

Project 1: Crazy cat game

Objective



To develop and refine ideas in writing using planning and problem-solving strategies (Year 4, Strand 9).

What's on the CD-ROM



Crazy cat game

- Type notes and instructions about how to play the game.

Writing template

- Game template for writing detailed instructions under the headings 'What you need' and 'How to play'.

What to do

The aim of this activity is for the children to work in pairs to decide how a game is played and then write two types of instructions – those that tell you how to play the game before you start and those that tell you what to do as you go around the board.

If children are unfamiliar with the conventions of this type of board game, you can make opportunities for them to play one or two, such as Snakes and Ladders. In a shared session, explore some of the typical features, such as rolling dice and counting along squares.

Discuss different types of playing instructions – those that tell you how to play the game before you start and those that tell you what to do as you go around the board (for example, miss a turn, move on two spaces and so on).

- Hand out sheets of photocopiable pages 38 and 39, printed out onto A3. As a class, talk about how a game might be played.
- Explain that the boxes with thicker outlines feature illustrations that tell you what to do. Organise the children into pairs and start by coming up with ideas about mischievous and well-behaved things that the crazy cat might do, and incidents that happen. The bad things will probably be funnier and more interesting than the good (for example 'gets stuck in a washing machine' or 'chases the dog next door'), but encourage the children to put in a few good things to help the game to progress.
- Remind them that players are usually held up when they land on a 'bad' square and moved on (or given an extra go) when they land on something 'good'.
- Look at the instruction on square 3. Open the CD-ROM file 'Crazy Cat Game' and ask the children to type in instructions for each illustration; or they can write their instructions on the photocopiable sheet. They can also draw their own illustrations in the outlined boxes on the sheet.
- Look at the last screen of the CD-ROM file. This invites the children to write about how to play the game. Together, read the prompts on the screen and then ask the children to type in ideas of how the game should be played.
They should consider points such as:
 - What things make you move on?
 - How do you score?
 - What happens when you land on a square with an instruction?
 - Where do you finish?
- Using the game template on the CD-ROM ask the children to write their own detailed instructions on how to play the game.
- Display a photo-enlarged copy of the evaluation questions on page 46, 'Peer review' to help them in their final task. Ask the children to edit their work, then give their instructions to another pair and ask them to test them out.