Middle School Game Design 1A: Introduction Course Syllabus

What you will learn in this course

MIDDLE SCHOOL Game Design 1a: Introduction

We all love to play video games – but have you ever wanted to build your own? If you are interested in a career in technology but also want a creative outlet, Game Design might be the field for you. Learn how to build a game from the ground up in Middle School Game Design 1, an interactive and hands-on course that will teach you all the ins and outs of making your own game. You will learn the importance of game structure and discover what makes a game fun, challenging, and interesting to players just like you. You will also have the opportunity to explore the design and creative process involved in game creation, learn block-based programs, and experiment with character and story development. As a bonus, you will leave the course with a digital portfolio of everything you created in class.

Unit 1: What's in a Game?

What's your favorite game? Even if you aren't much of a gamer, you might remember board games or outdoor games that you've played with your friends. Games have been with us ever since, well, since we've been human! You might think the bow and arrow in your video game is just a cool weapon to have in your arsenal. But going way, way back, people played archery games to see who was the best shot. Sometimes whole cities would play games to decide disagreements instead of going to war! Ever since the beginning, games have been a lot of fun, and so much more.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Define what a game is and explain how games are important to society
- Identify how simulations can be used to teach skills
- Analyze games for the four elements of game design
- Understand narrative and ludonarrative and how they relate to the storytelling aspect of games

Unit 2: Starting from Scratch

Why do some games hold our attention for hours, while others get boring after five minutes? We're going to look at how design elements like color and sound affect our mood as we play. We're also going to look at the code blocks and instructions that make the game work. Get those creative brains firing on all cylinders because we are going to start building our own programs using Scratch!

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand engagement and emotion and explain how they relate to game design
- Set up a backdrop and sound that creates a certain mood using Scratch
- Define sequence, loops, and conditional statements, and use them in Scratch to create a program
- Identify visual and sound elements that create the mood you would like to have in your game

Middle School Game Design 1a Midterm Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first two units in this course. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Unit 3: Let's Get to Work!

So far, we've learned concepts about game design as well as what we can do in Scratch. Now it's time to connect those two and get to work! First, you'll explore conflict and how to apply it to different gameplay styles. Then you'll look at game mechanics and use them in Scratch to create certain aspects of games, like jumping and leveling up. And for the grand finale, you will make your very own shooter game!

What will you learn in this unit?

- Describe how certain game mechanics function in game design
- Create different levels in Scratch that could be used in a role-playing game
- Plan and produce a shooter game in Scratch

Unit 4: Time to Plan

So far, we've talked about how solid game mechanics, a unique narrative, and challenging opponents are all parts of making a great game. As important as these things are, the interface can make or break the player's experience. We will look at good practices for interface design and try some of them out in Scratch. You will also be starting your Game Design Document, where all of the elements of your game will finally come together in one big plan!

What will you learn in this unit?

- Explain what is meant by user interface and user experience
- Implement aspects of good interface design in Scratch
- Describe how the user interface can affect the user experience
- Create a Game Design Document

Middle School Game Design 1A Final Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.

- Take a course exam based on material from all units in this course. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)