

Interview with a mysterious woman

Previous compulsory steps / Prior students' knowledge	None
Learning objectives	Practice English listening and problem-solving
Subjects	English as a foreign language
Recommended Age	15-18
Material needed	PCs that can run the game (light), smartphones
Sequence duration	2 – 3 hours
Individual or group activity	Individual or group
Skills developed	Problem-solving, social skills, empathy
Price range of the game	9€ on pc, 5€ on smartphones
Similar games to use with the approach of the sequence	Telling lies

Step by step: how to implement the sequence



Figure 1: Her story (source: [Wikipedia](#))

In this sequence, students are going to play Her Story. It is an investigation game, but contrarily to most detective games, no questions are asked to the player. Here, the player is free to stop whenever they think they have heard and understood enough.

The player must search through old footage of Hannah Smith's interviews by the police about the murder of her husband. But the discussions have been cut up into different answers and shuffled in an archaic database system. To find footage, you must search terms in a search bar. If a piece of interview features one of the words, it will appear in the search results.

When you hear a word of interest, you type it in, watch more videos, and start listening for repeated patterns. You write notes to draw connections, infer timelines, detect discrepancies. It is an actual detective game with a straightforward setup and gameplay.

Students can re-listen to videos as much as they like, which is perfect for self-paced English learning and hearing practice.

Cutting the cost

To spend less money on this sequence, you can buy one or several copies of the game and share them with your class. Students will play and write about the game at different moments. Once all of them have played, you can discuss their gaming experience in class. Try not to spread this over a long period so that the game remains fresh in their minds.

Step 1: Explain the concept and play for several minutes with your class (15 minutes)

Before letting your students go home and play the game, explain how it works and what they must do. You can use the introductory paragraph of this sequence to do so.

Maybe don't mention the woman's name and that her husband is the victim. Tell your students that they will have to write a report on their investigation. So, if they quit too soon, their essay will probably be missing some information, and their conclusion might be wrong.

You can play in front of your students and demonstrate the gameplay by watching in-game videos and performing queries on interesting words. However, don't spoil it by going too far.

Step 2: Students play at home (2 - 3 hours)

In terms of organisation, you can have groups of students play together. The player with the game copy can use Discord or Steam's streaming features to share their screen with others. They can debate, and if some of them do not understand a video passage, maybe another will.

It is up to you to decide whether they should write a shared or personal essay.

The game will provide each player with a personal story because their curiosity and intuition will guide them. Each one will piece together this narrative slightly differently. Thus, there is not much advice to give in terms of gameplay or hosting.

Step 3: Essay on their investigation

To prove they played the game seriously, students will write an essay on what they understood about the game story. They should make a timeline of events and explain the characters' motivations and actions. Arguments and references to in-game videos should support their claims or hypotheses and demonstrate their reasoning.

You can have a roleplay approach and ask your students to write the essay in the form of a police report on a cold case.

If you don't have time to finish the game yourself or didn't understand it, here is a recap video:

💡 ['HER STORY EXPLAINED | The story in full'](#) by Pocket Gamer.

Getting the game:

https://store.steampowered.com/app/368370/Her_Story/?l=french

<https://apps.apple.com/fr/app/her-story/id952658953>

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.MrSamBarlow.HerStoryGame&hl=fr
&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.MrSamBarlow.HerStoryGame&hl=fr&gl=US)

References:

Her story (n.d.).

[https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Her_Story_\(jeu_vid%C3%A9o\)#/media/Fichier:Her_Story_store_art.jpg](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Her_Story_(jeu_vid%C3%A9o)#/media/Fichier:Her_Story_store_art.jpg)

Pocket Gamer. (2015, June 25). 'HER STORY EXPLAINED | The story in full' [Video].

Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFveBzbylVA>