The Bartle Test of Psychology - http://matthewbarr.co.uk/bartle/

Bartle Test of Psychology, breaks up the way people play games into four simple categories. These categories are the Achiever, the Explorer, the Socializer, and the Killer. Originally it was used for players of Massive Multi-player Online games, but now for Single-player games as well.

1. **Achiever –** Achievers are all about points and status. They want to be able to show their friends how they are progressing. They like to collect badges and put them on display. This is the type of person who responds particularly well to incentive schemes such as Air Miles, where every additional mile collected is an achievement in its own right. Bartle estimates that roughly 10% of people are players of the Achiever type.
   a. **General Statements**
      i. They crave a challenge
      ii. Must collect everything
      iii. Get all the points
      iv. Achieve rewards for the prestige of having them
      v. Spend large amounts of time doing repetitive tasks
   b. **Single-player games**
      i. Like games that can be "Completed"
      ii. Live for rewards such as special endings, rare items, or bonuses
   c. **Multi-player games**
      i. Opportunity to show their skill and status over other players
      ii. Look to Socializer for praise of what they have accomplished
      iii. Seeing their name at the top of the leaderboard
      iv. MMOs creators target Achievers

Chances are you will know several people of this sort; someone who boasts he used a quicker route to get to a destination than his friend did is an Achiever type.

2. **Explorer –** Explorers want to see new things and discover new secrets. They're not as bothered about points or prizes. For them, discovery is the prize. Explorers are fine with repetitive tasks as long as they eventually "unlock" a new area of the game, or they deliver some kind of "Easter Egg" (an Easter Egg is a small bonus within a game – sometimes it's as simple as a little joke, whereas in other cases it might be a full extra video sequence regarding what has been accomplished). Explorers really enjoy the surprise that's possible in a game, and around 10% of players fit into this category.
   a. **General Statements**
      i. Enjoy discovering hidden areas
      ii. Creating maps
      iii. Finding secrets/Easter eggs/Glitches
   b. **Single-player games**
      i. Enjoy paying close attention to details and solving puzzles
      ii. Enjoy lore/backstory about players/and environments
      iii. Reads everything and anything
   c. **Multi-player games**
      i. Like to meet other explorers and share info

> ii. They will abandon a game if they feel that it has become a chore to play

These are the players who will feel at walls in a game in order to access a secret passage; their satisfaction on doing so is what makes them tick, not bragging to their friends about their discovery. Build this sort of feature into your gamification design—and you'll be speaking their language.

3. **Socializer –** The vast majority of players are Socializers. That's almost <u>80% of people</u> who play games. Socializers experience fun in their games through their interaction with other players. Socializers are happy to collaborate in order to achieve bigger and better things than they could on their own. Games, such as Farmville (Facebook's largest game), appeal to the Socializer. For instance, Socializers are happy to water someone else's farm in exchange for new crops for their own farm. For example, office workers who leave at the end of the day and remind each other to water each other's crops may be friends… or they may just be acquaintances.
   a. **General Statements**
      i. They enjoy interacting with players
      ii. Will interact with very interesting Non-player characters (NPCs), if not all of them
      iii. The games is another way for them to meet people in and out of the game
   b. **Single-player games**
      i. Levels and discovery aren't things that necessarily appeals to them
      ii. They play the most popular games to socialize
   c. **Multi-player games**
      i. Any online communities is an oasis of enjoyment with new relationships waiting to happen
      ii. Friend lists become filled quickly, communicating through voice chat and/or private messages
      iii. Use forums to share experiences and accomplishments
      iv. Guilds are very appealing
      v. Try to help out other guild members
      vi. Most influential socializer become famous on servers due to drama they constantly cause or services rendered

Whatever the deal is, the point with Socializers is that joining forces makes sense to them. Note— this is the last place you'll find fierce competition, but it doesn't mean Socializers are passive milksops who lack ambition.

4. **Killer -** The Killer denotes an ominous-sounding type, but one that is nonetheless valid. Killers are similar to Achievers in the way that they get a thrill from gaining points and winning status too. They enjoy PVP style games. More often, they will play the "Bad Guy". They thrive on action, destruction, and chaos. They interact with their environment by building and then destroying. What sets them apart from Achievers is that the Killers want to see other people lose. They're highly competitive and winning is what motivates them. Other notables:
   a. **Multi-player games**
      i. Some enjoy the competitive pursuit of outwitting their opponent by anticipating their moves and understanding their strategies
      ii. Overpowering others through skill

       iii.   Gankers: using overpowered characters to kill weaker characters
       iv.   Campers: sitting in a protected spot and picking off other players and giggling every time they do so
       v.   Enjoy social and economic parts of games
       vi.   Enjoy being community leaders or trolls. They enjoy influencing other less talented players

They want to be the best at the game—and it should come as little surprise that the only way for that to be true is if they beat everyone else. Bartle's research suggests that only a small number of players are Killers – <u>less than 1%</u> to be precise.

There's more to a Killer than a need to make others 'bleed', in the same way that Socializers don't mindlessly flit about watering each other's cyber-corn. <u>Remember, more than one type may power the thought patterns of your players.</u> Knowing them and understanding the context of their working environment is all-important.

Killers and Achievers are most likely to appreciate features such as leaderboards; Socializers and Explorers, not so much. Developing the right mechanics for your players becomes much easier once you understand the way they like to approach a game.

<u>Look to Aesthetics to Define Genre</u>

Aesthetics of Play – Fundamental reasons for playing the game

Core Aesthetic

1. **Sense Pleasure –** all senses
2. **Fantasy –** step into a role that is not real life
3. **Narrative –** game as drama
4. **Challenge –** game as obstacle course
5. **Fellowship –** work cooperatively
6. **Competition –** expression of dominance
7. **Discovery –** uncovering the new
8. **Expression –** to express yourself
9. **Abnegation –** game as pastime – tuning out