

Selecting, curriculum planning and teaching games as text

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Plan

Learning Intentions:

- To **explore** how students' out-of-school literacy practices can be incorporated into formal English education.
- To **identify** barriers students can face in being successful in the middle years English classroom

Focus questions:

- 1.Why videogames in English?
- 2.What did we do and How?
3. What challenges did we face?
4. Where to next?



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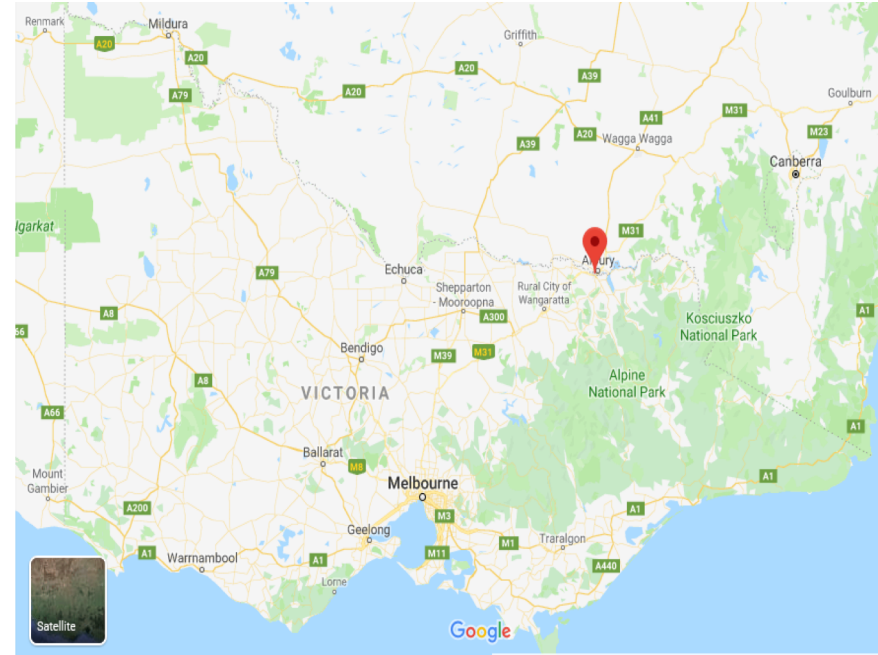
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School Context

- Wodonga Middle Years College is a 7-9 school run over 2 campuses in the City of Wodonga
- Approx. 841 students over 2 campuses
- 73 teaching staff over 2 campuses
- Only public middle years schooling provider in Wodonga
- Broad and diverse mix of students
- 7% - 10 % in a given year identify as Koorie
- Desperate to find new ways to engage students in a changing world



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Where our journey started

MOVE OVER SHAKESPEARE – WHAT STUDENTS CAN LEARN FROM STUDYING VIDEOGAMES

Are videogames the missing element in the English curriculum?

By Dr Alex Bacalja, University of Melbourne

A new way of defining literature

"Students entering high-school today probably won't enter the workforce until 2030 - food for thought for those charged with writing the English curriculum, and delivering its priorities."

"For many students, studying English today is not that different to what happened a century ago. In the 1920s, students in England were allotted five periods of English a week, with half a period dedicated for grammar, half for the novel, one period for composition, one for poetry and two for Shakespeare." - Alex Bacalja

The Book Show

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Should video games be taught in English class?

[Download audio](#)

Tuesday 29 May 2018 10:20AM ([view full episode](#))



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Why videogames?

- Engagement
 - “Forty percent of year 5-12 students were either ‘not engaged’ or ‘actively disengaged’ in school (Gallup, 2015)”
 - 80% of game households have more than one device for playing computer games
 - 89% of parents talk with their children about playing games
 - 50% of children had used games in the school curriculum (Digital Australia Report, 2018)
- Texts and textual practice
 - English curricula engagement with multimodality
- Identity practice
 - The importance of making links between learner identities and the literacy practices/textual orientations that inform who they are (youth literacies, new literacies, out-of-school literacies, digital literacies)



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Why videogames?

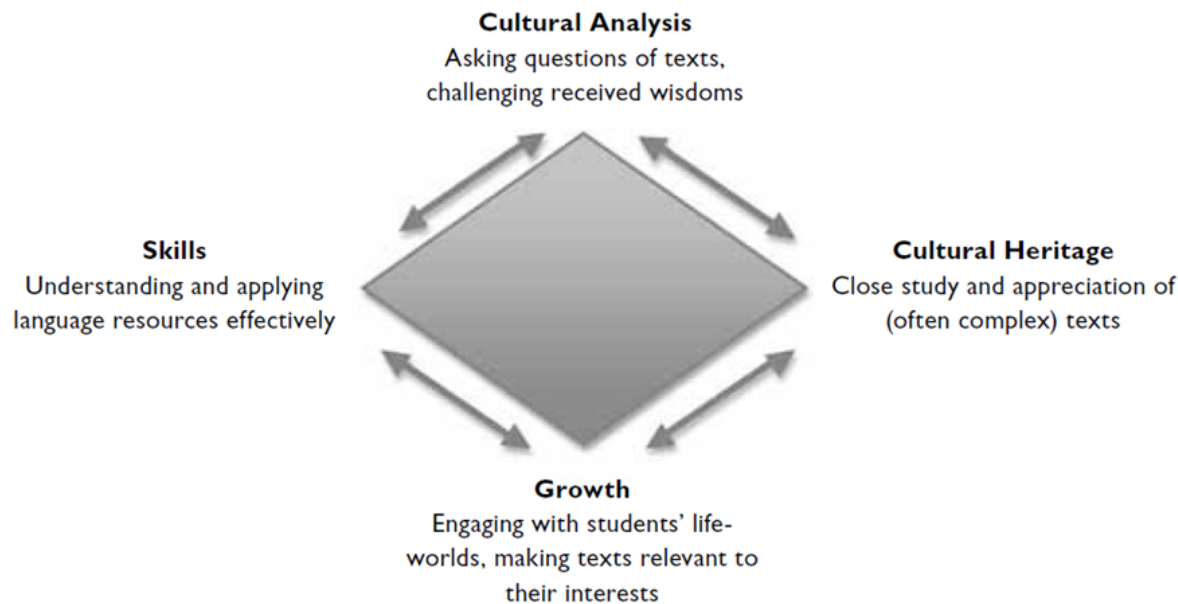
- Engaging reluctant readers (Ostenson, 2013)
- Literacy is a competence that should be taught through a range of modalities (Pelletier, 2005)
- Game-focussed study in schools can create collaborative learning environments (Simpson and Clem, 2008)
- Students can be supported to construct new representational systems and develop a metalanguage associated with this work through school-based learning focussed on game-authoring software (Buckingham & Burn, 2007; Burn, 2007).
- Using games to develop critical literacy skills, (McNeice, Smith and Robison, 2012)
- Using the comparative study of texts to enhance learning across popular culture (games) and canonical texts (Burn and Durran, 2013; Burn, Bryer and Coles, 2016)



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Why videogames?



(Macken-Horarik, 2014, pg.17)



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What about you?

Think/Pair/Share



Jot down your interaction
with video games



Discuss with the person next to you
what you engage with and your
level of interest and comfort



Share with the group: what
assumptions are made about video
games and gamers broadly?



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What did we do?

Pre-test →

1	Prediction/Content	NEVER
2	Story, Characters, Theme	ALONE
3	Passive + Active Voice	ALONE
4	Multimodal Storytelling	LANGUAGE MULTIMODAL
5	Authorial Choice	LANGUAGE MULTIMODAL
6	Modern perspectives on indigenous tales	AUDIENCE DUST

Post-test →

Extension: Students write a statement of intention and/or reflection

Short but one videos:

- Social media
- Community links/translator

Comparative Oral/Video Post-Test Survey

STORIES / SHORT STORIES / Banjil the Eagle

Summative

Game Assets

- Review
- Simulated play through
- "visual display"

Explicit Language + Grammar knowledge

Comparative - oral /

- speech / oral
- short answer

Knowledge vs Skills

PARAGRAPH Writing

- Audience
- Text Structure
- Ideas
- Persuasive Devices
- Vocab
- Cohesion
- Paragraphing
- Sentence Structure
- Punctuation
- Spelling



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“Never Alone”

- Reimagines a traditional Iñupiat tale - Kunuuksaayuka
- Developed in direct consultation with the Iñupiat people
- Educational videos embedded in game and hosted on game studio's YouTube channel
- An atmospheric puzzle-platform game



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'Never Alone'

English 8 2019

Content Grades Dropbox Discussions Quizzes Checklist Edit Course Class Progress

0% Standards + New Unit

Storytelling in the 21st Century

Curriculum Map - Year 8 English - Storytelling in the 21st Century

- Teachers: Installing the game
- Module 1: Storytelling
- Module 2: The Inupiat
- Module 3: Formative
- Module 4: Australian Indigenous Stories
- Module 5: Animation - Dust Echoes
- Module 6: Summative

Storytelling in the 21st Century

Never Alone

WMYC Learning Management System: Desire2Learn

- Built-in tech support
- Consistent approach
- Embed all resources: readings, videos, assessments



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'Dust Echoes' – ABC resource

- Dust Echoes is a series of twelve beautifully animated Dreamtime stories from Central Arnhem Land, telling stories of love, loyalty, duty to country and Aboriginal custom and law.



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Bunjil the Eagle/ Burraja Program



- The Burraja Aboriginal Cultural and Environmental Discovery Centre was first established in 2002, with set up funding from the Ian Potter Foundation.
- Supported by the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) and in partnership with parklands Albury Wodonga, Burraja was set up to train Aboriginal people in traditional knowledge skills and tourism.



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Assessment

- Assignment outcomes



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Challenges

- Game rating
- Game compatibility with student devices
- Game length
- Game content
- Game play
- Skills and knowledge
- Assessment
- Teacher expertise
- Student expertise

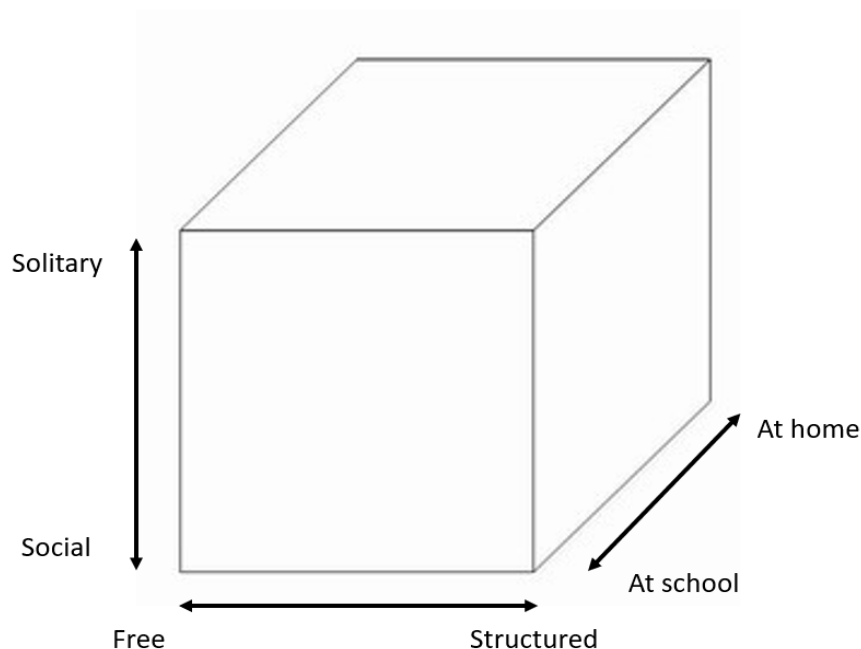


Figure 1: Pedagogies of Play Continua (Bacalja & Clark)



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Questions



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