



### ***Keep talking – VEGA Teaching Scenario***



**Topic:** teaching communication skills in a foreign language with support of a VR game [Keep talking and nobody explodes](#)

**Subject:** Communication skills in a foreign language (the game is available in over 26 languages)

**Age / Grade:** Age 12-15, Grades 6th - 8th

#### **Short description of the VR application in this scenario:**

Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes is a puzzle video game developed and published by Canadian studio Steel Crate Games. The game tasks a player with disarming procedurally generated bombs with the assistance of other players who are reading a manual containing instructions. It was designed around virtual reality support, with availability first on Android-driven Samsung Gear VR, with later ports to supported devices on Microsoft Windows, OS X, PlayStation 4, and Linux; though could be played without virtual reality in some cases.

## Introduction to the scenario



The main advantage of the game lies in the fact that the interactions take place across the virtual reality and the real world. One of the players is trapped in a VR room with a bomb ticking. The other/s are outside with a manual needed to defuse the bomb - they have all the information required but they can't see the bomb. The time is running out so the players on both sides have to communicate quickly and accurately to solve a number of puzzles before the bomb explodes. If the conversations are conducted in a foreign language (there are many language versions of the manual), the players have an authentic and motivating context to practise their communication skills.

## Learning outcomes:

The students are able to:

- Use conditional sentences to express various degrees of probability in a foreign language
- Give instructions and orders
- Describe objects of different shapes
- Communicate in challenging situations

**Curriculum:** Communication skills in a foreign language (the game is available in over 26 languages)

**Polish curriculum:** <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Szkola-podstawowa-IV-VIII/Jezyk-obcy-nowozytny>

- Students understand simple written statements (e.g. letters, inscriptions, brochures, announcements, timetables, picture stories with text): define the main thought of a text or text fragment; define the intentions of the author of the text; arrange the information in a specific order
- Understand simple oral statements (e.g. messages, announcements, instructions), clearly articulated in a standard variety of language: respond to commands, define the intentions of the author of the statement; find specific information in statements
- React verbally in typical situations: obtain and transmit information and explanations; propose, accept and reject proposals, advice; conduct simple negotiations in everyday life situations; warn, command, prohibit, instruct

### Formative assessment

**Number of students, duration (estimated time/number of lessons):**

- number of students: depending on the number of VR sets, ideally 2 - 3 students per headset
- duration: 3 lessons (3 x 45 minutes); one introduction lesson (can be for the whole class) with two follow-up lessons of playing the game in smaller groups

**Prerequisites (necessary materials and online resources):**

- Online access to [the game](#)
- Sufficient number of compatible VR headsets, depending on the size of the class (Valve Index, HTC Vive, Oculus Rift, Windows Mixed Reality)
- Sufficient number of PCs with the game installed (depending on the number of students), cf [minimal system requirements](#)

### Before the program begins (preparatory work for teacher):

- Learn the mechanics of the game yourself
- Ensure sufficient number of VR headsets
- Plan the lessons in a way that both the whole class and smaller group sessions are possible
- Prepare follow-up activities aligned with the curriculum to check the learning outcomes of the gameplay

### Lesson one: learning functional language skills needed to communicate information from the manual

(45 minutes)

The main requirements for the students to successfully play the game is to understand the information in the bomb defusal manual and communicate it effectively to the player trapped in the VR escape room. The manual is freely available at [www.bombmanual.com](http://www.bombmanual.com). The teacher should choose and print the relevant language versions in the number of copies required for the class sub-groups. The preparatory lesson/s should focus on the functional language and vocabulary needed to communicate the information in the manual. The suggested topics to cover are the following:

- Conditionals (example from the manual: “If there are no red wires, cut the second wire”)
- Orders and instructions (“Press and immediately release the button”)
- Description of geometrical shapes (expect some quite difficult to describe)
- Description of sequential occurrences (“the original button will flash, followed by another”)
- Revise the above material with the students using standard methods in the classroom (board, printouts, quizzes, flashcards, etc)
- Let them practise in pairs/small groups in preparation for the VR challenge



## Lesson two: defusing the bomb

(45 minutes)

The lesson begins with an overview of the game interface and main functions of the objects visible on the screen (no special introduction to VR is planned here as the students are expected to be familiar with this learning technology, if not additional introductory session/s are needed). Once entering the VR space of the game, the player finds himself in a locked room with a ticking bomb on a central table. The other players (2 - 3 in a group) don't need VR headsets but instead they have the bomb defusing manuals in their hands (printed or on their mobiles). Structure the activities in the following way:



- Divide class into smaller groups (max. 4 students in a group)
- Explain the task and let them choose the roles (only 1 player will use headset at a time and act as the bomb defuser)
- Allow sufficient time for lively interactions as the students will have to talk a lot while playing (loud, agitated expressions of emotions are very likely)
- For the first time probably most of the groups will fail to defuse the bomb and should try again
- Each new bomb includes up to 11 modules that have to be disarmed so there is plenty of 'material' to play with for the duration of at least one lesson
- If time allows, the players can progress to new missions that increase in difficulty as new modules are introduced
- Ensure sufficient time at the closure of the lesson for debrief

## Lesson three: applying the language skills to different tasks

(45 minutes)

In the previous lessons the students have learned/practised functional language useful in many different situations besides bomb defusing. Now it is a good idea design consolidation activities in a different context. It is very likely that the students would love it to continue their VR experience so we propose here another learning scenario in a virtual space.



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- Go to <https://hello.vrchat.com/>
- Get acquainted with the platform that provides a huge collection of VR experiences
- Choose a world/s that you find suitable for your class taking into account recent topics of your language classes in terms of vocabulary and speaking skills
- Set the equipment in such a way that the images visible to the player in VR are displayed on a larger screen in the classroom for all the students to see
- One student enters the chosen world and the others ask him questions or give instructions, e.g. “if you move to the right, what can you see?”, “Open the door in front of you”, “What is that blue triangle on the right?”
- The students will naturally use at least some of the language practised while defusing the bomb, consolidating the skills in a new way
- Monitor the exchanges and note the aspects of the conversations that need a follow-up

### **Evaluation of the scenario with pupils**

This can be done in many different ways depending on your choice and style of testing:

- An interesting form of a language test would be to ask the students to defuse another bomb: 2 students come to the front of the classroom, one gets a headset and the other the manual; the time for the interaction is set by the game, you assess their communication skills
- The game is also available for mobiles and PCs so a similar activity can be easily arranged without VR goggles
- Another approach would be to design a standard test checking the students’ mastery of the practised language skills (e.g. use of conditionals or giving orders and instructions) if you feel it’s high time to get back to the ordinary classroom reality