



WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN?

THE DIGITAL DEMO VERSION

Digital Demo Game Rules (Version 1.0)

By Prof. Joe Bisz (joebisz.com)

<http://joebisz.com/whatsyourgameplan>

Overview

This is a **free digital demo version** of my now famous card game *What's Your Game Plan?* (WYGP?). The game is a learning tool that teaches teachers, instructional designers, training managers, and game designers how to take their existing idea for a classroom lesson or training exercise, and through a fun brainstorming session alone or with colleagues, turn it into a non-digital interactive learning activity or game.

The game contains two sample draws of WYGP? cards and shows 8 total cards. This means the same group of people can play the digital game up to two times with completely different card prompts. After that, they would need my physical card game, available for separate purchase, which contains all 36 cards (not just 8!), and thus provides an infinitely more varied learning experience. So if you've enjoyed the digital demo version, I hope you will consider purchasing a physical copy of the cards on my website above!

Contents

You need the following files (all available at <http://joebisz.com/whatsyourgameplan>):

- What's Your Game Plan? - The Digital Demo Version.pptx (or .pps)
 - What's Your Game Plan? - The Digital Demo Version.pdf
 - What's Your Game Plan? - The Digital Demo Version – RULES.pdf (this document)
 - *Additional Files:* You'll probably need 2 files in the next section "How to Play the Demo Game"
- The PPTX and PDF files above are the game itself, and are exactly the same, except the PDF is just a backup and has no fancy animations! You'll want to run the PowerPoint (PPTX) version, if it works on the computer you'll be presenting from and correctly shows the animations.

How to Play the Demo Game

Setup

1. Read the "Game Rules"! I included a copy at the end of this document, or you can download them from my website here:
 - <http://www.joebisz.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/WYGP-Game-Rules.pdf>

The rules teach you how to actually play the WYGP? game. They assume you have the full card game deck, but you can use the rules to play the digital demo version as well.
2. If you'll be presenting this game to other people, read the "Facilitator Notes." I included a copy at the end of this document, or you can download them from my website here:
 - <http://joebisz.com/media/WYGP%3F%20Facilitator%20Notes.pdf>

Note: This downloaded document will mention on its first page that you need another document called "Example Card Draw.pdf," but you no longer need that other document,

because your “Digital Demo Version” replaces it. The “Example Card Draw.pdf” is only for people who are not using the Digital Demo.

In addition, if you’re presenting this game to other people, carefully study the example card draws in the Digital Game Version, so if they ask you questions about what these terms mean (e.g. Movement/Sport, Investigating), you can explain them a little. This step is *critical* if you have an audience whose first language is not English. You should also have online pictures of the games from the Game cards ready to show (e.g. *Blackjack*, *Scrabble*), since your audience may not have heard of these games.

Play

1. **Start Slideshow:** Open and start the slideshow for “What’s Your Game Plan? - The Digital Demo Version.” You will note that the single cards on pages 2-9 are animated. If you are presenting to others, the idea is that you are dramatically saying “First, we flip over our Lesson card...” and then you advance to the next slide to reveal the related card front (with fancy animation).

2. **Read Example Narrative:** You will also notice that these cards are the same as the “Example of How to Play” section in the “Game Rules.” This means you can use these cards while reading aloud the example brainstorm narrative there, so that players understand how the game works.

3. **Begin Design Brainstorm:** Pause the slideshow on page 11 which reads “Now it’s your turn!”. At this point, you begin the brainstorming part of the game, as described in the Game Rules, using the cards shown on slideshow page 11. If the players have chosen their own lesson instead of the one shown, which is very highly recommended, advance to page 12 (which shows a blank Lesson card that simply reads “??”), and keep that page displayed during the brainstorming.

- Note: If you are presenting this game, and you will be dividing the room into more than one design group, you should have every group use the same single set of cards displayed on screen, but of course each group should be designing for different “lessons”.

4. **Variant Game Cards (Optional):** Sometimes, most of the players will not have heard of (or do not closely remember) the Game card. In this case, use either page 13 or 14, which provides an alternate Game card (“Blackjack”).

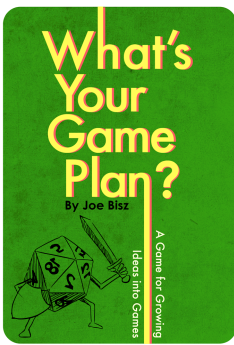
5. **Show Creator Information:** If you are presenting the game, you are required to advance the slideshow to my green author slide (page 15 or page 23), and explain to your audience that I am the creator of the game. This is the final slide.

Second Sample Draw

On page 16 of the digital demo slideshow (“Alternate Draw”), a second sample draw begins. Use this draw for a group that has already experienced the first sample draw. You can still use the first sample draw to remind a group how to play (as per Step 2’s “Read Example Narrative”), then skip to the second sample draw for their actual design brainstorm.

Permissions

- Permission is given to print out hard copies and disseminate them, but each person’s copy must have my author slide attached.
- Permission is NOT given to distribute the electronic file. Instead, redirect people to my website where they can download the file directly.
- *Contact:* Anyone may contact the creator through his website or at joe (at) joebisz.com.



WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN?

A GAME FOR GROWING IDEAS INTO GAMES

BY JOE BISZ

GAME RULES (Version 1.81)

Audience: For innovative Educators (all levels), Presenters, Training Managers, and Designers (Instructional, Content, or Game)

Length: 20-25 minutes

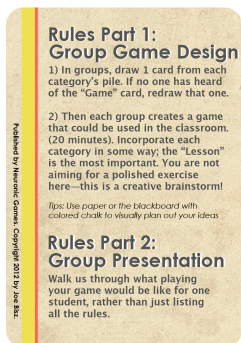
Players: Solo, or groups of 2-8 players. One game can handle 4 groups max (so up to 32 players)

**If you have more than 32 players, you'll need another copy of the game.*

**Teachers like to use this game with their students (Ages 11+) or in teacher workshops.*

Description: What does the lesson "Finding Citations," the game "Trivial Pursuit," and the mechanic "Bluffing" all have in common? WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN? is a brainstorming card game that works by the power of group collaboration. Your task is to enhance a traditional exercise with the mechanics of popular board games in only 20 minutes. If you're an educator, manager, or instructional designer, you will learn how to create quick non-digital learning games or training simulations, whether you're teaching the rules of citation or the rules of interviewing. If you're a game designer, you can generate ideas for any new game (whether educational or not).

Number of Players Per Group: WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN? works best with at least 4 players in a group if the players are highly experienced with game design. If most players in a group have not had this experience, 6 people is the minimum. Up to 8 people per group is fine. Respect these numbers for an optimal experience. *Note: The strength of this game is in group collaboration, so much of its depth will be lost playing it alone, especially if you have little experience with designing instructional games. Find some colleagues!*

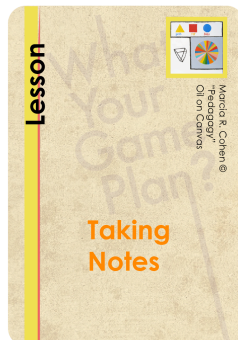


Quick Setup

- 1) **Supplies:** Get some paper and a pen!
- 2) **Prepare Piles:** If your game came with 4 green rule cards, assign one to each group of players. (The rule cards are unnecessary and were eventually removed from printing). Arrange the rest of the deck in 4 piles; from left to right, these should be one pile of Lessons, one pile of Games, one pile of Mechanics, and one pile of Actions. Turn each pile face-down so the cartoon die figure is on top, then shuffle each pile.

A Note to Game Designers: If you're a professional game designer who is NOT making an educational game, do not use the Lesson cards. Instead, think about your general theme. Then draw TWO cards from the Mechanics pile in Step 5, and use BOTH of them. Some game designers tell me they find the Game card too constraining (but others appreciate it); if the Game card feels too restrictive, replace it with an additional Action or Mechanic.

- 3) **Do You Need an Example?:** If most people haven't played, skip to the **Example of How to Play** below, find the cards mentioned there so everyone can see them, and read the example aloud. Then go back to Step 4.



- 4) **Ask for a Lesson:** Before you draw cards, you should ask if someone in your group can think of a lesson he or she teaches and would love to see turned into a game. Maybe something that students or employees find boring or difficult. Or a learning outcome of your organization, since the lesson can be any training objective. If so, use that idea as your group's lesson and do NOT draw a Lesson card in Step 5. The real value behind WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN? is in creating a game that will directly benefit you or your organization!
- 5) **Draw Cards:** Starting with the Lesson pile, flip over one card from left to right, four cards total. Each group needs to do this, so that each group has their own unique set of 4 cards in front of them.
- 6) **Make Game:** Set a timer; you have 20 minutes to make a game! With more than one group, everyone presents their game at the end.

Example of How to Play

- ◆ From the Lesson pile, I flip over the card “Taking Notes.” This means my goal is to create a game that will teach my students (or employees) how to take good notes.
- ◆ From the Game pile, I flip over “Trivial Pursuit,” and read the description. Whew; that’s one I actually know. (If I didn’t, I should pick a new Game card.)
- ◆ From the Mechanic pile, I flip over “Movement/Sport,” and read the description.
- ◆ From the Action pile, I flip over “Investigating.” (*Note: If this card did not come in your game, use “Trading.”*)

So I start thinking quickly. I remember that Trivial Pursuit has categories of information like History, Sports, etc. What can I add to my lesson “Taking Notes” that involves categories? Maybe the students are trying to assemble categories of information that represent different “methods” for taking notes (like quoting, or commenting in margins). I could assign each team of students a different text (ex. book, video lecture) to take notes on. Not bad; but so far I only incorporated the Game card into my Lesson. What about the Mechanic card “Movement/Sport”? Oh! The class pretends to be a relay team, and like the pie pieces in Trivial Pursuit, students have certain colored uniforms, or badges. Every few minutes I’ll say “Race!” and one student must run a copy of their most important note to another group, as long as that group has a note in a category that the student still needs. So it’s partly a cooperative game; the different student groups are trying to trade for the “best notes,” one from each category, and I will score them.

I take notes myself, and try to come up with at least one idea from each card. After 20 minutes, I stop. If what I wrote seems promising, I can expand it later, when I’m fresh. Better yet: run my idea by some interested colleagues.

After It’s Over: At the end of only 20 minutes, your game will probably feel wild and unfinished. **WHAT’S YOUR GAME PLAN?** is meant to be a fast-paced creative brainstorm. It shows you the possibilities of using game-based learning to enhance your ideas. A fully fleshed-out game takes collaboration, testing with your players or students, and countless revisions--just like an amazing exercise!



Don’t Feel Too Limited by the Category Cards: Note that the Game card you draw is just meant to inspire you. In my example above, I did not try to make my new game exactly like *Trivial Pursuit*. I did not even use a game board; I only had my students walk around the room. Borrow whatever concepts from the Game (and Mechanic and Action) card that you like. If you spent a few minutes honestly trying to incorporate a card, but it doesn’t seem to work, then draw ONE more card to replace it. Use at least one idea from each card, since it is the constraints that make the game. It is NOT a good idea to draw a second card from one category, then try and decide between the two, because this creates too much delay and overthinking. (Unless you are a real Game Designer, in which case you can decide between two cards of a category, but never three or more.) If you’d like longer definitions of the Game cards, visit my site below for a printable document.

For Organizations other than Schools: You may find that a few Lesson cards don’t really fit your organization, since they were designed with research-based organizations (like schools) in mind. You should interpret the Lessons broadly. For example, in school settings the Lesson “Finding Sources” refers to a student’s need to gather citations for a research paper. For non-schools, you might interpret this card as searching for articles that give you marketing leads, or gathering internal data for a needed report. If you can think of a better way to describe some of the key instructional objectives of your organization, then print (or handwrite) your new Lesson(s) on a label, and adhere that label to an unused Lesson card. But of course, the Lesson cards are only a warm-up. The best solution is to ask your group for a lesson.

Running the Game in a Workshop With Multiple Groups: A workshop is an excellent idea, and that is how Joe and the CUNY Games Network do it! Download the special files I made to assist you on my website’s “Facilitators” section. If you are paid a speaking fee when using this game, you are legally obliged to follow the additional instructions there.

About WHAT’S YOUR GAME PLAN? (www.joebisz.com/whatsyourgameplan): As of July 2015, this game has been featured at 50+ conferences and workshops. It has evolved, with expansions underway. At my website you can purchase the game and related supplies, get on my contact list, or read feedback from schools and companies on how they use it.

About the Designer... and Finding More Educational Games Resources: Dr. Joe Bisz is a game designer, writer, and Professor of English at the City University of New York. He has led nearly 100 workshops to faculty, staff, and businesspeople on using game-based learning. **WHAT’S YOUR GAME PLAN?** makes for an incredible team-building or professional development workshop. To invite Joe to speak at your school or company and to see what kinds of interactive presentations or consulting he can do for you, visit joebisz.com. You’ll also find the best board games by discipline, recommended readings, and one-click Amazon buying lists that I’ve organized to save you time (featuring game design components like blank game boards and cards, and supplies for any conference/workshop you’re running).

Rules Part 1: Group Game Design

1) In groups, draw 1 card from each category's pile. If no one has heard of the "Game" card, redraw that one.

2) Then each group creates a game that could be used in the classroom. (20 minutes). Incorporate each category in some way; the "Lesson" is the most important. You are not aiming for a polished exercise here—this is a creative brainstorm!

Tips: Use paper or the blackboard with colored chalk to visually plan out your ideas

Rules Part 2: Group Presentation

Walk us through what playing your game would be like for one student, rather than just listing all the rules.

Published by Neumatic Games. Copyright 2012 by Joe Bisz.

WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN?

A GAME FOR GROWING IDEAS INTO GAMES

BY JOE BISZ

FACILITATOR NOTES (Version 1.9)

This first page gives the long, chatty explanation of what you should know before running WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN? with more than one group (i.e. more than 8 people). The second page is a "quick summary" to glance at briefly during your actual session. You don't have to follow these notes to a tee, but they are designed to make sure your workshop is as productive as possible.

Number of Decks: Because each group will receive 2 Game cards, you will need a second deck if more than 32 people are in the room. In an emergency, one deck could handle 9 groups of 8 people (so 72 total), but then there will be no redraws (see "Redraws" below), so this is not ideal.

Time to Set Aside: It takes a minimum of 45 minutes to run a session for 4 groups, plus 5 minutes for each group beyond 4 (unless you don't ask those groups to present to the whole room in "Part 2," which is fine), and that's without a Q and A. Plan for an hour, especially your first time. It helps if you have some people to assist you.

Example Card Draw.pdf: This file is just an example draw that I project when I have more than 5 people in the room, otherwise nobody will be able to see your example from the physical card deck. You can download this file from <http://joebisz.com/whatsyourgameplan>. ALWAYS do the example, or your audience will be lost.

To display this example pdf, use either Adobe Reader in full screen mode, or Mac's Preview in "Single Page" mode (not Full Screen) which you can access under "View." (Single Page mode allows you to display one page at a time, and Preview sometimes show multiple page spreads in Full screen, which you don't want.)

Ask for a Lesson: Very importantly, you should explain to the room that drawing a "Lesson" is optional for their group; what works better is if a group member has in mind a lesson he or she would like to teach and wants to see a game created around. This lesson then becomes the Lesson card. Before creating arbitrary groups, poll the room and ask for X volunteers to state their lesson idea aloud, then have people join groups around their interest. Note that the lesson can be ANY objective, so if you have non-faculty present, ask for "any training or instructional exercise." I've found schools like to use WYGP? for professional development workshops where the "lessons" become "learning outcomes."

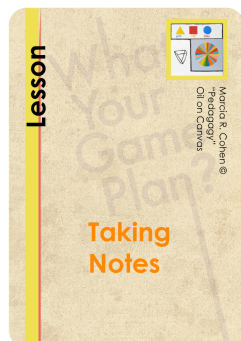
Get Helpers and/or Managers: This is unlikely to happen to you, but this game has been used with an audience of 200 people! If you think you will have 70+ attendees, it really helps to have people handing out the cards. Also, as soon as you are facilitating more than 1 group, it assists you a great deal if you have one person in each group who has thought about game design before. The way to do this is to ask "Has anyone thought about making games for school?" because "I could use one of you in each group." Then make them managers. Managers don't have any duties, but they make the group brainstorming experience better, since you can't be everywhere at once. During brainstorming, you should still try to spend time with inexperienced groups to reassure them they're "doing ok." (As my rules sheet mentions, don't have less than 6 people in a small group unless most of them are highly skilled at game design.)

Deck Size and Redraws: You are distributing only ONE card from each category to each group, plus one additional Game card (in case no one has heard of their first game), for a total of 5 cards. (If a group consists of Game Designers making a non-educational game, they will need at least 2 Mechanic cards--see my rules sheet as to why.) It is NOT a good idea give a second card from a category, because a group will often draw it from curiosity, then try and decide between the two, which causes too much delay and overthinking. However, as my rules mention, if a group has really tried to incorporate a particular card for a few minutes and they're failing, they should call you over so you can give a redraw.

Where Do We Go from Here? - More on GBL: Remember that all this fun is within the context of exposing people to game-based learning (GBL). So I would appreciate it very much if you advanced to the final page of the [example card draw.pdf](#) once the workshop ends, and tell them about me and my website (joebisz.com), which hosts Educational Games resources. (If you doing a paid presentation that uses my game, you are *required by law* to show them this page, or give all attendees a hard copy of it.) I also do speaker engagements using this game, other games, and on GBL in general.

SUMMARY INFORMATION FOR FACILITATOR SHOWING “WHAT’S YOUR GAME PLAN?”

Group Size: 6-8 (4 if teachers highly experienced in game design)



Setup Items for Facilitator to Bring:

(Get a room with a computer & presentation screen, also blackboards if possible)

- Colored Chalk; Notebook Paper; Index cards; maybe Markers
- Electronic file: “WYGP? Example Card Draw.pdf” (now the whole room can see the cards)
- What’s Your Game Plan? physical deck of cards

Time Game Takes:

45-50 minutes for 4 groups, plus 5 minutes for each additional group.

Directions for Facilitator:

1) (Show [Example Card Draw.pdf](#), p.1) Explain purpose of game, it’s a brainstorming game, what it looks like (4 categories with 9 random cards each). Put the real cards before you too.

2) “You draw one card from each category, starting with the Lesson.”

(Turn to page 2, Lesson and Taking Notes) (Manipulate the real cards too)

“I flip over the Lesson card “Taking Notes.” This means my goal is to create a game that will teach my students how to take notes.”

(Turn to page 3, letting them read the drawn cards there, then do the same for page 4 and page 5. End on page 6 which shows all four cards.)

3) “So I start thinking quickly. I remember that *Trivial Pursuit* has categories of information like History, Sports, etc. What can I add to my lesson “Taking Notes” that involves categories? Maybe the students are trying to assemble categories of information that represent different “methods” for taking notes (like quoting, or commenting in margins). I could assign each team of students a different text (ex. book, video lecture) to take notes on. Not bad; but so far I only incorporated the Game card into my Lesson. What about the Mechanic card “Movement/Sport”? Oh! The class pretends to be a relay team, and like the pie pieces in *Trivial Pursuit*, students have certain colored uniforms, or badges. Every few minutes I’ll say “Race!” and one student must run a copy of their most important note to another group, as long as that group has a note in a category that the student still needs. So it’s partly a cooperative game; the different student groups are trying to trade for the “best notes,” one from each category, and as their teacher, I will score these.”

4) Ask audience for “Lesson” volunteers and possibly divide into groups based on lessons.

(Variant: An interesting option is to give multiple groups the same “Lesson” and discuss the unique results. The other drawn cards would remain random.)

5) Ask for one manager or ‘ringer’ (experienced in game design) to join each group.

6) Explain once they’re in groups, they should introduce selves while you pass out cards. If they have a lesson in mind already, they should NOT draw a Lesson card. Finally, ask them to take good notes since they’ll present their game to everyone after 20-25 minutes.

7) Break out for groups brainstorming. Give 4 cards/group, +1 Game card. (Turn to page 7.)

During Groups BRAINSTORMING: (20-25 minutes total)

**Spend time with less experienced groups to reassure them. This is important.

✂ “If nobody in your group knows what your Game card is, draw another card.”

✂ “Use your imagination with the cards you drew, it’s meant to be creative.”

✂ “3 minutes/1 minute left! Figure out who is presenting on what.” (Give 2 warnings.)

During Group PRESENTATIONS: (3-5 minutes per group) (not all groups need to present)

The task (✂) below helps stop the talking. You should also consider asking the deeper questions (⌚) below as needed.

Finally, be sure to turn to the last page of the PDF (📖) to give me credit and mention useful takeaway resources.

✂ “While another group presents, your task is to write down a few learning principles you see operating.”

⌚ “What skills is your game intended to teach/practice?” ⌚ “How might the teacher assess understanding of the lesson through this game?” ⌚ “How could you add <X mechanic>?” (if it doesn’t feel gamey)

📖 (Turn to page 8 on [WYGP? Example Card Draw.pdf](#).) Show info about Joe Bisz and this game.

