Lesson 6: Mechanics

In this lesson, students will explore the role of mechanics in game design and how they contribute to meaningful decisions and rich gameplay. They will analyze and evaluate different game mechanics, such as leveling up, resource management, puzzles, and combat systems, to understand how each mechanic enhances the overall gameplay experience. Students will also learn about the concept of deep gameplay and its importance in sustaining player interest and allowing players to gain mastery. Through small group discussions and independent research, students will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge by analyzing the mechanics and gameplay elements of a specific video game. The lesson will culminate with an exit ticket to assess students' understanding of game mechanics and deep gameplay.

Objectives:

- Students will understand the role of mechanics in game design and how they contribute to meaningful decisions and rich gameplay.

- Students will recognize the importance of deep gameplay in sustaining player interest and allowing players to gain mastery.

- Students will analyze and evaluate the mechanics and gameplay of a specific game.

Materials:

- Whiteboard or blackboard

- Markers or chalk

- Handouts with examples of game mechanics

- Computer or mobile devices with internet access (optional)

Bell-Ringer Activity (10 minutes):

- Display the following quote on the board: "Mechanics are one of the tools that designers use to create meaningful decisions and rich gameplay."

- Ask students to reflect on the quote and write a short paragraph explaining what they think it means.

- After a few minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the class.

Introduction (10 minutes):

- Engage students in a discussion about their favorite video games and what they enjoy about them.

- Explain that behind every great video game is a carefully designed set of mechanics that make the game enjoyable and engaging.

- Define mechanics as the rules and systems that govern how a game is played.

- Emphasize that mechanics are essential in creating meaningful decisions and rich gameplay.

Direct Instruction (20 minutes):

- Provide examples of different game mechanics, such as leveling up, resource management, puzzles, and combat systems.

- Explain how each mechanic contributes to the overall gameplay experience and the decisions players have to make.

- Discuss the concept of deep gameplay and how it sustains player interest over long periods of time.

- Highlight the importance of allowing players to gain mastery and improve their skills as they progress in the game.

Guided Practice (20 minutes):

- Divide the class into small groups.

- Distribute handouts with examples of game mechanics.

- Instruct each group to analyze and discuss the mechanics provided, identifying how they contribute to meaningful decisions and rich gameplay.

- Encourage students to share their findings with the class.

Independent Practice (20 minutes):

- Ask students to choose a video game of their choice and research the mechanics and gameplay elements it incorporates.

- Instruct them to write a short essay analyzing how the mechanics in their chosen game contribute to meaningful decisions and rich gameplay.

- If computers or mobile devices are available, students can conduct their research online. Otherwise, they can use their prior knowledge and personal experiences with the game.

Exit Ticket (10 minutes):

- Distribute exit tickets to each student.

- Ask students to write down one thing they learned about game mechanics and deep gameplay during the lesson.

- Collect the exit tickets before the end of the class.

Closure (10 minutes):

- Review the main points discussed during the lesson, emphasizing the importance of mechanics in game design and deep gameplay in sustaining player interest.

- Encourage students to continue exploring and analyzing the mechanics and gameplay of their favorite video games.

- Preview the next lesson, which will focus on the role of narrative in game design.

Common Core Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3: Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.