Interacting with Interactive Fiction

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Driving Faculty Innovation with Non-Traditional Teaching Tools
#NERCOMPPDO3
> The Cask of Amontillado
Common Commands

- LOOK
- EXAMINE [OBJECT]
- INVENTORY
- GO [NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST]
- TAKE [OBJECT]
- WEAR [OBJECT]
- TELL [SOMEONE] ABOUT [SOMETHING]
> What Did We Learn?

- Who is the protagonist?
- Who is the antagonist?
- What is the protagonist’s Coat of Arms?
- How is it symbolic of the story’s plot?
- Where does Montresor find Fortunato?
- How does Montresor convince Fortunato to follow him?
What Now?

- What is Interactive Fiction?
- Interactive Fiction in Teaching & Learning
  - Playing Interactive Fiction
  - Authoring Interactive Fiction
- Resources to Get Started
What is Interactive Fiction?
> A Brief History of Interactive Fiction

- Prehistory
- The Commercial Era
- The “Modern” Era
- The Twenty-First Century
Prehistory

Welcome to adventure!! Would you like instructions?

Yes.

Somewhere nearby is a colossal cave, where others have found fortunes in treasure and gold. Though it is rumored that some who enter are never seen again. Magic is said to work in the cave. I will be your eyes and hands. Direct me with commands of 1 or 2 words. (Errors, suggestions, complaints to grother.) (If stuck type help for some hints)

You are standing at the end of a road before a small brick building. Around you is a forest. A small stream flows out of the building and down a gully.

Go in.

You are inside a building, a well house for a large spring.

There are some keys on the ground here.

There is a shiny brass lamp nearby.

There is food here.

There is a bottle of water here.

West of House
You are standing in an open field west of a white house, with a boarded front door. There is a small mailbox here.
> Commercial Era

> The End of Text?

- 1987: Adventure Game Toolkit
- 1988: TADS
- 1993: Inform
- 2006: Inform 7
> Hypertext

Images from https://www.choiceofgames.com and https://twinery.org
So What is Interactive Fiction?

- Text Adventures
- Hypertext Fiction (Choose Your Own Adventures)
- Graphic (Point-and-Click) Adventures
- Visual Novels

Ultimately, a variety of genres to a variety of people (but we’ll talk about text & hypertext)
Interactive Fiction in Teaching & Learning
> Two Ways to Teach & Learn

Playing Interactive Fiction  Authoring Interactive Fiction
How Can Playing (Computer/Video) Games Complement Teaching & Learning?

- Technology
- Collaboration & Communication
- Experimentation
- Problem-solving
- Memory
- Exploration of Identities
- Assessment
- It’s Fun! (usually)
How Can Playing Interactive Fiction Complement Teaching & Learning?

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Where is Interactive Fiction Found in Higher Education?

- Digital Literacy
- Historical Narratives
- Interactive Timelines
- Exploring Literary Texts
- Interactive Maps
> Two Ways to Teach & Learn

Playing Interactive Fiction

Authoring Interactive Fiction
How Can Authoring Interactive Fiction Complement Teaching & Learning?

- Technology
- Collaboration & Communication
- Experimentation
- Problem-solving
- Computer Programming
- Writing
- Research
- Design
What’s Important in a Good Teaching & Learning (Interactive Fiction) Game?

- Well Written
- Well Researched
- Immersion & Integration
- Continuous Challenges & Goals
- Immediate, Useful Rewards
- Flexibility
- And, of course, fun!
> Tools for Authoring Interactive Fiction

Hypertext Fiction
(Choose Your Own Adventures)

Twine
> Tools for Authoring Interactive Fiction

Text Adventures

Inform 7
Challenges with Interactive Fiction

- Learning Curve
- Resources (Time, especially)
- Adapting to Classroom

Image from https://sascha-kasper.com/the-bumpy-learning-curve/
Resources to Get Started
> Interactive Fiction for the Newcomer

◈ “A brief history of text-based games and open source”

◈ “Interactive Fiction”
   from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interactive_fiction

◈ Teaching and Learning with Interactive Fiction
   By Brendan Desilets: http://bdesilets.com/if/
Interactive Fiction You Can Play

- **1893: A World’s Fair Mystery**
  by Peter Nepstad (2002): [https://ifdb.tads.org/viewgame?id=00e0t7swrris5pg6](https://ifdb.tads.org/viewgame?id=00e0t7swrris5pg6)

- **Spent**

- **Depression Quest**
> Interactive Fiction You Can Author

- **Twine**
  [http://twinery.org/](http://twinery.org/)

- **Inform 7**

- **ChoiceScript**
> Interactive Fiction Communities

- Interactive Fiction Technology Foundation
  https://iftechfoundation.org/

- People’s Republic of Interactive Fiction
  http://pr-if.org/

- The Interactive Fiction Community Forum
  https://www.intfiction.org/forum/index.php
> THANK YOU!

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival