

Unit 1: It's on like Pong: The dawn of digital gaming

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**
Course(s):
Time Period: **September**
Length: **6 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Enduring Understandings

- Everybody plays games in one way, shape or form.
- Video games came along and offered an entirely new way to play.
- Arcades quickly cropped up to cash in.
- The narratives of early video games were simplistic, but eventually became complex and mythologized.
- Few early video games had a defined or intended resolution.
- While video games were played for fun, they quickly became competitive.
- Home gaming, among other factors, killed the arcades.
- Arcades have made a nostalgic comeback.

Essential Questions

- How are video games different from traditional games?
- What were the first video games?
- What made them popular?
- Which games are considered “classics”?
- What were the genres?
- What were the narratives of early video games?
- What happened at the end of video games when a player won?
- What skills are required to play video games?
- What, if anything, was missing from arcade games?
- How did the use of visuals, sound effects and music contribute?

Content

Vocabulary: kill screen, track ball, cabinet, coin-op, cabaret, cocktail, side-scroller

Skills

- Analyze early video game storytelling.

- Identify the setting, exposition, inciting incident, climax, denouement and resolution of early video game narratives.
- Chart plot.
- Identify and examine genres, especially as they combine and overlap.
- Analyze the complexity of video game plots.
- Understand and identify archetypes.
- Compare/contrast early games.

Resources

Potential Works of Study

- *Pong* (1972)
- *Pac-Man* (1980), *Ms. Pac-Man* (1981)
- *Donkey Kong* (1981), *Donkey Kong, Jr.* (1982)
- *Galaga* (1981)
- *Defender* (1980)
- *Space Invaders* (1978)
- *Asteroids* (1979)
- *Frogger* (1981)
- *Berserk* (1980)
- *Q*Bert* (1982)
- *Tron* (1982)
- *Dragon's Lair* (1983)
- *Spy Hunter* (1983)
- *Double Dragon* (1987)
- *Street Fighter* (1987)
- *Contra* (1987), *Super Contra* (1988)
- *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1989)
- *Mortal Kombat* (1992)

Standards

SL.11-12.1, 4-5

W.11-12.1, 9

RI.11-12.1, 3, 7

RL.11-12.3, 7

