**Lesson 01 – Indie, AA and AAA Studios**

**Main objective**

Students will learn about the different sizes of video game studios, and how they are defined.   
Students will also observe the differences between products of said different studios and consider what kind of game studio they may want to work for in a career.

**Standards**

* 9-12.IC.3 Impacts of Computing, Ethics
* 9-12.IC.7 Impacts of Computing, Career Paths
* 9-12.DL.2 Digital Literacy, Digital Use

**Lesson Structure/In class exercises**

Aim: What are the different sizes of game studios, and what sets them apart from one another?

Do Now:  
Students will play Cave Story – depending on limitations, perhaps either every table has a computer with the game installed (very small download and easy to boot up), or the teacher has the game and is projecting it on a screen for students, while students take turns playing the game.  
  
After a few minutes of play, the teacher will reveal that this game was developed by a single person over the course of 5 years, which will then segue to the main lesson starting with indie game studios.

Instruction:  
Starting with Indie game studios (by discussing Cave Story), review the 3 most common styles of game studios (in terms of funding/production values) – being Indie, AA and AAA studios.  
  
Indie (Independent) studios for small projects and teams, AA for slightly larger, and AAA for the largest  
  
The slides have plenty of examples of games that those types studios have produced, as well as a breakdown of other differences between the types of studios.

Group discussions:  
At the end of the main lesson, there will be a class discussion. Ask students what type of studio they would rather work in – Indie, AA or AAA studios.

Time to work on assignment:  
Students get the remainder of the class time to get started on their homework assignment.

**Assignments**

“Flame war” – Google classroom debate

<https://www.destructoid.com/geoff-keighley-explains-why-dave-the-diver-has-been-nominated-as-an-indie-game/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzgP3Y_U-gQ>

Choose either of the above resources (or both!) and read/watch it. Take a stance on what you think is right in each case, and explain your reasoning in detail.  
  
For the article: Is Dave the Diver an indie game? To you personally, what qualities does a developer/game need to be considered indie?  
For the video: Is Nexon in the right to sue Ironmace studio, or should Nexon let Ironmace be?   
  
Next, you will respond to at least 2 other of your classmates’ posts, except you MUST disagree with their points. Be respectful, but also give a good argument for the opposite side. You may even agree with their post, but think of ways to play devil’s advocate for the other side.

**Resources**

Cave Story**:** <https://www.cavestory.org/download/cave-story.php>   
(free indie game developed by a single person, Daisuke “Pixel” Amaya)

<https://kevurugames.com/blog/indie-aa-vs-aaa-game-unraveling-the-differences/>

<https://www.gameopedia.com/indie-aaa-aa-games-comparison/>

<https://www.destructoid.com/geoff-keighley-explains-why-dave-the-diver-has-been-nominated-as-an-indie-game/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzgP3Y_U-gQ>