

Game Narrative Review FAQ

What is the Game Narrative Review program?

The Game Narrative Review program is a collaboration between the nation's leading game development schools and the Austin GDC, which hosts the industry's premier gathering on the subject of storytelling in games at the annual Game Narrative Summit. Through this program, the GDC invites students with an interest in game narrative to submit a critique of the story elements of a game. The submission content and format are well defined for the students in 2 docs we provide ("Game Narrative Review_TEMPLATE" and "Game Narrative Review_SAMPLE"), but students are free to select any game titles of interest to them. Submissions are evaluated by GDC advisory board members to determine which ones hold the most interest for GDC attendees. The student authors of selected submissions are then notified, and asked to create a poster as a visual embodiment of their review. Accepted posters are then displayed at the GDC in Austin in October, and those students are offered free passes to attend the conference and discuss their work with conference attendees.

What are the benefits to participating?

For students:

- Gain knowledge of the elements of game narrative and storytelling effectiveness by completing an in-depth structured analysis of a game of your choice
- Authors of selected submissions will complete an instructive exercise in visual communications as they translate their narrative review into a graphical poster
- Accepted poster submitters get:
 - their work displayed at the Austin GDC
 - a free Expo pass to the Austin GDC
 - an invitation to present their work at scheduled "poster sessions"
 - exposure to industry contacts and hiring companies
 - recognition that they can leverage professionally
 - their work entered into the GDC's permanent online archives at www.gdcvault.com/gamenarrativereview
- A few of the most outstanding submissions will be recognized for their superior work; those students will be offered free All Access passes to the Austin GDC.

For participating schools:

- Exposure for the school to industry professionals
- Opportunities for their students to connect with leading employers
- An ongoing relationship with GDC organizers
- Incentive for students to delve into narrative and writing in games, a growing aspect of the game development field

For instructors who coordinate submissions (or encourage students to submit individually):

- A valuable student exercise to add to their curricula
- A project that interfaces with industry professionals and gives students exposure outside the campus
- And someone else does the grading! ;)

What does participation require?

For schools and instructors: The easiest way to participate is to circulate this "FAQ" to students along with the "Template" and "Sample" docs. Instructors can either gather the completed reviews and forward them as indicated below, or instruct students to submit them directly. That's all it takes. There may also be opportunities to implement this exercise more integrally into particular class curricula, as some schools have.

For students: Dissect a game's narrative elements, as prescribed in the "Template" form, and complete the form as exemplified in the 4-page "Sample" (one author per entry). Just a 4-page review is all that's needed for the initial submission. A collection of prior winning entries can be referenced here: www.gdcvault.com/gamenarrativereview

What games are eligible for analysis?

Any game you want. And this exercise is not just for triple-A console titles. Strategy games, adventure games, even casual and mobile games may provide valuable and fascinating subjects as well.

How should submissions be delivered?

Email all submissions to blacktorc@gmail.com for review.

What are the submission deadlines?

Completed Game Narrative Reviews are due May 15, 2012.

Students advancing to the next round will be notified thereafter, with instructions for submitting posters by mid-September. (If a school has specific timing constraints, the deadline can be modified to accommodate them.)

Who to contact with questions?

Procedural questions: Lev Chapelsky, lev@blindlight.com. Content questions: Richard Dansky, blacktorc@gmail.com.