

Game Design Principles One-Pager

Exploration, Progression System, and Regular Feedback and Rewards in games

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Exploration

Games: Spiritfarer, Animal Crossing, and Spelunky 2

Exploration encourages players to discover new areas, secrets, or mechanics at their own pace. It enhances curiosity, immersion, and replay ability. In Spiritfarer, exploration helps players uncover emotional stories tied to each spirit, while Spelunky 2 generates levels to reward players for taking risks and learning through discovery.

Pros	Cons
Boosts player curiosity and engagement	Can lead to confusion or aimlessness if not guided well
Encourages experimentation and replay ability	May overwhelm players with too much freedom
Creates emotional or narrative depth through discovery	

How I might use it:

In my game, exploration would appear through music and genre discovery. Players could explore different categories such as 80s music, Latin artists, or songs by women and encounter tracks or words they didn't know before. This type of "musical exploration" keeps the game engaging and educational, while exposing players to new songs, cultures, and artists.

Progression Systems

Games: Mario Kart, Animal Crossing, and Just Dance

Progression systems provide a sense of achievement by showing players that their actions lead to growth through levels, upgrades, or unlocks. Mario Kart does this with unlockable characters and karts, while Animal Crossing gradually rewards players with customization options as they develop their island.

Pros	Cons
Gives players clear goals and motivation to keep playing	Can become repetitive or grindy
Creates a satisfying sense of advancement	If progression is too slow, it risks losing player interest
Encourages long-term engagement	

How I Might Use it:

In my music guessing game, the progression system could involve earning points, badges, or unlocking new music categories (like 90s, rock, or Latin). Players could also unlock fun avatars or sound effects as rewards for consistent participation. Since I want the game to feel casual and accessible, I'd design the progression to be light and social, focused on enjoyment rather than grinding. This helps maintain a high level of motivation while maintaining a party-like, friendly atmosphere.

Regular Feedback and Reward

Games: Bomberman, Just Dance, Mario Kart

Feedback and rewards are essential to keeping players motivated and informed. They help players understand the impact of their actions through visual, auditory, or narrative cues. In Just Dance, instant score updates and encouraging visuals

reinforce correct moves. In Bomberman and Mario Kart, sound effects and on-screen reactions reward success and signal mistakes.

Pros	Cons
Keeps players motivated and engaged	Too much feedback can feel overwhelming or distracting
Clarifies cause-and-effect relationships	Poorly balanced rewards can make achievements feel meaningless
Reinforces learning through repetition and response	

How I Might Use It:

My game would give immediate feedback whenever a player guesses a song or artist. For example, if they get it right, a short audio clip or animation could play, and their points would appear instantly. Even incorrect guesses could trigger encouraging feedback, such as a quick “close!” message if the player’s word appears in the lyrics. Sound effects, visual cues, and pop-up messages would keep the experience exciting and help players feel recognized for their effort.

Source Cited

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