

# Nelson English Usage

*Digital resources for the Australian Curriculum*

## Résumé bootcamp 5: Writing a cutscene

In video games, cutscenes are special sequences where the player has limited or no control over gameplay. Usually, cutscenes are triggered by particular actions such as completing a key task or a level, or entering a particular location in the game's universe. Cutscenes are often rendered in higher quality graphics than the rest of the game because they do not require smooth gameplay, and because of this, they can be much more creative and aesthetically detailed than the rest of the game.

Cutscenes are often used to develop the main character, provide backstory, give clues and introduce antagonists. Some will open a video game to introduce the player to its premise, as in [Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken – Chicken co-op](#). Others might be a montage of different events in the game. They might be placed right before the final battle, or right after. Different endings to a game can provide different ending cutscenes, such as the very popular [BioShock](#) and [BioShock 2](#).

### Scenario

You are a video game developer applying for jobs. You have been shortlisted for a radical new position at Cloak and Dagger Gaming that combines game development and scripting, and the shortlisted applicants have been asked to script a cutscene, using only muted video from a competitor's game, [Overlord II](#). You have already scripted one cutscene as part of the initial job application, so it shouldn't be too difficult.

### Preparation

- 1 View the [cutscene from Overlord II on Gamespot.com](#). Make sure that the sound is muted.
- 2 Split into groups of three, watch the scene together a second time and discuss what each of you think happens in the scene.
- 3 In your group, visit the [Game Script and Storyboard Creation](#) website, and browse through the linked documents. Use the [Game Storyboard Template](#), the [Example Game Storyboard](#) and the [Example Game Storyboard Writing](#) links to chart what occurs in the cutscene.
- 4 When your group has completed the scene's storyboard in the Game Storyboard Template, submit it to your teacher for feedback.

5 Meet with your group to discuss your teacher's feedback and decide whether to apply the changes he or she has suggested. You will use the storyboard you have generated as a group to develop your own, individual script.

## Scripting

1 Use the storyboard, along with the Overlord II Cutscene script template, to write your script. You might also find it useful to refer to the Cutscene example script.

2 You should draft and redraft your script more than once, beginning in class and completing the task as homework.

3 Submit the script to your teacher.

4 After receiving feedback from your teacher, get back into your groups of three and discuss your scripts, alongside your original storyboard.

## Recording

1 Decide which of the three scripts suits the cutscene the most, then, using equipment supplied by your teacher or available on your class computer, record the audio for the cutscene in MP3 or WMV format. It will be necessary for the three of you to use accents, different voices and to each play multiple roles. You may need to modify your script if you find it does not suit.

2 Submit the recorded audio to your teacher, along with a final version of the script you used.

3 After you have submitted the audio, your teacher will play each group's audio alongside the cutscene, before playing the original cutscene with audio intact.

## Questions

1 How did your cutscene script differ from the actual cutscene?

2 Which group did the best cutscene? Why?

**3** Did you have to modify your script after you began to record the audio? If so, why did it need to be modified?

**4** What was the most difficult part of writing the cutscene?

**5** Do you think any of the class cutscenes were better than the original from the video game? Why or why not?