Education in Gaming: Narrative as a Tool for Fostering Engagement

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Pixelberry Studios

Overview

Pixelberry Studios

High School Story

Extra Credit

Pixelberry Studios

Our Vision
Create successful games with heart

Our Game
High School Story (HSS)

High School Story
(HSS)

Performance
- iOS Free Top 5
- iOS Top Grossing #10

Reach
- 18.6 million downloads
- 2.4 million MAU, 540K DAU

Engagement

- Tutorial Completion, after launch: 87%

- User Retention, after launch:

1 Day	7-Day	30-Day
70%	54%	20%

Fun Fact

Nearly 50% of our team are writers!

Story in
High School Story

Create your own high school

Put your friends in the game

Go on high school adventures,
like Prom and Homecoming!

Cyberbullying

Worked with nonprofit Cybersmile

Developed responsible, realistic quest that modeled positive behavior

THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

THE CYBERBULLYING CHARITY

5,000,000+ educated about cyberbullying

1000s connected to counselors

Body Image and Eating Disorders

Worked with National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA)

Storyline follows your friend Mia who is self-conscious

NEDA
Feeding hope.

800,000+ educated about eating disorders through the quest

50,000+ connected to resources through NEDA

Why SAT Prep?

- College admissions more competitive

- SAT scores still a large part of application process

20

6 244 673 +   1388 +   165 762 +

QUEST

SOCIAL

THANKS

POLLS

RESULTS

Do you think taking the SAT is stressful?

SAT? More like Stressed All the Time!

1 FRIEND   153766   31% ✓

The SAT is stress-free if you study!

1 FRIEND   86369   17%

Taking the SAT can be stressful, but I can deal.

3 FRIENDS   172933   35%

The SAT won't stress me out - I'm not taking it!

1 FRIEND   78165   15%

BACK

STORE

Why?

- College admissions more competitive

- SAT scores still a large part of application process

- Test prep courses are expensive

How?

- SAT prep and educational games can be a tough sell to teens

- They focus on learning first and fun second

- We wanted to do the opposite
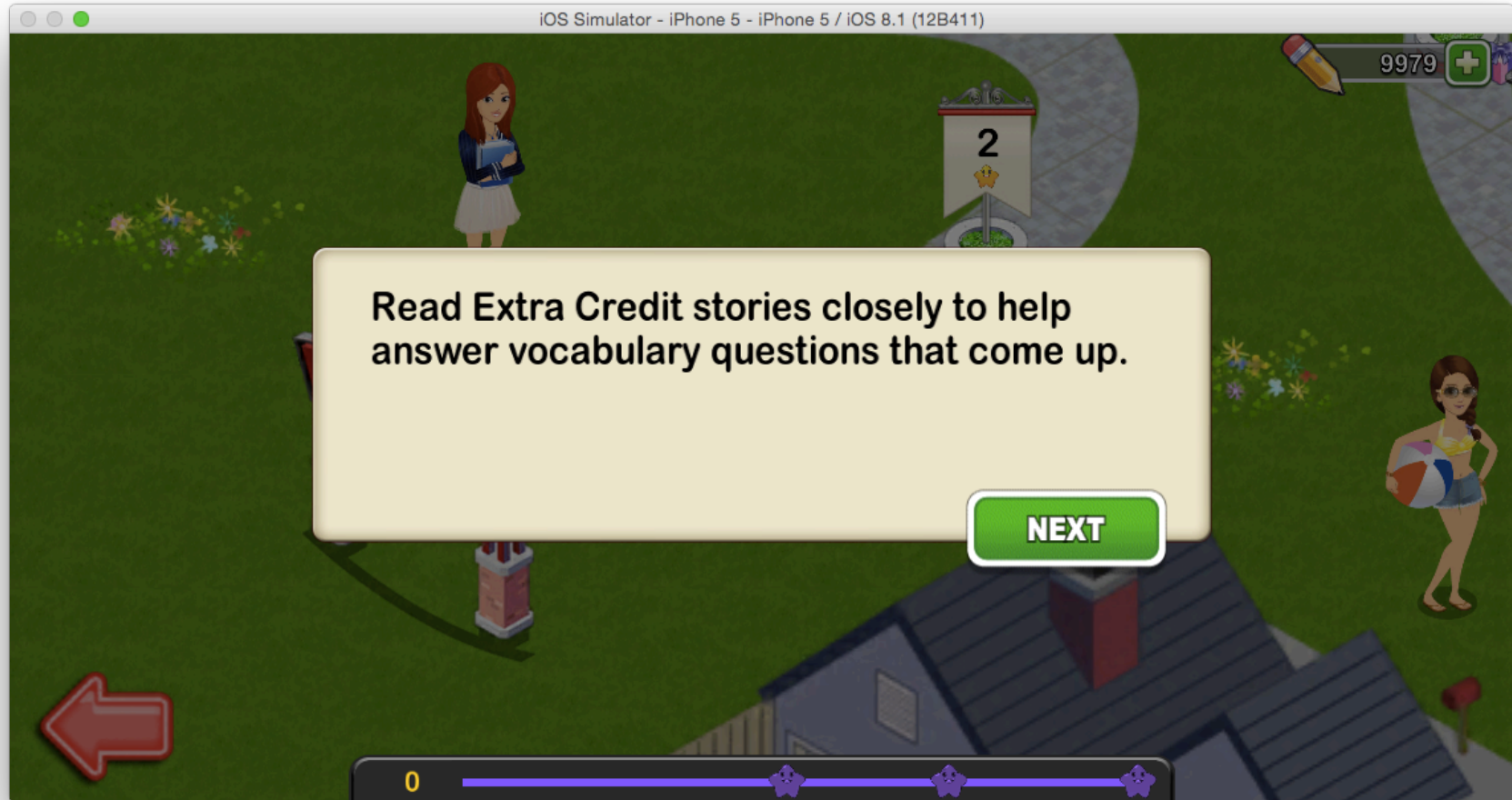
Teaching Vocabulary

- Teaching vocabulary without seeming overly too much like a lesson or breaking character

- Want to teach in a way that:
  - Motivates
  - Interacts with words in context
  - Reinforces

The Extra Credit Feature

iOS Simulator - iPhone 5 - iPhone 5 / iOS 8.1 (12B411)

9979

2

Read Extra Credit stories closely to help answer vocabulary questions that come up.

NEXT

0

Meet Kallie

New transfer student who loves to read and write

Has a big vocabulary and teaches words through context

Extra Credit Minigames
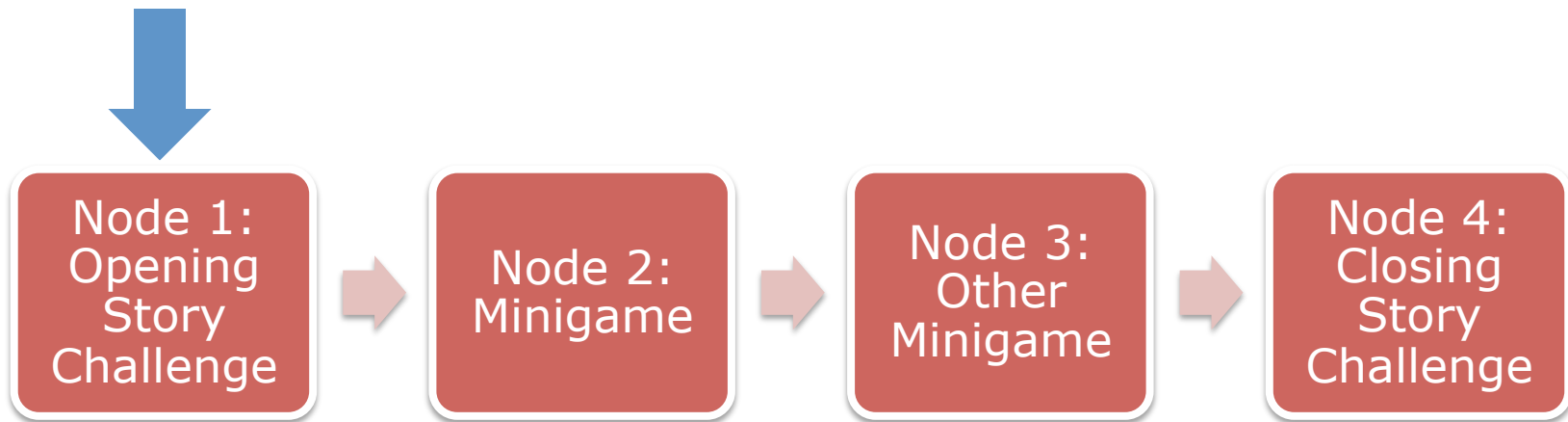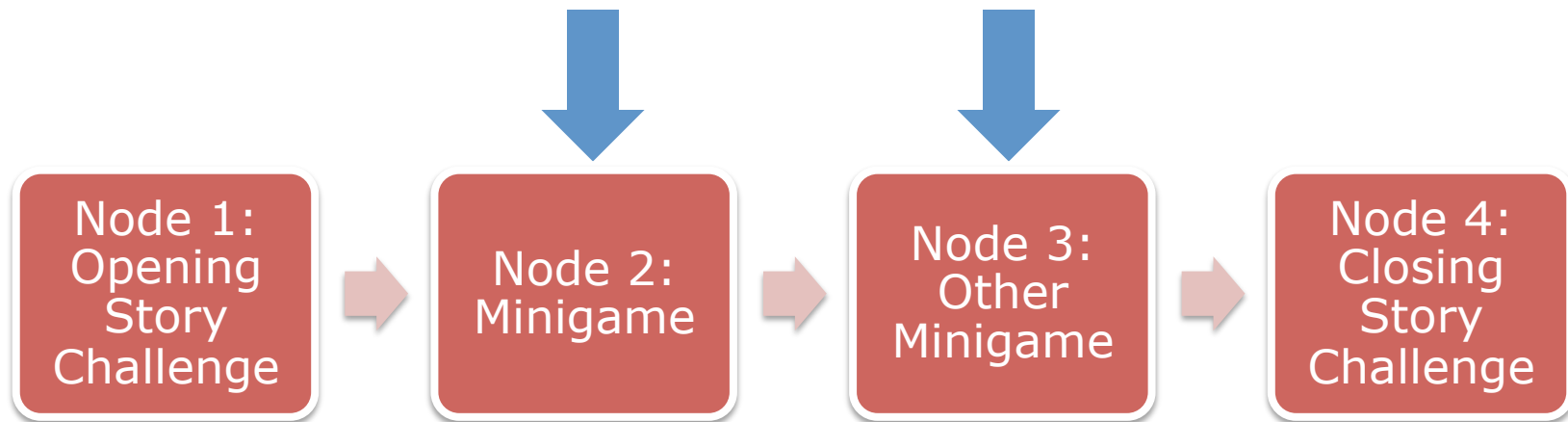
Four-Part Structure

iOS Simulator - iPhone 5 - iPhone 5 / iOS 8.1 (12B411)

24

1 000 000

10

100 000

9989

Kallie

It must look like a five-year-old lives here! I'm absolutely mortified!

Christina M.

Points: 20

You don't have to be...

tired

hungry

embarrassed

jealous

0

Four-Part Structure

| Node 1: Opening Story Challenge | → | Node 2: Minigame | → | Node 3: Other Minigame | → | Node 4: Closing Story Challenge |

1 000 000

100 008

100 000

High Scores

1. **Christina M.**
   ⭐⭐⭐ **100**

1. **Nishan**
   ⭐⭐ **95**

3. **Autumn**
   ⭐ **70**

4. **Payton**
   25

5. **Julian**
   10

Vocab Words 1

COMPLETE!

Bonus
Available

✓✓✓

100

SHARE   **REPLAY**   **NEXT**
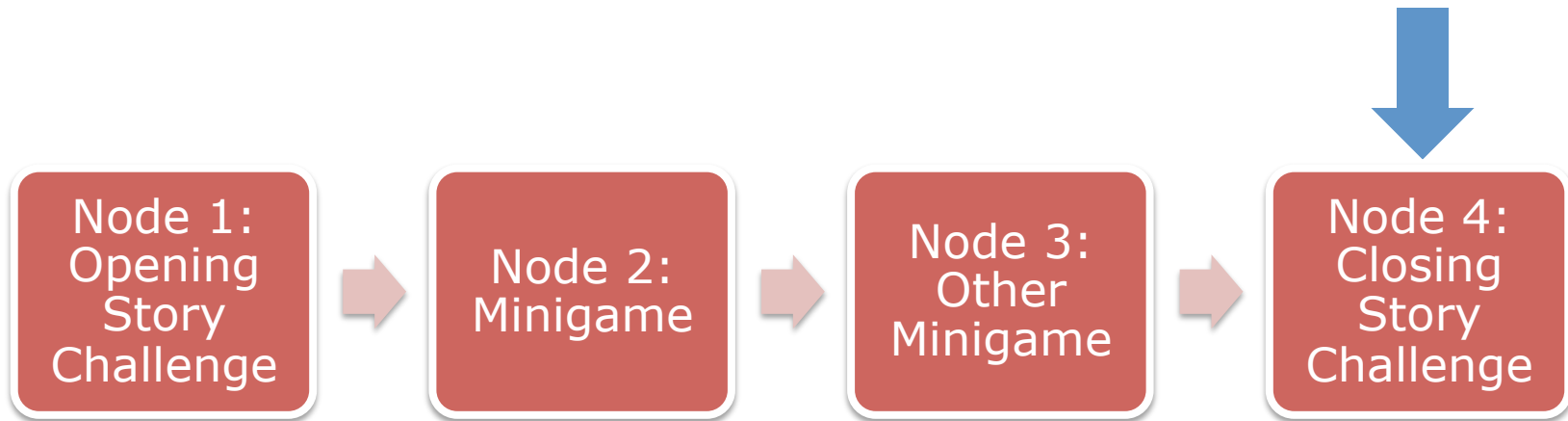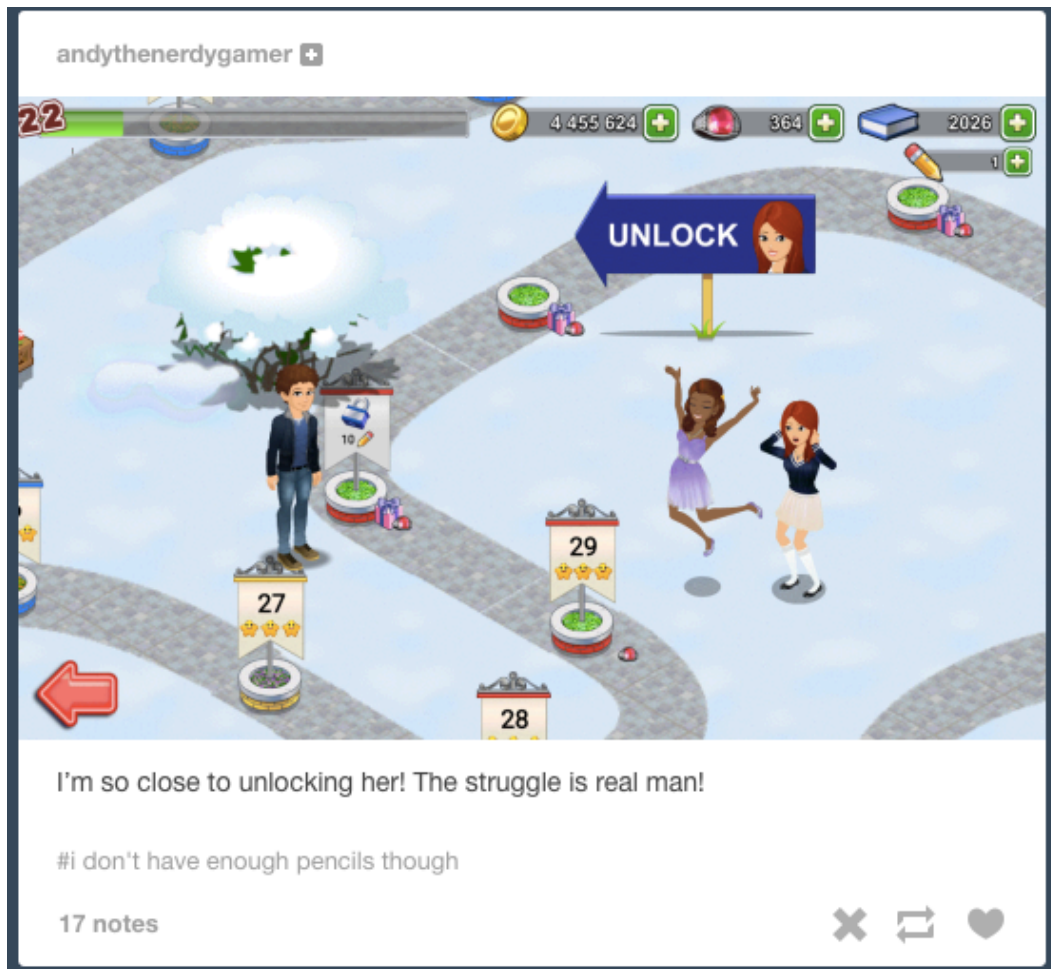
Four-Part Structure

Extra Credit Overall

Minigames
Reinforces and encourages interactivity

Story Challenges
Motivates by connecting players to Kallie

opal-the-nerdy-director ➕

(screenshot left) KALLIE: I doubt my ability to converse with my peers on topics of interest to them.

NEXT

(screenshot right) KALLIE: I'm simply... um... unfamiliar with how to conduct a successful social interaction.

NEXT

I wish that Kallie wasn't so relatable sometimes.

#kallie   #hss

41 notes

deejayrumba ➕

27   16 093 791 ➕   572 ➕   52 445 ➕

25 ➕

KALLIE

LEVEL 1 WRITER

🪙 113/hr

At a loss for words?
Writers always know
just what to say!
Whether it's eloquent,
enlightening essays or
fantastical flights of
fiction, these wise,
whimsical wordsmiths

Single

CUSTOMIZE   CLOTHING   MOVE   SELL   LEARN

QUEST

SOCIAL

STORE

all my life I've been waiting for this moment

#hss   #WRITER TYPE!!!!   #I LOVE KALLIE

25 notes   ✖ 🔁 ❤

kolivia4747 ⊞

Goddammit. I've always shipped Julian and Autumn since I started the game but the way Julian treats Kallie is precious.
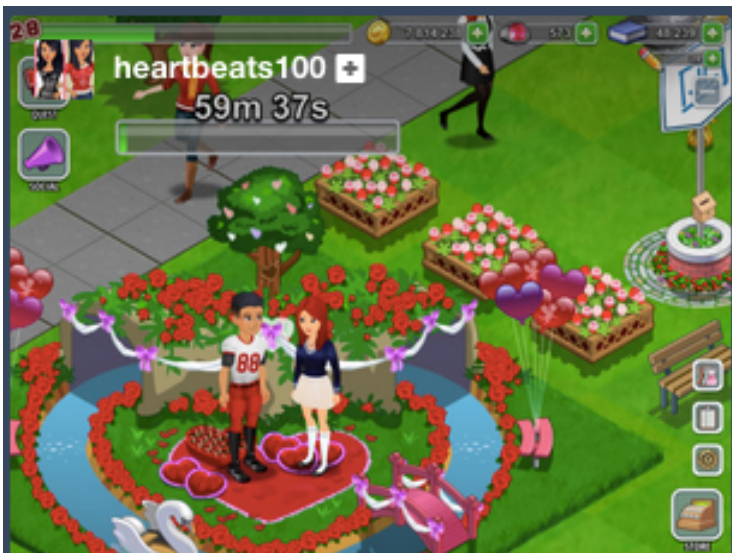
#I DON'T KNOW WHO TO SHIP ANYMORE!

4 notes

notsyrups ⊞

Julian and Kallie are so cute i cant wait to add her so they can date

#hss   #high school story

heartbeats100 ⊞
59m 37s

I was going to wait until I played more extra credit but I couldn't wait any longer ❤️🩹

#high school story   #Julian   #kallie

2 notes

QUESTIONS?

SHAMELESS PLUGS

1. Q&A Session for New Writers

2. Oliver Miao: How Our Game Saved a Life

3. Hollywood U