



## Narrative

### Halo 4 Official Trailer

Halo is a science fiction first-person shooter video game franchise developed by 343 Industries, a subsidiary of Microsoft Studios. The series centres on an interstellar war between humanity and an alliance of aliens known as the Covenant.

The games have sold over 65 million copies worldwide, with the games alone grossing almost \$3.4 billion due to huge marketing campaigns funded by Microsoft.

The Halo videogame series has always had close ties to the medium of cinema. The media language of the game is similar to that used by action cinema, and the games' characters are voiced by screen actors (Adrienne Barbeau). The game developers used motion capture to create realistic movement, and film composer Neil Davidge wrote the score for the game.

As well as the videogames, Microsoft Studios created a series of webisodes (5 instalments at 15 minutes each) that was set in the Halo Universe as part of the marketing campaign for Halo 4. It was later released as a full-length film for home media.

The marketing campaigns for the Halo franchise are often led by high production trailers that are shown in cinemas. These trailers are often live action and feature little actual 'game play'. Alongside impressive production values that showcase the games' science fiction genre, the trailers use narrative to sell the game to a mainstream audience.

This is known as 'gift wrapping': the process of applying a narrative to a game in order to encourage audience involvement.

Have students watch the trailer for Halo 4. Complete the grid, identifying narrative structures and codes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsWyP0LBikI>

Then get them to consider the following question:

How does the trailer for Halo Four use narrative codes to create audience appeal?