



The Role of Edutainment in Classroom Teaching

Definition and Origin

Educational entertainment or edutainment is defined as any content that is designed to educate as well as to entertain (Merriam-Webster dictionary (2012)).

Educational entertainment has existed from antiquity in the form of parables represented by short stories that teach a moral or a spiritual lesson like those told by Jesus Christ, and fables specially with animals as characters (Kalila and Dimna).

Etymology & Historical Background

Edutainment is a blend word (the combination of two separate words by taking the first part of a word and the last part of another to produce a new one): smog from smoke + fog, motel from motor + hotel , urinalysis from urine + analysis
education + entertainment = edutainment

The term 'edutainment' was used as early as 1948 by The Walt Disney Company to describe the True Life Adventures series (Wikipedia, retrieved 2015). It was used by Robert Heyman in 1973 while producing documentaries for the National Geographic Society (Rey-López et al, 2006).

Rationale

The rationale behind the existence and use of this Edutaining Approach to language teaching/learning is related to the need and desire to make the best of the advantages of information technology to fulfil relaxing teaching and learning and to achieve good results through lively activities.

The balanced combination of education/knowledge and entertainment/fun offers positive results concerning the learning outcomes.

Effectiveness/Advantages

1. It creates a relaxing and entertaining atmosphere.
2. It fosters and encourages interaction between learners and the material, and this accelerates learning.
3. It is used as a brainstorming stimulus which helps learners to think together to handle a certain issue or problem, and try to arrive at certain conclusions through joint efforts (group work) and opinion-sharing.
4. It saves a lot of teaching time and effort on part of the teacher(watching a video, a figure or a picture can be worth a thousand words(Beakes, (2003).

5. It motivates and draws learners' attention, makes boring activities more enjoyable, highlights learners' interest and motivation.

6. It acquaints students with new people around the world and hear their ideas, illustrates complex abstract concepts through animated images.

7. It engages students in problem-solving and investigative activities, helps students practice critical viewing skills and provides a common experience for students to discuss matters (through videos, movies, figures, documentaries, PPs).

Devices

Generally, edutainment refers to entertaining tools and devices which are primarily meant for educational purposes. These include:

Educational TV Programs

Videos & Audios

Pictures, Figures and Charts

Games

Movies

Documentaries

PowerPoint Presentations

Application

Edutainment devices can be applied in teaching all subjects including:

Language and Literature
Pure and Applied Sciences
Finance & Administration
Law
Business
Media
Others

Activities

Activity: Look at the figure and, then answer these questions below:



Questions

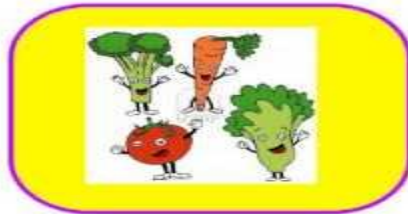
1. What is the figure (picture) about?
2. How many types of vegetarians are there?
3. Are they the same as the types in the reading passage?
4. How many types are there in the passage?
5. What are vegetarians from each type allowed to eat?
6. Are you a vegetarian? Why?

Watch this video and answer the questions:

We are what we eat

TYPES OF FOOD

Fresh food



Processed food



Questions

1. What is the video about?
2. What is meant by ' We are what we eat? '
3. What definition is given for fresh food?
4. What definition is given for processed food?
5. Where can we put each type of these foods?
6. Do you like fresh or processed food? Why?
7. Mention at least three examples from the video that illustrate Fresh and processed food.

Conclusion

Edutainment is the marriage (combination) of knowledge (education) and fun (entertainment) that gives astonishing and fruitful results and products, if well used and exploited. It is an invaluable gift from technology, so we have to fully consider it, to ensure the success and effectiveness of our teaching career to achieve our academic goals.