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***BLUEBOOK* BASICS FOR PARALEGAL STUDENTS: SUPPORTING CITATION-STYLE LEARNING WITH SHORT INTERACTIVE GAMES ON DEMAND**

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Bluebook citation fluency requires more than familiarity with citation rules: students must identify the source type, select the governing convention, and assemble each citation accurately. Drawing on cognitive and educational research, this article presents brief, interactive games and exercises for paralegal instruction, including matching tasks, error-identification activities, citation-construction puzzles, vocabulary challenges, and quizzes. It explains how instructors can sequence these activities from guided practice to independent application and use prompt, corrective feedback to improve later performance. These resources are offered as flexible course supplements whose effectiveness warrants further classroom study.

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grading practices, feedback for learning, and open pedagogy, with a particular interest in creating engaging, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences.

Introduction

Many novice legal writers find implementing *Bluebook* citations intimidating and challenging.¹ *Bluebook* citation style also presents persistent instructional challenges because citation is both highly technical and conceptually abstract. As Thomson observes, citation instruction is “so important and yet so abstract that it presents its own challenges to teach.”² Margolis similarly describes citation as involving both a substantive component, that of understanding what citation communicates in legal analysis, and a technical component, that of executing detailed formatting rules.³ Together, these demands place learners new to *Bluebook* citation style in a difficult position: they must classify a source, select the correct rule, apply abbreviations and ordering conventions, and execute precise punctuation and typography, often under time constraints and while still learning legal citation fundamentals and legal terminology and analysis.

Learning science suggests that durable citation competency comes primarily from extended practice, rather than simple exposure. Students benefit from frequent opportunities to retrieve citation knowledge from memory, practice across time, and discriminate among similar citation templates.⁴ However, these conditions are difficult to provide through periodic, high-stakes graded assignments alone, and delayed feedback may reduce students’ opportunity to correct errors promptly.⁵

Short, interactive educational games, available to students on demand, offer a practical option to deliver and sustain these evidence-based learning conditions. Educational games do not improve learning because they are “games” per se, but because they can efficiently structure retrieval practice, spaced repetition, interleaving of confusable formats, and immediate corrective feedback. They also align with conditions that support deep engagement, including a manageable challenge level, autonomy support, and visible progress toward clear goals.⁶ In legal education, game-based learning has been used to support the development of legal reasoning.⁷ More broadly, meta-analyses suggest that gamification and serious games can improve learning and academic performance, particularly when they supplement sound instruction and provide repeated opportunities to engage with the material.⁸

This article translates established learning principles into adaptable, low-stakes activities for teaching legal citation to law and paralegal students. Activities include paper-based and whiteboard options as well as accessible digital examples that students can replay for distributed practice across a course, semester, and/or program of study.

Citation Style Teaching and Learning Challenges

Citation learning often breaks down at the time of knowledge transfer: students may understand citation rules in isolation yet struggle to produce (or reproduce) correct citations in new contexts (for example, when drafting under time pressure, incorporating pincites, and/or switching from

cases to statutes). Identifiable and well-documented barriers to mastery are especially common for students new to legal research and writing:

1. **High cognitive load for novices**

Citation generation and review require coordinating multiple details at once (source category, jurisdiction/court, date parenthetical, abbreviations, pincites, and ordering conventions). When students experience cognitive overload, they may have difficulty retaining foundational principles and transferring them to new problems.⁹ Cognitive load theory suggests that novices learn complex procedures more effectively when instruction reduces extraneous load and uses scaffolding to introduce complexity gradually.¹⁰

2. **Confusable formats and “near-neighbor” templates**

When applying *Bluebook* citation style, students often mix up structurally similar formats (for example, statutes vs. regulations; books vs. chapters; cases vs. administrative decisions). The challenge is not only executing a format but selecting the correct template in the first instance. Research on interleaving¹¹ and discrimination learning¹² suggests that mixed practice can improve learners’ later ability to distinguish among similar categories and accurately classify new examples.¹³

3. **Overreliance on passive study strategies**

When studying *Bluebook* form, students may default to rereading rules, highlighting examples, or repeatedly consulting answers. Research, however, supports retrieval practice and distributed practice as more effective strategies for long-term retention and performance.¹⁴ Active learning activities and additional support for students can support both confidence and mastery. For example, selected foreign-trained lawyers in an accelerated J.D. program reported feeling better prepared for later coursework after completing a supplemental introductory lawyering-skills course.¹⁵ In that course, instructors used *The Indigo Book*, a freely available, openly licensed manual implementing a legal-citation system compatible with *The Bluebook*, to introduce proper legal citation.¹⁶

4. **Delayed and/or diffuse feedback**

Formative-assessment literature emphasizes frequent opportunities to attempt a task, receive timely and actionable feedback, and use that feedback in a subsequent attempt. Feedback generally improves learning, though its effects vary substantially with the information provided and how learners use it.¹⁷ However, if citation feedback most typically arrives through formal assignments (whether memos, briefs, citation exercises, or otherwise) submitted for grading and feedback, students may receive corrections too late to revise or revisit their underlying habits in intentionally reflective ways.

Open-access, repeatable mini games and interactive exercises can provide frequent, focused, and feedback-rich practice. When aligned with instructional goals, these activities may help students apply citation skills under authentic writing conditions.

Why Mini Interactive Games Help

Short, interactive citation games can be designed to incorporate learning conditions supported by educational research: repeated retrieval, practice distributed across time, discrimination among similar formats, scaffolding that fades as competence develops, and timely, actionable feedback.¹⁸ In citation instruction, these conditions are important because students must not merely recognize correct examples; they must produce citations by selecting the correct template and supplying missing elements, such as the court, date, abbreviations, and pincites.

1. Retrieval practice (the testing effect)

Retrieval practice¹⁹ improves long-term retention and later performance because actively pulling information from memory strengthens access more than additional study alone.²⁰ For citation learning, retrieval practice can be especially valuable because accurate citation requires generation: students must supply structure and components under authentic writing conditions.

2. Spaced repetition (distributed practice)

Distributed practice²¹ generally outperforms massed practice²² for durable long-term learning.²³ Mini games offer relatively simple opportunities to distribute practice across a course, semester, and program of study (for example, through classroom warm-up activities, exit tickets, short homework checks, and optional self-check exercises), turning citation practice into a steady, ongoing routine rather than a single unit or assessment.

3. Interleaving (mixed practice)

Interleaving, where activities mix problem types rather than focusing practice on one format at a time, supports learning in complex domains because it requires learners to *identify* and *select* the correct strategy. Citation tasks present a similar discrimination problem: students must decide whether a source should be cited as a case, statute, regulation, book chapter, or administrative decision, and then apply the relevant rule. Interleaving research offers indirect support for this design: a meta-analysis found improved performance on later assessments, particularly when learners had to distinguish among similar categories.²⁴

4. Scaffolding and cognitive load management

Cognitive load theory²⁵ supports structuring instruction to reduce demands on working memory that do not contribute to learning. Structured instructional support can then be withdrawn gradually as learners gain competence.²⁶ Mini games can implement this desired progression efficiently (for example, from recognition to completion to construction), allowing students to practice accurately while gradually taking on more of the overall task.

5. Feedback and formative assessment

Feedback is most useful when it is timely, specific, and actionable. Formative-assessment²⁷ research emphasizes repeated cycles of attempting a task, receiving corrective information, and trying again as conditions that can improve performance. Well-designed mini games can provide prompt feedback that allows students to identify and correct errors during practice and apply the correction on a later attempt.²⁸

What Research Suggests About Game-Based Approaches

Meta-analyses of digital and serious games for learning generally report positive average effects on learning, and research on serious games also reports a positive effect on retention; however, the magnitude of those benefits varies with game design and instructional context.²⁹ “Serious games” are games designed primarily to achieve educational, training, or other practical objectives rather than solely to entertain.³⁰ Meta-analyses of gamification³¹ report positive average effects on learning and academic performance, although effects vary across outcomes and implementations.³² Taken together, the literature suggests that game elements should reinforce effective instructional content, active practice, and feedback rather than substitute for them.³³ A recent one-group pretest–posttest study of criminal-law students likewise reported significant knowledge gains following a semester of educational games.³⁴ For citation instruction, these findings reinforce the learning principles described above: game mechanics should support—not replace—sound instructional design.

The following section applies these principles to practical citation activities. Organized by game type, each example identifies the citation skill(s) emphasized, explains the learning rationale (retrieval, spacing, interleaving, scaffolding, and feedback), and offers design tips to keep practice short, repeatable, and feedback-rich in both classroom and on-demand settings.

Sample Games and Activities

The following activities are adaptable templates for brief, low-stakes citation practice across a course or program of study. Each activity incorporates one or more of the learning principles discussed above. The examples are research-informed teaching resources rather than a validated intervention or instructional model.

1. Matching Activities

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Matching activities can support early-stage recognition, category discrimination, and rule identification.

How It Helps: Matching activities reduce cognitive load for learners by constraining choices while still encouraging retrieval and offering just-in-time feedback and opportunities for self-correction. Examples include pairing (a) source type with the appropriate citation format and (b) citation elements with their associated role/function.

Design Ideas: Use closely related *Bluebook* categories to make discrimination meaningful (statute vs. regulation; case reporter vs. statute code; book vs. chapter). Include a brief (one or two-line) explanation after each match.

Sample Game:

<https://jens246.github.io/The-Bluebook--Matching-Practice/>

2. Vocabulary Practice

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Vocabulary practice can improve student comprehension and retention by making key terms more familiar and recognizable, thereby freeing students' attention and efforts for higher-level thinking and problem-solving.

How It Helps: Vocabulary practice boosts students' ability to communicate more accurately (in classroom discussions and written assignments) and helps close background-knowledge gaps so that more students can participate in citation practice with greater confidence.

Design Ideas: Develop games around quick retrieval with immediate feedback (and frequent, spaced replays). Try to avoid or minimize lengthy definitions to manage cognitive load.

Sample Games:

- a. *Bluebook* Terminology Generator,
<https://jens246.github.io/Bluebook-Terminology-Generator/>
- b. Legal-Themed Wordle,
<https://jens246.github.io/LegalThemedWordle/>
- c. *Bluebook* Terminology, a traditional “hangman” game,
<https://bluebook-citations-a-traditional-ha.vercel.app/>
- d. *Bluebook* Spinner, a carnival-style trivia game.
<https://jens246.github.io/Bluebook-Spinner/>

3. Corrections / Spot the Error

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Spot-the-error activities can help strengthen students' proofreading and editing accuracy as well as their attention to technical and citation rules in practice and execution.

How It Helps: Error-correction tasks provide strong formative checks because the activity mirrors authentic revision work and makes feedback immediately actionable.

Design Ideas: Label error types (order, punctuation, abbreviation, missing element) so students build a reusable proofreading checklist.

Sample Games:

- a. *Bluebook* Brief Review, Spot the Error:
<https://jens246.github.io/BluebookBriefReview/>
- b. Case Citations, Spot the Error Exercises. This activity can be administered as a paper worksheet, a Google Forms quiz, or a collaborative group activity.

4. Crosswords

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Crosswords provide opportunities to reinforce active recall of terminology, abbreviations, and citation vocabulary.

How It Helps: Crosswords can strengthen quick recall of common terms and abbreviations, providing a useful foundation for more efficient citation work in practice. Crosswords may be especially useful when paired with retrieval and immediate, actionable feedback.

Design Ideas: Tie clues to course materials (common court abbreviations, procedural terms, *Bluebook* vocabulary). Follow with short quizzes or discussion questions that ask students to use the terms in authentic contexts.

Sample Game (Template Example): <https://drive.google.com/file/d/17LCTzfYQ3YVx-w0rtJN1x6sDTfY6jHkZ/view?usp=sharing>

Resource Guide (Sample terms): https://docs.google.com/document/d/143KpDhRD-R_JJpBip6IXZiHJwDFb-C7nKHCTpOrDx0g/edit?usp=sharing

5. Word Scrambles

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Word scrambles offer quick warm-ups that reinforce abbreviations and key citation terminology.

How It Helps: Like crosswords, scrambles primarily reinforce component and foundational knowledge (terms, abbreviations). They might be useful as a brief lesson opener that feeds into a higher-value retrieval task (for example, a short quiz, a writing activity, and/or error-correction).

Design Ideas: Make the scramble output immediately useful: i.e., the unscrambled words become the “required elements” students must next place into a citation template.

Sample Games:

- a. Legal Scramble. See: <https://jens246.github.io/legalscramble/>
- b. Legal-Themed Wordle. See: <https://jens246.github.io/LegalThemedWordle/>

- c. *Bluebook Terminology*, a traditional “hangman” game,
<https://bluebook-citations-a-traditional-ha.vercel.app/>

6. Fill in the Blank and Citation Construction

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Fill-in-the-blank and citation construction activities offer low-stakes, scaffolded practice to support citation generation and a deeper understanding of the nuances of citation format (for example, court/date placement, pincites, abbreviations).

How It Helps: Fill-in-the-blank activities offer a bridge between recognition and complete citation construction. Students identify and retrieve missing citation elements without having to manage an entire citation at once. Doing so balances cognitive load for learners. Citation construction activities also offer direct retrieval practice where students must generate and order elements, both of which support long-term learning and transfer.

Design Ideas: Reduce scaffolding as learner confidence grows. For example, begin practice with one blank, then multiple blanks, then remove the template entirely. Keep prompts realistic but brief. Can provide model answers the most common mistakes.

Sample Games:

- a. Citation Construction, Puzzle Game:
<https://jens246.github.io/Bluebook-Citation-Practice-Puzzle-Game/>
- b. Word for Legal Applications, Citation Practice:
<https://jens246.github.io/WordforLegalApplicationsPractice/>

7. Quizzes

Applications/Pedagogical Benefits: Practice quizzes offer opportunities for retrieval practice, spaced repetition, and immediate feedback.

How It Helps: The testing effect³⁵ supports using frequent, low-stakes quizzes as learning tools rather than merely as assessment tools.³⁶ Quizzes administered repeatedly over time can also combine retrieval practice with distributed practice across a course or term.³⁷

Design Ideas: Create short, mixed-format items (multiple choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, error correction, etc.). Allow immediate retakes after feedback is provided.

- a. *Bluebook* Citation Quiz, 5-question warm-up. See:
<https://forms.gle/jmJAbczCC44QhQF7A>
- b. *Bluebook* Case Law Citation Quiz (22nd Edition)
Summary, Mixed Practice, 40 Questions. See:
<https://forms.gle/hM7MiF4fuz7VGCu67>

8. Jeopardy-Style Games

Application/Pedagogical Benefits: Jeopardy-style games support active recall and sustained review through interleaving and collaborative retrieval-based learning.

How It Helps: Jeopardy-style play encourages repeated retrieval in an engaging format and can interleave source types and rule families (for example, cases, statutes, short forms, signals). The type of interleaving common in jeopardy-style games also supports learning when formats are confusable.

Design Ideas: Reward accuracy over speed. Allow all learners time to reflect before accepting responses. After each question, briefly explain *why* the correct choice is correct so the activity remains focused on learning and instruction as the primary goal.

Sample Games:

- a. General *Bluebook* Jeopardy: <https://jens246.github.io/bluebookjeopardygame/>
- b. Pennsylvania-Focused *Bluebook* Jeopardy:
<https://jens246.github.io/BluebookJeopardyPennsylvaniaSpecific/>

9. Games that Consolidate Knowledge

Applied practice that consolidates prior learning and instructional strategies can further strengthen student confidence and mastery. The following games reinforce foundational knowledge with repeatable opportunities for application through supported reinforcement, spaced repetition, interleaving, and specific feedback.

Sample Games:

- a. Case Law Practice:
<https://jens246.github.io/BluebookCitationAcademyCaseLaw/>
- b. Enacted Law Practice:
<https://jens246.github.io/BluebookCitationAcademyEnactedLaw/>
- c. Rules and Regulations:
<https://jens246.github.io/BluebookCitationAcademyRulesAndRegulations/>

Conclusion

Students develop *Bluebook* citation proficiency through active application rather than passive review alone. Short interactive games can offer an efficient way to put the learning principles discussed in this article into practice when they are aligned with instructional goals. In a paralegal studies context, where citation accuracy signals credibility, competence, and professional readiness, mini games can serve as a practical, research-informed instructional toolkit. The most useful designs will keep game activities brief, the targeted skills and focus narrow, and the feedback specific and immediate. Of course, there is no guarantee that games will be a good fit for every student and every class. However, there is value in the possibility that at least one student might find mini games helpful. One legal-research instructor, for example, describes games as creating “safe opportunities to practice, and even fail, when applying concepts students have learned.”³⁸ Ultimately, this author hopes that mini games and interactive activities will support student growth and citation proficiency while encouraging further conversation and resource sharing.

Additional Resources to Explore

Accessing *Bluebook* Practice Problems and Guides:

<https://library.law.unc.edu/2022/08/accessing-bluebook-practice-problems-and-guides/>

Engage Online with this List of Law-Related Activities:

<https://www.dcbbar.org/getmedia/c778d8a4-bbb4-4b70-b1da-eb0277dd8957/Online-Games-and-Resources-Virtual-Youth-Law-Fair-2>

Let's Have Some Fun: Gamifying Learning in Legal Research:

<https://ripslawlibrarian.wordpress.com/2025/11/06/lets-have-some-fun-gamifying-learning-in-legal-research/>

Mastering the *Bluebook*: Interactive Exercises: <https://cap-press.com/mbie/faculty.php>

¹ See Christopher Anderson, *Reconsidering How We Present and Grade Bluebook Citation*, 37 SECOND DRAFT 2, 2 (2024); Ivy B. Grey, *Does Bluebooking Matter? Some Insight on How to Cite*, STUDENT LAW. (June 13, 2018), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_students/resources/student-lawyer/student-essentials/does-bluebooking-matter-insight-on-how-to-cite/.

² David I.C. Thomson, *What We Do: The Life and Work of the Legal Writing Professor*, 50 J.L. & EDUC. 170, 185 (2021).

³ Ellie Margolis, *Doing Less—Reflections on Cognitive Load and Hard Choices in Teaching First-Year Legal Writing*, 68 ST. LOUIS U. L.J. 399, 415 (2024).

⁴ See John Dunlosky et al., *Improving Students' Learning with Effective Learning Techniques: Promising Directions from Cognitive and Educational Psychology*, 14 PSYCH. SCI. PUB. INT. 4, 29–47 (2013); Elizabeth Adamo Usman, *Making Legal Education Stick: Using Cognitive Science to Foster Long-Term Learning in the Legal Writing Classroom*, 29 GEO. J. LEGAL ETHICS 355, 365–69, 393–94 (2016).

⁵ See John Hattie & Helen Timperley, *The Power of Feedback*, 77 REV. EDUC. RSCH. 81, 98–101 (2007); Valerie J. Shute, *Focus on Formative Feedback*, 78 REV. EDUC. RSCH. 153, 157–65 (2008); Benedikt Wisniewski et al., *The Power of Feedback Revisited: A Meta-Analysis of Educational Feedback Research*, 10 FRONTIERS PSYCH., art. 3087, at 1–2, 11–12 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.03087>.

⁶ See Thomson, *supra* note 2, at 181.

⁷ See David Yuratch, *Ratio! A Game of Judgment: Using Game-Based Learning to Teach Legal Reasoning*, 55 Law Tchr. 213, 213–14 (2021).

⁸ See Michael Sailer & Lisa Homner, *The Gamification of Learning: A Meta-Analysis*, 32 Educ. Psych. Rev. 77, 77–79 (2020); Pieter Wouters et al., *A Meta-Analysis of the Cognitive and Motivational Effects of Serious Games*, 105 J. Educ. Psych. 249, 249 (2013); Jiyuan Zeng et al., *Exploring the Impact of Gamification on Students' Academic Performance: A Comprehensive Meta-Analysis of Studies from the Year 2008 to 2023*, 55 Brit. J. Educ. Tech. 2478, 2478–79 (2024).

⁹ See Margolis, *supra* note 3, at 410–11.

¹⁰ “Scaffolding” refers to instructional support tailored to a learner’s current level that enables the learner to complete a task not yet manageable independently. As the learner develops competence, the support is gradually withdrawn and responsibility is transferred to the learner. See Janneke van de Pol et al., *Scaffolding in Teacher–Student Interaction: A Decade of Research*, 22 Educ. Psych. Rev. 271, 271–72, 274–75 (2010). For the cognitive-load principles of reducing extraneous load and introducing complex material gradually, see Ton de Jong, *Cognitive Load Theory, Educational Research, and Instructional Design: Some Food for Thought*, 38 Instructional Sci. 105, 106–08 (2010).

¹¹ “Interleaving” is a practice method in which work involving one category, concept, or problem type is alternated with work involving other categories, concepts, or problem types. It contrasts with blocked practice, in which all work involving one type is completed before practice moves to another. See Ouhaio Chen et al., *Spacing and Interleaving Effects Require Distinct Theoretical Bases: A Systematic Review Testing the Cognitive Load and Discriminative-Contrast Hypotheses*, 33 EDUC. PSYCH. REV. 1499, 1499–1500, 1503–04 (2021).

¹² As used here, “discrimination learning” means learning to distinguish among similar categories or problem types and to associate each with the appropriate response or strategy. In research concerning interleaving, this process is often described as “discriminative contrast.” See Chen et al., *supra* note 11, at 1503–04.

¹³ See Matthias Brunmair & Tobias Richter, *Similarity Matters: A Meta-Analysis of Interleaved Learning and Its Moderators*, 145 Psych. Bull. 1029, 1029–30 (2019); Paulo F. Carvalho & Robert L. Goldstone, *Effects of Interleaved and Blocked Study on Delayed Test of Category Learning Generalization*, 5 Frontiers Psych., art. 936, at 7–9 (2014), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00936>; Nate Kornell & Robert A. Bjork, *Learning Concepts and Categories: Is Spacing the “Enemy of Induction”?*, 19 Psych. Sci. 585, 589–91 (2008).

¹⁴ See Dunlosky et al., *supra* note 4, at 5–6, 29–41; Usman, *supra* note 4, at 362, 365–70, 387–90.

¹⁵ See Sylvia Lett, *Flattening the Learning Curve for International J.D. Students*, 68 St. Louis U. L.J. 441, 442, 455–56 (2024).

¹⁶ See Lett, *supra* note 15, at 452; Christopher Sprigman & Daryl Steiger, *Interview: The Indigo Book: A Manual of Legal Citation*, 5 N.Y.U. J. Intell. Prop. & Ent. L. 513, 513–14 (2016).

¹⁷ See Hattie & Timperley, *supra* note 5, at 81–82, 86–90; Shute, *supra* note 5, at 153–57, 175–77; Grant Wiggins, *Seven Keys to Effective Feedback*, 70 Educ. Leadership 10, 10–16 (2012); Wisniewski et al., *supra* note 5, at 1, 10–12.

¹⁸ See Dunlosky et al., *supra* note 4, at 29–44; van de Pol et al., *supra* note 10, at 271–72, 274–75; Shute, *supra* note 5, at 153–57, 175–77.

¹⁹ “Retrieval practice” is the deliberate effort to recall previously learned information from memory, such as through self-testing, practice questions, flashcards, or an unaided explanation, rather than merely reviewing the information again. See Shana K. Carpenter et al., *The Science of Effective Learning with Spacing and Retrieval Practice*, 1 NATURE REVS. PSYCH. 496, 500–05 (2022); Olusola O. Adesope et al., *Rethinking the Use of Tests: A Meta-Analysis of Practice Testing*, 87 REV. EDUC. RSCH. 659, 659–62 (2017).

²⁰ See Adesope et al., *supra* note 19, at 659–62, 672–74.

²¹ “Distributed practice,” also called “spaced practice,” divides repeated learning or practice among sessions separated by intervals of time rather than concentrating the repetitions within one session or brief period. See Carpenter et al., *supra* note 19, at 498–501; Nicholas J. Cepeda et al., *Distributed Practice in Verbal Recall Tasks: A Review and Quantitative Synthesis*, 132 PSYCH. BULL. 354, 354–56 (2006).

²² “Massed practice” concentrates repeated study or practice within one session or a relatively brief period. It is commonly associated with “cramming” and generally produces less durable retention than practice distributed over time. See Carpenter et al., *supra* note 19, at 498–501; Chen et al., *supra* note 11, at 1499–1500.

²³ See Carpenter et al., *supra* note 19, at 498–501; Cepeda et al., *supra* note 21, at 354–56.

²⁴ See Brunmair & Richter, *supra* note 13, at 1029–30.

²⁵ “Cognitive load theory” holds that novel information must be processed through a working memory whose capacity and duration are limited. Instruction should therefore manage task complexity and minimize demands that do not contribute to learning, because excessive cognitive load can impair learning and transfer. See John Sweller et al., *Cognitive Architecture and Instructional Design: 20 Years Later*, 31 EDUC. PSYCH. REV. 261, 261–62 (2019).

²⁶ See de Jong, *supra* note 10, at 105–09; Margolis, *supra* note 3, at 402–08; van de Pol et al., *supra* note 10, at 271–72, 274–75.

²⁷ “Formative assessment” is a process in which evidence of a learner’s current understanding is elicited, interpreted, and used by the instructor, learner, or peers to make better decisions about the next steps in instruction and learning. An assessment is considered formative because of how its results are used, not merely because it is informal or ungraded. See Paul Black & Dylan Wiliam, *Developing the Theory of Formative Assessment*, 21 EDUC.

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION & ACCOUNTABILITY 5, 9 (2009); see also Shute, *supra* note 5, at 153–54.

²⁸ See Shute, *supra* note 5, at 157–58, 163–67; Wisniewski et al., *supra* note 5, at 10–12.

²⁹ See Douglas B. Clark et al., *Digital Games, Design, and Learning: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*, 86 REV. EDUC. RSCH. 79, 79, 108, 116–17 (2016); Wouters et al., *supra* note 8, at 249, 258–59.

³⁰ See Wouters et al., *supra* note 8, at 249–50.

³¹ “Gamification” means adding game-design elements, such as points, badges, or leaderboards, to a nongame activity or learning process. Unlike game-based learning, gamification does not require a fully developed game. See Sailer & Homner, *supra* note 8, at 78–79.

³² See Sailer & Homner, *supra* note 8, at 77, 92, 100–01; Zeng et al., *supra* note 8, at 2478–79, 2494–98.

³³ See Sailer & Homner, *supra* note 8, at 78–82.

³⁴ See Yasmina Beatriz Riega-Virú et al., *Impact of Gamification on Teaching-Learning Criminal Law: A Quasi-Experimental Study with University Students*, 14 TEM J. 612, 615–18 (2025).

³⁵ The “testing effect” is the improvement in later learning and retention produced by retrieving previously studied material through practice tests, compared with additional study that does not require retrieval. See Adesope et al., *supra* note 19, at 659–63.

³⁶ See Adesope et al., *supra* note 19, at 659–63, 683–89; Dunlosky et al., *supra* note 4, at 29–35.

³⁷ See Dunlosky et al., *supra* note 4, at 35–40.

³⁸ Jasmine Plott, *Let’s Have Some Fun! Gamifying Learning in Legal Research*, RIPS LAW LIBRARIAN BLOG (Nov. 6, 2025), <https://ripslawlibrarian.wordpress.com/2025/11/06/lets-have-some-fun-gamifying-learning-in-legal-research/>.

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