[2] Good morning everyone, thank you for being here today, I’m Arthur, and today I’ll tell you about one of my favorite games, The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim.

[3] I’ll talk about it following three parts, beginning by giving you some general informations about the game, then i’ll describe it deeper, and finally, I’ll tell you why, according to me, it is relevant to the study of games in general.

[4][5] So, let me begin by telling you that the game is a single player Role Playing Game situated in a Fantasy universe. It was released on 11th, November, 2011 by Bethesda Softworks and developed by Bethesda Game Studios. It is available on Windows, Mac, Xbox (360, One), Playstation(3,4), Nintendo Switch, VR and Amazon Alexa (yeah that one is surprising).

Also, it is intended for anyone, hardcore gamer or not, as long as one is above 18 years old. So no skill set necessary or any accessories, it can be played on the go.

[6] So now that I’ve given you basic infos concerning the game, it is time to talk about it more precisely.

[7] First of all, I’ll try to explain to you to lore of the game. The game begins by showing the player captured by a very powerful military and politic force, going by the name “The Empire”, in a region called Skyrim (which is why the game is called this way). Before being executed, the player is saved by a dragon attack. After that, stuff happens, and the player kills a dragon. Then we discover that the player’s character can literally eat the dragon’s soul to harness and use their power. Their power is called “Thu’um”. Basically, it allows the dragons to shout words, which can have different effects depending on the word combinations being shouted. The player then has to increase the strength of his power by eating dragon souls, learning new combinations, and exploring dungeons in order to kill the dragon leader, also named “ the worlds eater” and therefore save the world. To this point, we can resume the purpose of the game as “Kill dragons, shout as loud as you can” !

[8] As it is an RPG, the game features many characters to help the player fulfill his quest, but 5 of them can be qualified as the most “important”. Indeed, the games features various main factions as well, having different roles in the game’s universe. Along the main quest to kill the dragon leader, the player will encounter a small group, called the “greybeards”, led by arngeir on the left, which think the dragons are not fundamentally evil and that there is good in them. On the other hand, an almost extinct order, called “ The blades” composed of Esbern and Delphine in the middle, are dragon killers. Also, there is an ongoing civil war in skyrim between the Empire, led by General Tullius, and a nationalist group called the “Stormcloaks” led by Ulfric Stormcloak.The player will have to choose only two of them as their respective goals are not compatible.

[9] Now concerning the gameplay : As any well made RPG, the game features hundreds of quests to fulfill, [10] different races to play, like elves, orcs, lizards, cats or humans. Each race will have different advantages which enhance [11] progression in the skill tree, divided in three main paths, the warrior, the mage, and the thief.

[12] These skills influence greatly the player’s game style, as any fight can be resolved or avoided through stealth or [13] by jumping into the crowd and punching everything that moves. [14] Although that last solution can look easier, depending on the difficulty level (there are 6 of them, from beginner to legendary), it can be hard to get out from, although it is really entertaining. (I took the screenshot you can see on normal difficulty, and I died right after). But this skill tree also allows the game to be replayed in many different ways, choosing different play styles, which gives the game a great replayability.

[15] Now for the graphic part : the game features really beautiful special effects, especially when it comes to spells, [16] or landscapes, as you can see on these slides [17][18]. Unfortunately, the game is a bit old now, so I’m afraid I took these screenshots using the special edition which is basically a remastered version of the games, therefore the vanilla game is slightly uglier. But is is beautiful anyway ! [19] The game also comes with a few musics, they are very discreet, and they mostly enhance experience, especially immersion. Indeed, walking for minutes in grasslands hearing nothing but your steps would be really boring.

[20] Finally, like every game, this one features a few bugs like the player being stuck in a wall, objects disappearing, or mammoths flying. [21] Also, three dlcs are available and they mostly features new locations and quests.

[22] Now, as a conclusion, i’ll quickly explain to you why this game is relevant to the study of games.

[23] It is not the same today, but at the time the game was released, it was the most realistic open world we could find on the game market, and I still remember the feeling of liberty it gave me when first playing it like “Oh I could go there, or there, or explore this dungeon, or talk with this guy”.. you might tell me that this is a common thing, but it was one of the first to really introduce such a functionality at such a detailed graphic level for the time. Also what makes this games important to me, is that it is one of the first which democratized player customization.[24] By that, I mean the use of mods, developed by the players, for the players. Most games feature that today, but at the time never would developer expect the players to customize the game so much, creating new quests, new weapons or enhancing graphics. Of course development studios didn’t really like players taking their games and making it better, but allowing players to customize their game is making sure that they will like it. This idea of player customization led to the concept of early access, which is basically making players participate in the making of the games ! [25] Of course, it also led to some...weird things, but that was to be expected when it comes from the players. Anyway, that’s what makes this games important in the history of games to me.

Ok, I think I’m done now, thank you for listening to me, if you guys have any questions, i’m ready. [26]