

# Creating a Text-Based Game in 2020

*Andrea Esposito*

## ABSTRACT

During my Bachelor's studies, I rediscovered some very old games. I'm talking about those games like "Colossal Cave Adventure", where everything runs inside a terminal and uses only text. Let's create one of them in 2020!

During my Bachelor's studies, I rediscovered some very old games. I'm talking about those games like "*Colossal Cave Adventure*", where everything runs inside a terminal and uses only text.

Usually, this kind of game it's based on a textual narration of a *dynamic* story, in which the player decides what to do next, starting from a set of predefined possible actions. It's clear that the stories were not actually "*dinamic*": the player's actions simply modify the outcome of an event in one way between a set of predefined ones. The action input is given by *writing* a command that the game executes.

My objective is simple: to recreate one of those games in a "modern" language and to give it a more user-friendly "modern" interface (that doesn't force you to type an entire command), while still keeping the text-based user interface. But, we're Computer Scientist: actually, my goal is to create it in a way that allows us to change the map and history of the game without modifying all the rest of the source code. Basically, we want to create a "*framework*" for text-based videogames.

## The Plan

Now, I'm not by any means a writer, let alone a game designer, but I still want to work on this project. The solution is simple: I'll work on my "framework" and I'll try it out by recreating an existing game. More precisely, I've chosen to recreate the game "*L'Astronave Condannata*" (note that the website and the original game are only available in Italian) by *Enrico Colombini*, who I emailed to ask permission to work on his project.

The original game was written in BASIC, an old programming language that dates back to the 60s, and was published in 1997.