LEADING IF DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

TWINE (CHOICE)

Twine is arguably the most accessible application with high potential depending on how much the creator is willing to dig in. It has its own easy-to-use languages that make creation of the story fairly simple, but allows the use of HTML, CSS, and Javascript to significantly broaden the possibilities as well as the difficulty.

INFORM 7 (PARSER)

Inform 7 has been around for a very long time in software years (circa '93) and is the head honcho of parser game development. If you are looking to create your own parser game, Inform is a great place to start.

TADS 3 (Parser)

Text Adventure Development System, or TADS, has been around for about as long as Inform and is a popular alternative. Many Parser IF developers have familiarity with one or the other. TADS has a bit more of a learning curve compared to Inform.

HONORABLE MENTION DEV TOOLS

QUEST or SQUIFFY (PARSER OR CHOICE)

The website textadventures.co.uk has two tools available for interactive fiction development: Quest and Squiffy. Quest is similar to Inform and TADS for creating parser games. Squiffy is similar to Twine for creating choice-based games. Both tools have had several years since their last update.

CHOICESCRIPT (CHOICE)

Games can be created for free, however, commercially sold games give a percentage of the profit to Choice of Games. Choice of Games also provides a platform to sell your titles.
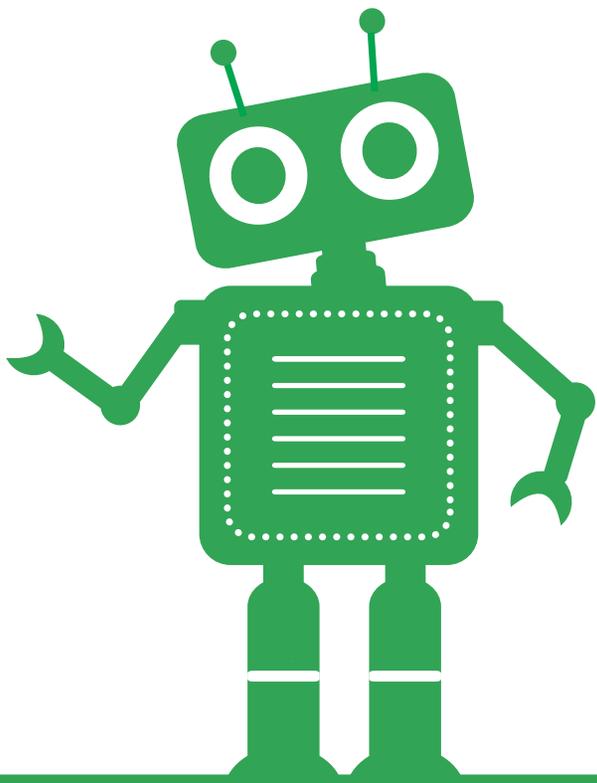
ADRIFT (PARSER)

Promotes itself as the lightest "programming required" parser development software available. There have been a few success stories coming from this title.

DABBLE BOX

BASICS

Interactive Fiction

rev. 7/21

WHAT IS INTERACTIVE FICTION?

Interactive fiction, or IF for short, is a broad term that may be used to describe a wide array of formats. Any video game that includes significant narrative is a type of interactive fiction. This guide covers parser- and choice-based interactive fiction titles.

IF TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION (IFTECHFOUNDATION.ORG)

An organization thats work on retaining interactive fiction as an art form. You will likely notice IF Tech Foundation's presence on many of the IF websites out there. Some affiliated sites include the Interactive Fiction Database (ifdb.org) and the Interactive Fiction Archive (ifarchive.org).

INTERACTIVE FICTION COMPETITION (IFCOMP.ORG)

The Interactive Fiction Competition has been held annually since 1995. For more info, visit the website.

INTERACTIVE FICTION APPS

CHOICE GAME LIBRARY: DELIGHT GAMES (ANDROID)
DELIGHT GAMES PREMIUM LIBRARY (IOS)
Choice-Based IF

Both of the above apps provide access to more than 70 of Delight Games' interactive fiction titles.

CHOICE OF GAMES (ANDROID & IOS)
Choice-Based IF

A popular app with dozens of IF titles. Title costs range from free to $10.

CHOICES: STORIES YOU PLAY (ANDROID & IOS)
Choice-Based IF

Provides several stories to play with frequent updates. Games have in-app purchases added but can be played without purchasing anything.

FABULARIUM: INTERACTIVE FICTION (ANDROID)
FROTZ (IOS)
Parser-Based IF

Apps that allow users to access various interactive fiction formats including TADS, Zcode, glulx, etc.

PARSER-BASED INTERACTIVE FICTION

Parser is a style of interactive fiction in which the user types in natural language to interact with the game. For example, you may enter a room and look around which will be described to you in text. You look more closely at something specific like an object in the room. The game tells you what it is. You decide to take, push, kick, open, stab, etc. whatever that item is. The game tells you what happens. You react to events and move from place to place, exploring the world in text.

```
>enter building

Inside building
You are inside a building, a well house
for a large spring.

There are some keys on the ground here.

There is tasty food here.

There is a shiny brass lamp nearby.

There is an empty bottle here.

>take keys
Taken.
```

—*Adventure* (1976)

NOTABLE PARSER IF TITLES

***Tavern Crawler* by Josh Labelle**
"A story about what happens AFTER you slay the dragon." —Interactive Fiction Competition (IFComp)

***Adventure* by William Crowther and Donald Woods**
"The original. What more can be said?" —Carl Muckenhoupt, Interactive Fiction Database (IFDB)

***Counterfeit Monkey* by Emily Short**
"Good luck getting off the island." —IFDB

***Zozzled* by Steph Cherrywell**
"Get splifficated on a snootful of ectoplasm in this paranormal puzzle comedy." —IFDB

***Anchorhead* by Michael Gentry**
"Uncover the roots of a horrific conspiracy inspired by the works of H. P. Lovecraft." —IFDB

CHOICE-BASED INTERACTIVE FICTION

Choice-based games are very similar to gamebooks, or books that let the reader choose a path through the story as they read it. A notable series of gamebooks is the Choose Your Own Adventure series. A narrative is displayed and the user is given a specific set of actions or choices. Based on the choices the user makes, the story follows a different path. The biggest difference between a physical gamebook and a digital choice-based story is that a physical book can only be so thick while a digital story has virtually no limit.

```
            Look alive, kids.
       Say hello to your new friend.

     The shadows start to take shape,
    stirring from sleep, untangling them-
    selves from ragged blankets on the floor.
        They're all around your age.

 LOOK AT THE MAN    |    LOOK AT THE CHILDREN
```

—*Bogeyman* (2018)

NOTABLE CHOICE IF TITLES

***The Impossible Bottle* by Linus Åkesson**
"Housework is only as dull as your imagination." —IFComp

***Choice of the Dragon* by Dan Fabulich and Adam Strong-Morse**
"Play as a fire-breathing dragon who sleeps on gold and kidnaps princesses for fun!" —IFDB

***Creatures Such As We* by Lynnea Glasser**
"A dating sim about how humanity connects through art, even out in the vastness of space." —IFDB

***Bogeyman* by Elizabeth Smyth**
"You can go home when you learn to be good." —IFDB

***Queers in Love at the End of the World* by Anna Anthropy (18+)**
"Fellas, is it gay to make out in the ashes of capitalism?" —itch.io