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