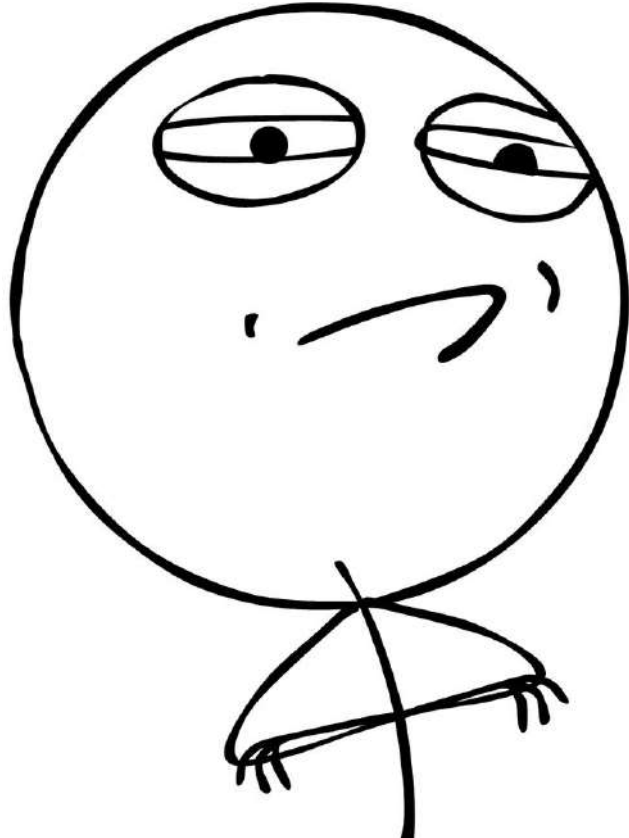


Narrative is All Around

What is narrative design?

Dmitry Sergeev

Challenge!



Do you know popular
game without narrative?

Do you know, that...

Pong — tennis



Mario — a plumber
searching a princess

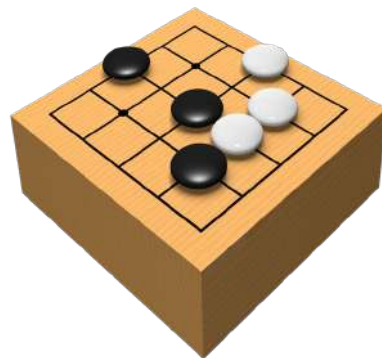


Candy Crush
— sweets



Snake? Galaga? Donkey Kong?
Sport Games? Jungle Speed?

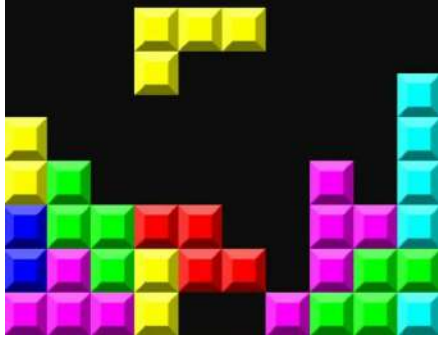
Chess —
two armies battle



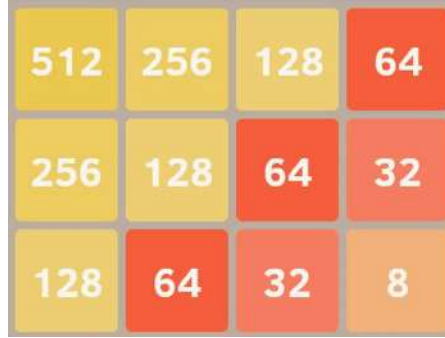
Go: The board is
a model of the sky
for astrology and
a calendar

No Narrative Games

- Tetris



- 2048



- Set (boardgame)



- Doctor Mario



- Fantasy Story 2048



- Jungle Speed



Serious Questions

- What is narrative design?
 - *Why narrative $\neq$ text?*
 - *When is Game Design also Narrative?*
 - *Why do we need it?*
- Narrative in board games?
 - *Can it support GD?*
 - *How to do it?*
 - *Examples!*

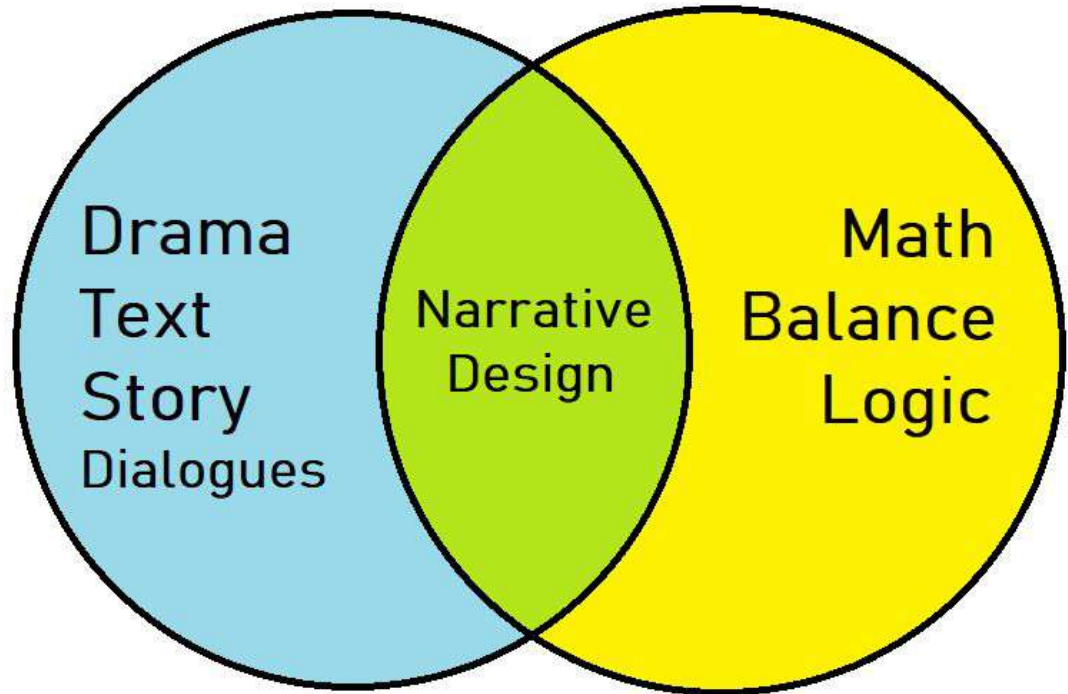


Narrative Design

— is the art of presenting a story through gameplay.

© *Maria Kochakova*

Narrtorika School



Brothers: A Tale of Two Sons



House is burnt.

With his wife and child.

The man is desperate.

“What Remains of Edith Finch”

Lewis' Story

A guy at a fish factory does a monotonous job: he cuts off the fish heads. He begins to fantasize about traveling through the maze, gradually completely immersing himself in his fantasies.

2. *Using the keyboard, the player controls Lewis and goes through the maze.*

3. *Gradually, the maze becomes more colorful and fills the entire screen.*



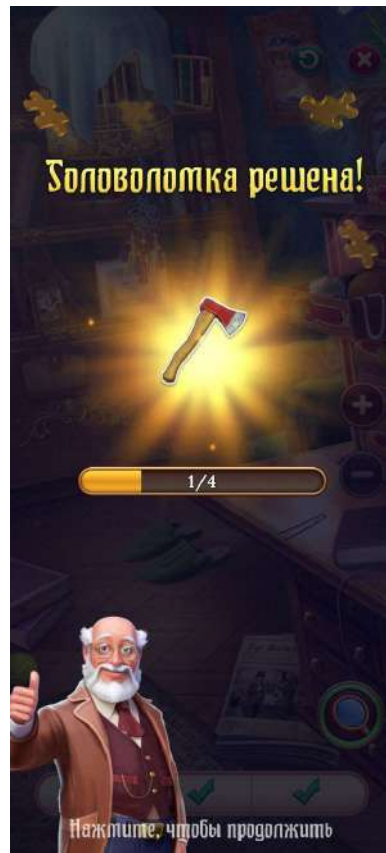
1. *Using the mouse, the player must cut off the fish heads, becoming bored with monotonous work.*



The game doesn't just tell a story, but forces the player to fully relive Lewis' experience on their own and understand why he escapes from his boring and gray life into a fantasy world.

video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQBISnsT5bc>

Mobile M3 Clockmaker



Cutscenes in mobile Clockmaker



When is GD also narrative?



If your GD is not abstract
(collect balls and get squares)
there is a built-in narrative

Why is it important?

- Engagement

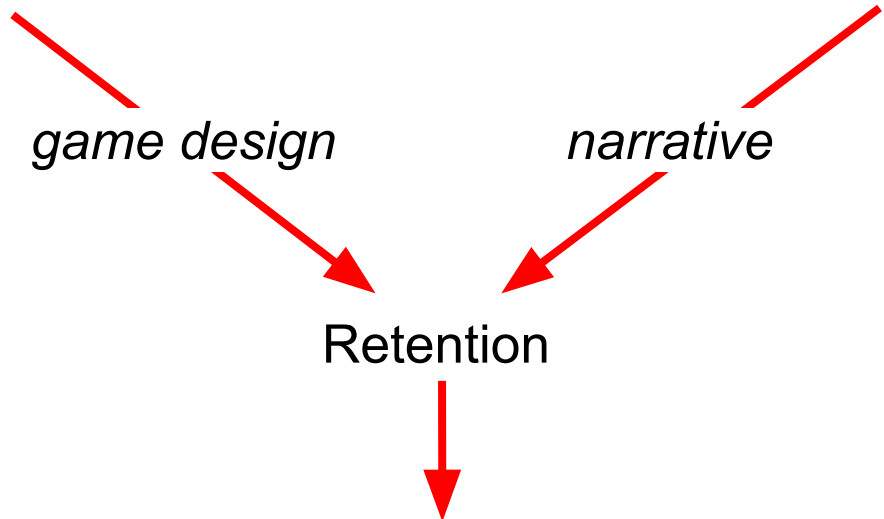
- Immersion

game design

narrative

Retention

\$\$\$



Quests in Role-Playing Games

No Narrative:



+ Narrative:



The gameplay is limited and consists of the same type of tasks, but the narrative should set the context and make this monotony invisible to the player

Player Motivation Matrix



Action "Boom!"	Social "Let's Play Together"	Mastery "Let Me Think"	Achievement "I Want More"	Immersion "Once Upon a Time"	Creativity "What If?"
Destruction Guns. Explosives. Chaos. Mayhem.	Competition Duels. Matches. High on Ranking.	Challenge Practice. High Difficulty. Challenges.	Completion Get All Collectibles. Complete All Missions.	Fantasy Being someone else, somewhere else.	Design Expression. Customization.
Excitement Fast-Paced. Action. Surprises. Thrills.	Community Being on Team. Chatting. Interacting.	Strategy Thinking Ahead. Making Decisions.	Power Powerful Character. Powerful Equipment.	Story Elaborate plots. Interesting characters.	Discovery Explore. Tinker. Experiment.

Narrative Design

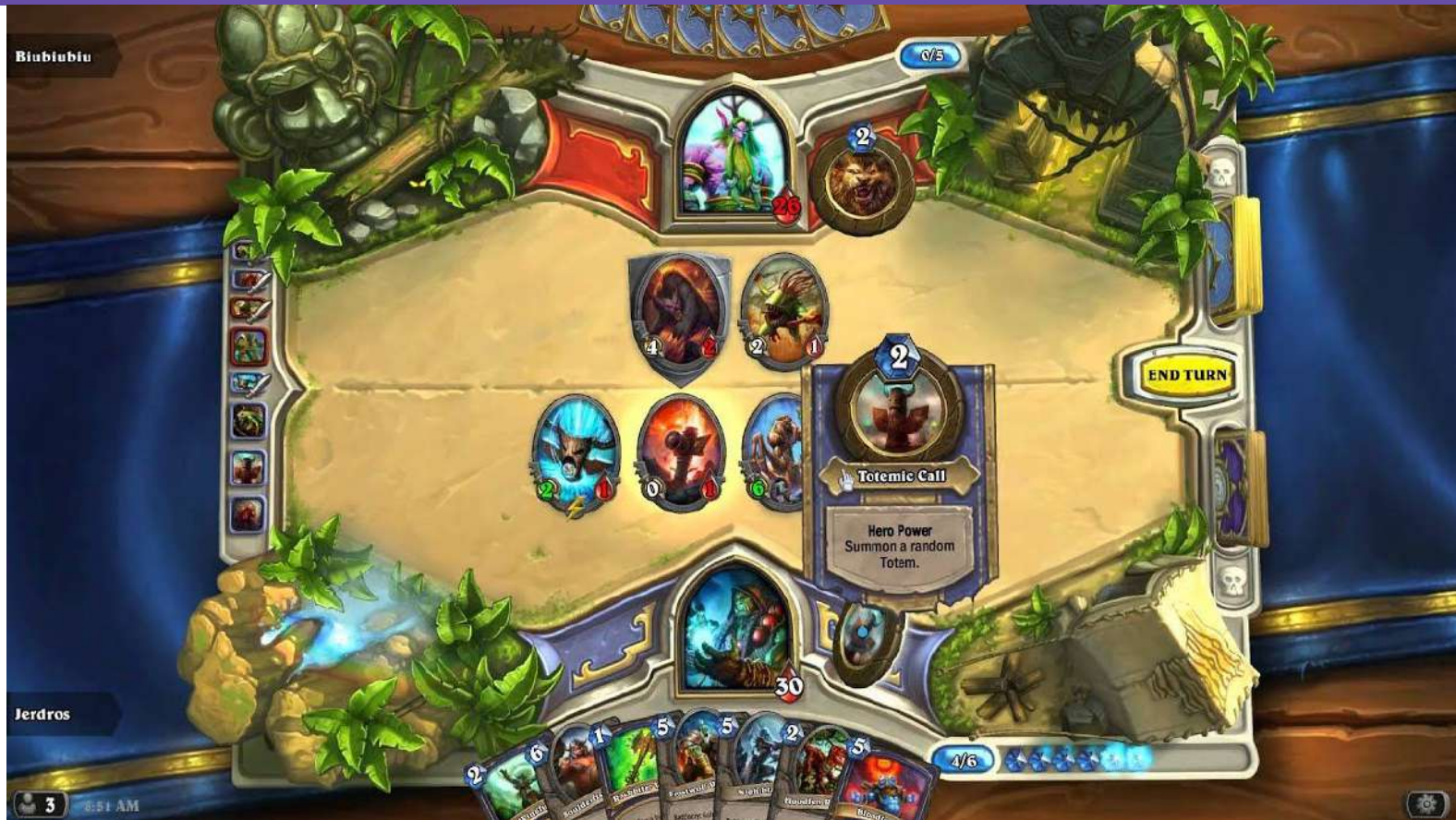
- Narrative Design - the art of presenting story through gameplay;
- GD = narrative design for 90%
(we do not live in abstract world)
- Engagement and Immersion -
to Retention and Revenue
- Narrative provides context and
saves monotonous gameplay



Wait a minute! What about board games?



Hearthstone: the gameplay



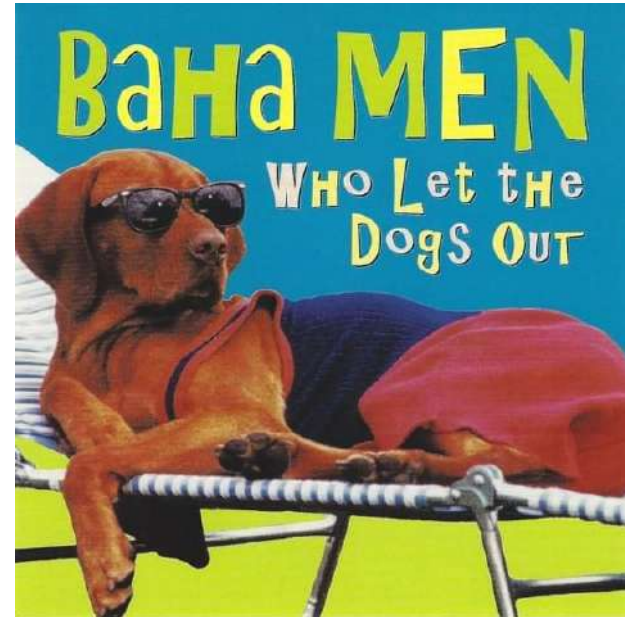
Story through GD of cards: Hearthstone



Jokes: Hearthstone



This is me
who let the dogs out!

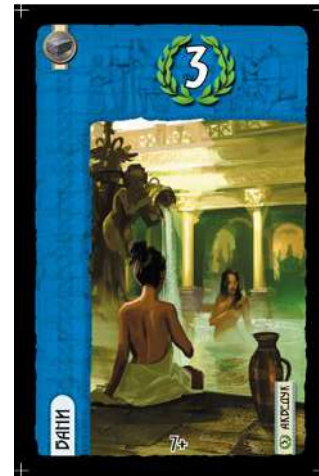


Easter eggs: Hearthstone



eng. Goody Two Shoes = good girl
Goody Two Shields

7 wonders: the gameplay



bath



aqueduct

Naming: 7 wonders

Бани (BATHS)	3	Акведук (AQUEDUCT)	5
 3+ 7+		   3+ 7+	
Алтарь (ALTAR)	2	Храм (TEMPLE)	3
3+ 5+		   3+ 6+	Пантеон (PANTHEON)
			7
			3+ 6+
			     
Театр (THEATER)	2	Статуя (STATUE)	4
3+ 6+		   3+ 7+	Сады (GARDENS)
			5
			3+ 4+
			  

Мастерская (WORKSHOP)	Стрельбище (ARCHERY RANGE)	Осадные орудия (SIEGE WORKSHOP)
3+ 7+	3+ 6+	3+ 5+
Лаборатория (LABORATORY)	Здание суда (COURTHOUSE)	Обсерватория (OBSERVATORY)
3+ 5+	4	3+ 7+
Скрипторий (SCRIPTORIUM)	Библиотека (LIBRARY)	Сенат (SENATE)
3+ 4+	3+ 6+	6
		Университет (UNIVERSITY)
		3+ 4+

Context: 7 wonders and leaders



Archimedes:
scientific cards
are cheaper



Leonidas:
military cards
are cheaper



Imhotep:
building wonders
is cheaper



Midas:
additional points
for gold

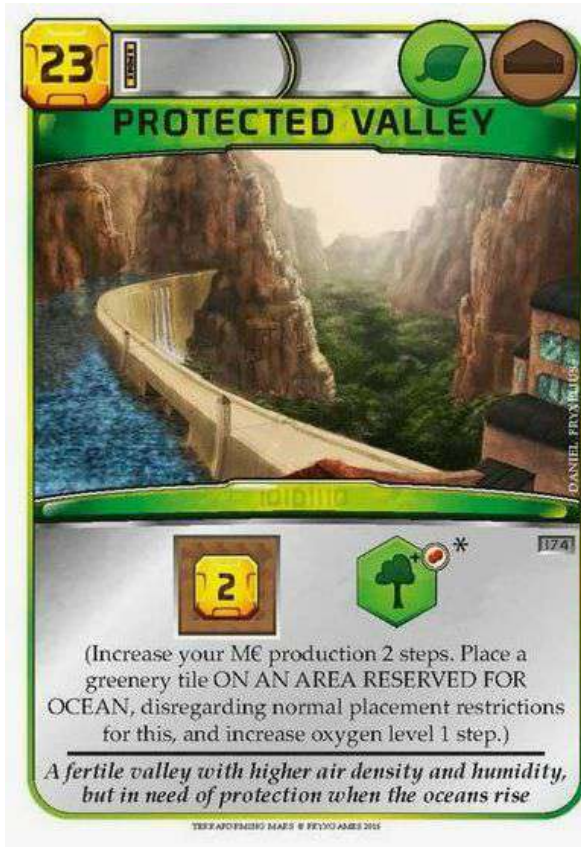


Alexander:
additional points
for battle victories

Immersion: Civilization and districts

- Scientific District > Campus
- Cultural District > Theater Square
- Military District > Encampment
- Production District > Industrial Zone
- Religion District > Holy Site
- Sea District > Harbor
- Commercial District > Commercial Hub

Story in GD: Terraforming Mars



Codenames: the gameplay



Codenames: the story



Same GD - different narrative

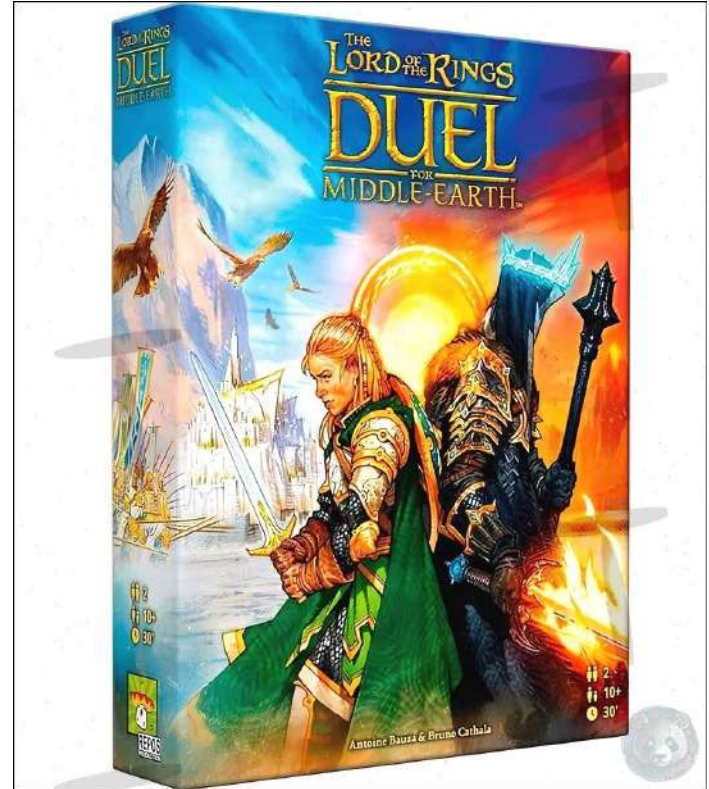
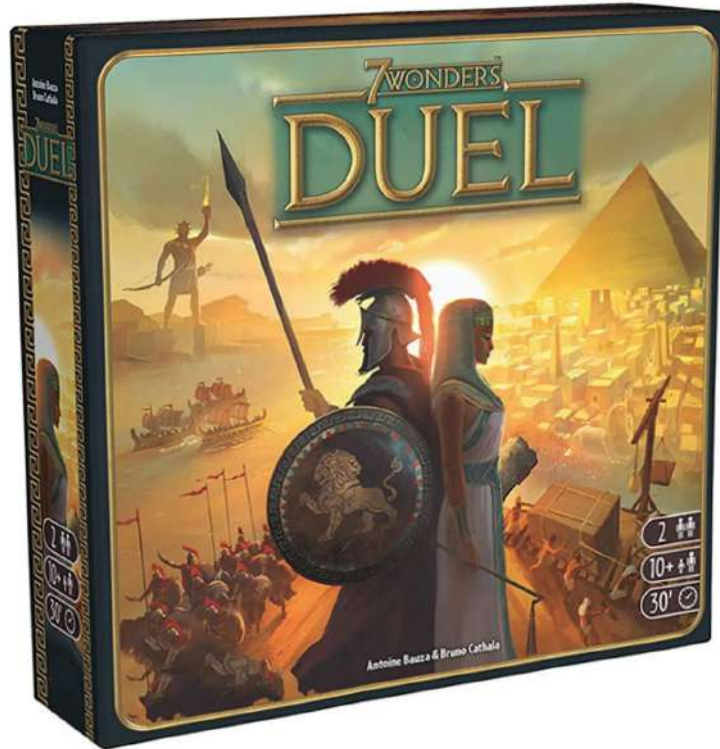


The spread of infection



The spread of ghouls (undead)

Same GD - different narrative



Boardgames

- Story through Game Design
- Narrative supports Game Design
- Context and Immersion
 - Theme, Art and Naming
 - Jokes and References
- VIBE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

Conclusion: *any part of your board game
is a narrative instrument*