NARRATOR: This grade 9 science class is taking part in deep learning through gamification.

STUDENT 1: I’m giving you each a hundred dollars.

STUDENT 2: No, no, no I want dairy cows and chickens, Just give us ten of each.

NARRATOR: Darrin Bausch created a game to be played throughout the entire semester to reinforce the curriculum while promoting global citizenship.

EDUCATOR: There’s conflicts around the world, there’s sustainability issues and I thought you know there’s got to be a way to make it more real for them without umm you know obviously being involved in a lot of that stuff.

NARRATOR: So, at the beginning of the semester, Darrin assigned each student a province and allocated resources, like oil and freshwater, based on numbers he got from Stats Canada.

EDUCATOR: And then at that point they’re given a couple goals that they- they need to achieve so to increase their GDP basically and also to keep their ecological footprint low.

NARRATOR: Students are encouraged to trade or auction their resources in order to help accomplish the goals.
EDUCATOR: OK so there’s three provinces up here minimum bid of 250,000. Just a second, let me get my clock running

STUDENT: 230!

BACKGROUND: 240! 250!

EDUCATOR: Jake’s out, 5 seconds left! Nobody else is going to switch it out at the last second?

(background voices)

BACKGROUND VOICE: 610! 600! 650!

EDUCATOR: Whoa no! He got it! 610!

BACKGROUND VOICE: No its 650!

EDUCATOR: No it was up! The timer was up.

EDUCATOR: So different kids choose different approaches to it and because of the provinces are different and the resources that they get, the amount of money that they have, they’re not all making the same decisions.

NARRATOR: Darrin acts as an activator as the students track their own exchanges through a Google Doc. The students play through 10 decades of Canadian history. That has students trying to sustain life in their province...

STUDENT: You have way more food than I do though

STUDENT: (laughs) but I still need food. I have more people.

NARRATOR: But at the same time, handling real issues like the idle no more movement and whether or not they should vote in favour in things like a carbon tax.

EDUCATOR: The main idea with it being that the kids are given the opportunity to problem solve, to be involved in critical thinking and it gives you a chance to reinforce the ideas that you’re teaching everyday without kind of scripting it. The kids have
complete control over it. You can guide them in certain directions but there’s a lot of control that they have over it and a lot of their ideas come out more naturally that way.

NARRATOR: The game also promotes real life problem solving… like how to manage finances...

EDUCATOR (talking to group of students): So you can sell your expertise to her. You can sell that sheet to her

STUDENT: Yeah I don’t have enough money for that

EDUCATOR: Oh you might want to look at that, it’s going to make you money

NARRATOR: Meanwhile, Darrin asks for feedback from students about the game and changes it accordingly

EDUCATOR: That’s another part of the inquiry process for them is feeling like they have some control over how things develop in the game and how it evolves and if they feel there’s a new rule or a new addition to the game, feeling like they have control over that really engages them, gives them ownership over what they’re doing, it gives them ownership of their learning

[MUSIC]

TEXT ON SCREEN: This was a glimpse into an Ontario classroom that is part of a province-wide collaborative research study on effective technology-enables teaching and learning practices.