

COMP 3218: Coursework 1 Fundamentals of Game Design

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Core Dynamic

Our game, “Spatial Reasoning dungeon” fits (funnily enough) into the spatial reasoning core dynamic. The core gameplay loop involves pushing objects, such as blocks or wheels to unlock doors or reveal entrances. The user has to use their problem-solving skills to find the solution, the correct order in a series of steps to complete the level by unlocking the final door with a key. We do have elements of a racing game as the user has a timer which keeps track of how long they have taken to complete the level, but this is a very minor element of the game and is only used as a source of extrinsic motivation to reward the player for playing well.

Feedback and Response

Feedback Points:

- In the first iteration of our game’s design, there was no motivation to play. We were encouraged to come up with some method of motivating the player the continue playing, for example a risk/ reward system
 - In response to this. We developed the timer system. In each level, a timer will count up, keeping track of how long it’s taken you to complete the levels. This is a source of extrinsic motivation for the player as they can compete with friends for faster scores
 - We also thought about intrinsic motivation, another important source of engagement for the player. It involves making your core gameplay naturally rewarding. We focused on developing our main mechanics really well so that they can be combined in interesting ways that the user feels rewarded for discovering. This was actually commented on during our playtesting, where one person who played the game said she felt happy after discovering the solution to one level just because it was an interesting puzzle with the right level of difficulty.
- The game needed ways to support multiple different playstyles. At first, there was only one way of playing the game. This was just to complete the levels, at whatever speed you wanted, with no real reward for doing it in different ways.
 - In response to this feedback, we further developed the timer system so that the user has two ways of playing the game. They can either just try and complete levels as quickly as possible or spend more time exploring the map to find gold-tinted urns which take time off their “score”. This meant that the speed-running and explorative playstyles were both rewarded in separate ways by giving the user choices instead of following a linear gameplay loop.
 - Level 2 and 3 are the best examples of this, as optional rooms are included in the map design which aren’t compulsory to explore in order to complete the main objective
- We were also told that in implementing these new features, we have to make sure we maintain our core dynamic, as with the ideas we brainstormed in the feedback session, we risked changing the core dynamic to a more confused mix of Racing, Survival, Collection and Spatial reasoning.

- This is the main reason our timer ticks up instead of down. We thought at first of making each challenge time-constricted, so the user has to restart if they aren't fast enough, but upon reflection, we decided this would make it more like a racing game than a spatial reasoning game. So, we decided to make the timer tick up so the user can choose to play faster, or be patient and take their time with every level
- We also decided not to include several other mechanics such as enemies or doors with time-restrictions because those fits better into survival, fighting, or destruction dynamics instead of our targeted one. Instead, as previously mentioned, we focused really hard on making our core dynamics well developed and able to interact in several interesting ways to create more varied puzzles