Game lesson title	*Space Frog:* using interactive fiction for shared reading		
Brief intro	*Space Frog* is a short and cute interactive narrative about a frog going to space in search of a star. It is a text-based, browser-based game, with colourful supporting illustrations and a pick-your-path structure with multiple story endings. In this lesson plan, students explore the game through modelled and shared reading with the teacher. They explore making choices to direct the story and discover different endings. In reflection, they consider differences and similarities with other stories they have experienced. This can be a single reading lesson or expanded into a multi-lesson sequence. In additional sessions, students explore language features in the story and develop their own creative ideas inspired by the text.		
Lesson hook	Explore interactive fiction and making different choices to find different endings with a fun adventure of a frog in space.		
Suggested year level	F-2	**Suggested age level**	5-8
Suggested duration	Flexible: 1 – 4 x 50 minute sessions	**Costs involved?** (detail below)	Free, with optional purchase of a paper resource for $3/USD
Author	You are free to copy, communicate and adapt this lesson plan which was created by Kate Matthews and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.0		
Subject/s			
☒ **English**			

Curriculum/Capabilities Alignment (VIC/AC) and Skills

Foundation

Understand that texts can take many forms, and that imaginative and informative texts have different purposes (VCELA141)
Understand concepts about print and screen, including how books, film and simple digital texts work, and know some features of print, including directionality (VCELA142)
Recognise that texts are made up of words and groups of words that make meaning (VCELA144)
Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (VCELT150)
Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently (VCELY153)
Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images (VCELT159)
Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts (VCELT171)

Level 1

Understand concepts about print and screen, including how different types of texts are organised using page numbering, tables of content, headings and titles, navigation buttons, bars and links (VCELA177)

Explore differences in words that represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs) (VCELA179)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (VCELY186)

Build on familiar texts by using similar characters, repetitive patterns or vocabulary (VCELT193)

Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and compare some features of characters in different texts (VCELT208)

Level 2

Understand that different types of texts have identifiable text structures and language features that help the text serve its purpose (VCELA212)

Know some features of text organisation including page and screen layouts, alphabetical order, and different types of diagrams (VCELA213)

Understand that nouns represent people, places, things and ideas and include common, proper, concrete or abstract, and that noun groups/phrases can be expanded using articles and adjectives (VCELA216)

Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (VCELT219)

Create events and characters using different media that develop key events and characters from literary texts (VCELT228)

Build on familiar texts by experimenting with character, setting or plot (VCELT229)

Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts (VCELT242)

Game Used	**Space Frog** https://npckc.itch.io/space-frog		
Game play required?	Game-play is guided by the teacher for whole group for a modelled/ shared reading experience		
CLASSIFICATION	**DEVICE/s**	**INTERNET REQUIRED?**	**COST (RRP)**
Unclassified but judged G	Computers and mobile devices (browser-based)	Yes	Free or donation

Important note about Game Classification

As classifications can change, teachers are responsible for checking the latest videogame classification and suitability for their class age group. Please visit https://www.classification.gov.au/ and https://www.commonsense.org/education/ to guide you.

How are games used by students in the lesson?

☐ **Watchers** – observing, analysing and evaluating. Learning about the world and ourselves through understanding the impact of games culture and industry.

☒ **Players** - learning by playing videogames - learning things applicable to life outside of (and in) the game e.g. flight simulators, esports, etc.

☐ **Makers** - learning through making games (coding, creative production, teamwork, leadership)

☐ **Explorers** (Minecraft) – imaginative, self-directed, exploratory/sandbox learning.

eSafety Considerations

Space Frog is hosted on itch.io, an open platform for independent game makers. This site has content for all ages and should not be explored by young learners unsupervised. In this lesson plan, the game is explored from a single device operated by the teacher, as a shared reading experience with the group.

Prior knowledge/skills (Required/Recommended/References)
Adaptable for different reading levels – assumes prior experience with fiction stories, in particular storybooks. Ideally the teacher has in mind some linear stories the students have read/ listened to in previous lessons that they can compare this interactive fiction story with. Teachers may wish to do some background reading about interactive fiction for their own understanding. The Interactive Fiction Technology Foundation's *Frequently Asked Questions about Interactive Fiction* is a useful resource. It is useful for teachers to explore *Space Frog's* different paths and endings before running. Useful things for teachers to know about the story structure (but to not spoil for students!) are that Space Frog sets out in his small space-ship to look for the sparkliest and brightest star in the sky. The player can choose one of three objects for space frog to take on his trip. During a play-through, the player can land on one of three planets. There are 3 possible outcomes on each planet – *Space Frog* goes home empty handed but ready to try again another day; Space Frog returns with a small, not very bright star and is happy but plans to try again another day; or Space Frog returns with the brightest, sparkliest star. If the player finds this outcome, they discover why Space Frog wants the star: to give to his friend Earth Cat. The browser game is free, however a printable zine template can also be purchased to download for $3USD. Cutting, folding and stapling is required to put the zine together. When assembled, the zine is the *Space Frog* story reformatted as a pick your path/ choose your own adventure book. Teachers may wish to purchase this to show students, or construct with them. This could be a resource for extension activities with students exploring how pick-your-path stories can be told in a print as well as digital form.

Student outcomes	
Learning goals	KNOW: that videogames can be a form of storytelling in which our choices can change how a story unfolds
	BE ABLE TO: identify some differences and similarities between interactive fiction and other forms of fiction; identify language features in a text; use a game story to inspire creative concept development
	IMPROVE: English learning and engagement with storytelling

LESSON 01 SEQUENCE

Prep & introduction activities	**Teacher preparation and resources:** - Equipment needed: computer/ tablet with web browser and internet connectivity, connected to projector or large screen viewable by whole class. No sound connection needed. - Recommended: teacher to read through *Space Frog* and explore navigation and different endings on the device in advance; and to consider other stories the students have read at school that are suitable to compare the text with. **Lesson introduction/ Tune In:** We are going to read a story together about a frog going on an adventure in space – *Space Frog!* In this story we will get to make some choices about what happens and there are different endings we can discover depending on which choices we make. This type of story is called interactive fiction, which is a type of videogame.
Main lesson activities	(1) The class follows the story on screen and read aloud by the teacher (depending on reader level and available time, students may read sections also). A first read through can focus on enjoyment and engagement with the story, comprehension, and understanding the interactive features of the text. In modelled reading, use 'think-aloud' strategies to draw attention to interactivity – notice that words highlighted green can be clicked on to expand parts of the story. Notice the pictures sometimes show characters, places and objects from the story - but when Space Frog/ the Player need to make a choice the illustration is a question mark. (2) At these question mark moments, the reader can click on different options to choose where the story goes next. Take group input on these choices – e.g. through a show of hands, and/or pausing to discuss. (3) After reaching the ending once, discuss with students: • Who was the main character in the story? (*Space Frog*) • What did Space Frog want? (- *To find the brightest and sparkliest star in the sky*) • Did Space Frog get his wish? (*This will vary depending on choices made and which ending the group found*) • Ask: I wonder what would happen if we made different choices? Let's read the story one more time and find out. (4) A second read is focused on making different choices and guesses/ predictions about what might happen. (Note: expandable green words that have already been explored may be skipped to reduce repetition in a second read through if needed).

	(5) Discuss what was different/ similar different in the story this time – then move onto reflection (below). Timing note: one read-through without pauses takes around 5-8 mins, depending on the path chosen. For two read-throughs factoring in extra time for comprehension strategies and discussion, allow around 20-30 mins.

Reflection activity	Focus a guided reflection on text-text comparisons. Discuss similarities and differences between this story and other (non-interactive) stories the class is familiar with. Depending on time, reflection can be extended to include talk about other games students enjoy; and/ or social/emotional ideas in the text.
	
	Discussion prompts may include:
	
	• What are some other stories we've read recently? Let's think about what is similar and different in this story
	• What are some differences between this story and other stories we know?
	• What are some similarities between this story and other stories we know?
	  • *E.g. you may prompt students to consider features such as fictional events, characters, locations, a story timeframe, a character with a goal going on a journey/ adventure, the character facing difficulties or obstacles, and text features of the storytelling such as dialogue, and common phrases like 'once upon a time…'.*
	
	• Did you enjoy being able to make choices in the story?
	• Did we find out more about the character and world by exploring the story a second time?
	• Did Space Frog achieve his goal both times, one time, or no times? Did he have interesting adventures anyway? What was his mood when he returned home?
	  • *There is potential here for light exploration of social-emotional ideas – Space Frog has an ambitious wish but doesn't get exactly what he wants in every version of the story, however he discovers something interesting every time. In playthroughs where it doesn't work out, he is decides to keep adventuring another day.*
	
	• Have you played other videogames? How are they similar/ different? What characters and locations do they have?

Differentiation: modification, extension and inclusion notes	Depending on reading level – students may take turns to do some of the reading, or the teacher can read. During reflection activity, pair and share and similar strategies can be used to support student participation. If there is any extra time in the lesson, the group can read through again to find further endings, or activities form Lessons 02 or 03 below could be started. To extend text comparison, the teacher may select a linear story for the group to read/ listen to and compare in place of discussing stories previously experienced by the group. One example might be *How to Catch a Star* by Oliver Jeffers, which features a character with a similar desire to Space Frog.
Student Homework/Further Work	
No homework: can be extended into longer lesson sequence – see below.	
Assessment	
Learning Intentions: To understand that videogames can be a form of storytelling in which our choices change how a story unfolds. To explore some similarities and differences with other forms of storytelling. Success Criteria: We have explored a videogame story where we made different choices to discover different endings. We have identified some similarities and differences with some other stories we know. Criteria is assessed formatively through observation of student engagement with the lesson.	

LESSON 02 SEQUENCE	
Prep & introduction activities	Lesson 2 focuses on identifying language features in the text. In this example lesson, students identify nouns and adjectives in the text – however the lesson is adaptable to explore different language features appropriate for learners/ level. (See differentiation). **Teacher preparation and resources:** • Equipment: computer/ tablet with web browser and internet connectivity, connected to projector or large screen viewable by whole class. No sound connection needed.

	• Print-outs of some sample story pages, or if using digital devices screen grabs for students to highlight digitally. Recommended: select pages that students in story paths that students have already explored • Optional: print out or slide giving definitions and examples of nouns and verbs • Paper and pencils **Lesson Introduction/ Tune in –** Discuss what we discovered last time we played *Space Frog*. Today we are going to explore another path in the story (making different choices that we haven't explored yet) and spot some nouns and adjectives along the way. We are going to read through and stop to hunt for nouns and adjectives together on some of the story pages, then we are going to search for some on our own • What is a noun? – discuss • What is an adjective? – discuss
Main lesson activities	(1) Revisit the story together as a group for another shared read through, in search of a new ending. During this read through, select *some* pages to pause on and find nouns and adjectives in the text together. (2) Identifying nouns and adjectives (individual). Give students selected sample pages from the story. They highlight or circle nouns in one colour and adjectives with another colour on the pages. (3) Sentence creation: use new adjectives to describe planets. In the story, Space Frog can visit different planets, including a small, pale, blue planet; a big, bright, red planet and a strange, dark, lonely planet. Think of three new adjectives to describe another planet Space Frog could visit. • This could be an individual task set as a writing prompt, or a verbal activity in small groups. • If students are struggling, they could consider similar adjectives to the ones in the text – e.g. What's another way to say 'small'? What's another colour? Etc. • If time – draw the planet!
Reflection activity	Look at some of the responses together as a group. Revisit what we understand about nouns and adjectives.

Differentiation: modification, extension and inclusion notes	This example focuses on nouns and adjectives as a language feature but this lesson can be adapted to explore different language features suitable for the classes levels and curriculum focus. For example, other options may include: • Early readers spotting features such as familiar letters of the alphabet or focus words in the text (e.g. high frequency words/ "tricky words") • A phonics focus choosing words from the text to sound practicing sounding out after modelled reading • Identifying punctuation features • Exploring dialogue construction
Student Homework/Further Work	
Assessment	
Assessed through observing group identification of language features during modelled/ shared reading and by individual identification of language features on Learning Intention (example) – We are practicing identifying nouns and verbs in a text Success Criteria (example) – I have found and highlighted adjectives and nouns in parts of a story. I have practiced creating sentences using different adjectives.	

LESSON 03 SEQUENCE	
Prep & introduction activities	In this lesson, students work on imaginative text and image creation and role-play inspired by *Space Frog.* Depending on class size, timing and time given to presentation of outcomes – this could be a 1 or 2 lesson activity. **Teacher preparation and resources:** • Art materials – Paper, pencils, erasers, scissors • Equipment for revisiting parts of the story and presenting task: computer/ tablet with web browser and internet connectivity, connected to projector or large screen viewable by whole class. No sound connection needed. **Lesson Introduction/ Tune in:** We have been exploring the story *Space Frog.* Recall with students: • What does Space Frog go to space to find?

	• What are the things Space Frog can take to space? • Who are some of the characters Space Frog meets there? • What happens? In some of the story paths, Space Frog gives a character an item and ends up with a star. Today we are going to imagine more planets for Space Frog to visit and characters for him to meet. We are going to imagine items that Space Frog could give those characters in exchange for a star. We are going to draw and describe these things. *(If students haven't yet encountered an ending where Space Frog finds the star, tune in might also include a read through of another story pathway guided towards a suitable ending)*
Main lesson activities	(1) Revisit parts of the story with students to see how Space Frog ended up with a star. Each involve visiting a **planet**, meeting a **character** and giving them an **object** that leads in some unexpected ways to Space Frog taking home a **star** (2) In groups, students brainstorm a new planet for Space Frog to visit (if Lesson 2 above has been included with a focus on adjectives, this can build from this); a new character to meet. What is an object that Space Frog could give the character to end up with a star? (3) Students create artwork of their planet, character, object and star on separate pieces of paper. This could be done using different techniques suitable for the group – e.g. drawing, paper cut out, collage. Depending on language level students may also write short descriptive sentences to label their images.
Reflection activity	Share student work in the form of a roleplay. This may extend into a 2nd lesson. Groups keep their planet, character and star images. The teacher collects their object images. To present, the teacher takes on the part of space frog visiting each planet. Each group in turn shows and describes their planet and character. Role play offering different objects to the character until finding the right object to receive a star. (Note - In this reimagining of an extended Space Frog universe, Space Frog now has a bigger space-ship and satchel and can take every item along instead of just one.) In a final guided reflection, students can consider key things they have learned about while exploring *Space Frog.*

Differentiation: modification, extension and inclusion notes	Depending on reading level this activity may be purely an image creation and verbal presentation task, or can include some written description.

Student Homework/Further Work

The lesson sequence could be used to springboard into a range of additional activities/ future lessons:

- Exploring paper-based pick-your-path/ choose your own adventure stories, such as the zine version of *Space Frog*.
- (Advanced/ for higher year levels:) – students may explore the different story pathways and endings further and make a map or diagram of them
- Students can try creating a 'multiple ending's story of their own. A simplified version is recommended, e.g. with 2 story branches/ endings
- To explore different forms of game story, with a visual and coding focus, students could explore Scratch Jr and in particular its free tutorials on creating game stories

Assessment

Assessed through roleplay/ presentation of students' creative responses to the text.

Learning Intention – To make a creative response to a story by imagining new places, characters and events to add to the story

Success Criteria – We have drawn and described a planet, character, object and star to add to the *Space Frog* story. We have presented our work through roleplay in class.

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