

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Glitch in the Matrix: High School Video Game Narrative Audit

Evaluate ludonarrative dissonance, algorithmic ethics, and procedural rhetoric in modern gaming through this rigorous ninth-grade critical analysis assessment.

1. In the context of 'procedural rhetoric' as defined by Ian Bogost, how does a game like 'Papers, Please' persuade the player regarding systemic bureaucracy?

Answer: B) By forcing the player to enact repetitive, restrictive rules as a core mechanic

Procedural rhetoric is the art of persuasion through rules and processes. By making the gameplay a tedious, rule-bound process, the game makes a political argument about the soul-crushing nature of bureaucracy.

2. When the actions a player takes in the gameplay (e.g., violence) contradict the personality of the character in the story (e.g., a pacifist), it is called _____ dissonance.

Answer: B) Ludonarrative

Ludonarrative dissonance occurs when there is a conflict between a video game's narrative (story) and its ludic elements (gameplay mechanics).

3. True or False: The 'Magic Circle' theory suggests that the norms and rules of a game world should be interpreted under the same moral framework as real-world society.

Answer: B) False

The 'Magic Circle' refers to the conceptual space where the rules of a game take precedence over real-world norms, creating a separate psychological reality for the player.

4. Which term best describes the ethical concern of 'Dark Patterns' in game design, such as 'fear of missing out' (FOMO) mechanics?

Answer: B) Exploitative monetization

Dark Patterns are design choices specifically engineered to manipulate players into spending more time or money than they intended, often through psychological pressure.

5. The concept of _____ in games like 'Hades' or 'Elden Ring' refers to how players learn through failure and repetition to master complex systems.

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Answer: A) Iterative learning

Iterative learning in gaming involves the cycle of trial and error where the player gains 'literacy' in the game's mechanics through repeated attempts.

6. True or False: 'Environmental Storytelling' is a technique where the narrative is provided primarily through found objects and the physical layout of the game world rather than dialogue.

Answer: A) True

Environmental storytelling, famously used in games like 'BioShock' or 'Fallout,' allows players to piece together events by observing the setting/props.

7. How did the 'Corrupted Blood' incident in 'World of Warcraft' assist real-world scientists?

Answer: B) It provided data on how human behavior influences the spread of epidemics

Epidemiologists studied the virtual plague to see how players' unpredictable behaviors (like traveling or intentionally spreading the disease) modeled real pandemic scenarios.

8. Games that aim to create a state of 'Flow' (as defined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi) must perfectly balance _____ and player skill.

Answer: C) Challenge

The 'Flow' state is achieved when the difficulty or challenge of a task is high enough to be engaging but not so high that it becomes frustrating for the user's skill level.

9. True or False: 'Gamasutra' style analysis is focused primarily on the entertainment value of a game rather than its technical or cultural development.

Answer: B) False

Academic and professional game analysis (often found on sites like the former Gamasutra/Game Developer) focuses on deep-dive post-mortems and design theory.

10. Which concept describes the player's ability to exert power and make meaningful choices that significantly impact the game's outcome?

Answer: B) Agency

Agency is the capacity of a player to act independently and make choices within the game's framework that have consequences.

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