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Going on a goosechase

Practical equipment skills in a competitive learning environment

Aim: To improve the amount and level of practical equipment knowledge gained by student Occupational Therapists during their pre-registration education
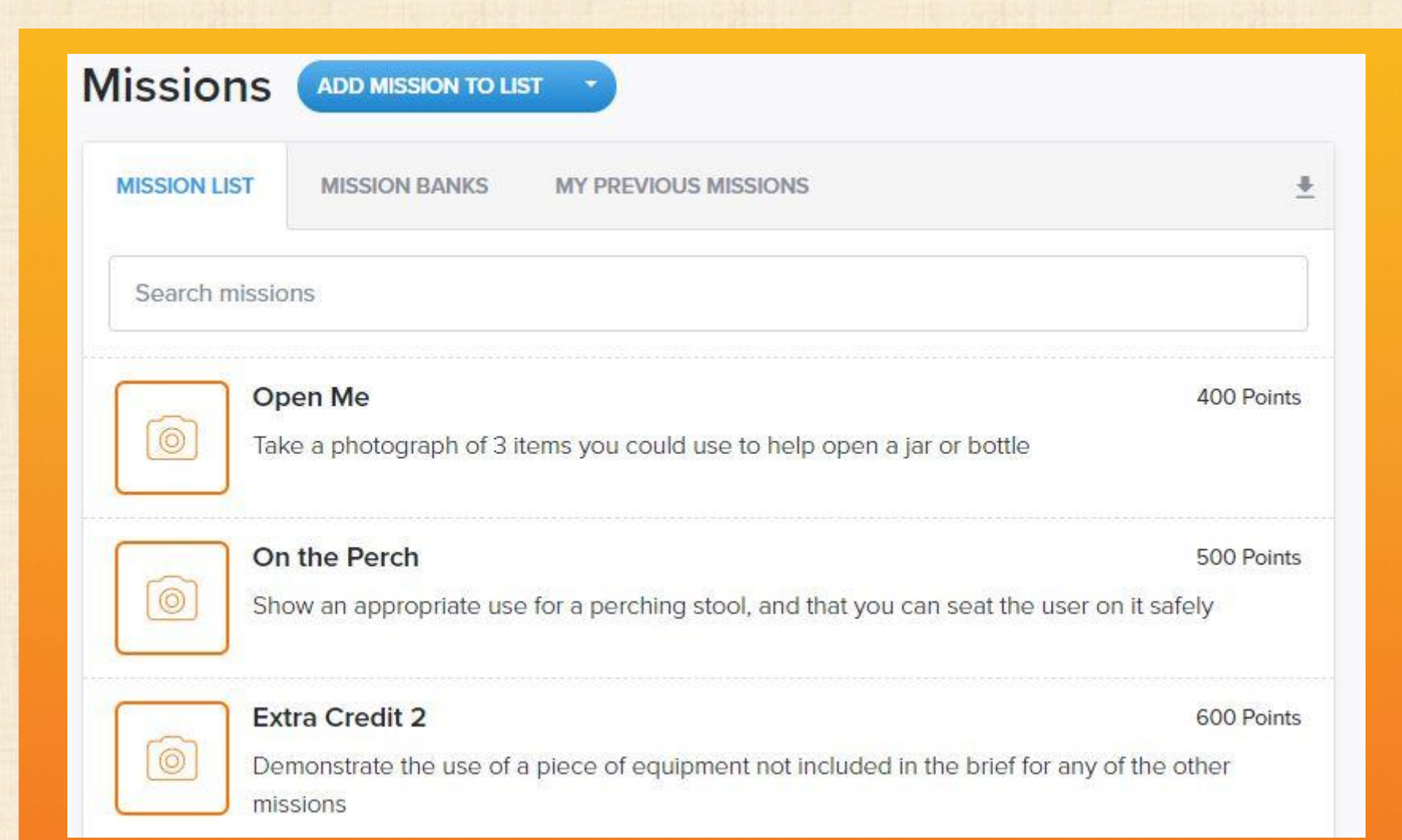
Learning how to safely use and effectively prescribe equipment is a vital Occupational Therapy skill. However, like all practical skills, this takes time and repetition, which may not be available during placement. The increasing diversity of practice placements, whilst broadening students experience and leading to diverse practice opportunities, reduces conformity in the experiences that all students will encounter (Glenn and Gilbert-Hunt, 2012). This can risk limiting the new graduates' confidence and competence in undertaking some core skills such as raising a bed or providing the appropriate toilet equipment.

Challenge: How to replicate practical learning in a classroom environment

Setting up appropriate classroom learning to meet this need can be challenging. Whilst the benefits of experiential learning approaches are widely recognised, these require significant time to set up appropriately and can add to the student's feelings that theory and practice do not interact, as they can lead students to overlook the theory base and focus solely on the practical skills (Laurillard, 2010).

Solution: Goose Chase

GooseChase is a freely available scavenger hunt app for smartphones. It was used to design an interactive workshop using game-based theory (Crocco, Offenholley and Hernandez, 2016) which, once established, can be repeated for subsequent student groups and be used to challenge the students theoretical knowledge, as well as practical skills
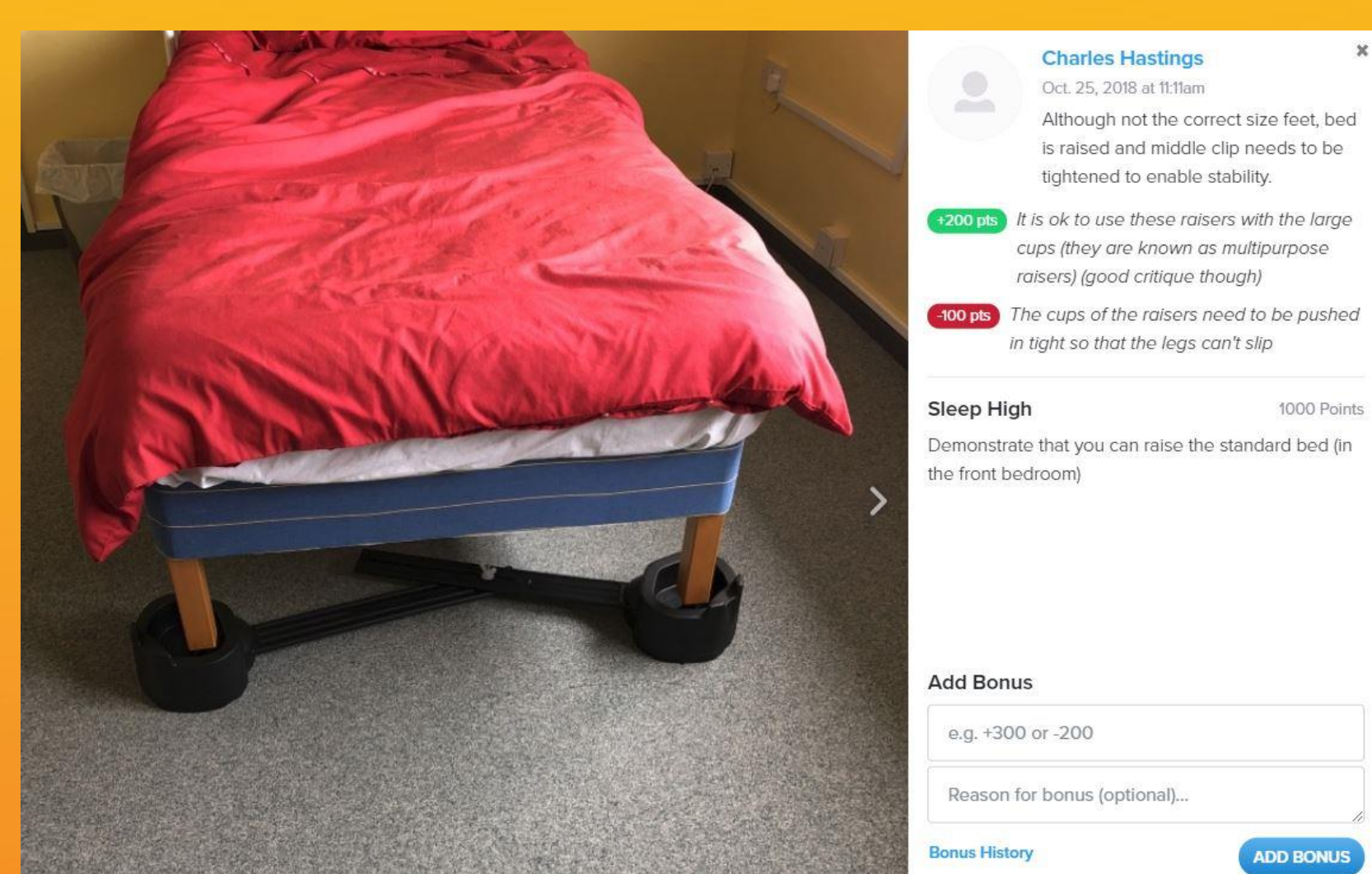

goosechase
Scavenger Hunts for the Masses

After registering online, the tutor creates "missions" based around the available equipment or specific learning outcomes. Students are challenged to complete a number of missions and to support these with theory to gain maximum points. Missions can take the form of photo, video or text submissions.
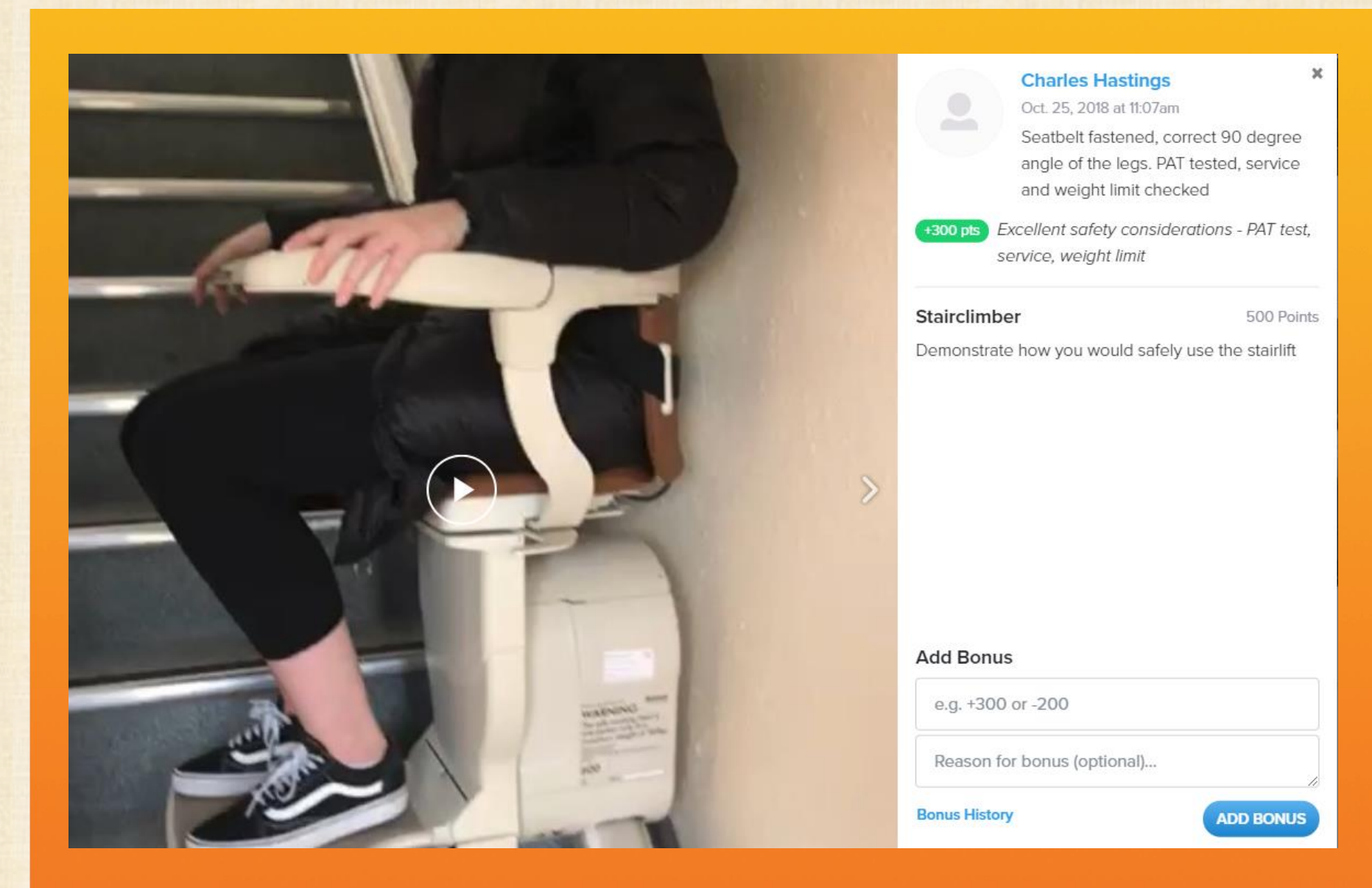

Game-based theory allows for the potential of play to support learning. Adult students still enjoy playing with new equipment to learn about its properties and uses

Students are free to spend time practicing using the equipment before submitting their final photograph. Tutor support is available as required but the absence of the lecturer in the room appeared to improve students willingness to "have a go" and enables them to develop the required skills in a safe environment, encouraging peer and social learning

The game manager reviews all submissions (in real time or after the session) and adds or removes points. In this image, points have been **added** because students had debated & considered the appropriateness of the equipment available to them. Points were also **deducted** from this submission for incorrect fitting. This makes feedback more tangible.

Integrating theory with the practical tasks is key to ensuring learning takes place and replicates professional reasoning required in practice. Manufacturers instructions are available for ALL equipment for students to use if they wish.

What is it? Bed raiser
What is it's purpose? To raise the bed
Who is it used for? People with lower beds that have limited movement e.g hip replacement
Contraindications- if it is not fit in properly the bed would be unstable.
Who provides it? NHS

Requiring students to provide professional reasoning behind use of each item develops knowledge and safety awareness. It also encourages students to articulate their understanding and to find out more about local provision from their peers

Errors such as this are easy to miss in real time without standing over students, but can be easily spotted when reviewing submissions and looking for points deductions

- 300 points

The workshop led to extremely high (and competitive) student engagement, thus providing students with ample opportunity to enhance their equipment knowledge. This teaching technique could be applied to any practical task in order to increase student skill & confidence.

For evaluation of student learning experience see:
Grant, T. (2019) 'Using Technology Enhanced Learning to Promote the Acquisition of Practical Skills in Occupational Therapy', *Journal of Occupational Therapy Education*, 3(2).

References:
Crocco, F., Offenholley, K. and Hernandez, C. (2016) 'A Proof-of-Concept Study of Game-Based Learning in Higher Education', *Simulation & Gaming*. SAGE PublicationsSage CA: Los Angeles, CA, 47(4), pp. 403–422.
Glenn, E. K. and Gilbert-Hunt, S. (2012) 'New graduate occupational therapists experience of showering assessments: A phenomological study', *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*. Wiley/Blackwell (10.1111), 59(3), pp. 188–196..
Laurillard, D. (2010) 'An Approach to Curriculum Design', *Education*, (April), pp. 1–35.