



Game lesson title	Teaching with videogames: no rules games		
Brief intro	As part of the unit 2 outcome ‘narrative genre and style’ in Media, this unit aims to explore the codes and conventions, aesthetics and characteristics of videogame narratives. We will study game mechanics as well as how traditional notions of narrative have been challenged by video games.		
Lesson hook	Be a wanderer in a videogame with no overt rules and explore how this format changes your experience of a game’s narrative.		
Suggested year level	Year 11 (though can be adapted to a year 10 game studies unit)	Suggested age level	16/17
Duration	2 x 60 minute sessions	Costs involved? (detail below)	Yes
Author	You are free to copy, communicate and adapt this lesson plan which was created by Dean Ashton, Alora Young and ACMI, licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 .		
Subject/s			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Media		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital Technologies
Curriculum/Capabilities Alignment (VIC/AC) and Skills			
VCE Media	Unit 2 Outcome 2: On completion of this unit the student should be able to apply the media production process to create, develop and construct narratives.		
Key knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Media production processes and their relationship to specific media forms.Construction of narratives using the media production process.Technical skills used in the operation of media technologies.Media language appropriate to the design, production and evaluation of media products.		



Key skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and produce narratives using the stages of the media production process • Undertake roles and responsibilities within the media production process • Apply technical skills in the operation of media technologies • Use media language appropriate to the design, construction, production and evaluation of media productions.
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Game used	Dear Esther		
Game play required?	Ideally, although watching part of a video playthrough could also work		
Classification	CONSOLE	INTERNET REQUIRED?	COST (RRP)
M	Mac or PC	For initial download	\$12 on GOG for a drm free copy playable offline and compatible with different devices
Important note about Game Classification			
As classifications can change, teachers are responsible for checking the latest videogame classification and suitability for their class age group. Please visit https://www.classification.gov.au/ and https://www.common sense.org/education/ to guide you.			
How are games used by students in the lesson?			
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Watchers – observing, analysing and evaluating. Learning about the world and ourselves through understanding the impact of games culture and industry.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Players - learning by playing videogames - learning things applicable to life outside of (and in) the game e.g. flight simulators, esports, etc.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Makers - learning through making games (coding, creative production, teamwork, leadership, e-sport roles etc)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Explorers (Minecraft) – imaginative, self-directed, exploratory/sandbox learning.</p> <p>Shining through play.</p>			
eSafety considerations			
N/A			



Technical notes

Have a projector, smartboard or similar connected to a computer with internet for gameplay video if selecting this option for exploring *Dear Esther*. Otherwise have the game installed on devices for groups of students to play.

Please note that *Dear Esther* is not compatible with macOS 10.15 Catalina.

Devices required for students individually or small groups with image capturing and editing software such as Photoshop. This could include separate camera and computers devices or be completed on a tablet.

Prior knowledge/skills (Required/Recommended/References)

Some experience playing games generally required to understand game interactivity and agency, as well as experience with image editing software such as Photoshop.

Student outcomes

Learning goals	KNOW: How game mechanics and interactivity build narrative
	BE ABLE TO: identify features of game design in leading narrative choice
	IMPROVE: Build on their understanding of gaming codes and conventions

LESSON SEQUENCE #2: Exploration of video game narratives

Prep and introduction activities	Opening provocation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happens to a narrative when a game has no overt rules?• What about when you play the game 'wrong'? For example, break the game rules or do things unexpectedly?
Main lesson activities	Students to either play through or watch part of a playthrough of <i>Dear Esther</i> and answer the questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the rules of this game?• Without a layout, icons or controls, what are some of the ways the game design tells you where to go and what to do?• Take note of when something happens. Is this timed or triggered by being in a certain location?• What would the ramifications of this be for your experience of the story?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could you incorporate aspects of this type of storytelling into your game design? <p>From here, students either individually, in pairs or in small groups continue creating the storyboard they began in the previous session, explaining a narrative adaptation from film or book towards a videogame.</p> <p>This could include capturing and altering photographs to convey their style of gameplay, as well as overlaying graphic elements to add to their layouts and communicate their game style. You can find a more extensive library of premade user interface elements here.</p>
Reflection activity	Present finished storyboards as a class or in small groups for feedback and discussion.
Differentiation, modification, extension and inclusion notes	<p>Students who are confident with this format could design their own graphical elements and create more comprehensive storyboards which show how they will adapt their narrative to a videogame format.</p> <p>The collaborative introductory activity is designed to support students less familiar with video game formats. Students could also complete a single frame from their storyboard using an allocated game format. Students could look up games that follow this format to inform their designs.</p>
Student homework/further work	
Storyboards could be further developed into animated or filmed snippets of students' games, with continued analysis of different game styles used as inspiration for developing depth of narrative structure.	
Assessment	
Notes taken during the exploration of Dear Esther as well as the finished storyboard game adaptation displays.	

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