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Chan, L. et al. 2002. Budapest Open Access Initiative. New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml [Accessed: 18 November 2015]

Copyright Dough: A playful approach to teaching copyright

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Abstract

This project report describes a playful approach to teaching copyright through a newly developed game entitled Copyright Dough. As copyright literacy has become increasingly important in scholarly communication, this paper explores how a more engaging teaching method is essential for getting researchers, students, academics, and library staff to feel comfortable and confident in discussing copyright, a topic that is often met with anxiety. Drawing upon the existing literature on play, games, and active learning, this paper highlights how incorporating these concepts together can lead to a welcoming and safe space, bringing open and honest discussion. In achieving these goals, it is shown that not only is engagement with copyright increased, but learning objectives are also achieved in a meaningful and memorable way.

Keywords

active learning; copyright; copyright literacy; creative commons; games; playful learning; scholarly communication

1. Introduction

Copyright is a part of scholarly communication that is frequently met with avoidance due to its complex nature, which often leads to confusion about where responsibility lies in answering copyright queries within institutions (Secker, Morrison & Nilsson, 2019). Yet as online content continues to grow, copyright is an increasingly important part of research and education. However, there are many examples of creators signing away ownership of their work in order to be published, without fully understanding the implications of doing so (Prosser, 2019). This indicates that copyright is still a difficult topic to understand, even though it is likely a topic many working in Higher Education interact with more than they might think.

At the same time, funder initiatives like Plan S have sped up conversations around open access content and copyright due to their demands for immediate open access to research, as well as their aims to ensure copyright stays with the author or institution (European Science Foundation, 2020). As a result, many funders have updated their policies, and libraries are negotiating transformative agreements with publishers. This means that there is, and will be, an increasing amount of teaching and research outputs available under open access licences, or creative commons licences, making it easier for others to use and build upon these resources. On the other hand, a recent report by Morrison et al. (2020) showed that many publishers have not aligned to the new funder requirements, and perhaps even more confusingly, many publishers' policies even differ on a journal level. This indicates that there is a need for institutions to ensure that they have professionals available to answer copyright queries, who

are able to help researchers and teachers navigate new policies and requirements around copyright and the reuse of published material.

Despite this need, many institutions do not have dedicated copyright experts, and an international survey of Library and Information Science professionals' copyright literacy by Todorova et al. (2017) showed that approximately half of the respondents were unsure whether their institution even had a copyright policy. This indicates that copyright might be an area that is only explored on a need basis. Researchers and educators could therefore benefit significantly from learning more proactively about copyright, and yet a UK survey by Morrison and Secker (2015) suggests that many professionals do not feel they know enough about copyright, and have some anxiety around the thought of dealing with queries. Engagement with copyright teaching is subsequently often low.

Though many library staff members do have various levels of understanding of copyright issues in higher education, often they do not feel confident in their knowledge, and few receive copyright training (Nilsson, 2016). The avoidance of answering copyright questions mentioned earlier is likely due to this lack of confidence, combined with the many grey areas and 'it depends' situations copyright brings, as each case tends to differ and usually requires more information before it can be dealt with it. With this lack of confidence in copyright in mind, alongside the fast-moving world of open access content and its effects on copyright decisions, we sought to create a learning environment that would feel safe for librarians, students, researchers, teachers and practitioners alike to come together to talk about some of the situations around copyright that might cause anxiety and even panic.

2. Background

In order to create a safe environment for discussion and learning, we decided to develop a workshop based on known concepts of playful and active learning. According to Walsh (2018), active learning builds upon existing knowledge and enables learners to have an active role in their own knowledge expansion through promoting discussion with other learners. Though many might not initially have confidence in their own skills, we wanted to show that even students, librarians, and researchers who *feel* like they know nothing about copyright, do in fact have a knowledge base to draw upon. If we were to strip copyright back to its moral grounds, it is something that seeks to protect the creator in a fair way, and is therefore based on values that we all would share as creators.

Another concept we wanted to embrace was play, as this would help to create a safe environment where learners could 'express ideas and create new knowledge' (Walsh, 2018, p.18). We expanded upon this idea of play further by trying to encourage two of the features Brown and Vaughan (2010) explain play allows: 'diminished consciousness' and 'improvisation potential' (p.17). We aimed for these aspects by incorporating role play, for as each player takes on the role of someone else, this helps to equalise the knowledge base of the players, bringing about more open and honest discussion.

We also intended for the game to generate positive emotions before the main teaching aspect, so included play dough in the beginning to help players to relax. Play dough is a modelling clay designed for, and primarily used by, children. The simplistic and nostalgic nature of play dough thus brings positive emotions, which subsequently help to increase learning and memory (Tyng et al., 2017). In this respect, we wanted to make sure that the game we designed would not only be fun, but would also be a memorable experience that players could draw upon later. In other words, it would be a lot easier to remember, for instance, that you were not able to copy a blue dinosaur for a textbook you would make money on because it had a copyright licence that restricted non-commercial reuse, than to try simply to remember a list of copyright exceptions read to you in a lecture.

In combining active learning, play, and positive emotions in this way, we sought to create a safe space where scenarios could be explored in terms of what is possible and permissible, rather than what individuals themselves might do in the scenarios. Ultimately, however, we created a game, for as Walsh (2018) explains, games are a 'useful vehicle for enabling play' (p.18). In developing the game to enable play, we incorporated the four defining aspects of games explained by McGonigal (2012): a goal, rules, a feedback system, and voluntary participation. When reading about playing the game, these four aspects should become evident. In this respect, with our aim to create a learning environment that would feel both safe, and would encourage discussion, creating a game to enable play that brought positive emotions seemed the best way to approach this goal.

3. Development

3.1 Inspiration

The initial idea behind Copyright Dough dates back to June 2019 during the Icepops conference (UK Copyright Literacy and Information Literacy Group, 2019). The Icepops conference is not like any other conference; it is a place where librarians, scholarly communication professionals, copyright experts and many more come together to talk about copyright with playful and innovative approaches encouraged. There is no other place where copyright and fun go better hand in hand. During one of the talks, inspiration struck as mentions of a lack of confidence in copyright and the need for safe spaces to learn and develop skills were discussed. Several playful approaches to copyright exist, such as Copyright the Card Game (Morrison and Secker, 2017a). However, during talks about the need to put yourself in the creators' shoes to understand copyright, along with the idea that copyright should be about what is morally right, and that it is not 'born' to be complicated, it was clear that there was a potential gap to fill.

3.2 Game overview

The game itself has two main phases: creation, and discussion. Both of these phases are facilitated by playing cards, which are distributed to the players at the beginning of the session. Each player is given three cards: a role card, a task card, and a licence card (see Figure 1). The role card assigns the player their role, and gives them some unique characteristics. There are four roles within the game: students, teachers, researchers, and creators. When playing the game, there should be at least one player for each role. The players are asked to introduce themselves to the group by reading their role card.

The second card players receive is their task card, which explains what they must do in the game. There are two tasks on each card: one to be completed in the creation phase, and one in the discussion phase. In the creation phase, players all create a model using play dough. Some players are instructed to create a model from their own imaginations, whilst others are tasked with either creating an exact copy, or a model inspired by, another player's model. The third card is the licence card, which designates each player a copyright licence for their model.

After the creation phase, the discussion phase takes up the rest of the session. In this phase, players take turns to complete the second task on their task cards. These tasks all give the player an instruction to explain their model to the group, however whilst some are honest about the inspiration behind their models, others are told to claim their models were entirely their own ideas. There is also variation in terms of how players say they have gone on to use their models. For example, some teachers may have used their models in teaching, and some researchers may have used their models in published works. As players explain their models' inspiration and use, alongside displaying their given licences, players vote individually using voting cards whether the use is OK or not OK in terms of copyright legislation. Following the voting, players are encouraged to explain their decision, and discussion takes place around this.



Figure 1: Example of the three card types within Copyright Dough. © Hannah Pyman & Katrine Sundsbø. This image is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY).

3.3 Design

When designing Copyright Dough, our first objective was to ensure that the game would incorporate the playful learning spirit that had brought the initial inspiration. It was from this that we decided to incorporate play dough. Play dough is a tactile material that individuals tend to associate with their childhood. Because of this, as previously mentioned, it puts participants at ease from the very beginning of their experience with the game. However further to this, as play dough is easy to use, it also creates a somewhat level playing field amongst those taking part. This is important within Copyright Dough, as we have found that, in discussions around copyright, often those seen as the 'experts', or those simply with the most knowledge of copyright in the group, can take the lead with discussions, with those less confident taking a back seat. To somewhat level these disparities thus became crucial to the development of the game, and using play dough seemed a simple yet effective way to achieve this.

As explained, within the game, individuals are asked to create a play dough model, which is later given a copyright licence. The trick is that while some individuals' task cards instruct them to create their models from their own imaginations, others are secretly tasked with either copying another's model, or creating something inspired by someone else's model (see Figure 2). This initial task within the game thus works as a great icebreaker to the session, and forms the basis for the subsequent discussions around whether the actions of each individual is permissible under copyright legislation.

Once we had found the basis of the game, we needed to ensure we created a safe space for participants to discuss a topic that individuals are often lacking in confidence. With discussion being the key element of the game that enables learning, it became apparent that we needed the relaxed emotions that the play dough brought to continue throughout. We therefore settled upon the idea of individuals taking on different roles within the game. This was inspired by both the Publishing Trap (Morrison and Secker, 2017b), and, as previously mentioned, the aspects of play outlined by Brown and Vaughan (2010). Role play had proven a successful technique within the Publishing Trap for facilitating more open and fun discussions, and has demonstrated the same effect within Copyright Dough.



Figure 2: Example of a play dough model and its copy. © Hannah Pyman. This image is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY).

Within the game's four roles, creators, researchers, teachers, and students, there are several characters available. Each character is given some unique characteristics on their role card, which are intended to be light-hearted and tongue-in-cheek. Players are asked to introduce their character before the game begins to both start conversation, and give players almost some fondness for the characters. As the game progresses, this familiarity with the characters enables a sense of empathy and understanding for the ways in which individuals' copyright decisions affect people at all stages of their research career.

Another important part of the game, which required more thought than design, is the role of the facilitator. When designing the game, we knew it was important that the facilitator has knowledge about copyright licences and exceptions so that they can answer questions and bring the game forward to the next phase: from creation to discussion. However, we decided the facilitator also needs to be confident enough to lead a session, and deal with any disagreements should they arise. Furthermore, it became apparent that it is important for the learning outcomes that the facilitator can explain each scenario as it unfolds, ensuring participants understand each situation, and creating an environment where participants feel they can ask questions.

The final aspect to consider when initially designing the game was for it to be both mobile, and replicable. Our intention was always to share Copyright Dough upon completion, so, with this in mind, we stuck to the basic concept of playing cards for the most part of the game, with the play dough itself being the only additional component needed. Later in the development of the game we added voting cards, information sheets, and instructions, but the main concept of the game remained that all materials, aside from the play dough, could be easily shared online, and printed by individuals wishing to play the game. In this respect, less is more with Copyright Dough, and at this stage we felt the game was ready for testing.

3.4 Testing

Copyright Dough was initially tested with library staff from the University of Essex who had varying levels of knowledge on copyright. This judgement was based upon both the role those individuals have within the library, and self-reporting of copyright knowledge. As a result of this initial test, we made some small but significant tweaks to the game. The first aspect we noticed was that individuals having a licence card for their model alone did not provide them with enough information to facilitate discussion around whether their task was permissible under the licence they had been given. We therefore created information sheets, which include details of all of the licences and the copyright exceptions we thought might be relevant to discussion (see

Figure 3). On further testing, these information sheets led to greatly increased discussion, and subsequently enabled a much richer learning experience. Participants could take these information sheets away with them, so they also served as a reminder of the lessons they had learnt, and we have heard from experience that these sheets are kept and used by past players.

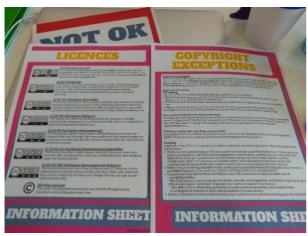


Figure 3: Examples of the information sheets displaying licences and exceptions. © Jane Secker. This image is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY).

To further improve the learning experience of the game, we also added a voting element. This was to help further overcome some members of the group taking the lead with discussion, as the two-sided voting cards displaying "OK" on one side, and "not OK" on the other mean that everyone gets a chance to have their say in terms of whether someone who had copied a model (or created their own) were fine to do so, and not potentially infringing any copyright. The relatively vague terms of "OK" and "not OK" were deliberately chosen to reflect the lack of blackand-white in copyright judgements. After voting, players are therefore encouraged to explain their decisions.

There were also some more practical tweaks made to the game. This included more of a basic introduction to the learning outcomes of the session before launching into the game, and more of a roundup conversation at the end to assess whether individuals felt they had learnt from the game. Additionally, some pre-arrangement of the distribution of playing cards was also found to be beneficial. This is not essential, but from experience we have found that, especially with smaller groups, arranging which combinations of role, task, and licence cards will be distributed leads to both broader, and perhaps more realistic, discussions of different scenarios.

These tweaks highlight the previously discussed importance of the facilitator. However, what became apparent through testing Copyright Dough, was that the amount of input the facilitator has influences the way the game progresses, subsequently affecting the extent to which learning objectives are met. Through testing, it became clear that the facilitator should keep their knowledge to themselves for the majority of the game, and for the most part should only reveal information either when asked by participants, to prompt and encourage discussion, or if a discussion needed settling. The facilitator therefore became a key aspect of the game in helping to ensure participants had achieved the learning outcomes by being more inactive. In other words, it was ultimately more important that the facilitator was a good listener, was fair, and allowed for discussion instead of being an 'all-knowing' copyright expert.

4. Playing the game and outreach

4.1 Playing the game

Since testing Copyright Dough, it has been played several times with a variety of different individuals (see Appendix 1). This has shown the benefit of Copyright Dough's adaptability. When individuals playing the game have less knowledge of copyright, more input is required from the facilitator. In these instances, the discussion element of the game focuses less upon working out the 'correct' answer, and instead it becomes more important to build confidence in discussing licences and exceptions. Researchers and students do not necessarily need to know all of the 'correct' answers about copyright decisions; that is what copyright experts in library services and research offices are for. However, having better knowledge and confidence to come to us with their enquiries and to be involved in discussions is crucial.

In contrast, when playing Copyright Dough with library staff, discussions are focused more upon coming to the 'correct' answer. This is great when surrounded by a room of copyright 'experts', but also works as a successful tool for mixing library staff with varying levels of copyright expertise, and training those who are less confident answering copyright questions. This is increasingly important, as copyright becomes more prominent in the concerns of students and academics alike with an increasing amount of teaching being carried out online, alongside the shift to open access publishing.

In all of the slight variants of the game, we have found through anecdotal feedback that afterwards players felt more confident discussing copyright, and had gained a better understanding of the complexities involved. We have also found through anecdotal feedback that the game-based approach achieves our aim of making the learning experience more memorable, and creates some positive emotions around copyright. Whilst so far we have not gathered much feedback in a more formal way, some of the conclusions we have drawn from speaking to participants are reflected in this written feedback we received from one participant after taking part in Copyright Dough:

I thoroughly enjoyed playing the Copyright Dough game as part of our Comms away day. Not only was it fun and interactive, it was informative and helped the team explore the different aspects of copyright as well as the implications of using the different licences for both the owner and the user. I am still using the information sheet, given out at the end, for reference.

We have therefore seen that Copyright Dough can work as a tool for both engagement and education around copyright literacy, and hope that it can be broad reaching in its potential scope for teaching. Going forward, we aim to collect some more formal feedback from participants both immediately after playing the game, and also potentially at a later date to see whether the knowledge learnt has been retained.

4.2 Outreach

After designing and playing the game, outreach was focused upon to enable Copyright Dough to be played more broadly. The initial step was to upload all of the materials needed to play the game, aside, of course, from the play dough, to Figshare (Pyman and Sundsbø 2020a-e). Figshare is an online repository that allows users to easily share their projects in a discoverable format, and generates a DOI to facilitate citation. The materials were shared under a CC-BY licence to allow a broad level of use. On uploading the materials, the project was promoted on Twitter, and there was significant interest in the materials. This was judged by the number of likes, comments, and retweets received (see Appendix 2 for a selection of example tweets).

Following this, we have taken Copyright Dough to the University of Kent to be played with colleagues there, and were due to present Copyright Dough at the 2020 LILAC and Icepops conferences. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, this was not possible, though we hope that Copyright Dough will feature at these, and potentially more, conferences in the future. This will enable practical demonstrations of the game to future facilitators, and will also allow a test of a planned new format of the game designed with larger groups in mind.

In addition to this more face-to-face side of outreach, blog posts have been used to promote Copyright Dough. One blog post was written for UK Copyright Literacy (Pyman, 2020a), and another for the Copyright Licencing Agency (Pyman, 2020b). Again, these were promoted via Twitter, and proved a good way to gain some more interest in Copyright Dough. We have also been in contact with A. J. Boston, the scholarly communication librarian at Murray State University, who came across Copyright Dough on Twitter, and noticed the similarly between his own active learning exercise used to teach about copyright, fair use, and creative commons (Boston, 2020), and Copyright Dough. This similarity highlights we are not alone in our ambitions to teach researchers about copyright licences and exceptions in a more engaging and creative way, and opens the door for some potential future collaboration toward our common goals.

5. Discussion

5.1 Challenges

One of the main challenges we found when running Copyright Dough was that it can be difficult to grasp the level of understanding in the room before beginning a session. Though many had 'lightbulb' moments where they found they had more knowledge than they thought they did, this would not be revealed until the discussion part of the session. Furthermore, players differed a lot in terms of how much support and help they needed in understanding their task, which is where we found it useful to have two facilitators. However, the nature of the game is 'unpredictable', as players could interpret their task in very different ways, and the discussion could go in any direction. This meant that even when players had misinterpreted or misunderstood a task or a licence card, discussion would still go ahead, albeit in a way we did not anticipate. It is of course possible for the facilitator to steer the discussion back, and this again highlights the importance of the facilitator for the progression of the game in a way that ensures learning has taken place.

Though this leads to another challenge we came across: trying not to lead discussions too much when players were discussing their creations, and the inspirations behind them. Though the facilitator does often have to step into a discussion to ask a question or explain something, a part of the learning objective was to empower the players to become more confident in their ability to answer copyright questions, and thus we as facilitators needed to minimise our input where possible. Whilst we had acknowledged in the testing phase that the facilitator's role should be a subtle one, it took us a few rounds to get used to becoming a more silent facilitator. However, we do not recommend jumping into the discussion too soon. Many times, players have concluded what we would have wanted to explain two minutes earlier, yet the point was not to lecture, but to coach. This ties again to the aims of facilitating a safe learning environment that allows positive emotions, as to jump in early and end discussion would surely hinder these aims.

Aside from these challenges, as mentioned above, the biggest challenge we have faced with developing Copyright Dough has been the abrupt brakes COVID-19 put on our plans for outreach this year. We hope to be able to take Copyright Dough to different places in 2021 and beyond, but in the meantime Copyright Dough has been somewhat put on hold. This drastic change in the learning environment perhaps highlights a need for some further thought for the

game in the future, as we may need to consider how Copyright Dough could be delivered in an online format, whilst still achieving the aims which have so far underlined its development.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Creating a safe environment

In conclusion, we believe that the games-based approach focusing on the concept of active learning breaks down barriers within the room, and facilitates a positive and safe environment for discussion of an aspect of scholarly communication that can bring anxiety. In enabling players to put themselves in the shoes of others, we feel that Copyright Dough allows individuals to see different perspectives when considering copyright decisions, leading to broader and more open discussions. In this respect, the decisions no longer feel personal, and players are able to discuss freely and openly without feeling constrained by people's roles and positions. In giving individuals the confidence to discuss copyright in this way, within a game that should leave a positive and memorable impression, it is hoped that the experience will lead individuals to transfer this confidence to real life copyright scenarios.

6.2 Engagement

Finally, we have experienced first-hand that using a game to teach copyright makes the subject much more engaging, and is a great way to get people in the room breaking down barriers before and during the session. This approach has worked with a broad range of people, from students and researchers, through to academics, library staff, and others in professional services in higher education. This broad level of engagement, leading to successful and memorable learning, is crucial for the development of copyright literacy, as copyright is becoming ever more important in scholarly communication.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Where Copyright Dough has been played, and with whom.

- 13th November 2019 University of Essex. Library staff.
- 18th December 2019 University of Essex. Library staff.
- 9th January 2020 Newcomers Research Week, University of Essex. Early career researchers and Academics.
- 27th January 2020 University of Essex. UK Data Archive Professional Services Staff.
- 9th March 2020 University of Kent. Library staff and Research Services staff.
- 14th March 2020 University of Essex, Southend Campus. Early career researchers.

Appendix 2: Examples of engagement via Twitter



Tweet URL: https://twitter.com/Hannah_Pyman/status/1230524526590644225?s=20



Tweet URL: https://twitter.com/katrinesundsbo/status/1230527488985632768?s=20



Tweet URL: https://twitter.com/UKCopyrightLit/status/1234510862855086082?s=20



11 Retweets 16 Likes 2 Quotes

In today's #HigherEd blog, @Hannah_Pyman tells us all about Copyright Dough, an interactive game that she developed with @katrinesundsbo for @Uni_of_Essex to engage learners in copyright licences and exceptions!



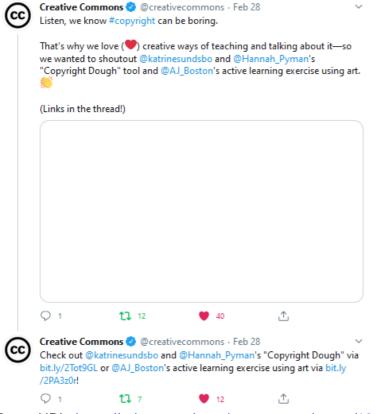
Tweet URL: https://twitter.com/CLA_UK/status/1242123872998174720?s=20



You've heard of Copyright the Card Game. We now introduce you to Copyright Dough, a game to teach, and bring discussion, about copyright licences and exceptions. With playdough! What's not to love? from @Hannah_Pyman and @katrinesundsbo bit.ly/331Gqtz



Tweet URL: https://twitter.com/ccAustralia/status/1235395778543120384?s=20



Tweet URL: https://twitter.com/creativecommons/status/1233476304214859777?s=20