An excerpt from "Read The Manual, If You Can " by Eugene Myers

When you read a game's manual before you ever pick up the controller to play it, your anticipation and excitement build. It captures your imagination—you create expectations, and you see the game for its potential, rather than its limitations. The illustrations show you what those blocky sprites 'really' look like, and the carefully selected screenshots tease what you can look forward to. Perhaps the way the games were described and documented in their manuals was the best, purest representation of the developer's intent, the way that they see the game. And in that light, what game can truly live up to all it could have been?

Or maybe I'm just a bit biased; before I ever knew what a video game was, I was an avid reader—so my first love was print and paper and stories. I was used to creating whole realities from words on a page. Just as TV or film adaptations of your favorite books often don't match the version in your head, the possible game in your mind and the actual game on your screen may be two very different things.

Maybe that speaks more to the power of words: That underpaid and underappreciated writers tasked with drafting video game manuals so often rose to the challenge, even went above and beyond to do more than provide some much-needed background information for games that usually conveyed little plot—to make them come alive. Looking through old NES manuals, one might get the impression that the often-anonymous authors might even have been aspiring novelists.

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