

## Pedagogical sequence

# The Little Alchemist

Language level	A1+ & A2
Skills	Reading
By the end of the sequence, students will be able to...	Understand and identify common objects and words related to colours, food, plants and directions. Understand and react to common phrases and instructions – locations, interactions
Inclusiveness	The game is inclusive and adapted for students with Specific Learning Disorders (SLDs) - see the accessibility section of this document
Operating system	Windows, Mac OS, Linux, web browser

## Where to find the game

Best experience is ensured with the desktop versions of the game. However, for simplicity, “The Little Alchemist” is also available online: <https://logopsycom.itch.io/the-little-chemist>

## Hosting the game sessions

### Accessibility

#### English level

**A1:** The core vocabulary of the 1<sup>st</sup> steps of the game (garden and house searching)

**A2:** Most vocabulary, for the game in its entirety

**B1 (optional):** A B1 activity can be organized to talk about the game

You could therefore use the garden and house-searching part with A1 students, the game in its entirety with A2 students, and asks B1 students to talk about the game, how it played and what they liked or disliked.

## Accessibility features

The in-game font is adapted for learners with specific learning disorders (sans-serif, aligned left, large size, contrast).

- For technical reasons, the player cannot adapt the font settings in the game themselves, however.

One topic of the game is “colours”. However, the name of the colours is always available in a written form, so that colourblind students can also play the game without issue.

The game is controlled by a keyboard and/or a mouse, but other game controllers cannot be configured in the game settings.

## Advice for specific student profiles

Inform colourblind students that they will be able to win the game even though the colours are covered in the game.

## Classroom organisation

### Duration

The game should take between **20 to 40 minutes to complete**.

You can **split the game** into several sessions, based on the roadmap below. This will allow to discuss with the students at different steps of the game. **The game progression can be saved** in the menu for the next sessions.

If your time is limited, be careful that your students are not stuck on a step of the game for too long, and give them hints if they need it. You can also ask your students to **turn on the “always dash”** option in the “Options” menu, so that players will move faster.










**The player’s guide** will also help students find their way in the game and will be particularly adapted for less proficient students.

## Single-player mode

### Solo

There is only one game character to control; therefore this game may be best suited to be played in solo mode (one student per computer).

To launch the game, first download and extract the file “The Little Alchemist - Windows.zip” (depending on the operating system the game will be run on). In the extracted folder, double-click on “Game”.

 locales	09/09/2022 21:22	File folder
 swiftshader	09/09/2022 21:22	File folder
 www	09/09/2022 21:22	File folder
 credits	14/04/2022 16:15	Firefox HTML Docu...
 d3dcompiler_47.dll	14/04/2022 16:15	Application extension
 ffmpeg.dll	14/04/2022 16:15	Application extension
 Game	14/04/2022 16:15	Application
 icudtl	14/04/2022 16:15	DAT File
 libEGL.dll	14/04/2022 16:15	Application extension

It should launch the game and bring you to the title screen.

for simplicity, “The Little Alchemist” is also available online: <https://logopsycom.itch.io/the-little-chemist>, even though the best experience is ensured with the desktop versions of the game.

## In Group

There is not multiplayer mode for this game.

However, students can play in groups of 2 (or 3) on the same computer. Students could then have different roles: one would remember what to do and the other would be in charge of the action. Then, they should regularly switch roles, for instance at every new step in the game story, or every 5 minutes, for instance.

## Play as homework

You could also ask them to play this game at home and, if the level of your students is adapted, to make a small report on the story.

Make sure that students are aware of the expected duration of the game, so that they can manage their time accordingly. For the homework activity, it is also advised to give them the player's guide, so that they can find help if they are stuck at a step of the game.

## Briefing

### Pedagogical requirements

The game is tailored for **A1+ and A2 learners**. However, in the game dialogues, they may be exposed to more complicated vocabulary, less important for the resolution of the game.

To help them, students can be allowed to use the player's guide and the included vocabulary list.

In terms of grammar, in order to understand the story in details, students should have basic grammar knowledge:

- Some modal verbs (can, must)
- Simple present
- Simple past
- Simple future
- Possessive 's

## Explanations to give before playing

Explain to your students that:

- they are going to play a game that will make them practice their English;
- The language should be in keeping with their level but that they can use a vocabulary list if they don't understand some words;
- the game covers colours, directions, usual objects and food.

## Emotional security and other warnings

The game should not have strong emotional triggers.

Depending on their individual life stories, be aware that the game covers the following:

- Having a companion dog,
- Lost in the forest or at sea,
- Poisoning (the king is poisoned by the Dark Mage)

## Follow-up and Post-play activities

### Evaluation: score analysis or resolving difficulties encountered

There is no final score of how the players performed at the end of the game, but they have to understand the story and what is asked of them in order to win the game.

You can ask your students what steps felt the most difficult for them and why. It may help them identify their own language difficulties and make them aware of what they should focus on.

### Lesson plan using the in-game content learned

Prepare your students **before the game session**, to make sure that they have the basic skills to understand the basics of the story. Training them already on some of the vocabulary and grammar that they will encounter in-game will help them memorize more efficiently.

For the game activity, a **player's guide** is available in several languages. The guide comes with tips to advance in the game, in case students don't understand well what is expected. It also comes with a **vocabulary list**, that students can look at when they encountered new words.

Distributing the player's guide to your students, in English or in your student's native language, with or without the vocabulary list, will depend on how you plan to use the game and the level of your student.

In order to really fix the vocabulary and grammar that will have been encountered in the game, also reuse the learned material in another activity of your choosing.

### **Debrief or production based on the game session**

Have a debriefing after the game session(s) to evaluate what students understood of the story, and what end of the game they were faced with (depending on their choices during the game).

If you choose to give this game as a homework, you could also ask them to write a short essay about the story of the game and what they understood of it.

It's important to have the feedback of your students on the activity in order to see if it was enjoyable for them and if it fulfilled the goal of making them practice English in a safe environment.

As a follow-up activity, you can ask students to think of what happens next in AI's world.

# The game

## Context and story

### Plot


Al, the Great Alchemist's apprentice, learns that the king is suffering from a sudden and very serious illness. The apprentice is the only hope to cure him because the Great Alchemist is abroad. The Little Alchemist has to leave home and collect ingredients with the help of a book of spell and potions and go to the King's castle. The villagers will be able to help the hero, if they are helped in return of course...


### Lore – game world

Fantasy kingdom with a forest, little houses outside, a castle, towers. Middle Ages atmosphere and magic.


## Characters

### Protagonist(s)



	<p><b>Al – The Little Alchemist</b></p> <p>Al is the main character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Game objectives:</b> Save the king, make potions to help the village, collect ingredients</li><li>• <b>Goals:</b> Become the best alchemist, save the king.</li><li>• <b>Inclusiveness:</b> Al's gender is never mentioned in game; the player doesn't know if they are playing a male or female character.</li></ul>
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	<p><b>Sparkle - Al's dog</b></p> <p>Sparkle is a talking dog and can help in Al's quest.</p>
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### Antagonist(s)

	<p><b>The Dark Mage</b></p> <p>The villain of the story, he is the one who poisoned the king</p> <p>He puts obstacles in Al's way by reversing the direction of the different paths.</p> <p><b>SPOILER:</b> The dark mage is actually the king, who is faking to be sick. His goal is to panic the population and to make himself even more loved when he is cured. Depending on the choices of the player, several endings can be offered: the king is discovered or he is not discovered.</p>
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### Other characters(s)

	<p><b>The King</b></p> <p>The king is sick and dying and the hero's quest is to save him.</p>
	<p><b>The Great Alchemist</b></p> <p>The protagonist's master, he is absent from the present in the story because he is away at a meeting in another kingdom</p>
	<p><b>The Villagers</b></p> <p>Al will meet a hunter, a hunter, a soldier and a castle guard.</p>


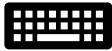







# Gameplay

## Gameplay 1: Exploration and interactions



The game gives a top-down view that the player navigates using the following controls:

			
Move	Left click	← ↑ ↓ →	 tap where you want to go
Action button	Left click	Spacebar	 tap
Open/ close menu	Right click	Esc	 or 

For mouse and touch, the "dash" option is on by default (ie. the character goes faster). It can be turned on from the setting for the keyboard.

## Gameplay 2: Combat



There is only one fight: at the end of the game, with the Dark Mage.

The difficulty of the fight will depend on if the player has the correct items that were asked at the beginning of the game.

### **Pedagogical impact**

Interacting with objects and characters will have the player read English texts that explain what happens in the game.

The final battle, as well as other steps in the game, make sure that the players have collected the correct items.

## Roadmap and solutions

### Phase A – Player’s exposition of the story and controls

#### Initial situation

The game starts with a short cutscene providing the general context of the story.

Then, there is a short activity to learn the basic game controls and game mechanics.

#### Objective

The player is exposed to the story and has to show that the controls of the game are understood before going on.

#### Conclusion

When phase A ends, the player knows their role in the story and what is the goal of the game.

### A.1. Game basics



Al must pick fruits and vegetables of specific colours, as asked by the man. The player has to choose among the fruits and vegetables in the garden.

- **Goal 1:** Bring back at least 2 red fruits
- **Goal 2:** Bring back something green, something yellow and something purple

The player is exposed to the following aspects:

Grammar:

- **Simple present**
- **Modal verbs:** “can” in questions (“can you help me?”)

Vocabulary:

- **Colours:** red, yellow, green, orange, purple
- **Fruits and vegetables:** apple, orange, pear, cherry, aubergine, wheat, carrot, cabbage, pepper

## Step A.2 – The Quest to save the king is revealed



When the player has finished A.1., the weather changes and someone comes screaming in panic that the King is dying. The little alchemist accepts to go save the King, returns to his little hut to prepare for the quest (step B1).

The player is exposed to the following aspects, though the dialog:

Grammar

- **Modal verbs:** “can” in questions (“can you help me?”), “you **must** save the king”
- **Possessive ‘s:** the king’s castle, my master’s instructions
- **Pronouns:** him, yourself
- **Imperatives:** “go prepare yourself”
- **W questions:** “Where is your master”

Vocabulary

- terrible (adj, “It’s terrible news”), sick (adj), away (adv), hope (noun), potion, unless, “hurry up”

## Phase B – Prepare the journey to the kingdom

### Initial situation

Al cannot go directly to the castle but needs first to gather all the items that the Great Alchemist instructed Al to take in case of problem during his absence.

### B.1 – Gathering necessary items in the house

On the table in Al's house, where the player is after A.2, there is a check-list of items to take with him, left by the Great Alchemist.

The player will find all the items in the hut. Every time that a new item of the checklist is found, the player can go back to the check list and see that the item is now checked.

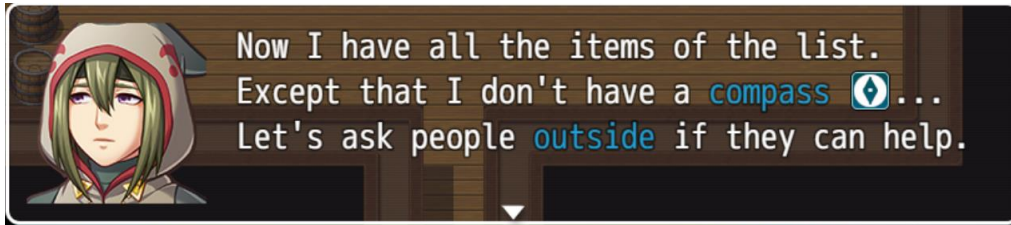


For two items, Al has several options.

- 2 different necklaces: one purple and one red
  - if the red necklace is chosen, the final battle with the Dark Mage will be more difficult, because it's not the one that the master asked Al to take.
- 2 separate bracelets: One blue and one purple
  - Without the blue eloquence bracelet, Al will not be able to convince the castle guard to let him inside the castle and will have to go back to the house to get it.

For the other items of the list, there is no trap, they are simply in the hut.

One essential object however is missing: the compass. Al will have to find it elsewhere, outside of the house.



Vocabulary: colours, clothes and other items

## B.2 – Get a compass

On leaving the hut, the protagonist has two options: The forest (east) or the farmer's (west).

**Path of the forest:** The alchemist heads for the forest. A real labyrinth. There are signs telling the direction, but they are written in “dog language”, incomprehensible to humans. Fortunately Sparkle (Companion dog) can help. Sparkle is near Al’s hut, speaking to him will make him follow the hero everywhere in the game.





There are a number of directions that are indicated (right, left, down, up). Every time AI doesn't take the correct direction, he returns to the starting point in the forest.

When the right path is found, AI meets the hunter.

### Encounter with the Hunter



The hunter has a compass for AI, but will only give it to him in exchange for food, because he is hurt and cannot hunt himself. AI has never killed an animal and doesn't want to have to do it. He has 2 options:

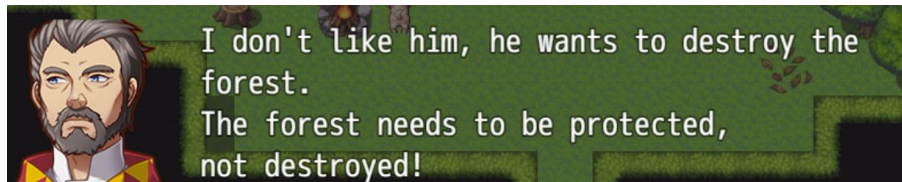
- kill a chicken just before the hunter's place, but it's against his principles (he will gain **negative** karma points).
- AI can get all the ingredients to make an alternative recipe from the "book of spells and potions" (**positive** karma points). If spared, the chicken will give AI an egg and the other ingredients can be found in the forest.

The hunter gives the compass to the alchemist after receiving his meal, whatever it is.

The compass appears at the top left corner of the screen.



The player learns that the king wants to destroy the forest. The hunter ask Al to convince the king no to do it if he's saved.



**To the Farmer's:** The farmer doesn't have a compass for him, but will give Al a bottle of milk that will serve later.



The player is exposed to the following aspects:

Grammar

- **Modal verbs:** "can" in questions ("can I go with you?")
- These woods, these days

Vocabulary

- **Directions:** left, right, up, down
- **Food and animals:** "recipe", chicken, egg, meat, mushrooms, flowers, dog, milk
- **Other:** maze, signs, forest, woods, glad, find your way, fortunately, smart, to lay an egg, to heal, compass, destroy, protect.

## Phase C – Reach the castle border

The Little Alchemist now has all the items of the checklist and can go to the castle.

### C.1 – Encounter with the Dark Mage

Al talks to the soldier that is guarding the way to the castle south of Al's house. With the compass, Al is allowed to pass and get to the river bridge.



Al sees the **Dark Mage** for the first time on the bridge. With an evil laugh, he will destroy it. The mage disappears immediately.



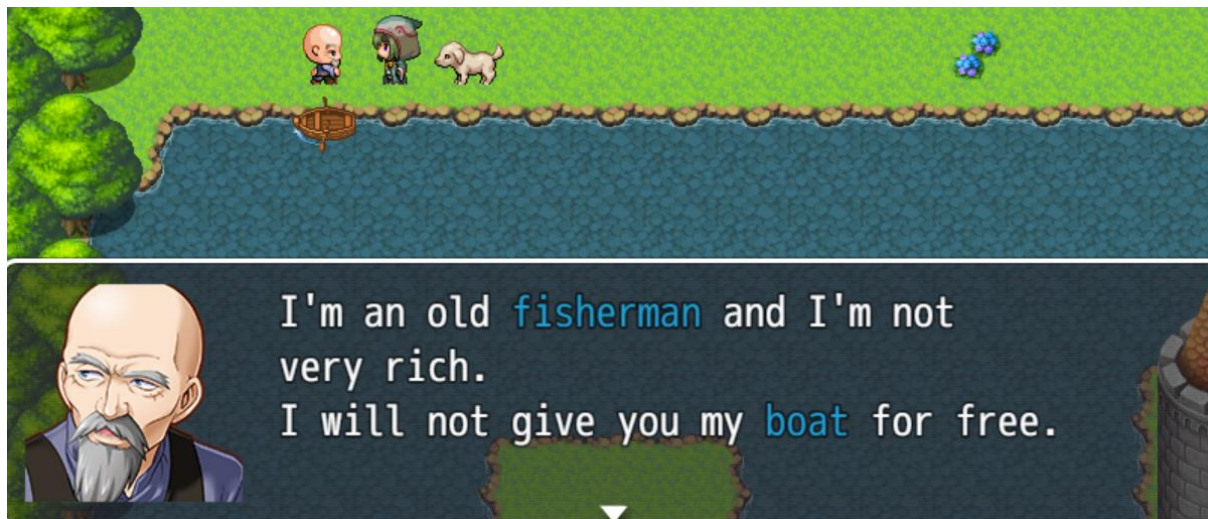
It is now impossible to cross by the bridge. Al needs to find another way to the city. Exploring the riverside, he will find a fisherman that may be able to help him.

The player is exposed to the following aspects:

- Grammar: **Past simple** (eg. "I poisoned the king")
- Vocabulary: bridge, save, poison, destroy

## C.2 – Help the fisherman

The fisherman has a boat that he can give to Al, but only if Al helps him by making him a youth potion.



Al collects the ingredients for the potion on the riverside: a blue flower, a red flower, a pink flower, brown mushrooms and a chicken feather.

To potion works, the fisherman becomes young again and leave the boat to Al.

He also gives a map to Al that will guide him to the castle.

## Grammar

- **Future simple:** “I will exchange my boat with a potion to make me young again”
- **Present perfect:** “It is not working”
- **Wh questions:** “What does it mean?”

**Vocabulary:** directions, food, flower, young, youth, potion, indeed, to feel something, “I’m so happy”

## C.3 – On the river

When Al takes the boat and goes south to the castle, the Dark Mage appears again. He cursed the place and now the directions are all mixed up, just like in the forest.

But with the map and the compass, it will be easy for Al and Sparkle to find their way.



The map indicates a direction (North, East, South, West) to follow, and the player looks at the compass on the top left corner of the screen to find where to go.

**Vocabulary:** directions, food, flower, maze, “put a spell”, area, indicate, to look at something, know

## Phase D –The king’s castle

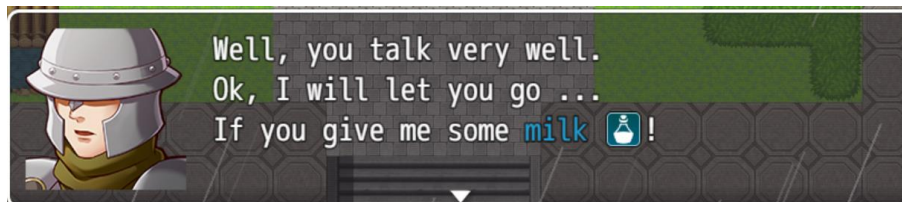
After the journey on the water, the alchemist finally arrives at the castle's ramparts. A guard is sleeping near the entrance.

### D.1 – Encounter with the castle guard

The soldier wakes up when Al tries to get to the castle. He doesn't want to let him pass at first, but with the **blue eloquence bracelet**, Al convinces him, in exchange for a bottle of milk.

If Al does not have the bracelet or the milk, he can go back to his house or to the farmer's. The guard tells him that the bridge is now repaired, it should be faster than before to come back.

The guard lets Al pass, and the hero enters the castle gate.



**Grammar:** Future simple

**Vocabulary:** milk, well, let someone do something,

## Phase E – Save the King

All arrives at the castle and can finally see the sick king.

### E.1 – Defeat the Dark mage

When Al enters the main door of the castle, he goes to the king but the Dark Mage is there too. He begins to cast dangerous spells on the alchemist. Al needs to defend himself.



If AI has the **purple necklace**, as supposed to, powerful spells are available and defeating the Dark Mage is possible without much issues.

With the red necklace, however, only weaker spells are available, and without any necklace at all, only his fists. In this circumstances, he will probably have to go back to his house and get the proper necklace to defeat the Dark Mage.

AI wins the battle and the Dark Maze cannot move.

**Vocabulary:** fire, water, wind, fist, win, victorious, defeat, spell, attack

## E.2 – The end of the game

The end of the game will partially depend on the choices made during the game.

With the Dark Mage immobilised, AI can try to cast a spell to reveal his identity. The spell only works if AI has a sufficient karma score (>1).

The spell reveals that the Dark mage is actually the king, and that the king is not sick. In his place is the Great Alchemist, who has been cursed.

- If the king is exposed, he is exiled by the Great Alchemist and a democracy is put in place.





- If the Dark Mage is not discovered: Al thinks he has saved the king and life returns to normal. Al is appointed alchemist of the kingdom.

**Vocabulary:** to cure a sickness, cannot, banish

## References

The game has been realised with [RPG Maker MV](#), with the assets of the program and some additional ones.

### Additional assets

- SciGho, "Fruit+" at <https://ninjikin.itch.io/fruit>



## Co-funded by the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

**Project code:** 2021-1-BE01-KA220-SCH-000027783

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