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Introduction and Module 1

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INTRODUCTION

Present infomaterial is a teacher training material to use the **GreenEdu Larp (GEL)** in their classes. Project GreenEduLARP curriculum and its supportive materials and training tools are developed within the project GreenEDULARP: Green Actions in School using Educational Live-Action RolePlaying (EduLARP). **Project GreenEduLARP aims at using the tool of EduLARP (Educational Live Action Role Playing) for Climate Change Education (CCE)**. More about project <https://greenedularp.wordpress.com/>

GreenEDULARP is a method that **connects the topics related to Climate Change learned in classroom with real-life situations.**



Photo Ederi Ojasoo, larp NOA 2424 in Viimsi school in Estonia

The GEL curriculum introduces EduLARP (Educational Live Action Role Playing) as a means to act for climate change in schools. From raising awareness on environmental issues (knowledge acquired) towards concrete actions of primary and secondary education students.



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AIM OF THE MATERIALS

Aim of the resources you are reading at the moment is to **support late primary and secondary education teachers**, implement the Green Edu Larp (GEL) methodology in school with LARPing for students towards a greener changemaking attitude using scenarios to trigger behavioral shift and action.

These materials should **give the basic idea how to adjust LARP games to the classes and general study aims**. Role play games are non-formal education methods that are not widely used. There is a need to develop tools to encourage teachers to use this method.



Photo by Helena Hagegård,

Teaching through **edu-LARP provides equal support to students' mental, physical, moral, social and emotional development and satisfies their needs arising from individual particularities and personal interests**. The role of the edu-LARP is to prepare youth for adjusting and to act as a creative, diverse, socially mature, trustworthy and critical person who is aware of his or her goals and able to achieve them in their life.

GOALS OF THE GEL CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS

Main goals of this module is to briefly provide **information what is EduLarp**. More detail information about its benefits and how to develop your own EduLarp will be available from other modules. Material is to handling **to support using of active methods to deal with global and environmental education issues in the classroom**.



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Present materials support European sustainability competence framework that is one of the policy actions set out in the European Green Deal GreenComp to enhance and **to promote learning on environmental sustainability in the European Union** (Bianchi et al 2022).

GreenEdu Larp (GEL) curriculum itself can be handled as a tool to increase educational workers competences to use more global and sustainable development issues via educational role play games.

Edu-Larps help learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that promote ways to think, plan and act with empathy, responsibility, and care for our planet and for public health skills and attitudes that promote ways to think, plan and act with empathy, responsibility, and care for our planet and for public health (Bianchi et al 2022).

GreenEdu Larp (GEL) curriculum and materials related with it are supporting GreenComp competence areas:

- embodying sustainability values,
- embracing complexity in sustainability,
- envisioning sustainable futures and
- acting for sustainability (Bianchi et al 2022).

More information about GreenComp:

https://green-comp.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/jrc128040_greencomp_f2.pdf

MODULE 1 - What is Edu-Larp

This module gives an overview of what EduLarp is and How it is connected to Climate Change Education. Teachers introduce LARP and role play games, different topics and



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different larp types. Modul I materials and its tools provide knowledge so that teachers and students will come closer to what an educational role play game is. They will introduce it as a learning tool for Environmental Education and as an option for the student to participate.

WHAT IS LARP

Larp is a form of game play in which participants physically embody characters within a fictional scenario for extended periods of time. Larps can set in any time, place, or genre. Characters range from strongly similar to the player's primary identity to completely distinct (Bowman 2010).

A different reality helps to distract the players from their everyday problems and stimulates their interest in the topic. All the senses are activated, physical and emotional engagement support deep learning. Larps **develops empathy** and **the ability to see other perspectives** (Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation 2020).

By connecting the topics learned in classroom with real-life situations, the student can more easily relate them to their own life and make connections between different subjects. Role play can **improve students' communication skills**, and for the shy students, role play provides a safe way to interact from behind a mask and thus develop their confidence. Therefore, the share of role-playing and other active learning methods in schools should be even higher than it is today (Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation 2020).

There are many ways how to classify LARP. There are differences between LARPs in different countries.

For example **Nordic larp** is a term for shared larp traditions in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. What sets the Nordic larp traditions apart from others is a strong emphasis on collaboration and collective creation, unobtrusive rules, as well as a rich variety of



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play styles and settings sometimes including heavy themes
(<https://nordiclarp.org/what-is-nordic-larp/>)



Photo by Ederi Ojasoo

But Larps can be divided into groups also differently. There are three main types of styles that LARPs fall under: **demonstrative, salon, and live steel.** (<https://thelarplife.wordpress.com/2015/06/10/types-of-larps/>)

- **Demonstrative** is your basic boffer LARP. These usually have a small group of players who face challenges from NPCs.
- **Salon**, or theatre-style, LARPs focus on interactions between players, without using weapons. Usually these LARPs only last a few hours.
- **Live Steel**, also known as heavy combat. These LARPs can range anywhere from being a tournament, for individuals or teams, to thousands of players taking part in a war. (<https://thelarplife.wordpress.com/2015/06/10/types-of-larps/>)



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WHAT IS EDU-LARP

EduLarp is live-action roleplaying used to impart pre-determined pedagogical or didactic content (Balzer and Kurz 2015) . Edu-LARP is thus a “form of experiential learning that engages students on multiple levels, **including cognitive, affective, and behavioral**. Similar to drama pedagogy and simulation, **edu-larp employs scenarios in the classroom in which students enact roles and engage with class content**. The practice affords similar benefits as other forms of experiential learning. (<https://libguides.library.cofc.edu/immersivescenariogames/edularp>)

As a pedagogical outgrowth, edu-larp refers to an educational role-playing exercise in which participants adopt a new role for a long period of time in a bounded, fictional scenario that may or may not resemble mundane reality (Bowman 2015).

Educational Live Action Role Play (EduLARP, or educational live action role play) is a method in which participants learn about selected topics by impersonating characters in an agreed-upon story and world in order to solve a certain problem or reach goals.

Edu-LARP is an exemplary form of experiential learning, since it allows students to experience the subject that they are studying in a way that is relevant and engaging to them. It is a powerful educational tool to help students better grasp material, think critically, and engage positively with what they are learning.



Photo by Ederi Ojasoo, LARP Estonia 2424 in Viimsi



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EduLARP explained by "Good Jobs Studio" <https://youtu.be/hAilQNwPa8s> is following. Through a narrative frame it promotes differentiated teaching and many forms of knowledge. **The Edu Larp can take many forms and move within many genres.** The Edu-Larp can last anywhere between just an hour and several weeks ("Good Jobs Studio 2015)

In Edu Larp subject knowledge is a fundamental key element. Subject knowledge moves from being the main focus to being a means to achieve a shared and meaningful goal ("Good Jobs Studio 2015)

The Edu Larp creates a clear framework through roles and a narrative where everyone has a function. Thereby you can see each other and the subject knowledge in a new light. The interaction between the academic and social dimension motivates and creates meaningful knowledge ("Good Jobs Studio 2015)

The curriculum comes into play and is made relevant through and immersive experience. The role makes it easier to handle failure as it is the role that fails, not you as a person. The game and the narrative are a motivating factors. Everyone can influence the development and the outcome of the story ("Good Jobs Studio 2015)

The aims of eduLARP are to engage participants in a given issue and to develop creativity, partnership and taking initiative. By carrying out their tasks, players learn the way of discussing and negotiating, assertiveness, leadership, group work, conflict resolution, and decision making. So **EduLarp teaches through action and active participation.**

EduLarp is an opportunity to integrate traditional learning methods with a playful way of learning. Most of the time, larps are associated with historical sword fighting games, but in fact, there is a world with even more possibilities behind it: laboratory-oriented role-playing games related to mathematics and chemistry lessons, climate change and environmental conflict games for biology and geography lessons, games to perceive socioeconomic conflicts, etc. **The purpose of educational role-playing games is to**



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direct participants to learn through action. Through informal methods such as drama, simulation or role play, the learner remembers about 90 percent of the material covered. Based on this, it could be said that, theoretically, these interconnected methods are an important part of teaching (Ojasoo and Pullerits 2020)

Take a look at Edu-Larp “**SOLARPUNK**” https://youtu.be/pY0s_iq4sZA to get the overview of the Edu-Lapr parts.



Homepage: <https://ctc.ee/publications/games/solarpunk>

Edu-larp includes drama education, simulation gaming / system modelling, game-based learning, experiential learning, experience design, instructional design, and the constructivist paradigm in educational theory (Mochocki 2013).

On other words, edu-larp is simultaneously:

- a game,
- a drama/role play,
- a simulation, and



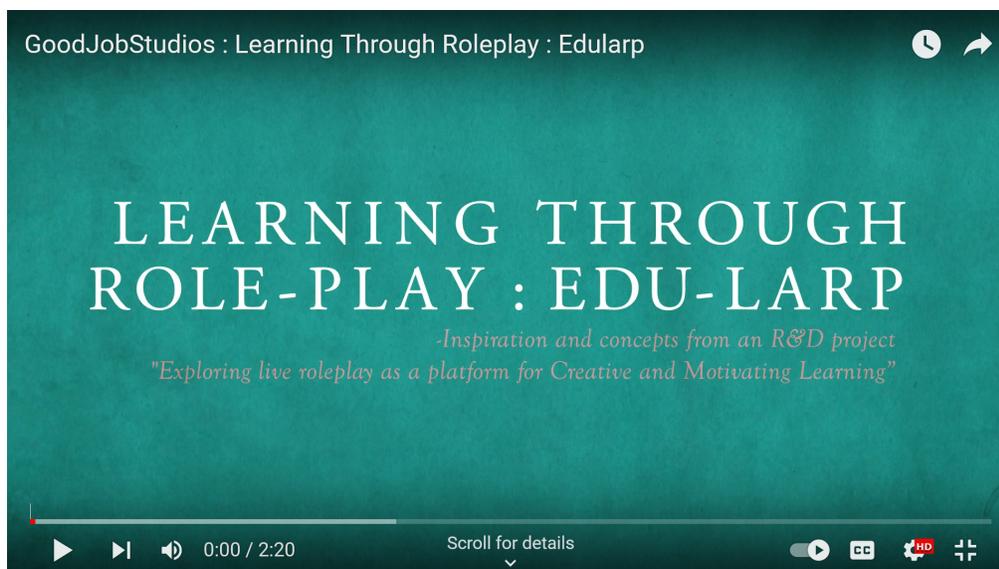
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- a designed learning environment (Mochocki 2013).

See also Introduction video to the role play game by GoodJobStudios: **Learning Through Roleplay**: <https://youtu.be/hAjLQNwPa8s>



EDU-LARP PHASES

An Edu-larp has a structure we could describe in 5 different phases (Maragliano 2019):

- 1) **Ice-breaking and/or warming-up phase**: this is the group preparation phase and creation of the atmosphere. In this phase, knowledge games, energizing and preparatory activities to make the game playable and meaningful are used. The main goal is to create an open and judgement-free climate.



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- 2) **Workshops phase:** in this phase rules, restrictions and the development of the game are described. Participants start getting acquainted with their character and to the way in which to relate with others through theatrical workshops.
- 3) **Play phase:** game development and “run”. This is the phase in which the characters play the scene, interacting with each other and with the game.
- 4) **Deroling phase:** the characters played in an Edu-larp are fake, but the interactions and emotions are real. This is why the game experience can trigger deep emotions or unexpected reactions, or can blur the boundaries between the person and the character (bleed in/out phenomenon). For this reason, an Edu-larp should include activities aimed at “taking the character off”, so as to always grant the safety of the participants.
- 5) **Debriefing phase:** debriefing constitutes the reflection and discussion phase of the experience. Debriefing should cover the following reflection areas:
 - How do you feel? (emotions, sensations, individual experience)
 - What happened? (analysis, explanation, game experience)
 - How do you link the game to reality? (abstraction, contextualization, link to reality)
 - What did you learn? (synthesis, generalization, education)
 - What if...? (hypothesis exploration)
 - How do we proceed? (change intentions and transformative processes).

This last one, **debriefing phase**, is one of the main steps for a larp to be educational **effectively**. In fact, it is at this stage that the elaboration of the experience and its consolidation in learning can take place. (Maragliano 2019).



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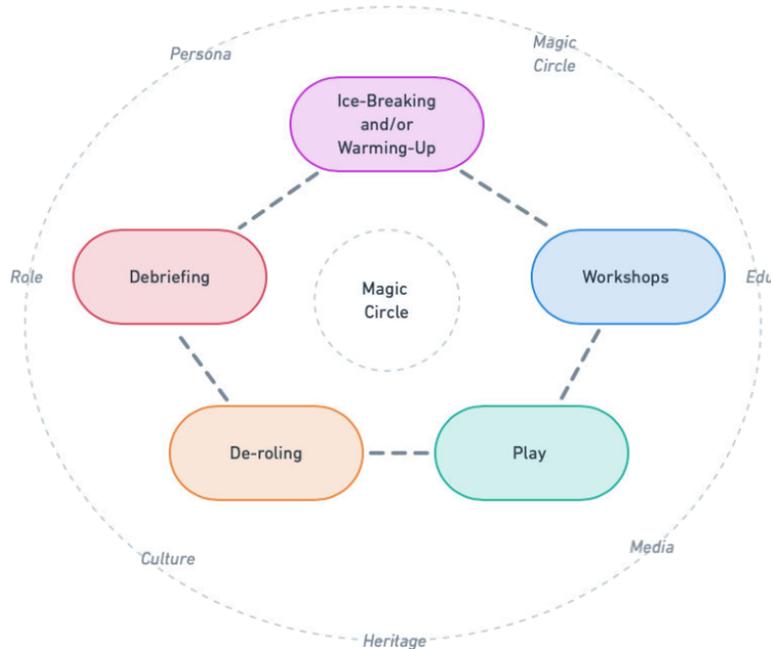


Figure: Edu-Larp phases structure

MAIN TERMINOLOGY IN GEL AND IN PRESENT MATERIALS

- **EduLARP** - short for educational live action roleplay.
- **Curriculum** - Our curriculum is a study plan that shows you what EduLarp is and how to use it as a teaching tool. Includes lesson plans.
- **Toolkit** - Everything that is needed to implement the lesson, resources for supportive exercises and literature lists etc. Methods and exercises, which in turn will assist teachers.



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- **Game leader** - The main Edularp facilitator, often the teacher but can be anyone that leads the EduLARP.
- **Players/Participants** - The students who will be roleplaying the EduLARP.
- **Concept** - scenario and plot that gives the general goals of what happens in the game.
- **Stakeholders** - interested parties into the basis for the concept, examples are politicians, business-owners, opinion-leaders.
- **Role** - The character the participant roleplay in the eduLARP.
- **De-roling** - How to get yourself out of a role once you've finished the eduLARP.

EDU-LARP EXAMPLES AND USEDUL LINKS:

- Mathematics EduLarp (EduMath) <https://edularp.vsb.cz/>
- Dark Caves & Dragons
<https://www.seedlingproductions.org/copy-of-outdoor-active-learning-tea>
- Larp videos: <https://www.larp-platform.nl/videos/>
- Edu-Larps <https://ctc.ee/publications/games>



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