Hack the Robot Dance

1. Overview

The goal of this activity is for learners to understand that hacking has always been a key element in the creative process, and that it is a constructive collaborative activity, not a destructive one. Participants will learn how to hack a popular dance from the 80s to design a brand new dance.

2. Materials you'll need

- Speakers
- Computer with reliable internet connection and unblocked access to YouTube
- Projector
- Video: How To Do The Robot (Totally Rad 80's Dances)
  http://youtu.be/E-_iUHY8RBs

3. How to play

- Participants form a circle
- Facilitator plays the "How To Do The Robot (Totally Rad 80's Dances)" video
- Facilitator tells the group that they are now going to hack the dance, starting with examining all of the steps in the dance
- Everyone practices the dance in its entirety
- The first participant finds one step of the dance to change
- The participant demonstrates the hacked dance in the circle
  - The person to the left of the initial hacker must hack that move or repeat it
  - If hacking the move, the person has to demonstrate the new dance move they are adding or replacing
    - Repeat until everyone in the circle has danced
    - When the last person in the circle has made their hack, everyone in the whole circle needs to try out the new dance. If there is extra time, go around the circle again

4. Discussion

After the dance party is over, direct guiding questions to participants to help identify the steps to hacking. Write definition/key words that participants come up with on the board/poster paper.

- How did you hack the dance? Discuss the rules — what were they?

What made the dance fun?

- What actions were you doing while hacking?
  Discuss the mechanics and dynamic systems — Break down the activity, first they looked at the dance, then they changed bits and pieces of it until it became a new dance. One person made a change which affected the entire dance.
- What was the goal of the activity?
  Discuss goal — creating a new dance by hacking
- What made the dance fun? Discuss creativity and co-developing the project.
- How do you think hacking a dance will be similar to hacking a website?
  Discuss what defines hacking and transition onto the next topic

5. Introduction to badges

Explain to participants that they will be able to collect paper badges for their accomplishments throughout the hack jam. At the end of a module, participants will "pledge" or apply for badges to gain specific super powers. They must successfully complete the pledged task in front of a peer mentor or facilitator who will award them the badge to show they've earned their superpower.

Photo Credit: Ted x Kids Brussels