



Pedagogical sequence/Introductory sheet

# V0c's Journey 2: The Letter

Language level	B1
Skills	Reading
By the end of the sequence, students will be able to...	Understand and identify the meaning of emotions, expressions, habits and traditions  Understand and react to common phrases and instructions – locations, interactions, directions
Inclusiveness	The game is inclusive and adapted for students with Specific Learning Disorders (SLDs) - see the accessibility section of this document

## Where to find the game

The best experience is ensured with the desktop versions of the game. However, for simplicity, you can access the game at the following address:

<https://d-esl.itch.io/v0cs-journey-2>

## Hosting the game session

The information provided below outlines how the game can be used in your classroom. More guidance on how to organise and animate a game session will be available in our **Implementation Guide**.

## Accessibility

### English level

**B1:** Most of the core vocabulary and grammar necessary to finish the game

Additionally, a few words are of **level B2** to provide more coherence but can be understood with the context and are not necessary to finish the game.

### Accessibility features

The font used in the game is a sans-serif font adapted for learners with SLDs, which should appear big enough on most computer screens.

If the font is not large enough for some, please ensure that the game window is maximised and that the game is played on a large enough screen. If you are playing through a web browser, make sure that the game is in full-screen mode and use "ctrl + scroll" on your keyboard and mouse to adjust the size of the game if needed.

The game can be played either with the keyboard (arrows and space bar), computer mouse or touch screen, whichever your students are more skilled or comfortable with. Other game controllers unfortunately will not work.

## Advice for specific student profiles

### Students with visual impairments or reading difficulties (dyslexia)

If the font is not large enough, start by ensuring that the game window is maximised (cf. above). If you play the game in a computer lab, ensure that the students with visual impairment or reading difficulties have access to the biggest

screens. If you plan on using a video projector, make sure that the students who need it are closer to the projection.

Unfortunately, the font cannot be changed or made bigger by the players in the game settings. As a last resort solution, the players could use the accessibility features of their operating system, such as the “magnifier” on Windows.

### **Colourblindness**

During the game, the players will have a series of interactions in which they need to choose the correct word or meaning of an expression, following directions they will receive to navigate the map. These indications do not refer to the colour of the elements on the screen. Therefore, not seeing the different colours or not being able to differentiate them should not hinder players’ experience.

### **Auditory disability or deafness**

There is background music along with sound effects within the game, but they are not necessary to accomplish the steps, nor are they relevant additions to the required information. The game can thus be played on mute, and students with auditory issues or deafness will be able to accomplish all the tasks without issue.

### **Students with dyspraxia**

The game can be controlled either with the mouse, the keyboard or the touch screen. Students with dyspraxia may prefer using the keyboard, as it could be easier to move the character where needed at a slightly slower pace and in a more precise manner because the character moves slower by default with the keyboard (this can be adjusted by maintaining the ‘shift’ key or in the game settings by turning on the automatic dash). One element that needs to be pointed out about using only the keyboard is that the character needs to be facing the object in order to interact with it, or the space bar will have no effect.

## Classroom organisation

### Duration

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

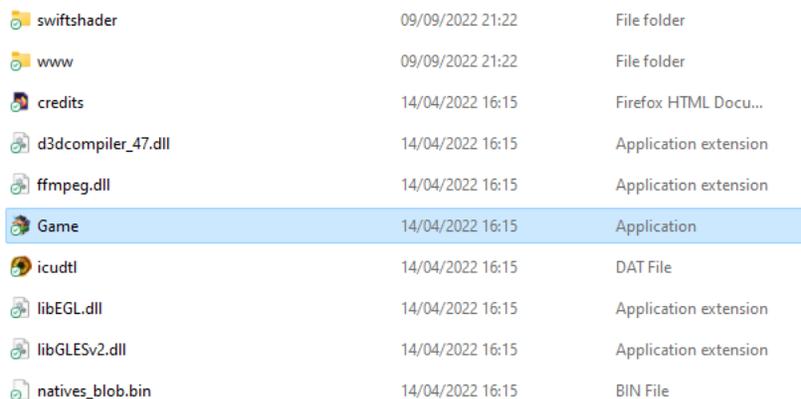
The language level involved is for intermediate students, and the game in itself has a rather moderate difficulty level.

### 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 "Voc's Journey 2 – The Letter - Windows.zip" (depending on the operating system the game will be run on). In the extracted folder, double-click on "Game".



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
<b>Game</b>	14/04/2022 16:15	<b>Application</b>
icudtl	14/04/2022 16:15	DAT File
libEGL.dll	14/04/2022 16:15	Application extension
libGLESw2.dll	14/04/2022 16:15	Application extension
natives_blob.bin	14/04/2022 16:15	BIN File

#### In Group

You could also make groups of 2 to 4 students behind the same screen. Make sure that everyone has the controls at some point by taking turns. For instance, a player could start the game and interact with the first few characters, and a different player could take over the controls when they reach another area or meet another

character - there are 7 characters to interact with. You could group students with a higher level and students with a lower level together so they can help each other.

If you don't have access to a computer lab and don't want to ask your students to play the game as homework, you could also use a video projector and ask your students to vote for the next action to do in the game. This may, however, make the activity less interactive and could prevent students with a lower level from participating instead of following the lead of students with a higher understanding.

### **Multiplayer mode**

There is no multiplayer mode, but students can play in small groups of 2 to 4.

### **Remote Play**

#### **Play as homework**

Another option is to have students play the game as homework and ask them to write down the vocabulary they learned or to make a small summary of the story.

If you opt for this option, it's particularly important to tell your students the amount of time the game should take (around 15-20 minutes) to plan their work better. This also means that you will not be able to guide the students or give additional explanations to those with a lower level, so prior instructions and a proper debrief would be necessary to have a full and effective learning experience.

You should also specify beforehand that they can interact with objects or locations that are not specified in the interactions if they wish to explore more elements of the map but that it is not necessary to finish the game.

#### **Distance learning activity**

Distance learning is also an option and can be arranged similarly to homework.

## Briefing

### **Pedagogical requirements**

This game can be used to introduce new terms and phrases or to revise them. During the briefing, tell your students that this game will make them practice and improve their vocabulary. They will work on B1 words and phrases related to habits, expressions, emotions, and traditions, along with directions and common phrases.

### **Explanations to give before playing**

The students should be informed about the expected duration of the game (15 to 20 minutes – depending on the learners' level and whether they wish to explore) and be asked if they understand the controls as shown right after they start (using the arrows, space bar or mouse). It should be specified to them that they can use both at the same time but that using the arrows makes the movements slower and requires that they face objects or characters in order to interact with them.

They should be told that they will be able to interact with many elements within the game and not just the characters specified in the instructions. If they are quick to have the necessary interactions and want to explore or they are curious about an element on the screen and choose to select it, they can learn more vocabulary and phrases, as additional information.

### **Emotional security and other warnings**

The topic of the game should be safe for every player. The game should not be scary or have other specific emotional triggers. There are mentions of pollution, recycling and environmental protection, homelessness and poverty, sickness and depression, and gender identities beyond male and female, as the main characters, V0c and D.I.A., are genderless, which is not mentioned here but is mentioned in the first game "V0c's Journey: the Mission".

## Follow-up and post-play activities

### Evaluation: score analysis or resolving difficulties encountered

There is no score count or levelling up: learners interact with 7 characters across 4 maps: the farm, the main square, the lake-side road and the final area for concluding interactions. Progress is made through conversations in which players have to correctly identify terms, expressions, habits or emotions in a multiple-choice format. Incorrect answers lead to a brief explanation before retrying. Correct answers lead to instructions and directions to the next character to interact with.

Deviating from the set path or going back to previous characters triggers reminders of the next required step. If progress stalls, hints are provided to redirect or review the previous steps. If some students take more time or struggle, you can ask them to go back to the previous character or walk around to come across a message with instructions for the next step. If need be, you can use these moments to discuss the difficulties encountered and guide the players towards what they're missing.

If learners with a higher level have already found everything, they can provide help to other students who are facing more difficulties or they can stop before walking up North (on Webster Street, as they can't go back once that final interaction is triggered) to explore other parts of the game and interact with more information.

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

Using B1-level vocabulary, different types of lessons can be organised before or after the gaming session to either formally learn or revise the words and phrases in the game or to share the learning experience as a group. Fill-in-the-blanks, vocabulary lists, dialogues to play out, and drill exercises can be interesting, especially for the elements that are useful on a daily basis or for some B2-level terms which may not have been learned by the students before.

At the end of this document are screenshots of each step from the game to know which exercises can be done to help students understand the more complex terms or expressions before playing or allow them to work afterwards on what they learned to improve their understanding and usage of those elements.

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

### **Listing the learned vocabulary**

After the game, students can write down and pronounce the words and phrases that they learned, whether as a class debrief or a group activity. Focusing on game essentials, students could compile and discuss, in groups, the emotions, habits, expressions and directions to explain their meaning and make sure they can identify and understand them. You could use that opportunity to ask about terms or phrases that the students have not fully understood, as some may have guessed the answers by chance and may not have focused much on the explanations.

Beyond the necessary interactions, there are a few other elements on the first two maps (the farm and main square) which can be interacted with, depending on the players' curiosity and opportunity to explore. Some students could learn words that other students will not come across if they don't decide to walk around. In that case, you could take time after the game to ask each student to list all the new words and phrases that they learned, either as a group activity or a brainstorming, which could result in a full vocabulary list so that all the students learn all the words and phrases present in the game, not limited to the required interactions.

### **V0c's Journey**

Have students write a summary of the plot so they can formulate sentences and express their understanding of what happened in the game. That could include the description of the characters, the different locations, the main tasks and steps of

the mission, and the full scenario, including a general idea of the first game, "V0c's Journey: The Mission", which is quickly explained in the first interaction with V0c (which could be more detailed if the students have played that first game as well).

### Character sheets

It can also be interesting to allow students to imagine more information about the characters, V0c and D.I.A., along with the humans they meet, by identifying their personality traits based on what can be observed in some of the interactions.

You could ask students these few questions and have them create the characters' profile sheets :

- Where are the characters from? (Students could imagine a name for V0c and D.I.A.'s home planet or a different background for certain characters, such as Captain Haddock who mentions having travelled around the world.)
- How old are they? (For D.I.A., it could be when the digital guide was created; for V0c, the date of birth that appears on the I.D. - 25<sup>th</sup> January 1995 - shown if the player interacts with the city hall door, can be believed as accurate or fake.)
- What are their main personality traits? (You could give a list of traits students would choose from and ask them to justify why and how each term corresponds to each character.)
- What do they like? (Students could base their answers about the characters' tastes on some of the interactions in the game, or they could imagine other preferences regarding food, colours, hobbies, etc.)
- What kind of feelings do they express? (Learners could either use the emotions that were mentioned in the game, such as frightened, curious, depressed, etc. or try to find the right terms to describe the characters' feelings in their own words: gratefulness, confidence, pride, impatience, happiness, eagerness...)

## What happens next

Now that V0c and D.I.A. are on Earth and have delivered the letter and made new friends, you can ask your students to imagine what could happen during their exploration of this town or the Earth. Students can also suggest how the characters they've met and the expressions they've learned could help them in their mission.

You could also ask them what they hope or wish that V0c would do next by asking them certain questions and having them write a few sentences for each answer :

- What places on Earth should V0c explore or visit? (Specific cities or countries, tourist locations or types of buildings – museum, school, arcade...)
- What should V0c eat or drink? (Based on the foods and drinks mentioned in the previous game or what the restaurant lady could potentially prepare, along with the variety of dishes depending on which places they visit.)
- What activities or sports should V0c try to do? (It could be influenced by the students' hobbies or interests or by what V0c and D.I.A have said in the game, or what students imagine an alien would be able to do regarding skills and abilities.)
- What types of people or animals should V0c meet and interact with? (Elements in the game suggest that V0c would be interested in meeting a cat or talking with fish, but students could suggest other animals or even children, scientists or teachers and can imagine the conversations they could have.)
- What reactions would the alien have when discovering more parts of the human world? (Students could reply based on the interactions within the game and V0c's curiosity and enthusiasm, but also their naiveté, kindness and obliviousness, or they could explore the possibility that V0c would be scared, shocked or worried about the vast diversity on Earth, certain negative behaviours, etc.)
- What reactions would other humans have when they meet V0c and D.I.A.?  
(Consider the original appearance of the green and purple alien that scared the

first human they met, but also acknowledge V0c's ability to shapeshift at will and appear more human-like with chosen physical features such as cat ears.)

**Note:** If the students have played the first game, "V0c's Journey: The Mission", and have done a similar activity, you can go back to their answers and see if they prefer what they had imagined from what happened in this game. Know that a third game follows the same characters. Some of the students' productions or suggestions could be used again if you use the next episode with the same learners.

# The game

## Context and story

V0c, a genderless alien, is on a mission: to explore the Earth and study the human world. In the first game ("V0c's Journey: The Mission"), they ask a human (the player) who got lost on their home planet to help them prepare their ship. After landing on Earth, they find a letter that was left by another alien, written for a human who lives in the city targeted for the exploration mission. D.I.A., the artificial intelligence system of the spaceship, uses the smartphone in V0c's pocket to share information and ensure they reach the right locations and accomplish the right steps to deliver the letter to Ben, its recipient. As soon as V0c has interacted with each character, they finally find Ben and promise to keep visiting and exploring soon.

### Lore – game world

The game takes place in a rural city called "Landing". The action is mostly set across 4 maps (the farm, the main square, the lake-side road and Webster Street) where V0c, D.I.A. and the player interact with 7 townspeople to ask them for help.

## Characters

### V0c, the alien protagonist



V0c is the main character of the game. As a curious alien specialising in human studies, V0c is sent on a research mission on Earth to learn more about the human world.

After interacting with the first human, V0c changes appearance to avoid scaring others and to pretend to be from Earth, adorning a different outfit, pale skin and cat ears.

## D.I.A, the digital guide



D.I.A is an A.I. system in the spaceship, now on the smartphone in V0c's pocket, a specialist in research expeditions to Earth. This guide will help V0c but also put obstacles in the way to ensure V0c follows the right steps and learns what they need.

## The farm girl



She is the first human that V0c meets after landing on Earth, scared at first by the alien. Too busy to help, she still teaches V0c that human language uses expressions.

## The old man



He is the first person that welcomes V0c in the main square. He doesn't like strangers and is rude, judgemental and suspicious towards V0c, providing false information and refusing to help.

## The homeless man



He nicely guides V0c away from the wrong street, indicated by the old man, near the pharmacy, then asks if they can give him some money and directs them towards the fountain.

## The fountain man



He is a helpful man near the fountain on the main square. He explains why V0c shouldn't take coins from the fountain and advises them to go ask the restaurant lady for food instead.

## The restaurant lady



She stands next to the restaurant that she owns, near the fountain, and welcomes customers. She is a very nice and generous old woman who gives back and helps when she can.

## Benjamin Haddock



He is a sailor and boat captain who used to travel the world but fell ill and had to stay home near the lake. The restaurant lady directs V0c towards Haddock because she thinks they're referring to him by asking about Ben, the recipient of the letter.

## Ben Hawkins



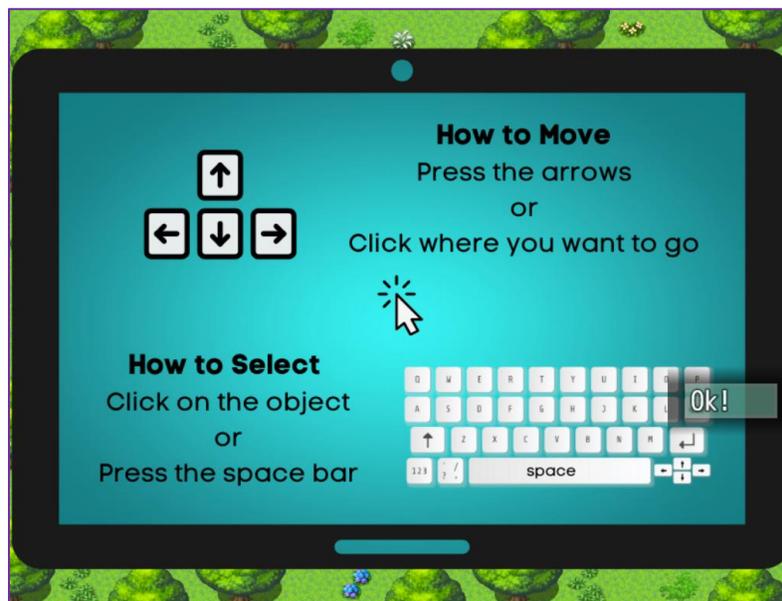
He is the recipient of the letter written by Mr Scroop but has a very bad memory and doesn't remember meeting the alien at all. He has doubts about accepting a letter from a stranger but after remembering, shows his friendly and dynamic nature.

# Gameplay

## Gameplay 1: Top-down view



The game gives a top-down view in which the player navigates with their keyboard or mouse. They can interact with items or characters using the interaction controls – space bar or click. The controls are explained at the beginning of the game:



## Gameplay 2: Interacting with people



While some interactions with NPCs (non-playable characters) are automatic when the character gets closer to them or enters a different map, others have to be triggered by clicking, tapping or pressing the space bar on the specific character. The conversation goes on as the player progresses or selects some of the choices, which either lead to an explanation when incorrect or to the rest of the interaction when correct, followed by instructions leading to the next character or task.



## Pedagogical impact

The gameplay has the following impact:

1. The dialogues are chunked into small dialogue boxes, making reading more manageable for the learner, which is especially impactful for learners with Specific Learning Difficulties.
2. Learners can see an image of the objects they find or interact with, linking some of the words with a visual.

## Roadmap and solutions

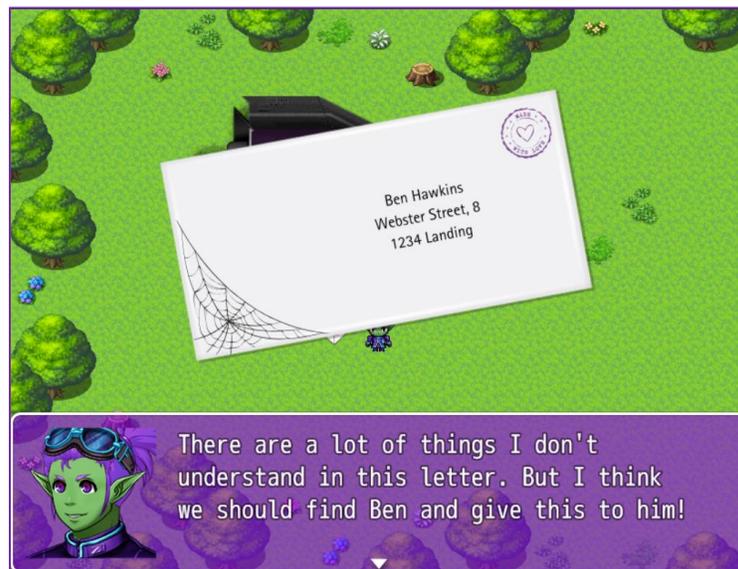
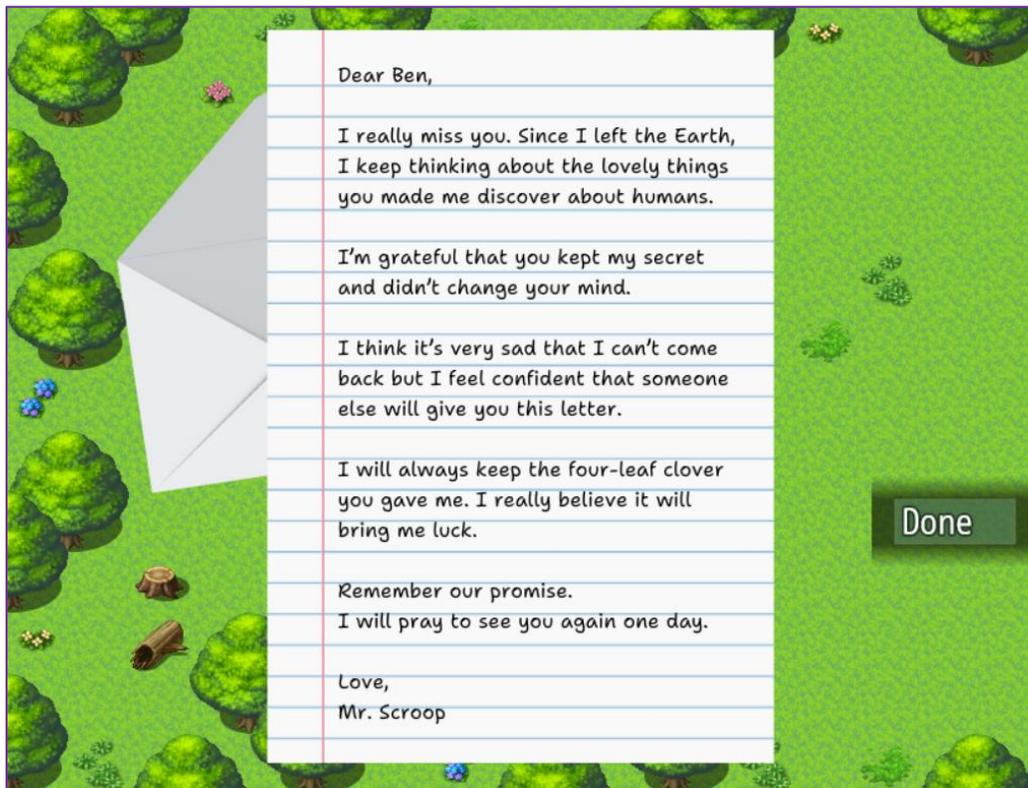
This part provides a general explanation of each step to accomplish during the game. More details and screenshots are provided in the player's guide.

### Level 0 : The landing



The game starts near a forest where the ship landed, as V0c welcomes the player and asks if they remember them. Either answer provides a short explanation of the

first game (preparing for the mission: exploring the human world). V0c then points out the letter at their feet, written by another alien for a human living in this city.



Not understanding all of the words and expressions used in the letter by Mr Scroop, V0c suggests they should find its recipient, Ben Hawkins, and D.I.A., using

the phone in V0c's pocket, provides assistance and agrees that it'd be a good opportunity to learn more about humans and their world.

### Level 1: First impressions



To the right, an automatic interaction occurs with the first human, who reacts with fear and hides behind a rock. After wondering why she reacted that way and a change of appearance by V0c, the character learns the first expression: "scaredy cat", relating it to their new cat ears, and figures that they need to learn more about human language. V0c asks the farm girl if she knows where Ben (the recipient of the letter) lives or where Webster Street (written on the envelope) is. She doesn't and is too busy, but she suggests that other humans in town could help.



Going all the way to the right, following the path, an automatic interaction shows a sign with the road names, which D.I.A. explains. V0c confirms that more humans would be on Main Square, thus transporting the character into town.



## Level 2: Welcome to town



An old man addresses V0c as they step into town, and after an interaction in which he expresses doubt and prejudice towards the newcomer, he indicates where Webster Street is with specific directions.

Following those directions leads to a blocked street where a man addresses V0c and explains this isn't the right street. When asked why the old man gave false information, the man calls him a "bad egg", followed by V0c's confusion, leading the player to choose which explanation of that expression is correct.



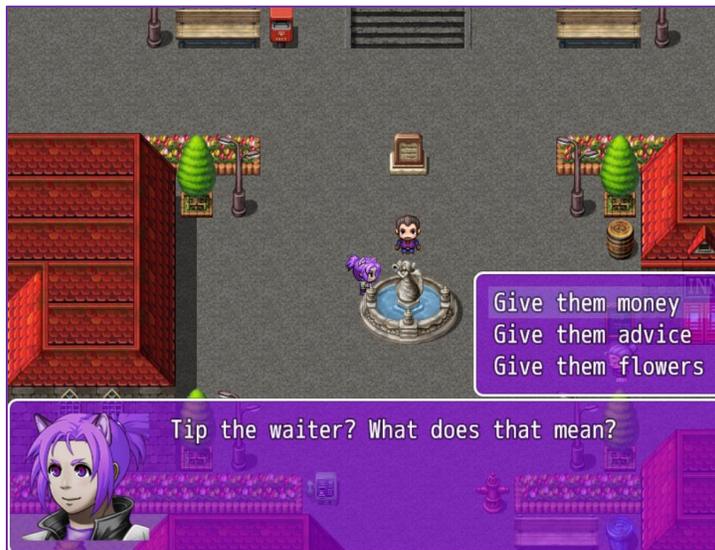


The man then explains that he's homeless and needs money, which V0c offers from their wallet filled with big bills, but not wanting to take that much, the homeless man suggests that V0c go pick up some coins from the fountain in the centre of the main square.

### Level 3: Make a wish



When V0c reaches the fountain, D.I.A. explains the term “spare change”, and as V0c attempts to take coins from it to help the poor man, another man interrupts them and explains the tradition of throwing coins in a fountain or well to make a wish. He then suggests that V0c goes to ask the owner of the restaurant to cook a meal for the homeless man, mentioning the price and the act of “tipping the waiter”, leading to another choice to explain that expression to a confused alien.



After asking the man if he knows where Webster Street is, which he doesn't, V0c is told where to find the restaurant lady.



## Level 4: Bon appétit



When interacting with the old lady standing outside the restaurant, V0c mentions wanting to help the homeless man by buying him a meal and being willing to tip the waiter, which the nice lady wants to compliment, providing another choice to select which quality that act exemplifies.

The lady promises to use her best ingredients to cook a tasty meal for the homeless man and one for V0c too, who denies by saying they'll give it to Ben instead. She mentions she knows where Ben lives and after going to purchase the meal (sandwiches) and refusing to receive money from the generous stranger, she provides the directions leading to Ben's home. Once the character reaches the bottom of the map near the lake, they are directly transported to the next map.



## Level 5: Captain Haddock

Reaching the lake-side house, an automatic interaction occurs with old Ben, who, upon seeing the name and address on the letter, states that he is not its recipient.



The man says he's sure that V0c will find the other Ben, using the expression "there's plenty of fish in the sea", leading the player to choose the correct meaning.



The sailor then mentions his experience in exploring the world at sea, now being stuck near a small lake due to illness that forced him to stop travelling, and asks V0c

how they believe it makes him feel, with each answer providing an explanation about each emotion and its nuances in his situation.



The former captain then mentions that the spider web on the envelope reminds him of a design on a manhole on the floor of one of the streets in town, which may be Webster Street. He provides directions for V0c to reach it.



When going back up to Main Square, D.I.A. automatically repeats the directions.

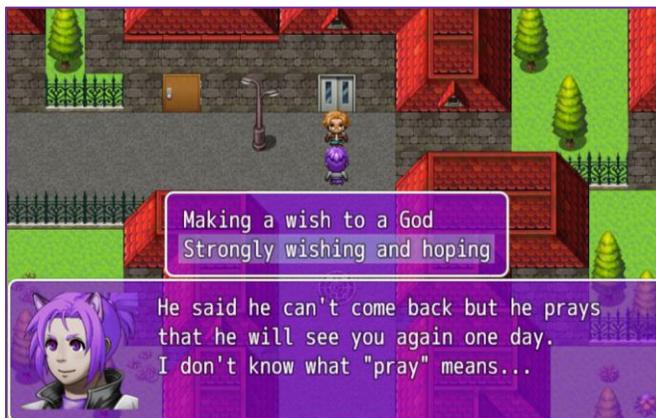
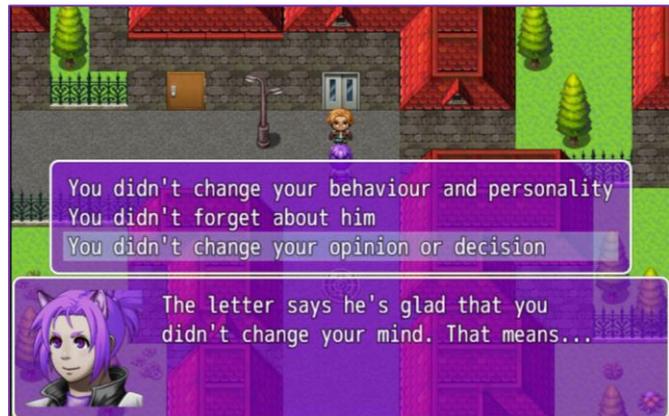


## Level 6: Ben's memory

Reaching the top right side of the map, the player can find the manhole displaying a spider web design and walk up that street to reach Ben's house.



They meet Ben, who confirms that his name and address match the envelope but does not remember meeting Mr Scroop or any alien. He asks for details about what the letter says, to be convinced to receive something from a stranger. V0c proceeds to cite parts of the letter and explain certain expressions by having the player select the correct options. Each explanation hints that Ben has a very bad memory but is very friendly and sociable.



Finally, V0c refers to the four-leaf clover mentioned at the end of the letter and Ben suddenly remembers Mr Scroop, asking V0c if they're also an alien, which allows them to change back to their original appearance.



Ben mentions the belief that four-leaf clovers bring luck and how he gave one to Mr Scroop and kept another so they'd both be lucky, then thanking V0c for bringing the letter and promising to help them visit the town and discover the human world. The game ends as V0c thanks the player and mentions how they will keep learning, hinting at the next episode of the saga.



## References

### Sound effects / Background music

"Autumn Day" and Windswept"

Kevin MacLeod (incompetech.com)

Licensed under Creative Commons: By Attribution 3.0

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>

### Visual assets

**RPGMaker MV Assets from itch.io** : Spacepack by Kauzz



## 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

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

**Learn more about D-ESL at:** <https://www.d-esl.eu>