Feature Guide: Gameboards

How to use Gameboard Templates with the Gamification Module

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ONPOINT

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Introduction

OnPoint's *Gamification Engine* Module was recently updated to include support for a new "*Gameboards*" feature that allows Administrators to select, configure and deploy visually pleasing gameboards from a library of pre-defined Gameboard template designs and then associate their selection with a current or upcoming game. Administrators can choose the number of waypoints on the Gameboard and associate a game object with each. These boards are then viewable by all Learners participating in the game, allowing for quick and straightforward rollouts without assistance from OnPoint's Technical Support or Design teams.

In this document we outline the process to select and configure a gameboard, and the resulting end-Learner experience once a board is published.

Applications involved

OPCM, Custom Interfaces (Online & Mobile); Requires OnPoint's Gamification Module Add-on

Why is this useful?

Gamification, as applied to enterprise learning, offers a compelling way to improve the Learner experience, drive participant engagement, and improve organizational outcomes. Learners are incentivized to complete required training or seek out new content through the lens of competing with their peers -- earning digital points and badges for recognition and social currency as well as securing their position on one or more leaderboards.

Industry research suggests gamified Learner experiences can enhance and accelerate organizational learning efforts through the introduction of an overarching narrative and other visual enhancements applied to a learning path or curriculum the Learner must complete, such as in the onboarding of new Learners or the training associated with a new product rollout.

Gameboard Creation & Management

Prior to the v6.9 release, OnPoint supported the use of gameboards associated with skill profiles, curricula, and games, but each board was a custom design, and it was necessary to hard-code the connection between the board and the learning path or game it was to be connected to via a metatag or parameter. With the addition of the Gameboard feature, Administrators can now select from a library of pre-defined boards, configure the boards to present the flow of learning desired via waypoints, then make them available to Learners without assistance from OnPoint. [Learner Interfaces *do* need to be using an updated 'base package' to allow gameboard access links to display.]

Gameboards can be added to current or upcoming games. This section will outline the steps to select a gameboard, configure it with waypoints and associated game objects, then release it to Learners.

Set-up in OPCM

The first step to associate a gameboard with a game is to navigate to any game in the *Course Manager* application (*OPCM > Skills & Games > Game Profiles > Select Desired Game*), then select the new 'Gameboard' tab.
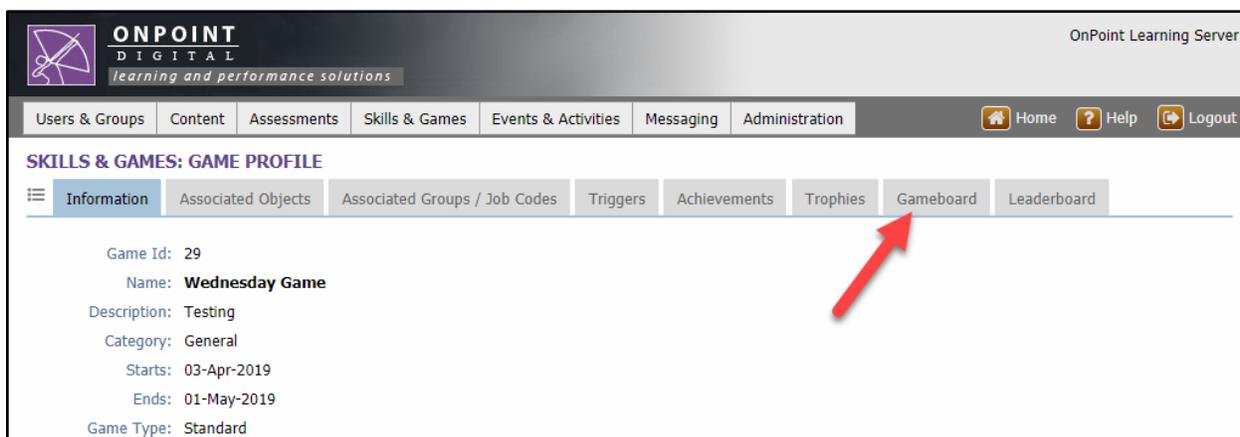
Figure 1: Gameboard tab in the Game Profile view

The Gameboard page displays all gameboards available on your server. As part of the v6.9 offering, OnPoint is including several pre-defined gameboards. Over time this catalog will grow as more gameboards are designed and deployed to all customer servers who have purchased OnPoint's *Gamification Engine* module.

[Note: OnPoint still offers support for development of custom gameboards; please contact your OnPoint Engagement Manager if you'd like to submit your own design and have OnPoint convert it to an actionable board.]

Figure 2: Available Gameboards

Each available gameboard template includes a title, short description, the minimum and maximum number of waypoints that can be supported for that particular design, and a 'still' image of how the board will appear to the end Learner. Once the desired board is located, click the **Use Template** button to associate the board with the currently selected game. Any number of games may utilize the same gameboard.

The association of the gameboard with the game is instantaneous, and all Learners with an interface supporting Gameboards will immediately have access to the board, even before it is fully configured. **As such, it is advised to associate a gameboard with a game before the game is available to Learners or while the game is unpublished.**

Once a gameboard has been selected and confirmed, the **Gameboard** tab progresses to the gameboard management view. From here, Administrators can review and configure the gameboard waypoints, set the gameboard options, and preview the gameboard image.

Waypoints

Every gameboard supports a specific range of waypoints. This is determined by the size and design of the board. Each waypoint can be set to correspond to a specific *Game* object, namely a *Course, Nugget, Assessment Set, Skill Profile/Curriculum, Event* or *Activity* included in the game via the **Associated Objects** tab.

[Note: for clarification, only items already associated with the game can be considered for waypoint association. If an Admin wishes to include an additional content item as a waypoint that isn't displayed, they must go over to the Associated Objects tab and add it to the game first. Also, if an Admin removes an associated object from the game that is already associated with a waypoint, both the item and its association to the waypoint are removed.]

When a gameboard is first associated with a game, it is added without any objects associated with the waypoints.
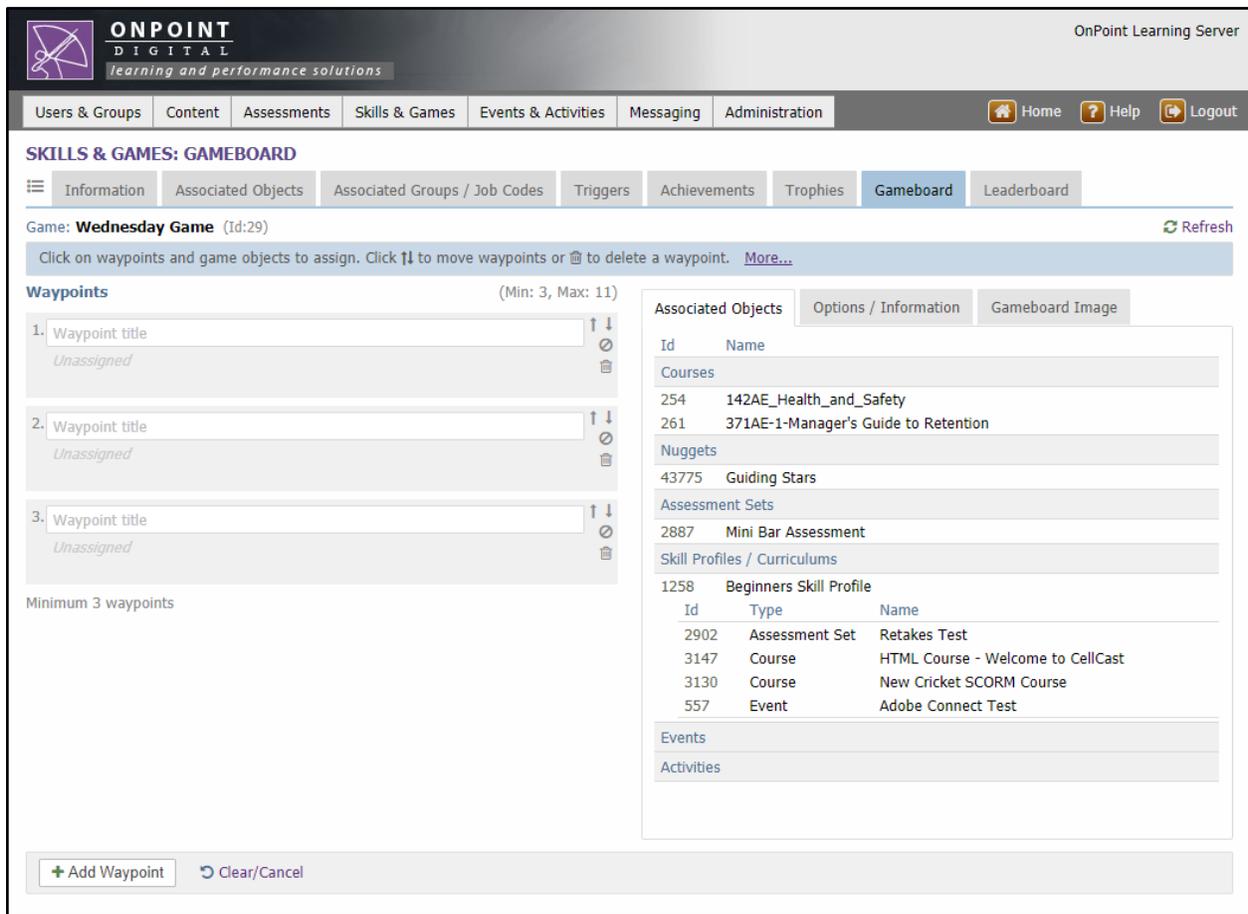
Figure 3: Newly selected gameboard prior to configuring waypoints

Game objects can be associated with specific waypoints by clicking on the bottom half of the waypoint and then selecting a game object from the right-hand list. Objects which have already been associated with a waypoint for this *Game* are greyed out in the list, as a game object can only occupy one waypoint.

Each waypoint can also be set with a specific title to appear when Learners access the waypoint from their interfaces. This can be used to customize the Gameboard further by giving it extra flavor or relevancy for the specific content being accessed. For example, "Start Here" could be at the first waypoint, and "Congrats!" or "Finish Line" could be at the last waypoint. Remember if you use this, to keep the titles short.
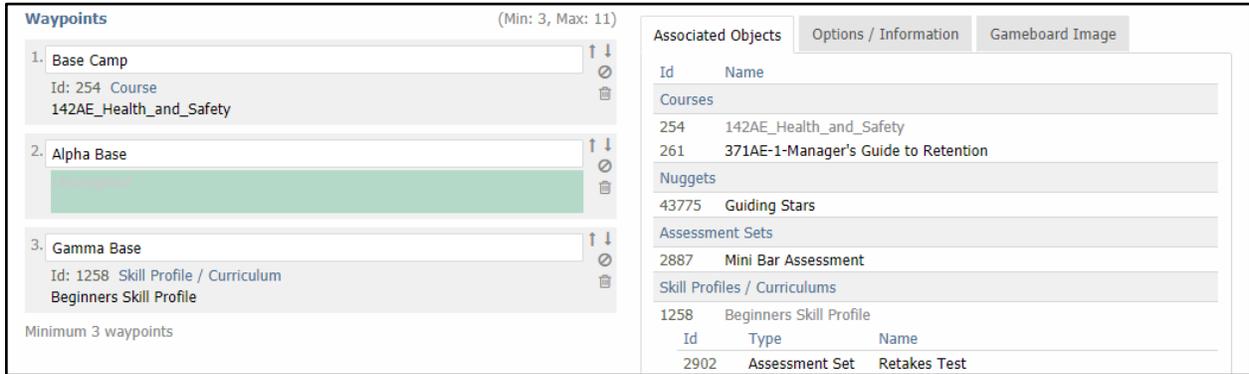
Figure 4: A Gameboard with 2 waypoints defined. Waypoint 2 has been clicked and is awaiting an object selection

Additional waypoints can be added with the **Add Waypoint** button at the bottom left of the page. The existing waypoints can be re-ordered, cleared, or deleted through the use of the up and down arrows, clear buttons, and trash-can buttons respectively. All changes are saved as they are made without the need for a Save button, so again, it is advised to set up waypoints and associated objects prior to the game going live for Learners.

[Note: any edits made to waypoints and their associated objects have no effect on points earned, as points are strictly related to the objects within the game itself. Only edits to the Associated Objects at the game level will affect points earned.]

As a reminder, the Gameboard has a minimum and maximum number of waypoints; once those limits are reached, additional waypoints cannot be added (if at maximum) or existing waypoints cannot be deleted (if at minimum).

Clicking on the **More**... button at the top of the page displays tip text outlining all of the waypoint options available to the Administrator.

Game Validation is designed to check that all game objects have been configured properly, and this system check will run in the background whenever an edit or update is made to the gameboard. If desired, an Admin can fire this validation manually from the Information tab of the game to ensure the game has all necessary functions in place.

Additional Options

In addition to the Waypoints and **Associated Objects** tab, the following tabs are available:

- **Options / Information** - This tab displays the options available to the Admin for this gameboard, namely to "Enforce Waypoint Sequence" or to "Unassign Gameboard." It also contains information about when and by whom the gameboard was associated with the game or last updated.

  - *Enforce Waypoint Sequence* - This option is used to set whether Learners can access the gameboard waypoints in any order or if they may only access them in the order in which they have been defined on this page. If this checkbox is selected, Learners are only able to access a waypoint if they have a status of 'Completed' for the objects associated with all previous waypoints. This option can be used to ensure Learners complete the game objects in a specified order if that is desired. [Note: any pre-requisites established at the content/object level will still be honored.]

  - *Unassign Gameboard* - This option is used to disassociate the gameboard from the game. If selected and confirmed, all configured waypoint information is deleted and the Admin is returned to the Gameboard selection view. As this action simply removes the graphical gameboard from the Learner and Admin views, all Learner completions and game points earned will remain intact.

Figure 5: Options / Information tab in the Gameboard view

- **Gameboard Image** - Like the Gameboard selection screen, this tab displays a still image of the gameboard as a Learner might see it, and is intended as a preview of the Learner experience from a desktop perspective.

Learner Experience

Once a gameboard has been added to a game and configured, Learners accessing via a UI that supports gameboards will automatically see the boards in their interfaces. [Again, all custom interfaces will require an update for Learners to have access to gameboards.] For interfaces which do not yet support gameboards or if the Learner has a game without a defined gameboard, the standard game interface (a 'list' view of game elements) will be displayed instead.

Games List

The Games List page displays more at-a-glance information than the standard games list view, including gameboard "cards" that show the title of the game, a short description, a snapshot of earned points and badges, and a preview of the gameboard image itself. This view allows Learners to quickly and easily identify the game they wish to access / launch. [Depending on how your custom interface is set up, this list may or may not include games that have no associated gameboard.]
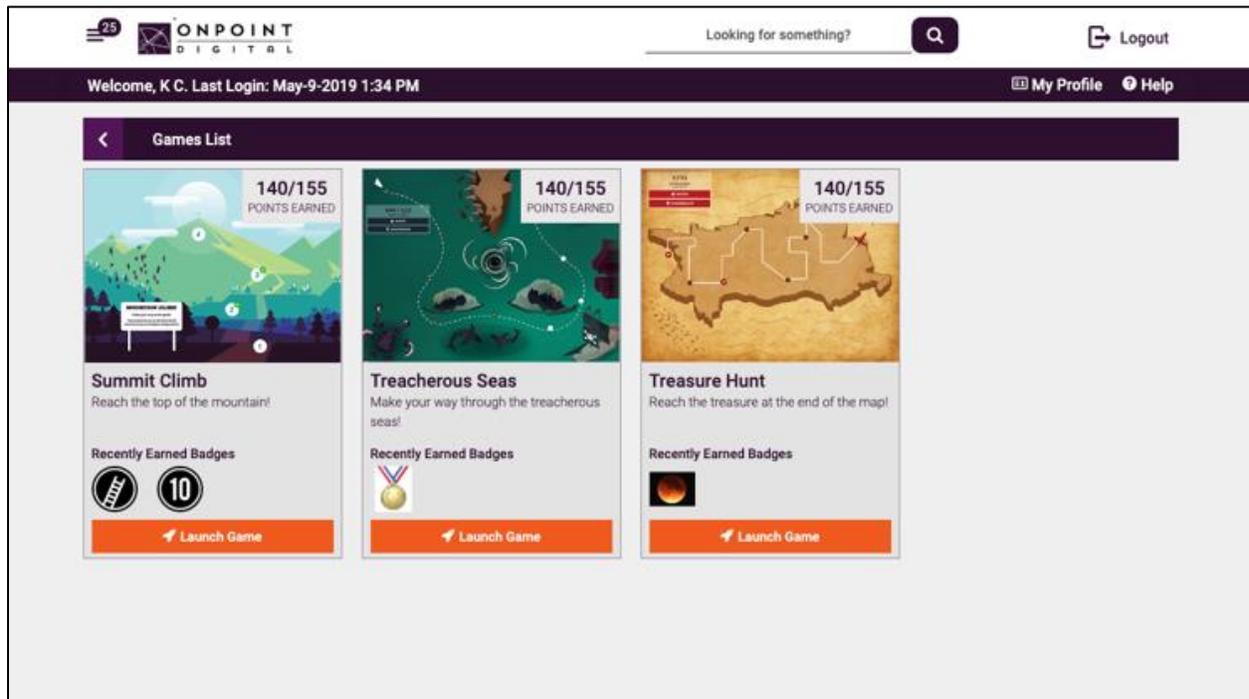
Figure 6: Games list showing all games with a Gameboard
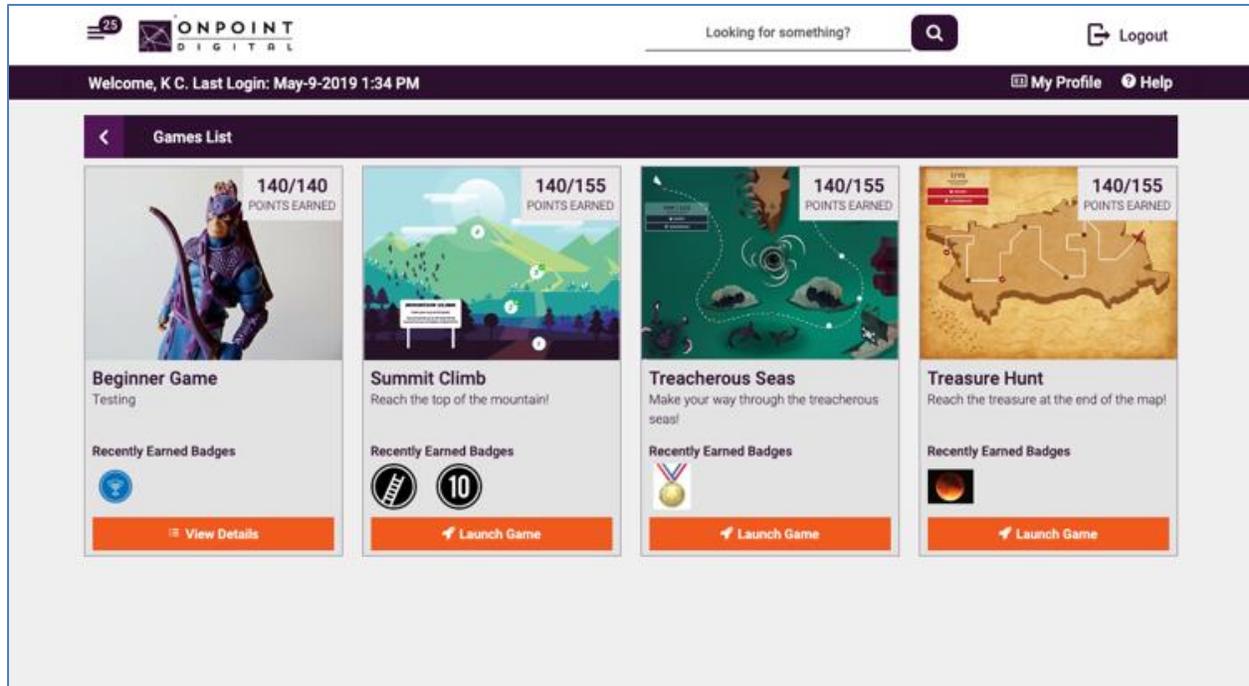
Figure 7: Games list showing all games (with and without gameboard)

The above example shows a Games List page that has one game with no associated gameboard; it displays a View Details button because the Learner will be presented with a 'list' view of the items within the game. The other three cards show games with associated gameboards; they display a Launch Game button to take the Learner directly into the board view.

Gameboard View

When a Learner launches a game that has an associated gameboard, the system will check the Learner's progress and update the display to reflect the Learner's current "position" on the board per the defined waypoints. As objects associated with waypoints are completed, that will be indicated on the board typically with a checkmark at the waypoint itself.

Figure 8: Example Gameboard with several Learner completions

Gameboards are interactive; the Learner can select a waypoint to open a details window with information about the object associated with the waypoint, and a launch action button.
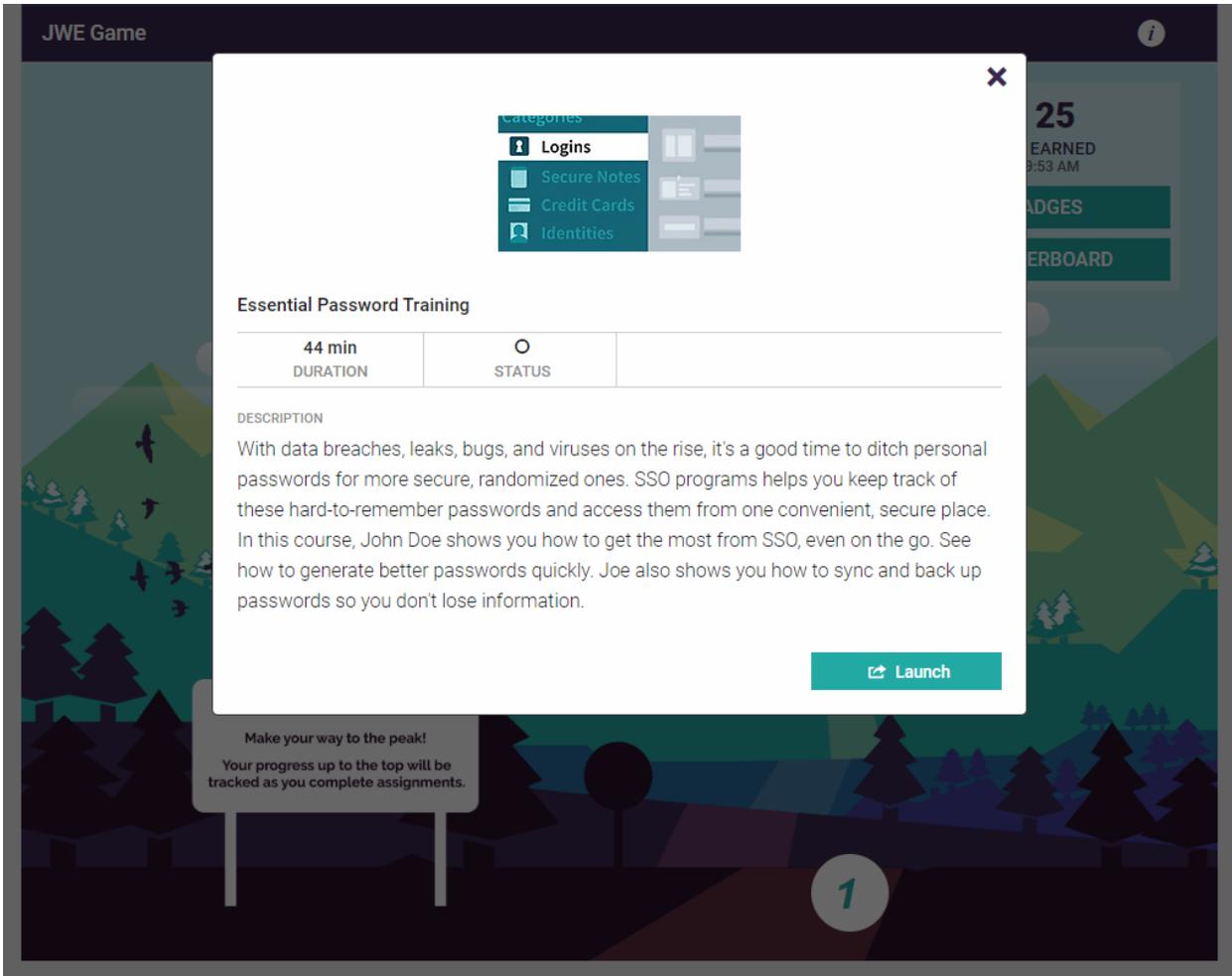
Figure 9: Info page opened by selecting a waypoint – single nugget example

If the waypoint has a *Skill Profile* associated with it rather than a single object, clicking on the waypoint will open a details window that includes a description of the *Skill Profile* itself along with a list view of the various items inside the skill profile. Learners can then click a **Details** link if they need additional information about any particular item, or choose to Launch or Browse an item from this window.
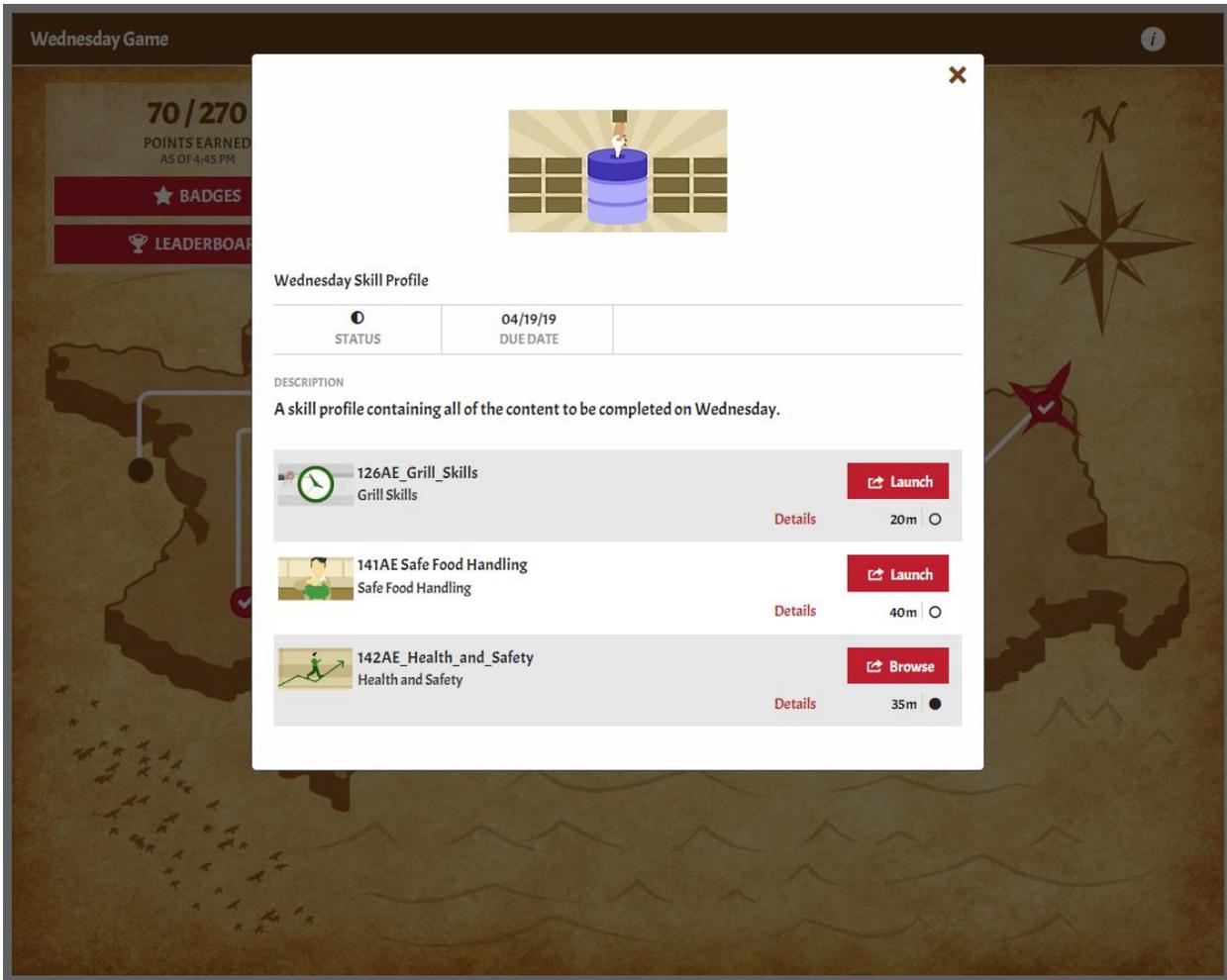
Figure 10: Info page opened by selecting a waypoint – skill profile example

Game Status

Gameboards may also include a "status" area, displaying earned points as well as options to access game-specific badges, trophies and leaderboard.

Figure 11: Game status summary

If there are no Badges associated with a game, the Badges bar will be hidden.

● *Points* – Displays the Learner's current points earned out of a maximum number of possible points earned within the game. The maximum is a full calculation including all possible engagement points (e.g. 3 points per login at max 5 logins adds 15 points to the game maximum). Any engagement points being earned will be calculated from the start date of the game.

[Note: a game will not publish/validate without all items within it having point values. In an upcoming release, "progress boards" will be supported that will allow visual boards without the use of game mechanics.]

● *Badges* **–** Opens a pop-up containing a list of badges associated with this game. Earned badges are highlighted and include the date the badge was earned, while unearned badges are greyed out until the Learner fulfills the badge requirements. Badges will appear in alphabetical order, and highlight once earned. The header bar provides a count of how many badges have been earned of the total number of badges that can be earned.
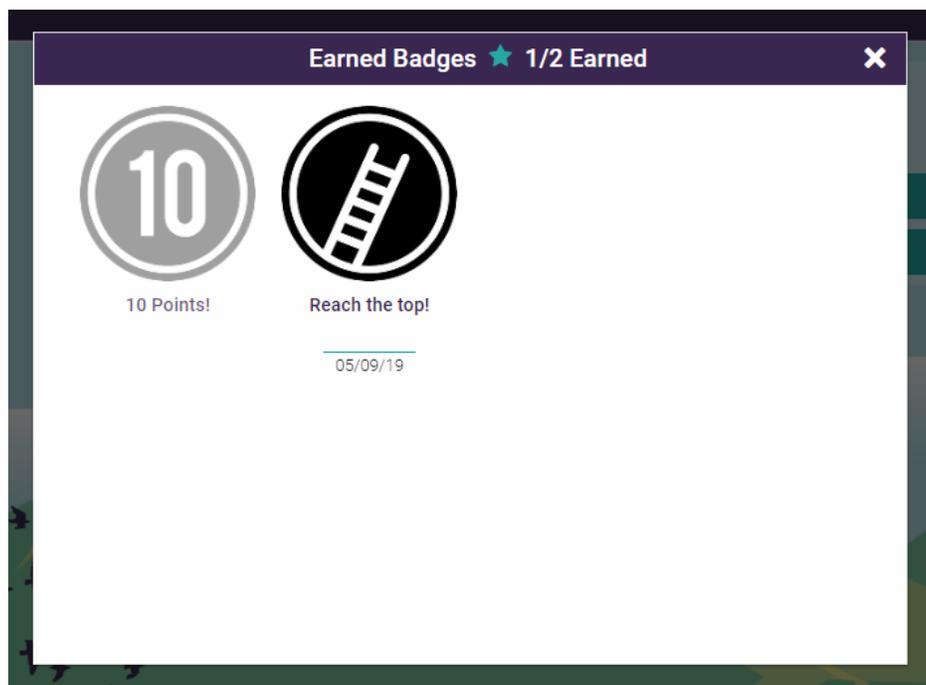
Figure 12: Game badges

● *Trophies* – If an Admin has set up a Trophy for the game, if will show up on the main card/tile of the games list page if the Learner has earned it.

● *Leaderboard* - Opens a similar pop-up containing a view of the game leaderboard, allowing Learners to see their position in the game -- specifically the top five or ten players along with the position of the Learner themselves in bold.
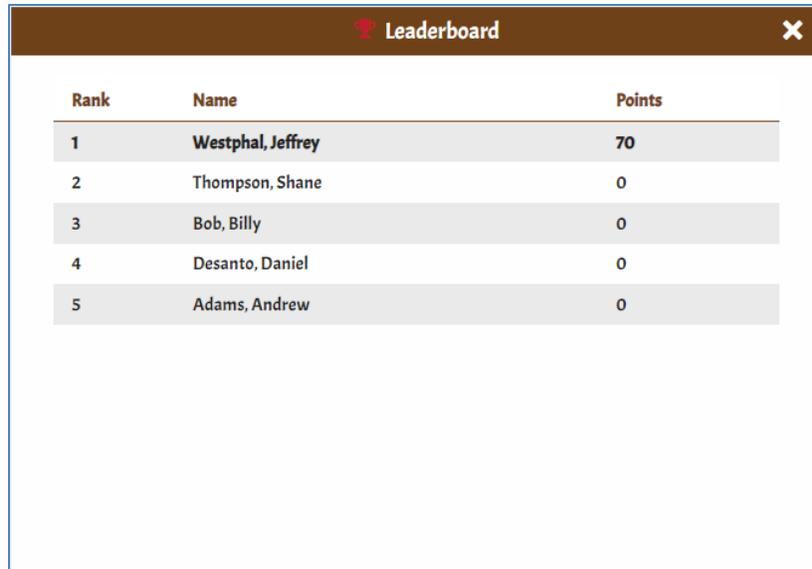
Figure 13: Game leaderboard

Gameboard Navigation

Learners may see additional messaging depending on other system settings, as follows:

- *Sequencing –* If the game is set up to allow Learners to access items along the path out of sequence, they may do so, as long as an underlying skill profile or curriculum does not have conflicting rules. If that is the case, the Learner will get the normal alert that there is a pre-requisite that has not been met, and therefore they are being blocked from accessing the item.

  If the game is set up to restrict Learners from accessing items along the path if taken out of sequence, the Learner will see a message asking them to complete the items in order. Admins can add information in the description if desired to inform Learners they need to take the content in sequence.

- *Launch vs Browse* – Once an item is complete, the action button changes from 'Launch' to 'Browse' as long as that item can be viewed without restriction (e.g. tests need to be set to be able to be retaken).

- *Equivalencies* – Currently, the gameboard templates do not support equivalencies. If an object associated with a waypoint has an equivalency, that information will *not* display to the Learner on the details pop-up accessed by interacting with the waypoint. OnPoint will provide an update to this functionality in a release later in 2019.

- *Assigned vs Self-assigned* – Since a game can include items not directly "assigned" to the Learner, if the Learner clicks on a waypoint and self-assigns an item, they will not be able to unassign that item as the points calculation would be impacted.

- *Admin Edits to Game* – If an Admin makes a change to a waypoint, the Learner will see that change the next time they login, perform a sync, or otherwise interact with the server, as the updates to gameboards are reflected real-time.

Platform Access

Gameboard templates are designed to be responsive, and are fully supported on both Desktop (Portal) and Mobile (tablets and handheld devices), provided the customer's UI has been updated to support gameboards; the Learner experience will be similar – optimized to work across devices and platforms. Certain designs will work better than others depending on the typical devices your audience is using.