



Learning Scratch Jr via Playground Games

Lesson 1: Movement Blocks and the Reset Button

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In this lesson, students will learn how to use the Scratch Jr interface and they will write a simple program to make the cat travel to all four corners of the stage (the white area in the center of the screen). In the process, they will get a sense of the scale of the Scratch Jr stage in terms of how many steps it takes a character to traverse it. They will also learn that the reset button returns their character to its starting position.



Discussion (5-10 minutes):

What is a programmer? (The person who makes the apps that everyone else plays)

What other iPad Apps have you used? (LetterSchool, MathBlaster, AngryBirds, etc)

How is Scratch Jr different from other apps that you have used? (in Scratch Jr, you make up the games and the stories)

Note: Students who have used other iPad Apps may be expecting to be told how to “play the game.” It will take a few sessions for students to understand that with Scratch Jr, they make the game, or they tell the story, and it can be any game or any story they choose.

Mechanics - Using the Scratch Jr Interface (5-10 minutes). See “Character Animation Using the Scratch Jr Blocks” tutorial video at Scratch Jr.org.

1. From the Home screen:
 - Make a new project
2. From the main interface screen:
 - Show the Stage
 - Show the Programming Area
 - Show how to drag blocks to the Programming Area
 - Tap on blocks in the Programming Area to show how the cat moves on the stage
 - Show how to change the number on a block to move multiple times
 - Show how to snap blocks together to make a sequence of moves





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- Show how to return the character to its starting position with either the blue movement block or the Reset button above the stage. This is important because the students will need to reset their character's position after each attempt at figuring out the programming challenge.

Self-directed work (20 minutes):

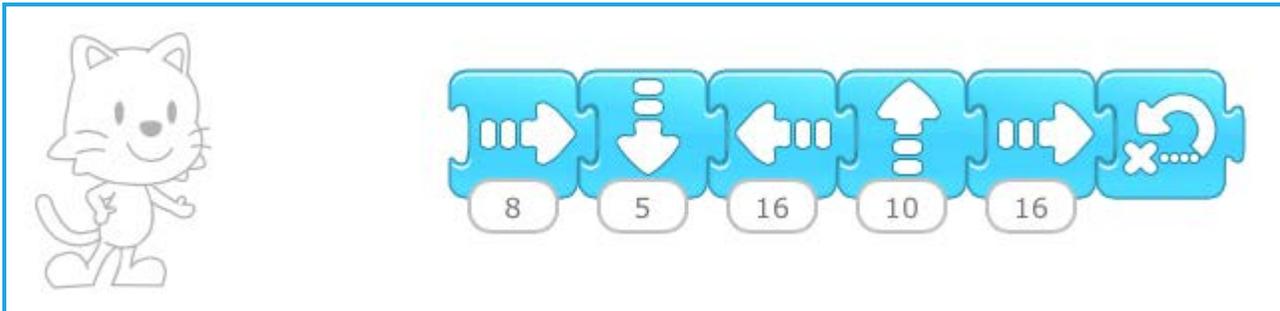
Using the blue movement blocks, make the cat travel to all four corners of the stage.

If you want a story to go with the activity, you could say that the cat is new to the playground and wants to look all around by visiting all four corners.

Make sure students know how to press the reset button to return the cat to its starting position when running the script multiple times (or put a reset block at the end of the script).

Students who complete the task may explore other areas of Scratch Jr on their own.

Here is a script that will work for this exercise, if you start the character in the middle of the stage:



Wrap-up (5-10 minutes):

Ask students who completed the task to show their projects to the class and explain what they did. This works best if you can connect individual ipads to a projector.

