Lesson 5: Core Game Loops

In this lesson, students will explore the concept of a core game loop and its importance in creating an engaging gameplay experience. They will analyze and identify core game loops in popular video games, discussing how challenges, rewards, and progression contribute to the overall gameplay. Students will then have the opportunity to create their own core game loop for a hypothetical video game, considering the genre and desired gameplay experience. Through group discussions, individual practice, and an exit ticket, students will demonstrate their understanding of the key elements of a well-designed core game loop.

Objectives:

- Students will understand the concept of a core game loop.

- Students will analyze and identify core game loops in popular video games.

- Students will create their own core game loop for a hypothetical video game.

- Students will explain the importance of a well-designed core game loop in creating an engaging gameplay experience.

Materials:

- Whiteboard or blackboard

- Markers or chalk

- Handouts with examples of popular video games

- Paper and pencils for students

Bell-Ringer Activity (5 minutes):

- Display the following question on the board: "What makes a video game fun and engaging?"

- Ask students to take a few minutes to write down their thoughts and ideas individually.

- After the time is up, ask a few students to share their responses with the class.

Introduction (10 minutes):

- Engage students in a discussion about video games and their appeal.

- Ask students to share their favorite video games and what they enjoy about them.

- Explain that one of the key elements that make a video game enjoyable is its core game loop.

- Define a core game loop as the main gameplay mechanic or sequence of actions that players repeat throughout the game.

- Emphasize that a well-designed core game loop is crucial for creating a fun and engaging gameplay experience.

Direct Instruction (20 minutes):

- Provide examples of popular video games and their core game loops.

- Discuss how the core game loop contributes to the overall gameplay experience.

- Explain that a core game loop typically involves a cycle of challenges, rewards, and progression.

- Discuss how different game genres may have different core game loops.

- Introduce the concept of game mechanics and how they are integrated into the core game loop.

- Highlight the importance of balancing challenge and reward in a core game loop.

Guided Practice (20 minutes):

- Divide students into small groups.

- Distribute handouts with examples of popular video games.

- Instruct each group to analyze and identify the core game loop of one of the games.

- Encourage students to discuss and debate their findings within their groups.

- After the allotted time, ask each group to present their analysis to the class.

Independent Practice (30 minutes):

- Instruct students to individually create their own core game loop for a hypothetical video game.

- Provide guidelines for the core game loop, such as the genre of the game and the desired gameplay experience.

- Encourage students to think creatively and consider the balance between challenge and reward.

- Allow students to sketch or write out their core game loop and provide a brief explanation.

Exit Ticket (5 minutes):

- Ask students to write a short paragraph explaining the importance of a well-designed core game loop in creating an engaging gameplay experience.

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

Closure (5 minutes):

- Recap the main points discussed during the lesson, emphasizing the importance of a well-designed core game loop.

- Highlight the creativity and critical thinking skills demonstrated by the students in creating their own core game loops.

- Encourage students to continue exploring and analyzing core game loops in the video games they play.

- Preview the next lesson, which will focus on the role of narrative in video games.

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.W.9-10.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.