

Unit 74: Computer Game Story Development

Unit code:	K/502/5672
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to introduce learners to game story writing. Learners will use structured gameplay and research to examine backstory, story and dialogue used in games and will study and practise story writing strategies. Learners will create story and dialogue for a game.

● Unit introduction

As games have become more and more mainstream entertainment and their development budgets have grown larger, the importance of good writing has also grown. For a game to be successful it is vital that developers create a solid story and life-like characters to guide players through the game space while allowing them to have a personal game experience.

Narrative is developed in 'storyplay' – the mingling of storytelling and gameplay which allows players influence over both what the story is about and how that story is experienced. Good game writers can produce complex narratives which anticipate the way interactivity and non-linearity will affect a user's experience of their story.

Well rounded characters are expected by the modern game player because full characterisation encourages that suspension of disbelief which enables immersion in the game and contributes to the success of the title. Also, in many games, the player experiences what the main character experiences during the course of the story. Character development through 'backstory' provides the characterisation so important to modern game development and adds to the realism of the game.

This unit aims to provide learners with an appreciation of the underlying principles of storytelling and how it can enhance a player's immersion in the game world. A study of game storytelling and character development is important to help learners acquire the skills needed to create dramatic tension and intricate storylines, which in turn generate more compelling and dramatic play experiences. Learners will develop a sound understanding of game story writing strategies before applying them to their own interactive narratives.

Learners will develop an understanding of how to use elements such as narration, monologue and dialogue to serve the purposes of their game story and will apply their observations of human attitudes and emotions to the development of convincing characters for their game concept.

This unit will also develop the learners' ability to reflect critically on their own work, as they will need this professional skill in any future career.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the elements of storytelling for games
- 2 Be able to create story for a game following industry practice
- 3 Be able to create game dialogue following industry practice.

Unit content

1 Understand the elements of storytelling for games

Forms of storytelling: cave painting; oral traditions (fable, myth, legend); theatre; text; film; television

Game genres: action, eg platforms, first-person shooter (FPS), third-person shooter (TPS), racing, fighting; adventure; puzzle; role-play; simulation and sports, eg turn-based strategy (TBS), real time strategy (RTS)

Approaches: location; conditions; actions; symbolism; three-act structure (beginning, middle, end); hero's journey (12 steps); episodic

Representation: emotions; characterisation; stereotypes, eg gender, ethnicity

Emotional themes: vengeance; happiness; fear; anger; perseverance; heroism; valour; hope; competitiveness

Interactive story: embedded; emergent; cinematics; cut-scenes; triggered events; player control; character customisation

Writing strategies: pre-writing, eg brainstorm, research, storyboard, list, sketch, outlining, freewriting; drafting (working title, write content); revision, eg add, rearrange, remove, replace, evaluate

2 Be able to create story for a game following industry practice

Purpose: concept, eg original intellectual property (IP), franchised IP, prequel, client brief; target audience

Components: theme; setting; context; backstory; premise

Plot devices: types, eg petition, deliverance, revenge, pursuit, disaster, revolt, enigma; exposition (inciting incident); foreshadowing; conflict or problem (internal, external); complication, eg rising action after inciting incident; goals, eg MacGuffin; ticking clock; plot twists, eg red herring, reversals; climax; deus ex machina; suspense; resolution; conclusion

Character types: antagonist; protagonist; guardian; sidekick; player character; non-player character (NPC)

Character backstory: physiological, eg gender, age, weight, appearance, actions; speech (native tongue, accent, words, tone); sociological, eg friends, family, economic power, occupation, education, race, political views; psychological, eg beliefs, temperament, optimism, pessimism, extrovert, introvert, complexes, intelligence; issues of representation, eg ethnicity, gender, age; character growth, eg character arcs; relationships (dyad, triangle); character capabilities, eg able to use a lasso, to climb, to jump; status, eg wardrobe (armour), inventory

Narrative flow: linear; non-linear (branching narrative)

Industry practice: reflect on finished story (compared with original intentions, fitness for purpose, literary qualities); production skills (ideas generation, workflow and time management, teamwork)

3 Be able to create game dialogue following industry practice

Game dialogue sources: eg design documents, game story, script

Verbal elements: narration, eg first-person, third-person, voiceover (VO), off screen (OS); monologue; dialogue

Script writing: layout (action, scene headings, character name, extension, dialogue, parenthetical, transition, shot, dual-dialogue); storyboard; flowchart

Industry practice: reflect on finished game dialogue (compared with original intentions, fitness for purpose, literary qualities); production skills (ideas generation, workflow and time management, teamwork)

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 summarise accurately the elements of storytelling for games using some subject terminology appropriately	M1 explain the elements of storytelling for games with reference to detailed illustrative examples and with generally correct use of subject terminology	D1 comprehensively explain the elements of storytelling for games with elucidated examples and consistently using subject terminology correctly
P2 create story for a game following industry practice, working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance [CT; SM]	M2 create story for a game following industry practice, showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance	D2 create story for a game following industry practice, showing creativity and flair and working independently to professional expectations
P3 create game dialogue following industry practice, working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance. [CT; RL; SM]	M3 create game dialogue following industry practice, showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance.	D3 create game dialogue following industry practice, showing creativity and flair and working independently to professional expectations.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with knowledge of how story and character development is used in a game to enhance the player's experience. Learners should develop an understanding of how story and dialogue are used and produced for games. Learners must experience backstory, story, character backstory and character dialogue for games.

Successful teaching of this unit requires a blend of tutor-led lecture, practical sessions and individual learner research and reading. Learners will need to observe the use of backstory, story and dialogue in games. This is best achieved via structured gameplay using a wide variety of game genres. Research will include the internet as well as taking part in the playing of a wide variety of games; the learners should focus on how story is used to enhance the player's experience. Although this game playing is an essential aspect of research in this unit, it must not outweigh the other methods of learning. When playing games the learner must understand the specific reason for such play.

It is suggested that teaching follows the order of the learning outcomes, starting with an introduction to the history of storytelling and moving on to appreciation of game genres and their differing narratives. This could be followed by an analytical study of the principles of story writing and an examination of some simple writing strategies. Tutor-led examples of cut-scenes from current and past game titles can be used to illustrate plot devices and character development. A sequence of recorded gameplay sessions could be used to illustrate the progress of a game story.

Practical story-writing exercises can be used to consolidate the learning of principles and strategies. Learners could create story ideas, analysing these to identify their plot types. Then learners could suggest consequences if plot type changes, and begin to identify characters and contrast the conflicting character goals. When studying character backstory, learners could choose characters from books or movies that exemplify character types. They could develop these characters further, extending qualities and projecting ideas for sequels. Internet research could be used to source still images of characters, and learners could be invited to create backstory to match the image. This could be extended to include photographs, with permission of willing subjects, who might find themselves characterised in an experimental game story.

Learners might form narrative teams, brainstorming game worlds and then individually creating episodic non-linear stories (game levels) with common characters, introducing new characters which could be shared with other levels, to create a well-populated game story of several episodes with varying character types. This should enable learners to better understand components used to produce an immersive game story using plot devices and narrative flow. This exercise could then be extended to allow consideration of possible dialogue between characters, NPCs and the player. Once the verbal elements of the dialogue are proposed, learners should examine how the industry expects scripts to be presented, noting the important elements to be included. A variety of presentation methods should be experienced so that the learner is better able to comply with expectations in any possible future career.

Critical self-reflective practice is important to all creatives, and is an important personal professional tool. This can be achieved through self-evaluation or peer/client testing and recorded through a report. Learners should be encouraged at every opportunity to record their evaluative comments for future reflection and for personal development. Reflections could be noted in personal logs, blogs or wikis.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the teaching and assessment of this unit.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities
Introduction to unit and unit assessment.
Introduction to how story and character development is used in a game. Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• receive lectures to explain forms of storytelling• receive lectures, hold discussions and attend demonstrations to examine how story and character development is used in a game to enhance a player's experience• receive lectures and hold discussions to examine common game genres and their differing narratives• receive lectures to explain the principles of story writing and simple writing strategies• play computer games which exhibit the use of good story and character development, make notes and discuss observations.
Assignment 1 – Storytelling Essentials Learners will write an article for an online games ezine on how game designers use story to enhance a player's gameplay experience. Article will cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• forms of storytelling• game genres• approaches• representation• emotional themes• interactive story• writing strategies.
Introduction to common principles and strategies used to assist in the creation of story in games. Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• carry out practical story-writing exercises• analyse game stories to identify plot types and devices• analyse character backstory and narrative flow.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities

Assignment 2 – Project X: Story

Learners receive a brief from a producer to create the story for a new game including backstory, characterisation and dialogue.

Learners will produce a development log covering:

- purpose
- components
- plot devices
- character types
- character backstory
- narrative flow
- reflections on finished game story.

Introduction to game dialogue content production through workshop sessions.

Learners:

- identify dialogue source
- carry out practical dialogue-writing exercises
- carry out practical scripting exercises
- reflect on finished game dialogue

Assignment 3 – Project X: Narration and Dialogue

Learners will produce a portfolio containing documentation that covers:

- game dialogue sources
- verbal elements of narration
- script
- reflections on finished game story.

Unit learning and assessment review.

Assessment

Evidence for assessment

Evidence for achievement of learning outcome 1 is likely to comprise presentations or reports describing storytelling. An innovative approach could be to require learners to prepare a linear multimedia narrative showing the history of storytelling through the ages and culminating in descriptions of the purpose and approaches to modern interactive story writing.

Evidence for achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to be achieved through the production of two separate though related documents: the game story including characterisation (character backstory) and a document detailing character dialogue and narration. The game story should include both linear and branching narrative. Learners should reflect upon the work produced through a written or oral report, assessing its suitability for purpose and making an informed judgement on its qualities. Written reports could take the form of personal logs, blogs or wikis.

Presentations must be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification.

For some elements of this unit, and for some learners, a formal viva voce assessment might be appropriate. When more than one learner in a cohort is assessed in this way, care must be taken to ensure that all learners are asked equivalent questions, and that all are given equal opportunities to expand or clarify their answers. Interviewers must also ensure that questions are not phrased in such a way as to provide or suggest an answer. Formal vivas should be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification and at least 50 per cent of such assessments must be internally verified.

Application of grading criteria

When applying the grading criteria, tutors should follow the advice given below. Please note that any examples of evidence given here are indicative only. This advice is not inclusive and the examples need not be included in a learner's work in order for that learner to achieve the exemplified grade. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

Pass

To achieve a pass grade, learners must achieve all the criteria at pass level. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

P1: learners will describe elements to telling a story including reference to historical approaches, genres, representation, emotional themes, interactive story, and writing strategies. Though these descriptions will be basic and conventional and might lack formal terminology, they will be correct and will cover the main details. Evidence will show a basic understanding of technical terminology but learners will generally be unsure about this vocabulary and will make fairly frequent mistakes when they do use it. A learner might note for example, 'The narrative approach is the storyline. Every story has a start, a middle and an end. An emotional theme in a game helps the player understand the character.'

P2: learners will produce a story for a game. To achieve this grade it is necessary that the learner's work relates to their intended story purpose though the connection may be tenuous and loose. Learners will typically use components which are not well developed and are unclear and conventional. At this grade learners will employ only a few basic conventional plot devices but must be able to identify character types involved and provide some characterisation (character backstory), though this may be basic, conventional and lacking imagination. To achieve a pass, learners must include both branching and linear narrative and review their own story-writing work considering literary qualities and fitness for purpose.

P3: learners will produce game dialogue which may include narration, voiceover or off-screen speech. They will, for the most part, correctly follow the technical requirements for setting out a script. Learners will review their own game dialogue work considering literary qualities and fitness for purpose.

P2 and P3: in terms of the aesthetic or imaginative qualities of their work, learners will not move beyond the conventional, but the conventions applied will be appropriate to the form or genre within which they are working. Learners will need frequent assistance and support, though they will take note of and make use of this help when it is given. If they are in frequent need of such help but fail to make positive use of it, they should not be considered for a pass grade for this unit. Learners will make comments evaluating their own work. This evidence should discuss both story and dialogue work. Learners will make comments on fitness for purpose (considering client brief or target audience) and will write about their application of writing strategies, commenting on how they have used plot devices and implemented character backstory. They will make brief, superficial comments that do not address opportunities for future improvement or explain why decisions were taken. They will not refer to examples from their work to illustrate points made. To achieve this grade some suitable correct terminology must be evidenced. For example, the learner might note, 'Overall I think my story was very good and that it would work well in a game. It had a beginning, a middle and an end. My story has a great climax. I had a hero and a villain. My characters had different ages, sexes and colours. My dialogue could be better.'

Merit

To achieve a merit grade, learners must achieve all the pass and all the merit grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

M1: evidence produced will describe elements to telling a story including reference to historical approaches, genres, representation, emotional themes, interactive story, and writing strategies. Learners will refer to detailed illustrative examples to illustrate their explanations though the examples they give will not be further elucidated. Learners will use technical vocabulary for the most part correctly, but may make mistakes or be unsure about usage at times. A learner might note for example, 'When computer games first began they didn't have any story to them: they were just electronic versions of board games. As games evolved they began to create characters and levels, and from there they created stories to make the characters more believable and emotional. For example, in Donkey Kong, which was released in 1981, there are characters. These characters make you try harder in the game and feel emotions that will bring you deeper into the game.'

M2: learners will produce a story for a game supported by storyboards. To achieve this grade it is necessary that the story clearly relates to the story purpose as expressed by client brief, IP or target audience. Learners will construct a believable story employing the full range of components specified in the unit content. The plot devices, character types involved and characterisation (character backstory) will show some inventiveness and learners will include both branching and linear narrative. Evidence for narrative flow might be produced as a storyboard depicting scenes and possible player choices, with accompanying stories. Learners will review their own story-writing work considering literary qualities and fitness for purpose.

M3: learners will produce game dialogue correctly following the technical requirements for setting out a script. This may include narration, voiceover or off-screen speech presented as a script with clear intention of allowing it to be followed by others, including voice actors and directors. Work will be approached methodically and presented neatly. Learners will review their own game dialogue work considering literary qualities and fitness for purpose.

M2 and M3: learners will still be working within recognisable generic conventions, but there will be some imaginative thought behind the work so that codes and conventions will be employed with some inventiveness. They will need little assistance, though typically they will still need some support when dealing with more complex or more sophisticated ideas. Like the pass grade learner, they will respond positively to any help given. Learners must make comments evaluating their own work. This evidence should discuss both story and dialogue work. Learners must make comments on fitness for purpose (considering client brief or target audience, or both) and make some judgements of their literary style in comparison to work of similar genres. When discussing their story and dialogue content, learners must make observations on their application of writing strategies, commenting on how they have used plot devices and implemented character backstory. They will make well-written comments using subject terminology appropriately and supporting comments with illustrative examples, but they may not address areas for future improvement. A learner working at this grade might note, 'My game story is good because I think I have made a believable story similar to the narrative used in Game X, the popular role-playing game. I have used the three-act structure with a clear thesis. I used my pre-writing strategy when I brainstormed my ideas with my group initially. I used my hero's sidekick to create conflict which added a plot twist. I made two drafts, but I only planned to have one – the second draft was needed because I got involved in a complicated storyline which did not lead my hero to the goal I had chosen for his journey.'

Distinction

To achieve a distinction grade, learners must achieve all the pass, all the merit and all the distinction grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

D1: evidence produced will discuss elements of storytelling and approaches to telling a story including reference to genres, representation, emotional themes, interactive story, and writing strategies. Learners will support their arguments by reference to highly relevant examples drawing out features illustrating precisely those points being discussed. The discussion of what is required in a game story will be interwoven with reference to the history of storytelling in such a way that the latter illuminates the former. Technical vocabulary will be secure and used correctly and confidently at all times. For example a learner might note, 'When computer games first began, they didn't have any story to them: they were just electronic versions of board games. As games evolved, designers introduced well-rounded, believable characters and emotional themes and employed branching narrative flow to enable the player to progress through game levels, developing the interactive story so popular in the modern video game genres. The popular single-player adventure game series Game X has very well developed storylines, and employs such believable characters that they have been easily transferred into hugely successful films. The game story thesis establishes the heroine as accused of murder and becoming a fugitive. The player easily adopts the persona of the heroine and becomes involved within the emotional theme of a quest to prove her innocence. In contrast, early games such as Donkey Kong involved a basic emotional theme of 'rescue the princess', with characters whose only development was graphical with no characterisation in backstory presented in developing narrative throughout the gameplay levels. In this way it was rather like a fairy tale, where the emphasis is on the story and there is little character development.'

D2: learners will produce a story for a game supported by storyboards. To achieve this grade it is necessary that the story clearly relates to the story purpose as expressed by client brief, IP or target audience. Learners will construct a believable story employing the full range of components specified in the unit content. The plot devices, character types involved and characterisation (character backstory) will show considerable creativity and the writing style will exhibit a confident and fluent ease. Learners will include both branching and linear narrative; evidence for narrative flow might be produced as a narrative storyboard depicting scenes and possible player choices, with accompanying stories. Learners will review their own story-writing work considering literary qualities and fitness for purpose.

D3: learners will produce game dialogue including, probably, narration, voiceover and off-screen speech. To achieve a distinction this must be presented as a script which can be followed by others, including voice actors and directors. The script will give characters believable speech which is tailored to their characterisation and which progresses fluently. To achieve this grade, dialogue must be clearly written to encourage interactivity of gameplay. The script presentation will follow game development industry practice using a conventional layout (being produced, for example, electronically in a spreadsheet or indented word processing) to a standard which is close to that which would be expected in the industry. Learners will review their own game dialogue work considering literary qualities and fitness for purpose.

D2 and D3: learners will apply themselves to the work not just with imagination but with ingenuity and even elegance, and codes and conventions will be used with occasionally surprising results. They will be capable of working autonomously and effectively. The term 'working independently' means that they are able to work on their own initiative, do not need constant support or supervision, give the work their full commitment, work positively and cooperatively with others, and meet deadlines. In other words, they have the kind of self-management skills that would be expected of them in a professional context. Note also that this criterion should not be taken to mean that learners do not seek advice or that they work without discussing things with their tutor, but rather that they are not dependent upon the support of others and that when they take advice they weigh it carefully for themselves. Learners will discuss both story and dialogue work, making comments on fitness for purpose (considering client brief and target audience) and making some judgements of their literary style in comparison to work of similar genres. When discussing their story and dialogue content, learners will make observations on their application of writing strategies, commenting on how they have used plot devices and implemented character backstory. Learners will consider a range of sources of information about their performance and make reasoned judgements that consider areas for future improvement. A learner working at this grade might note, 'My game story is good because I think I have made a believable story similar to the narrative used in Game X, the popular role-playing game, and it satisfies my client brief and target audience. My client has written that my narrative is quite realistic and some of my dialogue really engages and motivates a player. I have used the three-act structure with a clear thesis, and I used the struggle between the hero and his sidekick as an effective antithesis. I used my hero's sidekick to create this conflict which added an unexpected plot twist. I used my pre-writing strategy when I brainstormed my ideas with my group initially. On another occasion I would consider a MacGuffin to improve the suspension of disbelief early in the story, as my client and I think my plot was weak here and not very believable. I made two drafts, but I only planned to have one – the second draft was needed because I got involved in a complicated storyline which did not lead my hero to the goal I had chosen for his journey.'

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1	Assignment 1 – Storytelling Essentials	Article for an online games ezine on what makes a good game story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All preparatory notes. Article as word processed or electronic document.
P2, M2, D2	Assignment 2 – Project X: Story	Brief from a producer to create the story for a new game including backstory, characterisation and dialogue.	Development log containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all story ideas notes, sketches, storyboard finished story personal reflective comments.
P3, M3, D3	Assignment 3 – Project X: Narration and Dialogue	As above.	Project portfolio containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning notes all production documentation finished script personal reflective comments.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Creative Media Production suite. This unit has particular links with the following units in the BTEC Creative Media Production suite:

Level 2	Level 3
Writing for the Creative Media	Writing for Television and Video

There are opportunities to relate the work done for this unit to Skillset National Occupational Standards in Interactive Media and Computer Games as follows:

- IM1 Work effectively in interactive media
- IM23 Create narrative scripts for interactive media products.

Essential resources

For this unit learners will need access to a variety of games mounted on a variety of platforms in order to investigate story used in games. Learners will need access to research information when investigating storytelling for games. Typically this would include: books, developers and their websites, and game community websites. Normal office software will permit digital presentation of story and dialogue scripts.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with local interactive media production studios which could be approached to provide visiting speakers, study visits or samples of typical products.

Skillset, the Sector Skills Council for the creative media sector, has a substantial section of their website dedicated to careers, including job descriptions – www.skillset.org/careers.

Further general information on work-related learning can be found at the following websites:

- www.aimhighersw.ac.uk/wbl.htm – work-based learning guidance
- www.businesslink.gov.uk – local, regional business links
- www.nebpn.org – National Education and Business Partnership Network
- www.vocationallearning.org.uk – Learning and Skills Network
- www.warwick.ac.uk/wie/cei – Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick – work experience and workplace learning frameworks.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Baylis P, Freedman A, Procter N et al – *Level 3 BTEC National Creative Media Production, Student Book* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 978-1846906725

Baylis P, Freedman A, Procter N et al – *Level 3 BTEC National Creative Media Production, Teaching Resource Pack* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 978-1846907371

Crawford C – *Chris Crawford on Interactive Storytelling* (New Riders, 2004) ISBN 978-0321278906

Dille F and Platten J Z – *The Ultimate Guide to Video Game Writing and Design* (Lone Eagle, 2008) ISBN 978-1580650663

Glebas F – *Directing the Story: Professional Storytelling and Storyboarding Techniques for Live Action and Animation* (Focal Press, 2008) ISBN 978-0240810768

Krawczyk A and Novak J – *Game Development Essentials: Game Story and Character Development* (Thompson Delmar Learning, 2006) ISBN 978-1401878856

Miller C H – *Digital Storytelling: A Creator's Guide to Interactive Entertainment, 2nd Edition* (Focal Press, 2008) ISBN 978-0240809595

Websites

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interactive_fiction – explanation of interactive fiction

www.activision.com – information on game titles with story outlines and graphics

www.designersnotebook.com – Ernest Adams site of general information on game design

www.eidos.com – information on game titles with story outlines and graphics

www.ferryhalim.com/orisinal – online Flash games

www.gamasutra.com – general games industry information

www.gamedev.net – search for 'writing and story development'

www.gamespy.com – information on game titles with story outlines and graphics

www.igda.org/writing/articles.html – quick guide to games writing

www.igda.org/writing/WritersGlossary.htm – glossary of game writing terms

www.kirupa.com/developer/actionscript/gamestory.htm – step-by-step instruction guide on how to make an awesome and compelling story

www.maxis.com – information on game titles with story outlines and graphics

www.skillset.org/games – Skillset's computer games web pages

www.writing.com – online community for writers

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Creative thinkers	generating story ideas to be used in a game trying out different strategies to writing their game story and following ideas through to complete the story adapting and refining their ideas
Reflective learners	reviewing and reflecting on their story and dialogue authoring work and acting on the outcomes to modify and improve their work
Self-managers	producing story and a script to be used in a game responding positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed dealing with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	carrying out research into the approaches and strategies to story and dialogue/ script writing carrying out research to develop ideas for their own game story
Team workers	if working in a group to produce a story or dialogue, taking responsibility for their own role managing their personal contribution to discussions to reach agreements and achieve results.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	taking part in brainstorming sessions to generate ideas as a response to a game story and characterisation specification
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	studying approaches to narrative flow, plot and concepts for story writing for games
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	creating their report documents, ideas, notes, story, dialogue script, production documentation and reflective comment.