

Narrative Design

Game Design - Fall 2023
M Charity and Julian Togelius

Why Narrative?

- Adds flavor to a game
- Can tell a new story
- “Choose-your-own-adventure”
- Develops player immersion and connection to the characters

Commonly found in:

- RPGs
- Adventure games
- Single-player games



Levels of Narrative

Optional backstory



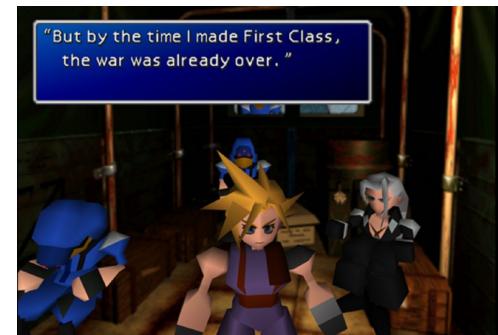
Ms Pacman (Intermission)

Support



Breath of the Wild (Memory Side Quest)

Focus



Final Fantasy 7 (Cutscene)

Text-based Games

```
one of the ship's primary escape pods. The pod bulkhead is closed.  
  
>restore  
Insert save disk then enter file name.  
(Default is C:SAVE\PLANETFA.DAT):  
SAVE file not found  
Failed.  
  
>restore step5  
I don't know the word "step5."  
  
>restore  
Insert save disk then enter file name.  
(Default is C:SAVE\PLANETFA.DAT): step5  
Ok.  
  
>look  
Lawanda Platform  
This is a wide, flat strip of concrete. Open shuttle cars lie to the north and south. A wide escalator, not currently operating, beckons upward at the east end of the platform. A faded sign reads "Shutul Platform -- Lawanda Staashun." There is a multiple purpose robot here.
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Zork

End of Alley

On the whole, it was worth the trip. The plains really were broad and grain-gold, if scarred with fences and agricultural crawlers. The mountains were overwhelming. And however much of the capital city is crusted with squat brick and faceless concrete hulks, there are still flashes of its historic charm. You've seen spires above the streets -- tiny green parks below tenements -- hidden jewels of fountains beyond walls. Any bland alley can conceal balconies wrought into iron gardens, fiery mosaics, a tree or bed of flowers nurtured by who knows who.

This alley, however, is a total washout. It ends in flat bare dirty brick, and you've found nothing but a door which lacks even the courtesy of a handle. Maybe you should call it a day.

Spider And Web

Interactive Fiction

Copyright 1997-8 by Andrew Plotkin.

(First-time players should type "about". For credits, "credits".)

Release 4 / Serial number 980226 / Inform v6.14 Library 6/6

Standard interpreter 1.0

End of Alley

It's a narrow dead end here, with walls rising oppressively high in three directions. The alley is quite empty, bare even of trash. (Your guidebook warned you: the police are as efficient about litter laws as about everything else they do.) You can retreat to the south.

A plain metal door faces you to the east, near the alley's end. It's firmly shut.

>

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Spider and Web

Story-Driven Games



Life is Strange



The Walking Dead



Chrono Trigger

Tabletop RPGs

TRAPPED IN A CABIN WITH LORD BYRON

You are on vacation with Lord Byron in his holiday home, but the weather has trapped you and your friends inside the house. Only the strong will survive.

RULES

You have three scores:
Scandal, Masterpiece & Stress

SCANDAL	<input type="checkbox"/>							
MASTERPIECE	<input type="checkbox"/>							
STRESS	<input type="checkbox"/>							

A NEW DAY WITH BYRON...

To start your holiday, generate a new Byronic Event by rolling a six-sided die (d6). Adjust your scores as directed by the event, then roll a new event. **Keep rolling new events until your Scandal, Masterpiece or Stress reaches 10.**

- If your Scandal reaches 10, you are no longer fit to enter society and must flee to nurse your reputation.
- If your Masterpiece reaches 10, you create a new genre of supernatural horror fiction based on your time with Byron.
- If your Stress reaches 10, you lose your patience with the man and either kill him in a fit of rage or otherwise descend into uncontrollable weeping from which you never emerge.

SPECIAL RULE: DISASTER MUSE

If you roll three 6s in a row, Byron destroys your manuscript either by accident or on purpose during one of his episodes - reduce that score to 0.



A one page RPG by Oliver Darkshire

BYRONIC EVENT... (ROLL A D6)

1 or 2	Byron's Recreations
3 or 4	Byron's Drama
5 or 6	A Brief Redoubt...

BYRON'S RECREATIONS

1	He is aware the walls are exceptionally thin?	+1 STRESS
2	He's made a mess of your desk in the process	-1 MASTERPIECE
3	May he borrow your husband? Of course.	-1 STRESS +1 SCANDAL
4	His half-sister is here, and they are far too intimate	+2 SCANDAL
5	You weary of listening to tales of his exploits	+1 STRESS
6	He makes an excellent muse on occasion	-1 STRESS +2 MASTERPIECE

BYRON'S DRAMA

1	He needs help reading his fan mail	+1 STRESS
2	He's brought his pet bear. It is not trained.	-2 STRESS
3	He wants to read you his poetry	+3 STRESS
4	He's in the papers. Again. Which means you are too.	+1 SCANDAL
5	He broke up with his latest girlfriend/boyfriend	+2 SCANDAL
6	He's found a new skull to use as a goblet	+5 SCANDAL

A BRIEF REDOUT...

1	Time alone. Blissful time.	+1 MASTERPIECE
2	He's busy with a paramour.	-1 STRESS
3	A walk around the house! Underwear on our heads!	+1 SCANDAL
4	He has an excellent supply of contraband substances	+1 SCANDAL +1 MASTERPIECE
5	Wine! A chest of wine!	-1 MASTERPIECE
6	He passed out in his study	+1 MASTERPIECE

ADVENTURE SKELETONS!

An RPG by Grant "Skellington" Howitt and Chris "Covered with a sheet" Taylor

DAMAGE
When someone attacks you, they hit. (You're slow.) Roll a D10 on the hit location table to see where they hit you. If a body part is damaged (mark off a hit box), as many parts that are directly attached to it (or in some common sense here), if someone hits you in a body part that is not currently attached, they miss!

FABULOUS TREASURES:
POTION OF REPAIR
HAT OF DISGUISE
INVISIBILITY CLOAK

REATTACHING PARTS
If a body part comes off, you can stick it back on. If it breaks, or you lose it, you can replace it with any bone you've found on your travels. You can have one bone replaced with another, or make a bone of appropriate size and shape (a banner for a chest, a tree branch for a leg, etc.). Fun fact: every human and most animals are full of bones going almost entirely unused!

PERFORMING ACTIONS

EQUIPMENT TABLE (roll twice):
1: LEATHER ARMOUR, +1 hit box on random slot
2: METAL ARMOUR, +1 hit box, but +2 hit boxes
3: SWORD, One-handed, D6 damage
4: DAGGER, One-handed, D4 damage, D8 from hiding
5: GRETAXAE, Two-handed, D8 damage, D12 versus the head
6: BOW AND ARROWS, Two-handed ringed weapon, D6 damage

Your roll is -1 for each body part you're currently missing. If you roll a 10, roll another D10 and add it to the result.

DAMAGING HUMANS (AND OTHER THINGS)
If you hit, roll on the location table to see where you hit, and roll your damage dice versus their toughness. (Without a weapon, you do D3 damage.) If you beat their toughness, they're in pain. If not, lower their toughness by 1. Toughness ranges from 2 (stupid, weasely) to 12 (dragon).

THE HUMAN "DUNGEON'S" DARK SECRET
It doesn't tell the players all the start!)
1: Human
2: Preying to a malevolent demon under the town
3: Worshiping a skeleton (who you know) as a god
4: Imprisoning a bunch of innocent skeletons in a basement
5: None of them have skeletons: they're all outside pod people in disguise
6: Town built atop an extensive dungeon complex

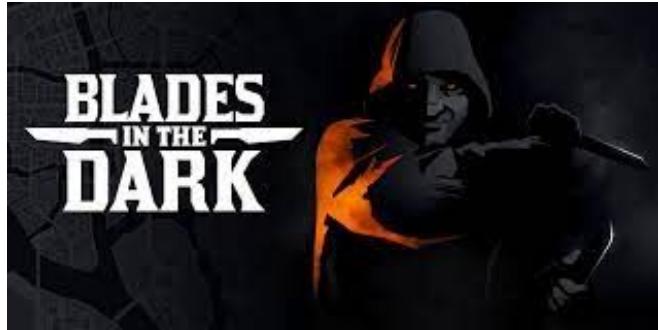
COOL TREASURE
1: BAG OF GOLD AND GEMS. Exchange it for goods and services

2: MAGIC SCIMITAR, +1 to hit and damage
3: MAGIC ARMOUR, As metal armour, but heals its user by 1 hit point per turn
4: INVISIBILITY CLOAK. Lets you hide in plain sight until you make a noise or attack
5: POTION OF REPAIR. Clear all marked hit boxes. One use only
6: HAT OF DISGUISE, +2 to attempt to disguise yourself

NAME:
ANCESTRY:

EQUIPMENT:

FAVOURITE BONE TYPE:



Cyberpunk

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME OF THE DARK FUTURE



2.0.2.0
THE SECOND EDITION
OF 1988



Interactive Fiction



There's This Girl

The palace courtyard.

A **balcony** looks upon the outside world. The throne room is closed for the Empress's inaugural blood bath.

Your **chambers** are on the second floor.

The **garden** sprawls over there. Your **workshop** is in a cabin down a shady path.

The **city** is through a vast archway hanging with vines.

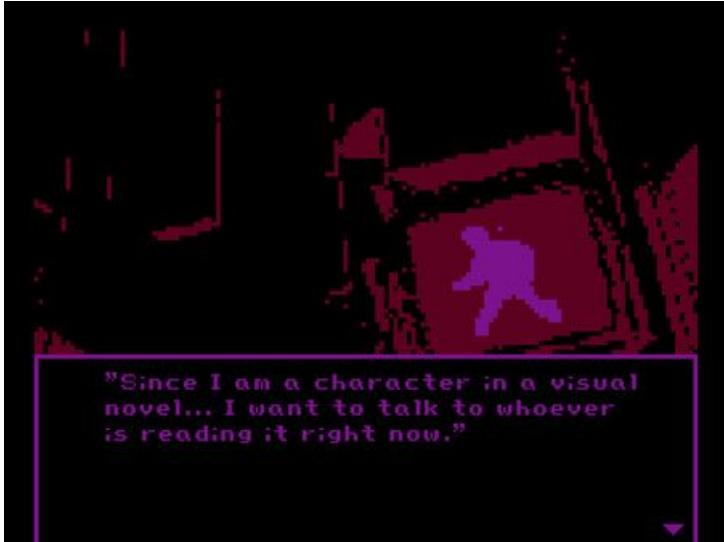


With Those We Love Alive



Roomba Quest

Visual Novels



Milk Inside a Bag of Milk



Butterfly Soup

Dating Sims



Arcade Spirits



Speed Dating for Ghosts



Monster Prom

Narrative for Tutorials

Relying on what Impa had told him, Link has to somehow make his way to Death Mountain. Link just might be able to find out where the mountain is by carefully studying where and when the monsters appear.



In the forests and mountains, there are several caves, and in these caves, there live merchants who will sell Link useful items. As well as buying things here, Link can get his hands on other things that he can't get elsewhere.

The NES Files

a number of ways. That way you're bound to hit upon the right combination.

<http://www.nesfiles.com>

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The Legend of Zelda (Booklet)

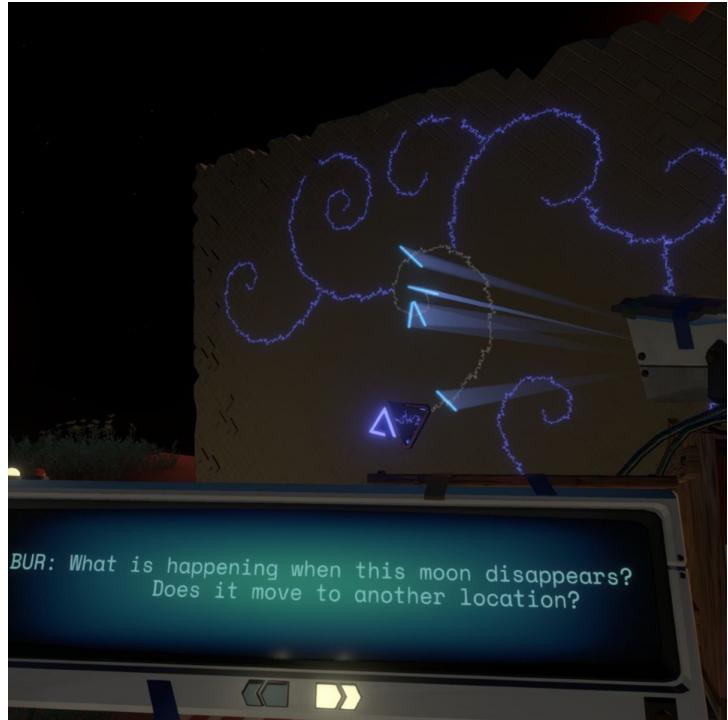


Pokemon Gold (1st battle)

Environmental Storytelling



Portal



The Outer Wilds

Cutscenes



Ninja Gaiden



Super Smash Bros Brawl



Kingdom Hearts 3 - All Cutscenes Full Movie HD

3M views • 4 years ago

 ProsafiaGaming ✓

This movie contains all cutscenes of Kingdom Hearts 3 for PS4 and Xbox One in 1080p & 60fps. I hope you'll enjoy it, rate, ...

Kingdom Hearts 3

Side Quests



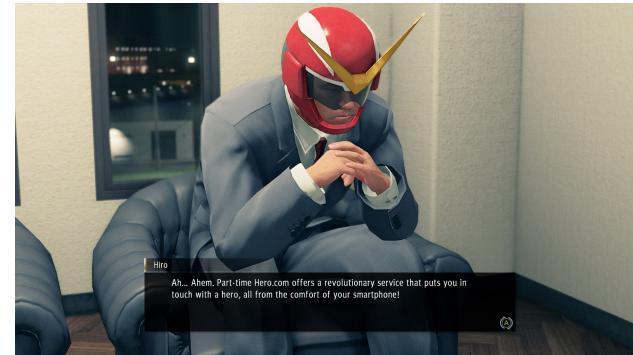
Ocarina of Time



Undertale



Cyberpunk 2077



Yakuza: Like a Dragon

Romance Options



Final Fantasy 7



Fire Emblem Awakening

A screenshot from Stardew Valley showing the Romance Meter screen. The table lists five characters with their current romance levels and relationship status. Each row includes a portrait, the character's name, a romance meter (filled with red hearts), and a status indicator (red heart with a circle or a green checkmark).

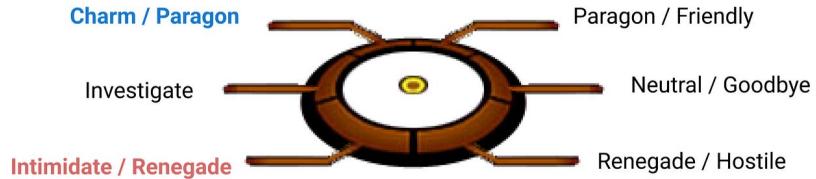
Abigail (wife)	16/36	Heart icon	Torch icon	Map icon	Key icon	Red X icon
Evelyn	16/36	Heart icon	Red heart with circle icon	Green checkmark icon		
Shane (single)	16/36	Heart icon	Red heart with circle icon	Red heart with circle icon		
Sebastian (single)	16/36	Heart icon	Red heart with circle icon	Red heart with circle icon		
Leah (single)	16/36	Heart icon	Red heart with circle icon	Red heart with circle icon		

Stardew Valley

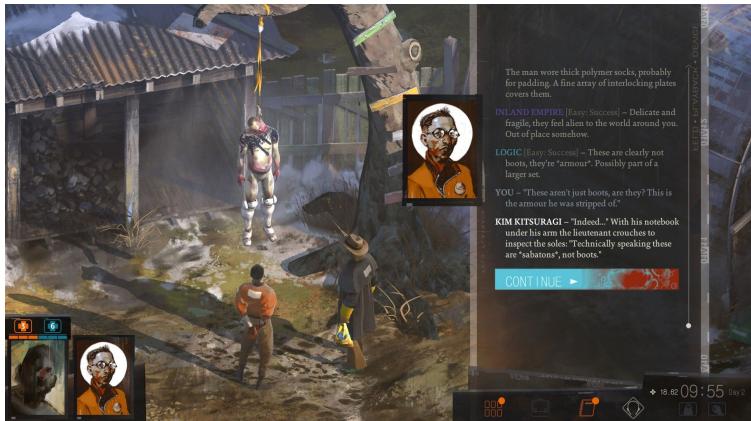


The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim

Branching Narrative



Mass Effect (Dialogue Wheel)



Disco Elysium

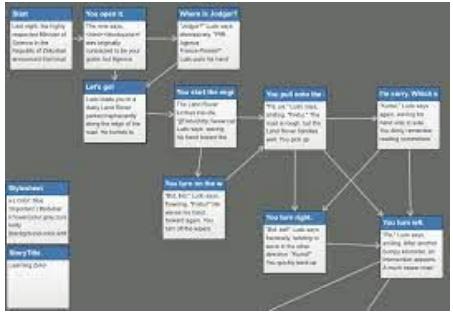


Shadow the Hedgehog (Level path)



GDC Talk (click me!)

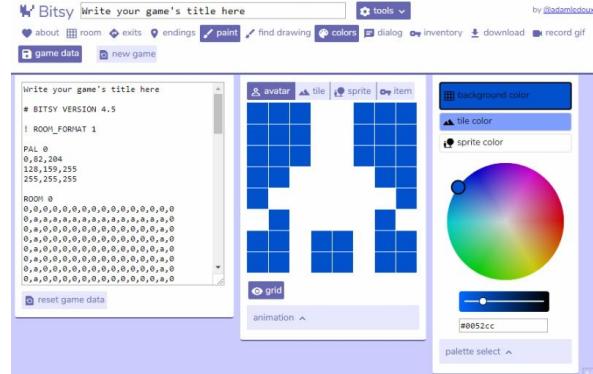
Game Engines for Narrative



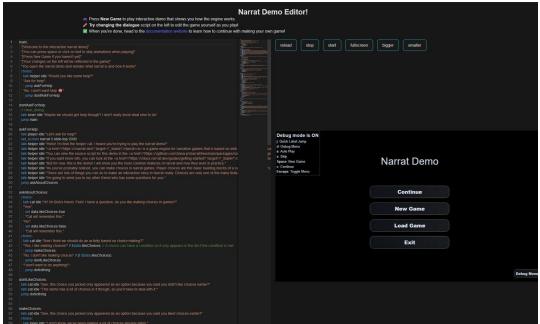
Twine



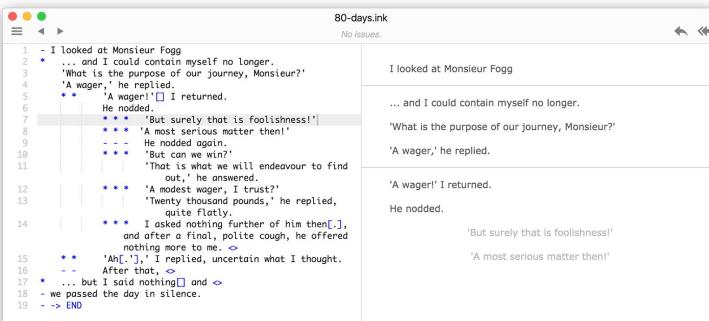
RenPy



Bitsey



Narrat



Ink

Ludonarrative Dissonance



Are there narrative-free games?

