

Dialogue for Published Games - Quick Overview.....	1
Dialogue Sample - Mystery, Comedy.....	2
Dialogue Sample - Emotional.....	5
Branching Dialogue - Simple Divergence.....	7
Branching Dialogue - Complex Divergence (Arcweave).....	8
Narrative Systems - Responding to Player Speech.....	9
Narrative Systems - Syncing with Level Design.....	10

Dialogue for Published Games - Quick Overview

Yet Another Killing Game (2025, Steam)

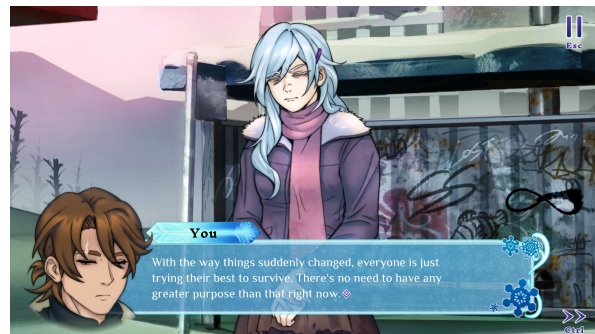
https://store.steampowered.com/app/3217970/Yet_Another_Killing_Game/



Cece: "People should be allowed to hold on to the things they care about the most, you know?"

Bus Stop at World's End (2026, itch.io)

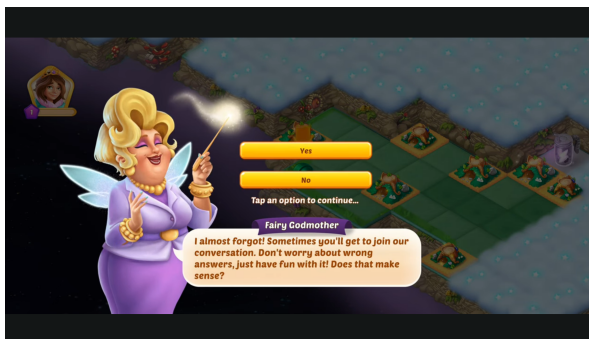
<https://junkakeru.itch.io/bus-stop-at-worlds-end>



You: "With the way things suddenly changed, everyone is just trying their best to survive. There's no need to have any greater purpose than that right now."

EverMerge (2023, Mobile)

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.bigfishgames.mergetalesgoog&pcampaignid=web_share



Fairy Godmother: "I almost forgot! Sometimes you'll get to join our conversation. Don't worry about wrong answers, just have fun with it! Does that make sense?"

Pitcher and the Whale (2020, Steam)

https://store.steampowered.com/app/1330120/Pitcher_and_the_Whale/



"With his shiny plastic bucket, the young fox was scooping water and splashing around with glee."

Dialogue Sample - Mystery, Comedy



Context:

The protagonist (name set to "PLAYER") is inside the newly unlocked "Lounge" with fellow captives Cece and Ria. Cece is in the middle of telling the story of how she discovered the "Attic" earlier and is suggesting the group search for clues on their kidnapper there, but Ria insists they search the Lounge first.

*Note: as this is a visual novel, the notes in () parentheses next to character names indicate their visible pose and/or facial expression changed during that specific dialogue line.

Cece (closed eyes):

"When I reached the top of the ladder, I poked my head into the hatch."

"And what did my eyes bear witness to in the attic?"

Cece (smiling):

"Only...a plethora of **occult materials!**"

Ria (leering):

"...!" <- slight screen shake, indicates her shock at the word "occult"

PLAYER (inner monologue):

"\Occult\... There's that word again..."

Cece (sparkling eyes):

"Weeeell? What do you think? Suspicious, right? Intriguing, riiiiight?"

Writing + Narrative Design Samples (Andy Bae)

May 26th, 2026

Ria (thinking):

"...."

Ria (closed eyes):

"...Maybe for you. But investigating this lounge should be our number one priority right now."

Cece (surprised, then change to sobbing):

"Wha--" <- auto-advance to next line after 0.5 seconds

"WHAAAAT?! You guys don't want to check it out?! PLAYER?!"

PLAYER (thinking):

"I don't know... How important can a bunch of occult stuff be?"

Cece (angry pout):

"But you guys were saying it before! If a room was blocked off from us..."

"There must be a **reason** why the culprit doesn't want us in there!"

PLAYER (surprised):

"...That's a good point."

PLAYER (thinking):

"Ria, you have to admit that the attic sounds just as suspicious as this lounge now, if not more."

Ria (thinking):

"...."

Cece (grinning):

"Oh! That's right, Ria, you're not too good with the spooky stuff, aren't you?"

Ria (annoyed):

"It doesn't scare me, if that's what you're implying. I just find it annoying how people buy into such illogical nonsense."

PLAYER (inner monologue):

"...I still don't understand why Ria joined the Occult Club..." <- callback to previous chapter

Ria (irritated):

"We have no time to waste on chasing fairy tales. We're better off staying here and learning more about the culprit."

Cece (closed eyes):

"Okay, okay, you can go ahead and investigate your boring little lounge. I, however, cannot resist the allure of the occult."

Writing + Narrative Design Samples (Andy Bae)

May 26th, 2026

Cece (happy):

"PLAYER, come with me!"

PLAYER (surprised):

"Huh? Me?"

Cece:

"Yeah, it'll be fun!"

Cece (smile): <- her "smile" sprite is a little creepy, which adds to the suggestiveness of the line

"Just you...and me...alone...in a dark little attic..."

Ria (thinking):

"...." <- Ria would normally call out Cece's teasing, but she seems to be distracted a lot by this room...

PLAYER (thinking):

"Hrm..." <- show the protagonist's expression here because (inner monologue) hides her face sprite

PLAYER (inner monologue):

"...I guess there's nowhere else worth checking besides the **attic** or the **lounge**..."

"And if these two are going to split up, I have to make a choice to go with one of them..."

PLAYER (neutral):

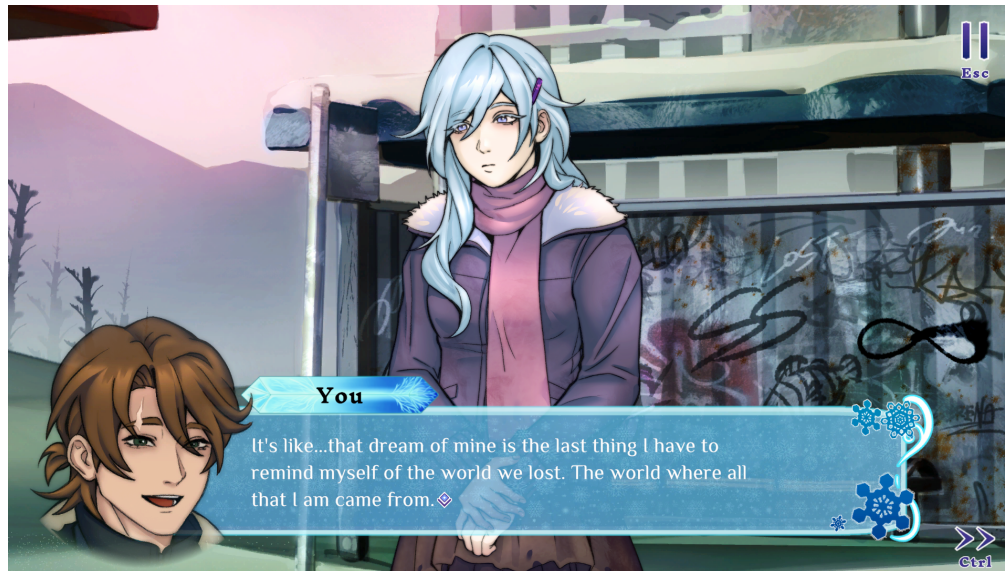
"Okay, I'll..."

CHOICE:

1. Go with Cece to the **Attic**
2. Stay with Ria in the **Lounge**

Depending on the above choice, the player goes to either the Attic story branch or Lounge story branch, each having exclusive clues for the overarching mystery. The player is encouraged to explore both options, starting with whichever location OR character interests them first.

Dialogue Sample - Emotional



Context:

The player-controlled protagonist (simply called "You") is attempting to convince a "Lone Girl" waiting at a bus stop to return to a safe shelter with him through an emotional appeal. He is sharing his own perspective on the "end of the world" that is much more optimistic than that of the Lone Girl.

*Note: as this is a visual novel, the notes in () parentheses next to character names indicate their visible pose and/or facial expression changed during that specific dialogue line.

You (closed eyes):

"Sure, things won't ever be the same as they were. And we can't bring back the people we've lost."

You (smile):

"But...I'd always dreamed of dedicating my life to protecting others. And I'm so, so grateful that I can still do that."

"It's like...that dream of mine is the last thing I have to remind myself of the world we lost. The world where all that I am came from."

"And having that means I can still consider this world my home. ...And a home is a warm place, right?"

Lone Girl (pained look): <- was previously (thinking)

"...."

"How could you think like that?" <- preceded by a pause for dramatic effect + let the music fade out

You (surprised):

"Heh?"

Lone Girl (leering):

"The world ENDED. We lost everything."

Writing + Narrative Design Samples (Andy Bae)

May 26th, 2026

"How can you possibly think that this world has any warmth left to offer?"

You (neutral):

"...." <- quietly hearing her out

Lone Girl (pained look):

"And even if you could bring warmth back to this world..."

"What about those you couldn't save? The ones who died without any reason or meaning... Are we supposed to just pretend they never existed?!"

You (smile):

"...Believe me, I've thought about that."

Lone Girl (leering):

"...."

You (closed eyes):

"Choosing to do what I do... It comes with the burden...the weight of every life that slips through my fingers." <- emotional music starts playing here

"But...I think the only reason I haven't lost my mind yet is because I'm not doing this alone."

Lone Girl (surprised):

"...." <- no words, but her expression is loosening

You (smile):

"My team... The rest of the ERC... And even the survivors we've rescued..."

"We're all doing whatever we can to help. To keep our spirits up during this absolute worst period of our lives."

"...I think...constantly knowing that other people are desperately trying to achieve the same dream as you..."

"It makes you sure that those we've lost would want the same thing, even if they can't be a part of it."

"And that turns everything we do into a service for absolutely everyone. There's a warmth in that alone, to be honest."

Lone Girl (thinking):

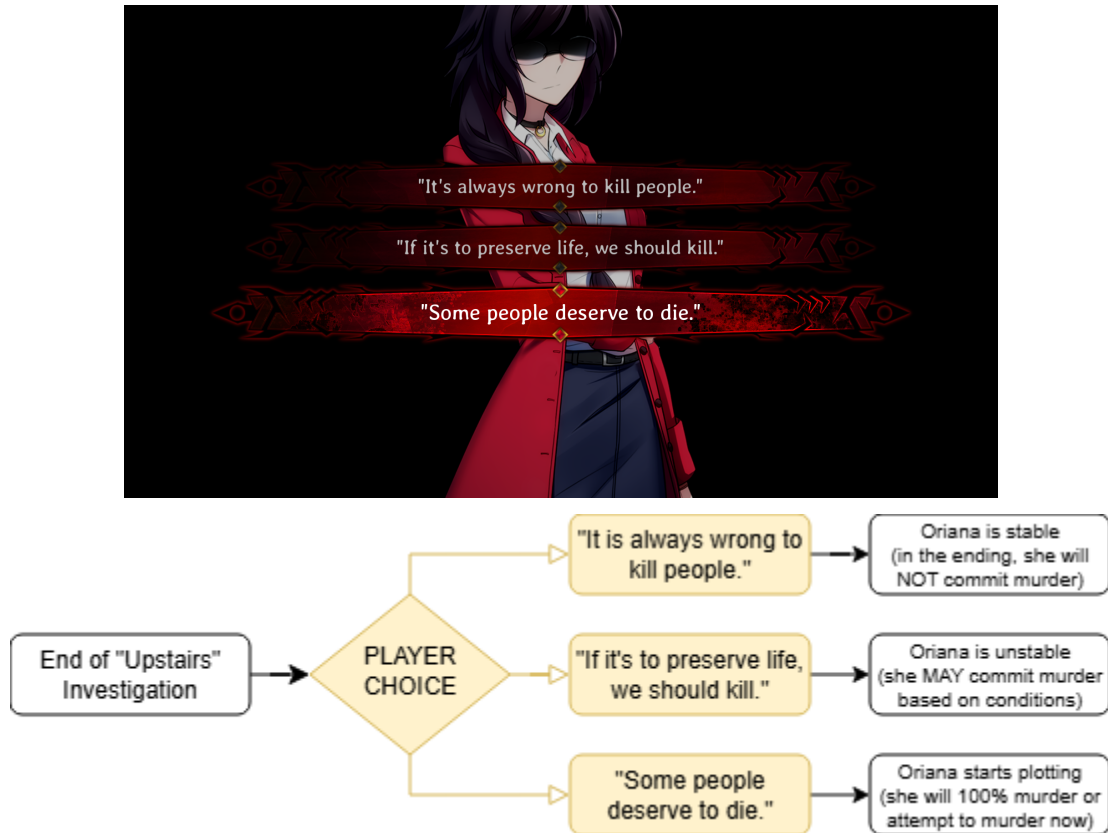
"...."

Lone Girl (pained look):

"...You are truly blessed, then..."

The scene (and the current route) ends with her leaving quietly, and the player receives a "Truth Crystal", indicating that this was an important ending relevant to and needed for the "true ending".

Branching Dialogue - Simple Divergence

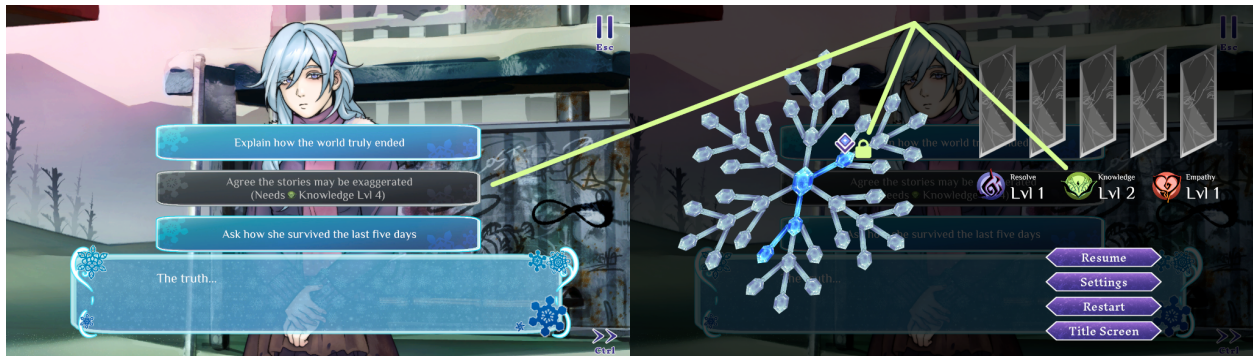


After completing the "Upstairs" investigation, Oriana will show severe distraught over their situation (i.e. being pressured to kill each other) before asking the protagonist about her opinion on if murder can be justified. The player can make the choice on what the protagonist says in this moment.

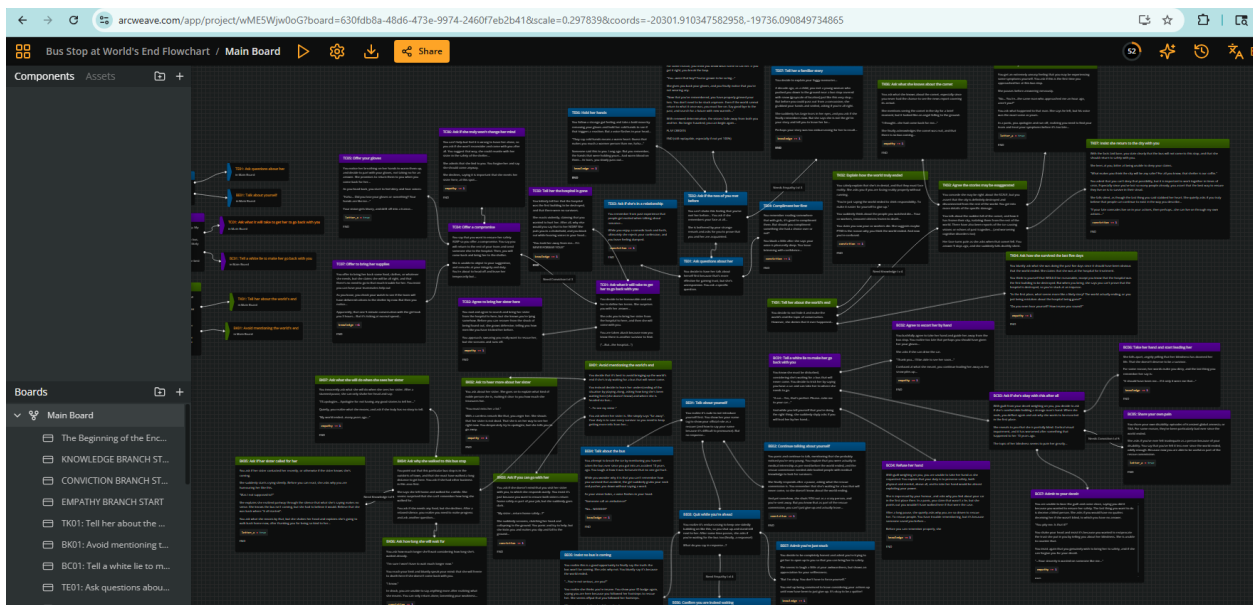
Depending on the choice made, Oriana will be set to either "kill" or "not kill", and the ending the player gets is dependent on how this setting relates with the same "kill" or "not kill" setting for Cecilia (another character). Furthermore, the middle option, "If it's to preserve life, we should kill.", becomes like the bottom option and sets Oriana to "kill" if the player has already seen the ending where Cecilia kills Oriana. This is because early playtesting revealed **players were assuming the middle and bottom options were the same severity** and experienced frustration when the middle option led to the same ending of Cecilia killing Oriana instead of something different.

As endings where Oriana kills Cecilia necessitate Oriana abandoning her personal ethics and sanity, it was important for the narrative design that the player either feels **personally responsible** for setting her path (i.e. picking the bottom option) or **has context** on why such a principled character resorted to extreme measures (i.e. having witnessed Cecilia cruelly kill Oriana in a previous playthrough first).

Branching Dialogue - Complex Divergence (Arcweave)



Certain choices in "Bus Stop at World's End" necessitates a sufficient "stat" level, which is increased by making other, unblocked choices and reaching the subsequent endings. In the above example, the player is unable to choose "Agree the stories may be exaggerated" until they first increase their "Knowledge" to level 4 by exploring other branches of the flowchart first--and very likely, collecting narrative hints as to why the "stories" about the world's end may indeed be exaggerated. To further encourage replayability, dialogue can be fast-forwarded anytime, and the average length of reaching any ending without fast-forward is only 5 minutes.



Planning and testing of the story branching was first done via Arcweave, a powerful and reputable narrative design tool. I found this especially useful to avoid planning endings that are too similar, and ensure "stat" increases are spread out in a way that encourages players to explore freely and without going through dialogue choices in a fixed, routine way. This created a unique "open-world" narrative game where no two players experienced the overarching story in the same way.

Narrative Systems - Responding to Player Speech

I worked closest with Vistro Entertainment's earliest prototypes of an AI-driven "conversation engine", a system that listens for and analyzes player speech to determine which pre-written response from the character would be most appropriate for the game, story scene, or simulation.

Garcia: I have only met Charlie a few times. He has not been working at this cafe for a long time.

Input: what do you think of Charlie

Intent: what_does_CHARACTER_know_about

Entity: CHARACTER You

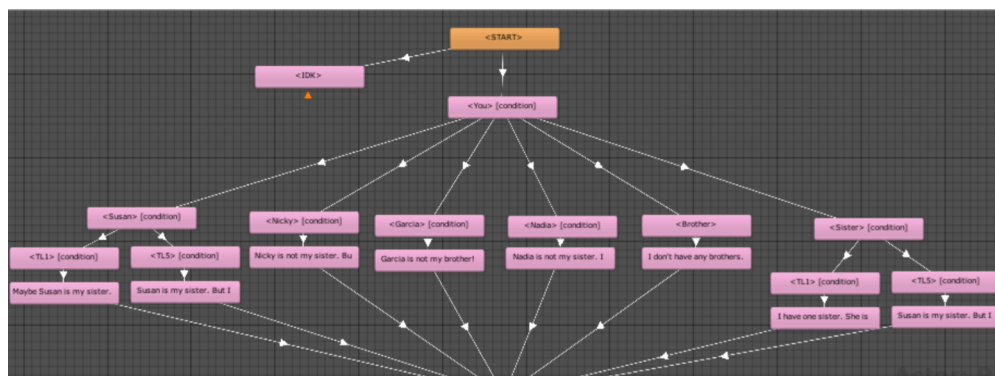
EntityValue: CHARACTER Charlie



sorry_about_that_sorry_im_sorry	Garcia	1	You are forgiven. My friend!
thank_you_thanks_thanks_so_much	Garcia	1	You are most welcome, my friend!
this_isn't_working_this_is_dumb_vr_isn't_work	Garcia	1	My apologies for causing you trouble. Perhaps I'm still dazed from vr
was_nadia_on_susans_computer	Garcia	1	I would know nothing about Susan's computer.
was_there_anything_else_in_the_box_you_hic	Garcia	1	There was nothing else in that box besides dainty white tablecloth!
what_are_you_doing_here	Garcia	1	I am musing over my next few art deals while eagerly anticipating for
what_did_nadia_copy_off_the_video	Garcia	1	I know nothing about meddling with videos. Technology these days b
what_did_the_painting_look_like_how_big_wa	Garcia	1	The painting is about the size of a large book, and depicts a woman's
what_did_you_copy_off_the_film	Garcia	1	I know nothing about meddling with videos. Technology these days b
what_did_you_find_on_the_cameras	Garcia	1	I do not have access to the security cameras or videos. Ask Nicky or
what_did_you_hear_charlie_say	Garcia	1	All I know is that Charlie apparently saw nothing suspicious.
what_did_you_hear_garcia_say	Garcia	1	I am Garcia. I know what I know. But it isn't much.
what_did_you_hear_nadia_say	Garcia	1	I haven't seen nor heard much of Nadia today. I believe she was in th
what_did_you_hear_nicky_say	Garcia	1	Nicky told me that the painting was missing from the box of tablecloth
what_did_you_hear_susan_say	Garcia	1	I don't think Susan knows about the painting. You will have to confir
what_do_you_know_about_charlie	Garcia	1	I have only met Charlie just a couple of times. He hasn't been workin
what_do_you_know_about_garcia	Garcia	1	I am Garcia so I know everything about Garcia.

This was a unique role where I grew to take on more responsibilities over time, starting from:

1. Writing dialogue that conveys the distinct personalities of each character
2. Ensuring dialogue was consistent with lore and character relationships
 - a. In the above image, "Garcia" knows "Charlie" is a recent hire, but not much else.
3. Marking dialogue lines to be different depending on variables related to the characters' or the game's progression
4. Getting story updates and determining what new dialogue the characters need to be able to respond with (e.g. questions related to security cameras, computers, etc.)
5. Participating in design discussions on how art, audio, and music can support the storytelling
6. Optimizing workflows to get shorter dialogue lines with fewer redundancies
7. Designing entire scenarios (i.e. plot, characters) for new prototypes that use this system



Besides writing and narrative design, I also assisted the development of prototypes by directly implementing dialogue lines in Unity. This was especially helpful for new prototypes where both programming and QA departments were less informed on the story and needed my input to confirm narrative content was accurate.

Narrative Systems - Syncing with Level Design



For a new story-driven feature in a popular mobile game, I collaborated closely with a level designer, my colleague at This Game Studio, to set up cutscenes, as well as ensure tutorials had well-paced, explanatory yet "flavourful" dialogue.

My specific responsibilities:

1. Bridging our level designer and engineers with external narrative and localization leads
 - a. Example: the tutorial dialogue for Starfruits appears when the first Starfruit becomes collectable (not when it is actually tapped and collected), meaning the Fairy Godmother's dialogue needs to state it was "discovered", not "picked up" by the player.
2. Collecting and entering activation IDs and localization string IDs for dialogue entered into a master spreadsheet
3. Referencing internal documentation, fan communities, and in-game content to confirm lore consistency of new content
4. Writing test plans and checklists for QA to follow for the new content
5. Editing dialogue based on expected gameplay or technical limitations (e.g. following character limits, ensuring clear language for tutorials)
6. Pitching and designing a "Story So Far" summarization sub-feature for players who experience the story in small, delayed bites
7. Doing day-to-day check-ins with external localization leads to confirm story and lore details
8. Eventually directly assisting in writing new dialogue and lore for later chapters