Choose Your Own Adventure! Scripting a Narrative Game

Ever wonder “what if I did _____ instead of ____?” Want to explore the different outcomes of potential decisions? This interdisciplinary class will teach students how to script non-linear, multiple plot/ending story lines PC games using Twine and Kodu. Game development will be more focused on narrative as opposed to action, but there are plenty of creative ideas that you are encouraged to explore in a "what if/what next" multi play-through experience. Come explore the outcomes!

Community Speaks: Reporting on the World Around Us

Hello, reporters! I am looking for inquisitive, creative and thoughtful storytellers to participate in a special project at my organization, Community Speaks. You will be an integral member of a team of specialists who are creating a community news website that chronicles your experiences, events and ideas through effective storytelling. We need your perspective and your voice! You will receive on-the-job training in recognizing perspective in storytelling, identifying your own perspective, developing effective interviewing skills and improving your storytelling skills through text, videos and image. In this undertaking, you will be presented with ample opportunities to share your stories as well as collect and report on the various experiences and ideas of the members of your community. These learning experiences will require you to use your critical thinking skills, develop your own voice and activate your community-building skills. You will finish the course having cooperatively created a professional, polished news website that showcases the unique stories and hard work of your own community!

Fighting Off Infection: The Never-Ending Battle to Keep Us Healthy

Every day we are exposed to tiny microbes, unseen by the human eye...so why aren’t we always sick? Thankfully, we have immune systems, a.k.a. the body’s defense against these tiny germs that don’t belong. During this course, we will meet the types of microbes that our body encounters and the brave cells in our body that keep them from causing harm. Students will follow the course of infection from beginning to end, appreciating what makes microbes hard to kill and the various interventions we can use to help our immune system win the fight.

Foundations of Architecture: Understanding Place and Space

What are the components that make up a building? How do light and ventilation affect a room? These are not only important questions that architects must ask themselves about every project, but important components of this course. Join us as we use these to guide us in hands-on activities, such as measurement, drawing, and the creation of models, that will lead to the construction of miniature rooms of the students’ own design. Students should leave with a good understanding of the foundations of architecture. Come and build your knowledge!
Lights, Camera, Action!

Do you love movies? Have you ever wanted to create your own? In this class, we will explore the art of visual storytelling as you work together with your peers to create a short film. Filmmaking is more than just knowing how to use a camera—some of the techniques we may investigate include how to create a storyboard, structure a screenplay, navigate video editing software, and organize a production. We'll examine popular films to learn from the experts about what it takes to make a story come to life. Through a multitude of hands-on activities, you'll discover just how much problem-solving, resourcefulness, creativity, and fun is involved in producing a film!

Naturalists in Action!

Do you like to stop and watch insects as they scurry, inch, and scuttle along the ground? Do you catch yourself snatching up curious plants and flowers when out on a walk? Are you just as interested in the shells and pebbles at the beach as you are in swimming and playing in the water? If so, then guess what? You already have the makings of a great naturalist! Our class will learn how historical men and women used the “toolkit” of their senses and other creative talents to reveal the wonders of nature, starting in their own hometowns and city streets. We will also use the natural landscape of UVA as inspiration for developing our own talents of observation, interpretation, and communication, skills that are at the very heart of being a scientist. Skills like collecting, sketching, and presentation have been practiced by everyone from Leonardo DaVinci to Charles Darwin—and even Thomas Jefferson! Join us as we create a picture of our nature experiences, learn how science can be storytelling, and how the first page in these nature stories is opened in our own backyards!

Parts of the Whole: The Microscopic Things that Make Up the Universe

The universe seems like a gigantic place, but when you break it down, it really isn't all that big after all. It is actually made up of teeny-tiny particles that form gases, solids, and liquids. These come together to form planets and life. In this class, we will examine how and why such small particles can form such large and important structures. We will start at the universe, examining how planets are formed and orbit the sun, move on to looking specifically at earth, and finish by focusing on what makes up all living things: cells. We'll interact with the concepts by creating gases, making rocks, and building model cells, so you'll be able to see for yourself what makes up the universe.

You Are What You Eat: Human Metabolism at Work!

How does food get processed by the digestive system? How do organs convert food into the energy we use for physical activity? How does the body respond to hunger or cravings? Our class will explore these core concepts to show how the food you eat gets converted into the energy you use. Students will study metabolism from multiple levels, employ active learning, laboratory demonstrations, and inquiry guided activities. This course will be as engrossing as it is gross! Come see how it all works!