Ways to make a game self-contained.

1. A good way to show of mechanics is to show off the simplest form of that mechanic, and then throw the player into a new problem that will make them think on how to use that mechanic in different ways.
2. Another way is to have a tutorial. A way to explain how to do certain mechanics in your game without taking away from the experience. For example, in our game we could have the player character actually speak and say something along the lines of “My favourite ball. I remember when I was younger that it used to help me see in the dark. Maybe if I bounce it around, I can see where I am and what is around me”
3. You can have a small cutscene that shows how the mechanics work before letting the player take control of the player character.
4. If you break things down and add one feature at a time, instead of dumping an intimidating number of rules and mechanics on a player at once, they will learn better and have a more enjoyable time learning. Just do not pace it out too long or they will lose interest quickly.
5. You could have a side character that can point out how to do certain things instead of letting the player figure it out, although this method tends to annoy players more than help them as players do not like to be told what to do too often or have their gameplay stopped to get told what to do. It can break immersion so this method isn’t the best.