any challenge in her work. Also she is a woman that thinks that values are very important in all aspects of life, because of that she feels impotent in her work, because she notices that people don't care about it. Finally she likes to work alone and hates being useless.

### Task 2

Emma has many talents, one of them is that she has been playing the piano for two years. Also she likes to paint pictures about nature, because of that last month she was painting a picture of an apple tree. Another talent is that she is good at inventing new things, therefore she is making a new magazine. Finally she is an artist that likes to dance.

### Task 3

Emma's religion comes from Israel. Her grandmother was Jewish, therefore she is Jewish too. Al Rosh Hashanah (New Year) she is going to eat apple and honey, because that represents the wish for a sweet new year. She celebrates Shabbat, that that starts on Friday evening and ends on Saturday night. She couldn't eat pork, because in her religion they aren't allowed to eat pig or seafood.

### Task 4

Emma is able to learn many things, despite her autism. Also she has problems to express her feelings. She has had problems to communicate with her employees. Sometimes she has problems to socialize with people. For that reason she has continues conflicts with her boyfriend and that will make them break up.

### Task 5

Emma is a logical person. She is a person who likes to plan, because she always knows what she is going to do. Also she always analyzes things before doing them. She should be more outgoing to relate to people. She will have more confidence in herself, if she socialize more with people.

### Task 6

1. She is from England.



Image 1

2. She is the president of American Corporation.





Image 2

3. She is Jewish.



Image 3

4. She has autism.



Image 4

5. She likes to work alone.



Image 5

6. She is a logical person.



Image 6

7. She is very intelligent.



Image 7

8. She has problems to express her feelings.



Image 8

9. She is shy.



*Image 9*

**10.** She has a boyfriend.

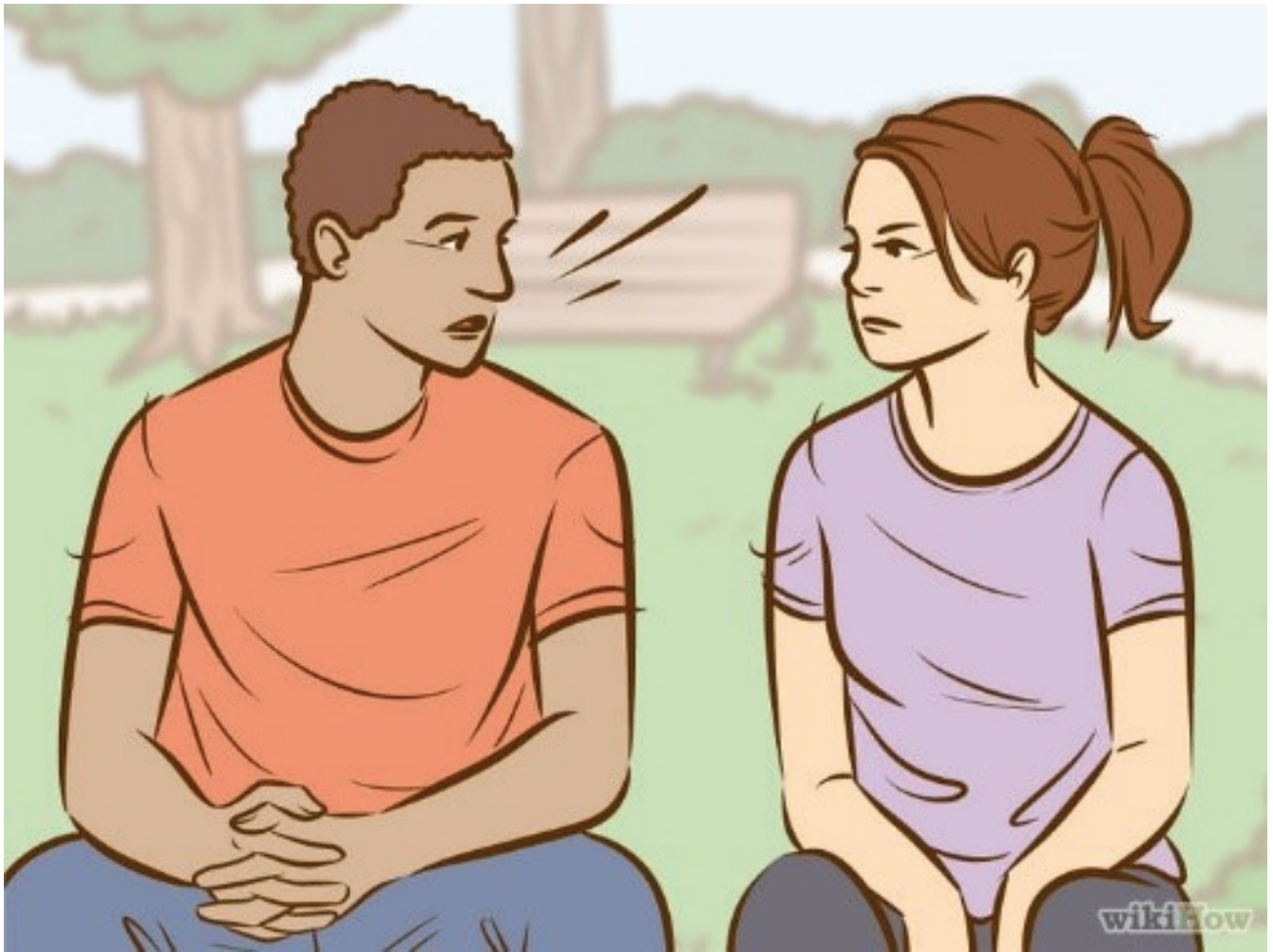


Image 10

11. She has a lot of money.





12. She is very creative.



Image 12

13. She plays the piano.



Image 13

14. She likes to dance.



Image 14

15. She couldn't eat pork or seafood.

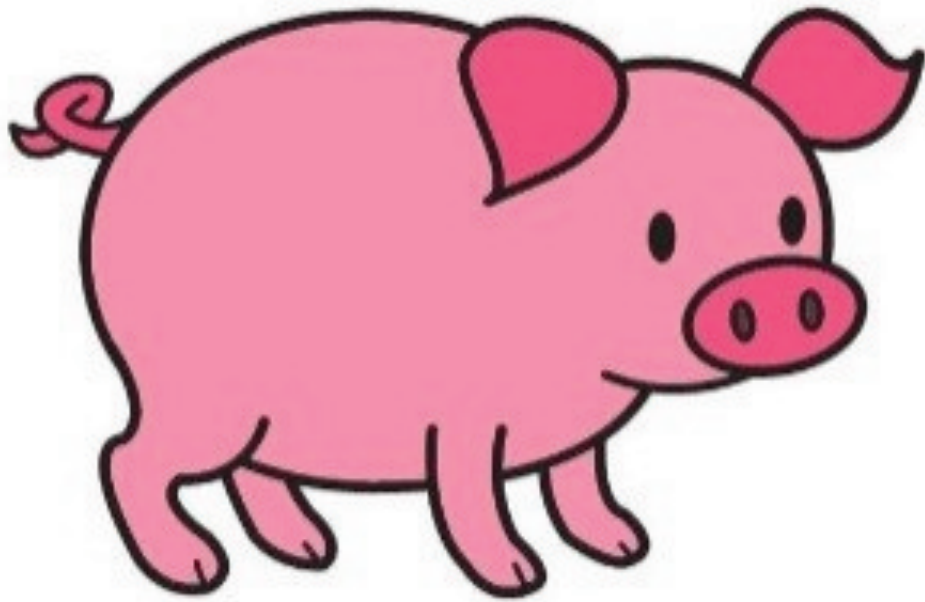


Image 15 A

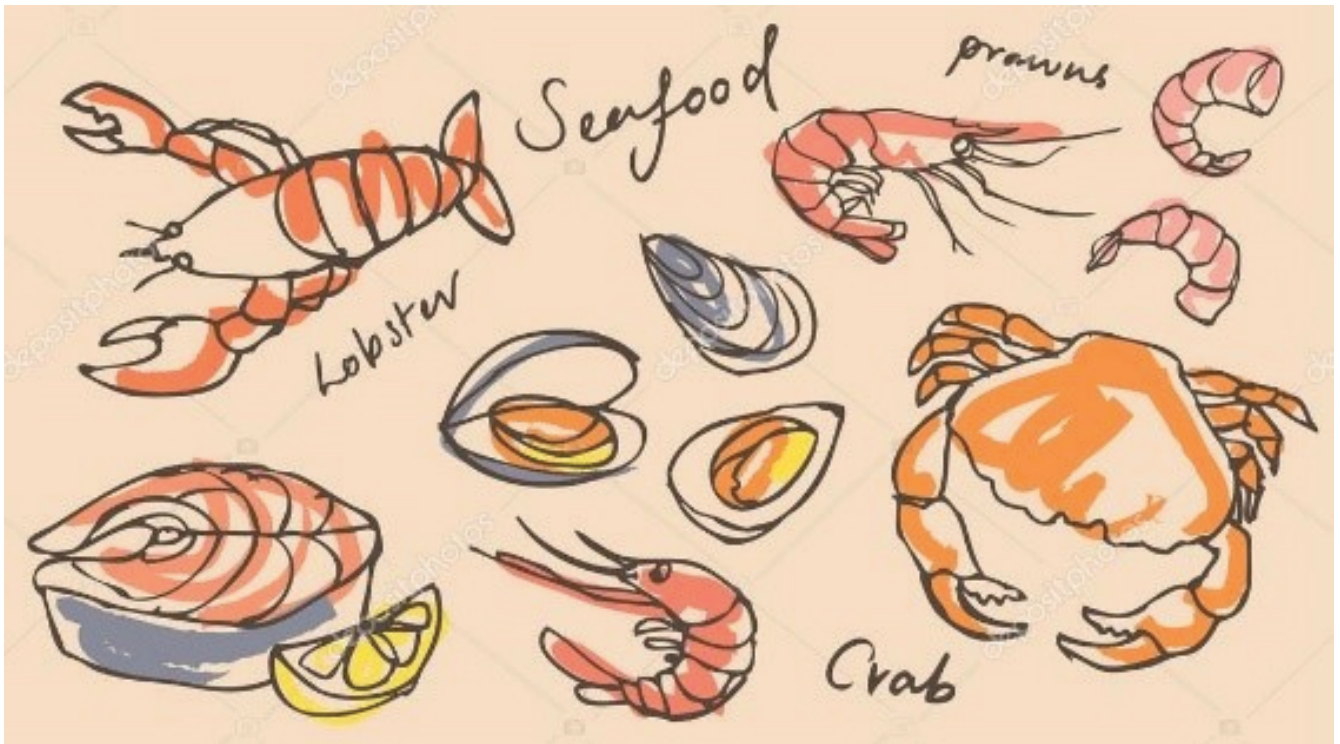


Image 15 B

## Second partial

- **Task 1**

They are a subculture that support the idea, of the bulimia. They don't think that bulimia and anorexia are an illness. Also they use the media like blogs, songs, and poems to transmit their idea. To occult this culture they become vegan.

- **Task 2**

This culture promotes the idea that girls should be skinny. They use web sites to give to the girls some tips to lose weight. They use natural medicine or drugs to lost weight. In most of the cases the girls pro Ana Mia hide their culture from their parents and their doctors. Anorexia is a psychiatric illness characterized by have a low weight, caloric restriction and people don't be satisfied with their body. On the other and Bulimia is an eating disorder which is characterized because people eat a lot of food and they lose the control to do it, but later they vomiting it or use laxatives to eliminate this food for their body.

The web sites pro Ana Mia talk about the anorexia and bulimia, and they think that those are eating disorders but also anxiety disorders. Also they said that the eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. Finally the pages of pro Ana-Mia take inspiration form advertising that shows that the girls look better when they are skinny.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Facebook: <https://rachaelplant.com>

Twitter: #ProAna/ #ProMia

Google: <https://www.medlineplus.gov>

- **Task 3**

### Anti-values

1. **Intolerance** Karen: How dare you call this disease cowardly? You jealous girl! Your comment is disgusting! <https://missanomia.wordpress.com/tips-pro-mia/>
2. **Superb** Deven Marie: My therapist wrote "I am in control" in my mirror. She doesn't know I'm Pro Ana and Pro Mia haha! <https://www.facebook.com/Deven.MarieTorentira>
3. **Frustration** They've been having me alone and letting me diet but I can't voice my felling of failure or tell any of them that I haven't eat all day. <https://www.myproana.com>
4. **Irresponsibility** I only eat one piece of fruit a day. [https://www.twitter.com/proanorexia1/with\\_replies](https://www.twitter.com/proanorexia1/with_replies)
5. **Hate** It's our body we can do what we want with it. <https://thinintentionsforever.blogspot.com>

### Values

1. **Willpower** I eat in breakfast a light babybel and a big cup of green tea.  
<https://www.myproana.com>
2. **Happiness** Being anorexic is positive, bones are beautiful. [https://twitter.com/proanorexia1/with\\_replies](https://twitter.com/proanorexia1/with_replies)
3. **Proud** We are gorgeous, you not. [https://twitter.com/proanorexia1/with\\_replies](https://twitter.com/proanorexia1/with_replies)
4. **Perseverant** We are trying to be thin. <https://thinintentos.forever.blogspot.com>
5. **Privacy** It's our body we can do what we want with it. <https://thinintentos.forever.blogspot.com>

- **Task 4**

Emma **is very tolerant** with people, because she **is working** in a corporation and she has to understand her employees. She is very responsible because she **has been working** as a president of American Corporation for 2 years, therefore she needs to have all the things in order, but on the other hand the people of the group Ana Mia are very responsible too, because they have an extreme control of what they eat, therefore they have a strict order in their life. On the other hand Emma and the Ana Mia group feel frustrated because they can't achieve what they want, because for one Emma **was working** at the same job for 2 years, therefore she wants a new one, which be more comfortable to her, and for the other hand the people of the group Ana Mia things that they are fat, for that reason they want to lose more weight. Emma **has had** problems to relate to people, because she doesn't like to talk about her privacy things with people and the group Ana Mia agree with this idea, because they don't want that people opine about their health. Finally both of them are perseverant to achieve what they want.

- **Task 5**

Emma is a busy woman, because she has to prepare a lot projects for her work, for that reason most of the time she **can't** eat well, because she has little time to do this activity. In the morning she **is going** to eat a piece of fruit and nothing else, because she has to start working at 6 pm, therefore she starts to search on internet about recipes that **will give** her more energy and wouldn't be high caloric, and she can find it in the Facebook page of the group Pro Ana Mia. Later of that Emma stars chatting with one of the members of this group who's call Andrea, and they made friends. Andrea starts to job at American Company, in which Emma is the president and in the break time they went to eat together and Andrea told Emma **if** she wants to continue be skinny, she doesn't have to eat things that have more than 55 calories. Emma said to Andrea that is very difficult to her to follow that rule, but Andrea told her that she knows a group call Ana Mia which could help her and that Emma **should** be part of them. Emma accepted Andrea's proposition and she starts to be part of this group and after joining them, she lost 15 pounds.