

“Open World” Texts: A Framework for Analyzing Recombinatory Writing Games (RWGs)

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Abstract: This paper uses a literary studies and game-based design approach to propose a theoretical framework for understanding, assessing, and designing recombinatory writing games (RWGs) as well as for establishing the relationship between RWGs and the larger category of creative writing games for reading (CWGR). Central to understanding this framework is the way RWGs integrate and develop Surrealist and Oulipo writing techniques (play, collaboration, juxtaposition, and constraint) to democratize traditional notions of Literature in order to create the inclusive, non-judgmental arena necessary to establish open world exploration and creativity as motivators in writing games for reading. This paper develops a theoretical approach and then uses it to analyze example games and prototypes to clarify *divergence*, *juxtaposition*, *textuality*, *open world*, and *play* as the key aspects of the framework. No framework has yet been established for examining CWGR or RWGs, thus this paper represents a necessary foundation for future research and design as well as an essential part of the larger project aimed at developing creativity and inclusivity as motivators for game-based reading and writing.

Keywords: Creative Writing, Reading, Games, Literature, Open World, Surrealism

1. Introduction

The West assumes Shakespeare wrote the greatest works of all time. This notion has kept a very good writer’s work alive, however, the hierarchy of genius reduces the inclusivity of Literature, and undermines creative, exploratory approaches to reading and writing, particularly for the majority of students, who do not identify as geniuses or even writers (Waitman, 2009; Runco, 2014). This along with the fact that writing in school is primarily associated with assessment (Boscolo and Hidi, 2007), creativity is increasingly perceived as childish as students progress academically (Jones, 2023; James and Nerantzi 2019), and the majority of educational reading games are not aimed at advanced reading, sets up a difficult task for those wishing to inspire upper-secondary students.

This paper proposes a framework for examining how game-based approaches to rearranging classic texts—recombinatory writing games (RWGs)—can motivate players by establishing a playful, building, exploratory experience comparable to open world games like *Minecraft*. This experience opens an inclusive creative space by democratizing the hierarchies associated with writing and Literature, and its recombinatory aspect facilitates creative and interpretive interactions with a primary text by combining Surrealist game-based techniques, the algorithmic recombination of the Oulipo, and the practice of “critical deformation”: the idea that textual reorganization can serve as an effective method for critical analysis (McGann, 2001). To analyze this game-based process, *divergence*, *juxtaposition*, *textuality*, *open world*, and *play* are proposed as an analytical framework.

2. Surrealist, Game-based, Combinatory Writing

Surrealist writing games democratize traditional notions of Literature by turning the artistic process into a collaborative exploration focused on the concepts of “chance” and “the marvelous” (Durozoi, 2004, p. 65). “Chance” and “the marvelous” are technical terms referring to the way two objects combined at random (chance) can function to inspire new ideas (the marvelous). Surrealist methods modify French parlor games to develop a suite of collaborative, chance-based, combinatory games focusing on the production of surprising juxtapositions. The most famous textual example, *Exquisite Corpse*, asks players to write part of a single sentence while blind to what other players have written. The chance-based intersection of sentence parts is given overall coherence by syntax: article + adjective + noun + etc. The game transforms the notion of artistic production from the product of singular genius to a collaborative, playful, combinatory process.

This process revolves around the moment of unfolding, an action that reveals and connects the individually produced texts. Unfolding actively combines writer and reader, as each writer becomes a reader of a final text that they have co-authored but have never seen in full. This collaborative reading also pertains to future readers: the crease left by the fold acts as a material acknowledgment of the collaborative and chance-based process for any future reader (Laxton, 2009). This awareness of the text’s collaborative creation transforms “reading” from the traditional notion of *convergent* sense making or comprehension (Bos et al., 2015), into a search for surprising and *divergent* juxtapositions, an experience comparable to that of the original writers/readers.

Collaborative, combinatory writing also challenges the notion of the text as fixed information in a one-way knowledge transfer from writer to reader. This is replaced with text as trace of playful process where connections can work at varying levels of cohesion. This may even go so far as to include “failure”; however, the measure of a “failed” juxtapositions is established by the reader rather than the writer, representing a further level of both textual openness and reader inclusion. This is in direct contrast to the way we typically read Shakespeare: as a set of ingenious connections established centuries ago and delivered to us under the threat of assessment.

The central mechanic of Surrealist writing games—juxtaposition—went on to influence the field of 20th century art (Lusty, 2021), to be used pedagogically in the field of Creative Writing, particularly songwriting (Pattison, 2010; Gooderson and Henley, 2017), and has recently been shown to improve solution-based processes (Mastria et al., 2022). In almost all fields, however, the emphasis on product has re-established a product- and assessment-focused process that undermines inclusion and creativity. Key to understanding the potential of Surrealist process is to understand this forgotten democratic aspect: how combinatory game design sets up a participatory community that transforms the writing and reading experience into in a creative and inclusive search for surprising textual juxtapositions.

3. Recombinatory Writing and “Critical Deformation”

While the Surrealists used these methods to produce original works of art, the experimental group Oulipo used combinatory methods as filters on source texts. Their methods quantify the “marvelous” juxtaposition in Surrealist game design, shifting from chance as a mechanic for sourcing texts (players write whatever they want) to data mining (a source text is mined by one of their algorithms) in what amounts to a mechanization of the combinatory process (Motte, 1986). For example, the ten sonnets of Raymond Queneau’s *One Hundred Thousand Billion Poems* can be recombined to produce 10^{14} poems. Rather than a singular combination driven by individual players, this method runs basic algorithms to explore a nearly infinite number of combinations on a source text. While Surrealist method decenters the artistic product, the Oulipo jettisons it completely; the point is not the poems but the mathematical rules (“constraint”) driving the composition (Motte, 1986). In essence, the process replaces traditional creative writing with algorithmic textual design.

While *One Hundred Thousand Billion Poems* still acknowledges individual genius, running its constraint on Queneau’s poetry, $S + 7$ represents a combinatory equation, involving no original work except what is produced by running the constraint (it replaces every noun in a text with the dictionary entry seven places from the original). This procedural filtering treats the original text as *material* from which to systematically “fold” a “new” text (Queneau, 1986). Writer becomes coder, designing algorithms to create a productive recombination of the original text. The approach jettisons the notion of a single product to such a degree that even the process produced, $S + 7$, represents only one of numerous potential algorithmic processes of this type.

The Oulipo did some work on turning this combinatory approach into a method for literary interpretation, but this was not taken seriously until Jerome McGann coined the term “critical deformation” and made an in-depth argument that isolating parts of a literary text can reveal connections and thus serve as a critical reading tool (McGann, 2001; Ramsay, 2011). As McGann’s deformations are too complex to present briefly, Yedda Morrison’s conceptual artwork can clarify this approach. In her critical deformation “*Darkness, All that/the Remains: a biocentric reading of Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness, 1902*”, Morrison (2012, p.177) erases “all things human” from the novel so that *Heart of Darkness* opens with enormous gaps:

flood

wind

river.

Rather than raising her original environmental questions, however, the process introduced ethical questions about race: “erase whites only? Thereby erasing colonialism? So blacks are “part of nature”? Erase blacks? As in erasing black history? Again?” (p. 177). This highlights the divergent and emergent nature of critical deformation. Rather than selecting quotes to support a predefined argument, ideas and critical questions emerge in the deformation process, which is essentially a Surrealist folding of the text driven by an Oulipian algorithm.

The presence of the fold as a mechanic in critical deformation reveals the surprisingly coherent and useful nature of this wildly divergent, collaborative, playful and sometimes nonsensical mechanic. In essence, critical deformation aims for the Surrealist product (surprising juxtaposition) with an Oulipean approach (systematic

exploration). The only characteristic absent is the rule-based framework: Oulipo has “constraints”, Surrealism has parlor games, but critical deformation lacks a clearly defined set of rules to direct the process.

4. Creative Writing and Expressive Deformation

The lack of defined process in critical deformation makes it useful for experts but reduces the collaborative element and gears the method away from inclusion and towards experts. An example of this is the critical deformation “*Imagining Nonlinear Reading*”, a word-cloud concordance of Dylan Thomas (see figure 1) built in digital, immersive 3D (Jones, 2012). Late one night at the lab, a student saw the word clouds and exclaimed, “Wow, that’s beautiful!” This, however, was quickly followed by, “So...how do you play it?”

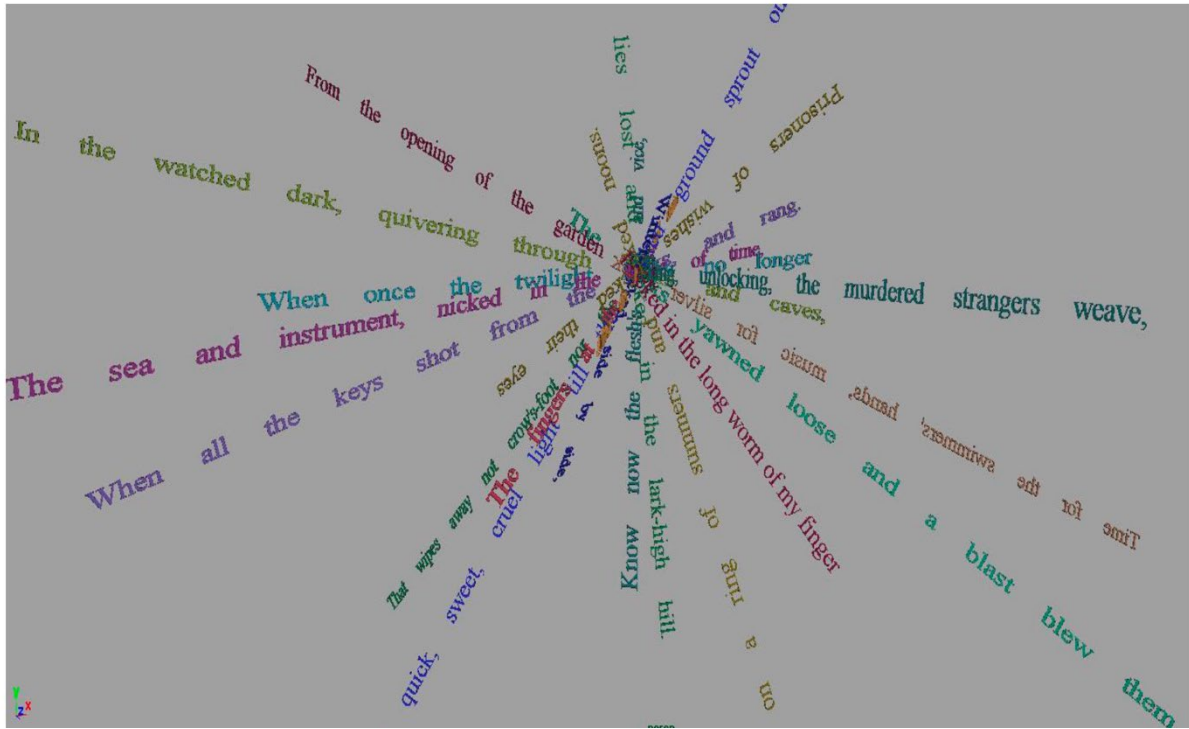


Figure 1: *Imagining Non-linear Reading*: word cluster surrounding “lock”

The lack of clearly defined methods in critical deformation has been overcome to some extent in the field of Creative Writing (CW) by emphasizing the artistic and expressive nature of the output. A common example of this kind of expressive deformation is the “replacement poem”, an exercise where a poem missing key words is completed by students (Gropp and Jorgenson, 2020). As a critical deformation, this process reveals the incredible density and complex linguistic structures of good poetry; however, the motivator in CW is often the creation of a new expressive piece. In other words, the answer CW gives is that the product is beautiful, regardless of its usefulness. This removes the “critical” element from the process, but it reveals the incredible power of presenting reading from a design perspective, where the reader identifies themselves as a builder, modifying and building one text from another, developing their goals and processes as they go.

In CW, framing the writer as builder/designer moves reading from an information search to a process of mining the master texts for building blocks (ideas, structures, language, syntax) to use in a new artistic product. This designer/builder frame also creates an inclusive relationship to Literature. It doesn't matter if Shakespeare hands over the brick or if it is lying in the street. For students who see themselves as creative, this represents a goldmine in terms of producing engagement with literary texts. The problem with this, however, is twofold: first, creative self-expression does little to engage students who do not see themselves as creatives (Boscolo and Hidi, 2007); second, the central goal of critical deformation is not to produce art but to engage in interpretation. So, how do you adapt deformations as critical tools while motivating "non-creative" users?

This paper proposes five categories of analysis for writing games that attempt to do just that: *divergence*, *juxtaposition*, *textuality*, *open world*, and *play*. This framework can be used to analyze the extent to which the broader category of creative writing games for reading (CWGR) develop an open-world, exploratory, building

experience and establish divergent creativity as a motivator for rule-based recombination. In other words, the framework assesses CWGR as game-based critical deformations, i.e. as recombinatory writing games (RWGs).

5. Creative Writing Games for Reading (CWGR)

Replacement poems qualify as CWGR, however, they allow the writer to use any words they like in the replacement, which means the level of recombination is lower than if the writer were allowed only text from the original. Party games like *Apples to Apples* are also CWGR, however, they have no relationship whatsoever to a primary text. Thus, they are combinatory as opposed to recombinatory. And both these approaches use Surrealist and Oulipo methods like chance and the fold to varying degrees to drive their processes. In view of this radical variety in CWGR, the present paper proposes a framework to specifically examine the extent to which these processes use rules/constraints (“games”), collaborative or chance juxtaposition, and a “playful” (Stenros, 2015) or divergent approach to create inclusive, “open worlds” for design/builder-based textual exploration. This framework will be developed by looking at the way RWGs combine game-based design with the motivation of CW combinatory practice (traditional notions of writing a poem), allowing creativity and self-expression to function even for users with low self-efficacy in creative writing. The analysis will find that RWGs develop an open world, sandbox/building relationship between the reader (who functions as a co-writer) and the literary text: words become material, like the blocks of *Minecraft*, and writing becomes exploration (skimming), building/designing (text mining), and solving (reading). The games imply that one need not be an artistic genius; one need only stack blocks in interesting ways.

In many ways, *Minecraft* set up this game-based approach by redefining the notion of what makes a video game. One of the most played games in the world, it is not really a game at all: there is little sense of competition, scoring, or goals beyond exploration and building (Duncan, 2011). It is almost solely based upon the motivation provide by design/building. The first version plopped the player down by a beach with no goal beyond placing blocks and smashing them: “left click to place or mine blocks” (Person, 2009). *Minecraft* remains hugely popular (nearly one million online now according to activeplayer.io/minecraft) despite its rudimentary graphics, and while it has added some first-person shooter and survival elements, it remains fundamentally an exploration and building platform (Duncan, 2011).

In *Minecraft*, “playing” consists of wandering an infinite world and building freely. Like *Roblox*, the central “game” mechanic is design. Likewise, recombinatory writing games (RWGs) are only games in the sense that they present reading and writing as a design-based experience. Rather than a beach, a RWG plops the player down in a work of literature with the essential motivator being to smash things up and reassemble them in new ways. The master literary text becomes the blocks in *Minecraft*, each word equivalent to a different material. The rules built into language (grammar, sense, and narrative), make a very simple rule (line them up) quite complex. In *Minecraft*, players learn that different combinations create different effects; in RWGs, the player arrives with long training in their language’s grammatical, syntactical, and narrative combinations. While *Minecraft* began with thirty blocks (grown to over 800), blocks in a RWG are equivalent to the user’s vocabulary.

The measure of the open world aspect of an RWG can be understood in contrast to the closed, solution-based aspects these games also employ. For example, storytelling games are collaborative creative writing games whose goal is to reach a particular set ending (Perez & Bidarra, 2022), so the parts are creative, but the ending is solution-based. *Apples to Apples* is probably the most a popular purely recombinatory game: the texts are fixed, players select what text to play, and the combinatory result is judged by a single player. This makes it solution-based, though a solution based predominantly on the interpersonal dynamics of public judging. Both storytelling games and games like *Apples to Apples* are RWGs, however, they do not focus recombination on an original text. Thus, one might argue that they are creative writing games that use recombination, but their goal is essentially creative or communal as opposed to critical, as the deformation aspect is absent.

Even in CWGR that succeed in recombining an original text, there is the consideration of how and to what level. The highest level of “textuality” would be a game like *Dylan Thomas Dominoes* (Jones, 2021) that *only* uses the text of the original literary text under consideration in its deformation. Remove the game element from this approach, and you have something comparable to a text-analysis tool like Voyant, the product of the game comparable to an information visualization or “direct visualization” (Manovich, 2011). A direct visualization uses “distant reading” (Morretti, 2005)—a computational and quantitative approach that visualizes large quantities of text—to move “distant” enough from a text that it becomes a map of its own internal relationships. A simple example of this would be an author’s complete works laid out in chronological order with all positive words highlighted in red. From a distance this becomes a density plot of the writer’s positive word use over time.

CWGR with low textuality do not necessarily lose their function as deformations. While dismissing it as “subjective”, McGann does include “adding” in his definition of critical deformation mechanics: “reordering”, “isolating”, “altering”, and “adding” (2001). An example of a RWG that uses recombination of the original text but also allows subjective addition is “One into another”. This Surrealist game, redesigned as an RWG (“analogy riddle”) in a recent study (Jones, 2023), asks students to make riddles out of two terms in a literary text. While the goal is to compare terms, the riddle clues are user-based and thus represent an addition to the text under analysis. This moves the product away from the original text and into the student’s contemporary experience. As such, it represents a lower “textuality” or use of the original text; however, it can allow for a higher level of divergent thinking, as the analogy can go anywhere, and grounding a comparison in student experience can also increase the open world aspect, as it opens the text outward to connect with the student’s world.

One of the central design challenges of a fully open-world game is the high cognitive load of exploration-based, building/design mechanics: too much openness in a game can leave the player/writer lost. This is why zombie attacks were added to the early version of Minecraft (Duncan, 2011). This gave players a sense of something specific to do: build for protection. Misguided notions of creativity as a completely open and free activity produce this problem of cognitive load: a lack of guidance can make creative play “grueling”, as Margaret Robertson points out in her *Minecraft* game analysis (2010). On the other hand, a more solution-based system that leads to a pre-determined answer, while reducing cognitive load, limits the ability for an RWG to foster open exploration. Play is replaced with the race for a single solution.

This paper’s exploration of Surrealist game design, Oulipo algorithmic composition, and critical deformation serves as the foundation for understanding RWGs as *interfaces that use open world game design to aim the creativity of combinatory writing at critical deformation*. The rest of this paper explores specific mechanics and games with the goal of clarifying the relationship between CWGR and RWGs. While this paper focuses on the framework, a future paper will present data from an ongoing research project designing and testing RWGs in Norwegian upper-secondary schools (Jones, 2023).

6. Freewriting as Experiential Frame and Mechanic

In CWGR, the open space of freewriting can function to develop both a divergent (Baer, 1993) and playful (Stenros, 2015) mindset as well as to train users in creativity as skill, motivator, and game objective. This, in turn, gives the player the skills and mindset necessary to experience recombinatory textual play as an open world.

The primary rule in freewriting is not to stop. This dismissal of judgment opens the low-stakes space essential for divergent performance (Amabile, 1982). In the 1980’s, Peter Elbow famously developed narrative freewriting as a critical tool in American university writing courses (1973/1998); however, freewriting is fundamentally at odds with RWGs, as recombination reduces the words a writer can choose. In view of this, each of the following CWGR freewriting modifications train the user to navigate from the open space of divergent creativity toward the convergent (logical or solution-based) space of critical thinking and writing:

Open freewriting has no constraints, the only rule to keep writing. It functions to 1. Establish an experience of freewriting from which the other forms diverge, acting as a baseline for navigating between divergent and convergent thinking; 2. Develop the skill of divergent thinking/writing to reduce the cognitive load of recombination so it can be experienced as an open world activity. 3. Refocus writing from coherence and self-expression to a game-like, playful, combinatory mechanic facilitated by constraints.

Blind freewriting asks writer to close their eyes. This disrupts the hand-to-eye connection of traditional writing, a disruption that encourages divergence and begins the embodying process that is part and parcel of making textual interaction an immersive, material process of exploratory block stacking.

“Word bomb” drops random words into the freewrite that the player must immediately incorporate. This produces a radically divergent moment that must be turned convergent (incorporated into the freewrite). Note that while open freewriting cannot be easily gamified, word bomb introduces the possibility of altering game speed and thus can be used for scoring and competition. These kinds of game elements are key to establish “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi and Le Fevre, 1989) and demonstrate how the relationship between aspects in the framework—in this case divergence vs. convergence—can become game elements.

Catchphrase drops logical phrases into a freewrite. The player must then continue writing from that phrase. While convergent in the sense that the phrase must make sense, these result in divergent moments when the phrase succeeds in turning the writing in a new direction. In CW, the term “I remember”, however, this typically

produces fluency over divergence. In the study associated with this paper, the catchphrase “Evil clowns should rule the world because” was used to combine convergent argument structures with divergent, playful content.

Non-sense asks players to put words together that *don’t* make sense. This works to reveal other linguistic capabilities associated with stacking word-blocks like rhyming, random, sight-based, alphabet-based, or algorithmic ordering. Non-sense also serves to physicalize the process by moving players toward sound (rhyming) and sight (writing whatever they see), which disrupts logical, convergent, narrative-based writing.

The five variations of freewriting can function as game mechanics. For example, the first stage of the RWG prototype *Poetry Planet* (Jones, 2024) sets the player up as a space explorer whose goal is to conquer the most territory on a planet surfaced in the words of a classical literary text. The first screen—“Blast Off”—is split, a rocket ship on the left and a writing area on the right. To “fuel” the rocket, the player goes through a series of freewriting variations. The only prompt given is “Words are rocket fuel—start writing!” Typing fuels the rocket, the goal to reach the top of the screen. “Blast off” trains the player in basic divergent writing skills, develops their sense of writing as an unjudged, open world experience (write whatever you want), and introduces them to word stacking (juxtaposing) as a mechanic for progressing in the game.

7. Game Analysis: Poetry Planet

After completing the “Blast Off” level, the player flies to a *Poetry Planet*, a planet wrapped in the text of a classic piece of literature or a text of the player’s/teacher’s choice. The text is strung from south to north as a single line of words, the reversal effected by the organization pre-deforming the text to a certain degree. The goal of the game is simple: conquer the most territory. To do this, players move from word to word, the only rule to make sentences. When the path a player leaves circles a chunk of text, they have “captured” it (see figure 2).

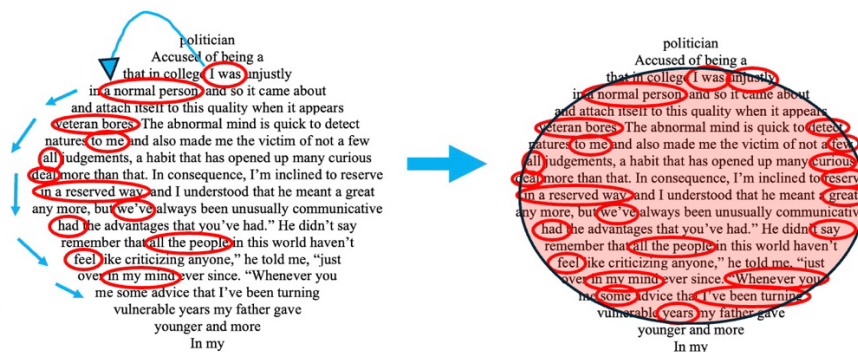


Figure 2: “Capture” in *Poetry Planet*

After capturing, a player can “mine” an area by playing “Mine the River” (see figure 3), a Tetris-like game where words drop from the top of the screen and must be dragged to the incline and ordered into sentences. The words dragged to the incline slowly slide down toward the pile. Once a sentence is completed on the incline, the trap door open and it is stored as “cargo”. The goal is to keep the screen from filling during the allotted time. Mining gives players necessary elements to repair their ship and text for use in battles with other players.

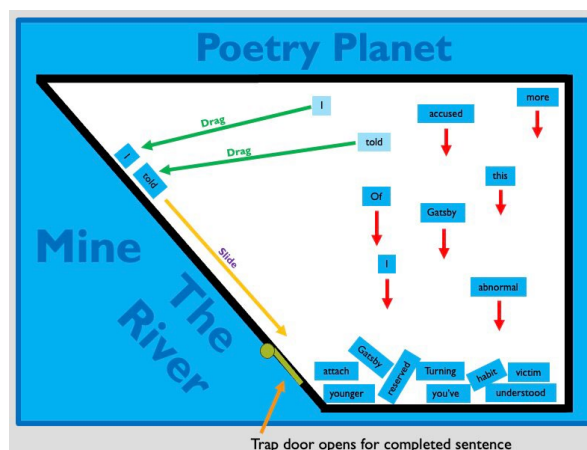


Figure 3: “Mining” with “Mine the River”

To win the game, players/teams can use any words in their “cargo” (all the sentences from “capture”, “mine”, and “battle”) to make a “riddle sentence”. Each team/player submits their riddle sentence for judging, and one is selected by majority player vote. Teams/players race to “solve” this riddle sentence by finding the location of each word on the textual planet (see figure 4). This mechanic is the one that most clearly moves from divergent word-block stacking toward convergent, solution-based thinking, as there are a limited number of correct answers. This mechanic also moves the player back to the original text (skimming to find pieces of the “riddle sentence”) and makes a knowledge of that text strategically advantageous for more quickly completing the riddle sentence. This is promising in terms of arguing that this RWG functions as a CWGR in terms of using recombination not simply as a game mechanic but to motivate interaction with the original text.

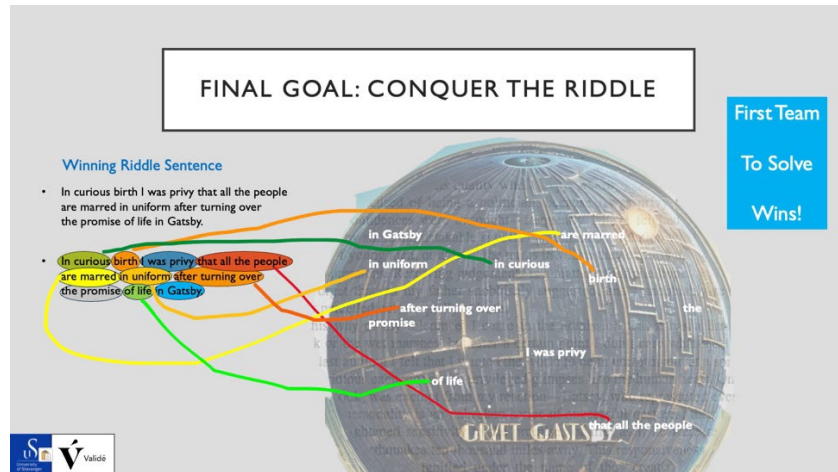


Figure 4: Screenshot of final stage of *Poetry Planet* prototype

The example of *Poetry Planet* shows us how game design can be used to direct highly divergent and subjective/additional writing (users freewrite with words not related to *Gatsby*) toward a second level that involves 100% textual recombinatory interactions (only *Gatsby* text is used in capture/conquer) through a third level of second-level recombination (designing a riddle sentence from recombinations built during gameplay) that sets up a potential foundation for critical analytical work (more complex riddle sentences build more complex conceptual juxtapositions/interpretations) toward a final riddle-solution stage, which is fundamentally convergent in terms of being solution-based (very few possible answers), and uses spatial immersion (fluency in the map of the planet/text) to set up an information visualization (knowledge about the spatial relationships between specific terms in relation to the overall planet).

Typically, RWGs only become clearly effective as reading tools when the games are followed by discussion and analysis that compares the game experience to a traditional reading of the text. While the game element in *Poetry Planet* has made deformation an accessible process, it has yet to do likewise with complex interpretation.

8. Using the Framework on *Poetry Planet*

This paper proposes the following framework for analyzing CWGR as RWGs:

- **Divergence:** the relationship of divergence to convergence in mechanics or game experience.
- **Juxtaposition:** the ways in which the game produces surprising juxtapositions from the original text.
- **Textuality:** the level to which a game uses the original literary text.
- **Open world:** mechanics and game experiences focused on free exploration and building.
- **Play:** the level to which the game uses a playful mindset as game experience or objective.

This framework reveals the following about *Poetry Planet*: 1. *Divergence*: *Poetry Planet*’s “Blast Off” stage is extremely divergent, the critical or even sense-making aspect of reading sidelined to speed and competition. The “word bomb” variation begins some movement toward convergence in the sense of forcing players to integrate the *Gatsby* text. The game grows progressively more convergent in terms of strategy- (team building) and solution-based (riddle solving). Overall, the prototype moves from an open world, divergent structure to a solution-based one, as there are a limited number of answers to the riddle sentence. The final search is the least divergent action, however, as it involves repeatedly looking for meaning in context, it develops textual familiarity which can scaffold divergent thinking in post-game interpretation; 2. *Juxtaposition and Textuality*: the central

mechanic of *Poetry Planet* is textual juxtaposition, however, in the open freewriting phase of “Blast Off”, there is no textuality (connection to the primary text), and as the player can write anything, surprising juxtapositions are less common than the later phases of constrained freewriting like “Word Bomb”. The “planet” in *Poetry Planet* is completely *textual* (100% from Gatsby) and is, in fact, already a *juxtaposition/deformation* as the text is organized such that new juxtapositions have already been laid out across the planet’s surface; 3. *Open world*: the immersive sense of approaching a planet makes the *open world* aspect both spatial and textual. It is spatial in the sense that a player can fly freely across a 3D text-planet and textual in terms of this paper’s central argument: the free, exploratory, building experience of creative recombination makes an “open world” of the original text; 4. *Play*: much of the play in *Poetry Planet* is sacrificed to game mechanics. For example, the speed of “Blast Off” make it less playful; however, the high level of recombination in a strategic master riddle sentence (designed to be hard to find) and the presence of an interested audience (the other team) increases the playfulness of the product. Note that there is almost no collaborative recombination in *Poetry Planet*.

9. Conclusion

This paper has used Surrealist and Oulipo theoretical approaches to set up a framework for understanding and exploring recombinatory writing games (RWGs) as a subset of creative writing games for reading (CWGR). RWGs use recombinatory rules that function like Oulipean “constraints” as a method for critical deformations driven by Surrealist game-based juxtapositions. This framework is important as it represent a step forward in the analysis and design of RWGs as useful tools in directing the motivation of creativity toward reading and writing. It also can be useful in examining the extent to which creative writing helpers like AILit (Bakken, 2024) or other literary games (specifically role-playing games like *Losswords*) could potentially integrate recombination as a method for creative engagement and textual analysis.

For reasons of space, a forthcoming paper will have to connect this framework to the data collected in “Gamifying Reading”, an ongoing study where RWG prototypes are being play-tested with 100 upper-secondary students in Norway accompanied by surveys examining how the games are experienced by different personality types (OCEAN model), by self-identified creatives versus non-creatives, and as a way to examine the difference between divergent versus solution-based aspects of the games on user experience and engagement. Specifically, this proposed framework will be useful to examine the data in the study. The final term that needs to be added in a future reworking of this framework is “criticality”: the level to which a game encourages, scaffolds, or produces critical reading of the original text.

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