Creation of the story: storyboard 2

Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge	'Integration of curricular elements in the game'
Learning objectives	A basic understanding of design and art
Subjects	Arts, English as a foreign language, Writing, Literature / Reading
Recommended Age (10 – 14) or (15 - 18)	15-18
Sequence duration	45 – 60 minutes
Individual or group activity	Group activity (divide students into groups of 2-3)
Expected production	Creation of the storyboard of the video game
Skills developed (after learning objectives)	Creativity, Collaboration & teamwork, critical thinking
Price range of the game (<20€, 20-40€, >40€)	Free
Extension / differentiation activities (at the end of the sequence)	Creating the description of the characters and the dialogues

Step by step: how to implement the sequence

This is a very important step in the development of a video game. Whether a video game is successful or not depends on the story of the game. You should divide your students into groups of 2 or 3 and ask them to create the storyboard of their video game. Working in groups will enhance the students' creativity, group cooperation skills, and critical thinking. No software is needed for this step.

● **Step 1 – Defining our main characters for the game (10 minutes)**

Recently there has been a revolution in the storylines of video games. For many years the stories of video games were based on the physicality of their characters instead of their substance and motivations (Campbell, 2019). For example, Super Mario jumps. His personality is not that relevant to the storyline. There are games, however, in which the storyline is based on the substance and the motivations of their characters, like 'My Child Lebensborn'. Neither option is wrong. You should explain this difference to your students before they start creating their own video game storyline. This step should serve as an inspiration for the students to develop their own video game storylines.

Example of video games with a storyline based on the physicality of the main character:

New Super Mario Bros: Super Mario tries to save Princess Peach who has been kidnapped. Mario jumps and collects Mega Mushrooms throughout the game to save the Princess (Super Mario Wiki).

Example of video games with a storyline based on the substance and motivations of the main character:

My child Lebensborn: This game revolves around its storyline. The game is located in a post-Second World War society and the protagonists are Karin and Klaus. The player should help them survive and build a better future, despite who their parent might have been and which side they supported during the war (My Child Lebensborn, n.d.).

https://www.mychildlebensborn.com/about#carousel-gallery-10
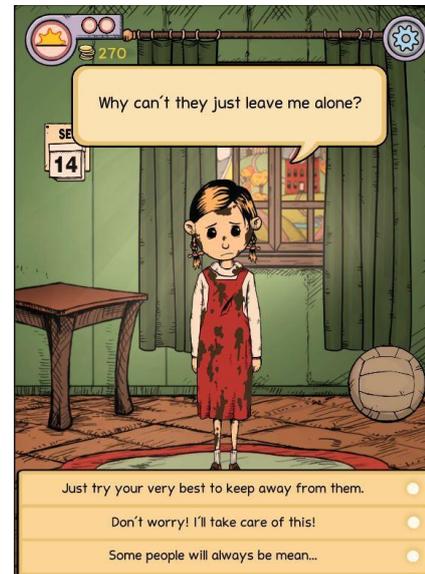
● **Step 2 – Brainstorming and developing the main story of the game (15 minutes)**

The key elements of writing a video game story are the characters, the setting, the plot, the conflict, and the resolution (Pinnguaq, n.d.). At this stage, the students can take inspiration from their favourite books, songs, movies, etc. For example, if their favourite movie is Charlie and the Chocolate factory, they can create a story about a boy who loves chocolate. In this case, the main character would be the boy and the setting would be in a chocolate factory. The conflict and the resolution could be anything from a machine that broke and needs to be fixed to chocolate monsters that attack the boy and they must be destroyed.

The targeted group of players is another crucial aspect of the storyline development. If the video game is targeted at children, the plot should be simple and the end goal

should be easy to achieve. If the video game is for adults, the storyline should have more depth and the motivations of the characters should be more complicated to add suspense (Jones, 2018).

- **Step 3 – Define the story and the world of the game (15 minutes)**

Once the students have decided the main characters, plot, conflict, and resolution of their storyline they need to develop these further. Example questions: Where is the game located? What is the importance of this location? What is the background of the current story? It is very important for a storyline to have a background story. For instance, how does the boy end up in the chocolate factory? What is the story of the chocolate factory? For this step, defining the background story of the game is more important than the main character (Welsh, 2017). If the player knows a lot of information about the world of the game and the chosen location of the game, the more engaging the video game will be. This way it will be easier to develop the main character at the next stage.

- **Step 4 – Add everything into one document (10 minutes)**

Once the students develop their storylines, they should create a document with all the details of their video game stories. They should include information about the location, the plot, the conflict and resolution of the video game, the end goal, and the main characters that will be developed in the next step.

Examples:
- Canva, https://www.canva.com/ - students can add all the details about their game on a Canva document. It is simple to use, and students can create different designs as well.

- Google Jamboard, https://edu.google.com/intl/ALL_us/products/jamboard/ – students can use a Jamboard page to add all the details about their game. It is easy to use, and they can use different colours for each step.

References

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Welsh, E.M. (2017). 'How to Write a Good Video Game Story'. Emwelsh.com. https://www.emwelsh.com/blog/write-good-video-game-story