

GAME MANUAL

The Truth Behind the Rumour

Educational Tabletop Escape Room (ETER) – Social-Emotional Learning

1. OVERVIEW

♦ Purpose

This Educational Tabletop Escape Room (ETER) is designed to develop students' **social-emotional competencies (SEL)** through a structured, game-based learning experience.

Students will engage in a realistic scenario involving:

- misinformation
 - social dynamics
 - emotional impact
 - responsible decision-making
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Learning Objectives

By the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- distinguish between **facts and interpretations**
 - identify and understand **emotional responses in social situations**
 - evaluate the impact of **rumours and digital behaviour**
 - make **responsible and ethical decisions**
 - communicate effectively to **resolve conflicts**
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Target Group

- Age: 14–18
 - Group size: 4–6 students per team
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Duration

- Gameplay: 45–60 minutes
 - Debriefing: 20–30 minutes
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2. NARRATIVE CONTEXT

A screenshot of a private message has been shared within a school group.

The message appears incomplete.
Interpretations spread quickly.
A student is being judged.

Tension is rising.

Students take on the role of a **School Mediation Team** tasked with:

- reconstructing the events
 - understanding emotional impact
 - identifying misinformation
 - deciding how to act responsibly
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3. CLASSROOM SETUP

♦ Space

The activity can be conducted:

- in a single classroom (recommended)
 - or divided into thematic zones:
 - Incident Reconstruction Area
 - Emotional Analysis Area
 - Verification Area
 - Decision Room
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♦ Materials per Team

- Mission Sheets (1–5)
 - Card sets for each mission
 - Team Code Sheet
 - Pens
 - Envelopes (one per mission)
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♦ Preparation (Teacher)

Before the session:

- print all materials
 - organize each mission in separate envelopes
 - verify codes using Printable Materials document
 - prepare timer
 - review facilitator instructions
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4. GAME STRUCTURE

The game consists of **5 sequential missions**.

Core Mechanic

For Missions 1–4:

1. Students read all materials
2. Select the 4 correct elements
3. Arrange them correctly
4. Turn cards over
5. Read the code

 Correct code unlocks next mission

Mission Overview

Mission	Focus	Skill
1	What happened?	Critical thinking
2	Emotions	Empathy
3	Truth vs rumour	Evidence analysis
4	What to do	Decision-making
5	Resolution	Integration

5. MISSION FLOW

♦ Mission 1 – Reconstruction

Students identify reliable evidence and timeline

 Outcome: understanding sequence

♦ Mission 2 – Emotional Analysis

Students identify emotional impact

 Outcome: empathy development

♦ Mission 3 – Verification

Students distinguish facts vs interpretations

 Outcome: critical thinking breakthrough

♦ Mission 4 – Decision Making

Students evaluate possible actions

 Outcome: responsible behaviour

♦ Mission 5 – Resolution

Students propose a solution

👉 Outcome: integration of learning

6. GAME FLOW (TIMELINE)

Phase	Time
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Introduction	5 min
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Missions 1–2	15 min
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Missions 3–4	20 min
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Final mission	10 min
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Debriefing	20–30 min
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7. ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

The teacher acts as:

- narrator
 - observer
 - guide
 - validator
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♦ During the Game

- introduce narrative
 - monitor progress
 - provide hints if needed
 - validate codes
 - ensure engagement
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♦ Hints System

Recommended:

- max 2 hints per team
 - hints should guide, not solve
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Important Rule

Do NOT confirm correctness of individual choices
Only confirm final code

8. DIFFICULTY MANAGEMENT

This ETER is designed to be:

- cognitively demanding
- emotionally engaging
- discussion-based

♦ If teams struggle:

- encourage re-reading
- prompt discussion
- suggest focusing on evidence

9. DEBRIEFING (CRITICAL SECTION)

 This is where learning is consolidated

♦ Structure

1. What happened?

- What did you think at the beginning?
- Did your understanding change?

2. Emotions

- How did different people feel?
- Did you consider all perspectives?

3. Rumours

- How did the rumour evolve?
- What made it believable?

4. Decisions

- What actions were most effective?
 - What could make things worse?
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5. Real-life connection

- Have you seen similar situations?
 - What would you do differently now?
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10. ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers may observe:

- participation
- reasoning
- collaboration
- empathy
- decision-making

Optional:

- short reflection activity
 - written response
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11. MATERIAL ORGANIZATION

Prepare folders:

- Mission 1
 - Mission 2
 - Mission 3
 - Mission 4
 - Final Mission
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12. CODE VALIDATION

Use Printable Materials document for:

- correct answers
 - code verification
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13. IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

- do not reveal answers
- do not simplify tasks
- allow productive struggle

 difficulty is part of learning

FINAL RESULT

Students should leave with:

- improved critical thinking
 - deeper empathy
 - awareness of digital responsibility
 - better decision-making skills
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FINAL STATUS

- ✓ Fully aligned with ETER methodology
- ✓ Ready for classroom use
- ✓ Replicable and scalable
- ✓ Pedagogically robust