



Pedagogical sequence/Introductory sheet

Literator

Where to find the game

<https://gd.games/instant-builds/32f20597-fcea-4fb0-ad45-dc572b7baadf>

Hosting the game sessions

Accessibility

English level

B1: The vocabulary is not too difficult.

B2: some poetic extracts can be challenging (E. Dickinson).

Accessibility features

We used a DYS-friendly font (open-sans) and a 1.5 line spacing to make it easier.

Reading the dialogue aloud in pairs could alleviate the focus on reading.

We also tried to break down long texts into several smaller pieces when possible.

Advice for specific student profiles

Classroom organisation

Duration

The game can take from 15 to 20 minutes to play, depending on the learners' level.

Single-player mode

Solo

The game can be played from a computer through a web browser. The students will need the internet to play it.

Allow students to report when they don't understand a sentence: you can put vocabulary on the board so that your students can use it if and when they need it.

Also, record the sentences or grammar points that were hard for your students to understand.

If your students are stuck at one point due to a misunderstanding of the English content, make sure to let all students reach the problematic point. Those who are ahead can pause the game and help their classmates.

Make sure they don't give out the answer but help them solve the "enigmas".

In Group

The game is thought to be played solo, and is probably more enjoyable this way since there is more gameplay involved than in a purely narrative game.

However, if there are several students per device, they can think about the literature excerpts that are in the game and think together about how to beat the “bosses”. The non-playing students can also pay more attention to the “inspirational word” (see gameplay section) and detect them in the player’s environment or search for definitions outside the game.

Multiplayer mode

None

Remote Play

Play as homework

The teacher can ask their students to play the game at home before the next English class.

To make it smoother, you can study Emily Dickinson’s “Because I could not stop for Death” and E.A. Poe’s “The Raven” styles and wording in class beforehand to help your students understand the clues when they encounter them in the game.

These sessions can be followed by the creation of a short introductory note to highlight the important aspects and where to search for information.

To play at home, all the students need is an internet connection.

Distance learning activity

You can play the game and share your screen with your students remotely. It is a remote version of the “play in front of your class” setup.

Briefing

Pedagogical requirements

In the game, the character can use their special affinity with the immaterial word (imagination) to absorb energy (verve points) from objects in the environment. Use this setup to your advantage to give your class a bit of vocabulary: before the game session, discuss the game's theme with your students and write down any words they might need. Ideally, they will have a sheet to help them search for specific words in the game. If they are low on energy, they can pause the game, search their notes, resume and absorb the correct element in the game.

Follow-up and Post-play activities

Evaluation: score analysis or resolving difficulties encountered

You can use the difficulties encountered by the students while playing the game as a basis for a lesson: there is a lot you can do with the cultural aspect of the games and the vocabulary they discovered.

Debrief or production based on the game session (essays, list of words to review...)

The game uses E. Dickinson's "Because I could not stop for Death", E.A. Poe's "The Raven" and M. Shelley's Frankenstein characters.

After finishing the game, the students could have to explain the events happening in these works and how they used them to beat the "bosses".

The game

Context and story

Plot

As time passes, some books, once considered classics in American or British literature, have fallen into oblivion.

A big company called FAGMA, has put in place a new product. Called the “meta church of the mind”, it is both metaverse and social media, directly plugged into the user’s nervous system.

As the product is launched, a supernatural phenomenon occurs: beliefs and imaginary creatures (such as literature characters...) breach into the material world!

Now without a purpose, some of the characters in the books have taken a physical form. As they are furious about being disregarded, they threaten the very balance of our world!

Armed with a magic book that can attract literary concepts and cast them back into the immaterial, the player will have to put back every character at rest. Not using physical violence, but knowledge of literature.

Lore – game world

The game is of science-fiction/fantasy style. An entertainment and cognitive technology produced by a big company breaches the veil between the material world and the world of imagination, beliefs and ideas.

The oldest story recorded, Gilgamesh, endows the player with a unique book that can put ideas back into the imaginary world, using its user’s imagination and art.

Detecting or capturing the escaped literature characters requires metaphorical actions that echo with their stories.

Characters

Protagonist(s)

- **Wesley:**

Wesley is a literature student. He loves old books and is writing a thesis on Gilgamesh.

Antagonist(s)

- **Wesley's dad's bad belief**

To ease his life choice of letting go literature studies for a more “money making” job, Wesley's father has developed a wrong belief. Like many other immaterial creatures from the imagination, this belief takes material form at the beginning of the game. By defeating it, Wesley can convince his father that studying literature is useful.

Companion(s)

- **Wesley's dad**

Wesley's dad was fond of literature when he was younger too. But he had to give it up to find a better-paid job when Wesley's mother died to provide for him.

He fell into the entertainment culture and now has a very pragmatic look at what one's job should be.

Gameplay

Gameplay 1: top down “shooter”

Description

The game is based on the idea of a top-down shooter: the player can see the character and the environment from above. Enemies shoot at the player, who must dodge (move) using the keyboard controls (z,q,s,d) and aim at them using their mouse (left click in the direction of the enemy).

We added a twist to this formula, instead of shooting, the player must absorb or repulse game elements.



In order to use their abilities, the player consumes a “verve bar”, the green bar in the top left corner.

To recharge it, they need to get inspired by absorbing concepts/vocabulary in their environment. Their current inspirational word is displayed in the top right corner. If

they absorb the corresponding object, they acquire verve points (represented by green letters "A", "B", "C").



They can attract or repulse elements and "dash" (a quick dodge). All these capacities consume "verve points".

Attract (left click):



Repulse (right click):



Dash (spacebar):



Gameplay 2: enigma-based boss fights

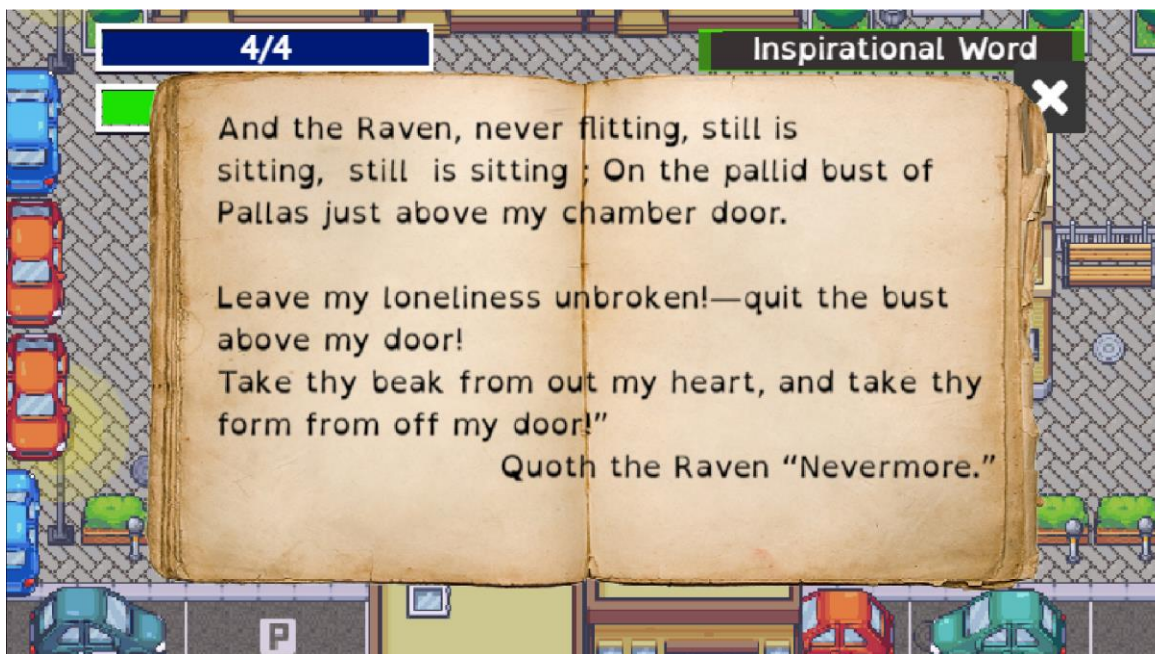
There are 4 characters to beat in the game, the Raven, the Reaper, Doctor Frankenstein and his creature.

In order to defeat them, the player must read an excerpt from the works they are from. They give clues on how to defeat them.

They must first explore the level to find the books containing the extracts and press the "E" key to open them.



Then understand the content to find a way to either find or beat the boss.



Pedagogical impact

In order to continue playing, the player needs energy to power their abilities (absorption). The absorption mechanic forces them to practice their vocabulary, by

searching their environment. The “inspirational word” changes every 30 seconds, forcing the student to use another word.

The boss fights require the student to understand texts for written comprehension skills.

Roadmap and solutions

Intro scene:

This level is the narrative introduction to the game. The only thing the player has to do is use the absorb ability on Gilgamesh. (left click) until it disappears.

After a few more lines of dialogue, the player is taken to the first level.

Level 1: The raven



Outside Wesley's house, a group of birds start attacking him. He must absorb the correct bird. Each time he tries absorbing a bird, they fire a projectile (harmful thought) at him. Instead of randomly absorbing birds, the player must read the book in the park. It says:

"And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting; On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door.

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

The correct bird to aim in the level is the only one that lands only above doors.

Once the raven is absorbed, the character gets a new ability: repulsion. They can use it to move the cars that block the way in the borders to reach the next level.



Level 2: The reaper and Frankenstein.



The book about Frankenstein is located in the south, in front of a house in ruins.



It reads:

“Consumed by hatred, Victor Frankenstein chased his creation all around the world, and finally found his trace on the North Pole.

As he was about to catch him, the ice broke underneath him. Although he was rescued by the captain of a boat, he died of exhaustion a few days later. The creature was able to find him and, in mourning, fled into the cold to meet his end on a pyre.”

Text commentary by Uni student

The doctor and creature are located in the north:



To defeat the doctor, the player must tire him. When the player gets close to the doctor, he runs away, consuming his health. However, anytime the player gets close, the creature chases and tries to attack him. It attacks with large dangerous attacks (don't let it get close!).

In the book, the doctor almost dies of drowning. To tire him faster, the player can push him into the water, in the southeast or in the fountain.

The creature has a lot of health. To defeat it, the student should take the doctor first. It is also quite efficient to push it into the fire!

The Reaper:

The Reaper starts the level in the graveyard. It moves really slowly, but it can go through walls and will relentlessly follow the player. Once it reaches the player, it also hits them with large dangerous attacks.



There is an open book on the bench in the graveyard.

It reads:

“Because I could not stop for Death - By Emily Dickinson

We paused before a House that seemed

A Swelling of the Ground -

The Roof was scarcely visible -

The Cornice - in the Ground -”

This extract depicts a house in a terrible state.

To defeat the Reaper in the game, you must walk it in front of the ruined house south of the level.



Level 2: The final boss.

Once all creatures have been beaten, the last boss appears: it is Wesley's father's bad belief. It cannot be harmed directly. In its introductory dialogue we can see that it originates from a lack of wonder when looking at everyday things. To make it disappear, the character must use its inspiration (absorption of environment objects matching the "inspirational word"). Doing so hurts the final boss: it is a vocabulary test. But while the player roams the area to absorb the current target vocabulary, the boss shoots at them.



References

Sound effects

Sound Effect by [JayAlvarez66](https://pixabay.com/users/jayalvarez66-24411567/?utm_source=link-attribution&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=music&utm_content=11647) from [Pixabay](https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/?utm_source=link-attribution&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=music&utm_content=11647)

Sound Effect from [Pixabay](https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/?utm_source=link-attribution&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=music&utm_content=6072)

Sound Effect from https://pixabay.com/?utm_source=link-attribution&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=music&utm_content=6298>Pixabay

Visual assets

Ghost asset: [@PixelFrogStudio](https://pixelfrog-assets.itch.io/PixelFrog)

Bird asset: [itch.io https://ma9ici4n.itch.io/pixel-art-bird-16x16](https://ma9ici4n.itch.io/pixel-art-bird-16x16) by ma9ici4n

Doctor: <https://chasersgaming.itch.io/medical-examiner-male>

Reaper: <https://samuellee.itch.io/reaper-animated-pixel-art>

City and interiors: itch.io, LimeZU

<https://limezu.itch.io/moderninteriors> free version

<https://limezu.itch.io/modernexteriors> paid version (1.5\$)

Book: <https://opengameart.org/content/open-book>

Sources

The Raven E.A. Poe

Because I could not stop for Death E. Dickinson

Frankenstein M. Shelley



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