Feature Specification: DevNotes

1. Overview

One of the two main tools of storytelling in Level With Me

Spread across the different versions of the level

Written by the fictional developers to communicate with each other

2. Main Purposes

(1) Provide more explicit insights into game development

(2) Establish the game developers and their relationships

(3) Tell the meta-story of the development process and the traitor

(4) Hint at parts of the underlying game's story that players won't experience themselves

3. Narrative Framing

DevNote is an internal developer tool made by the fictional studio

> Made to handle working across various time zones

> Notes are visible in-game, not just in the editor

The system itself is called DevNote, the individual pieces are called DevNotes (or DevNote if it's just one)

4. Production & Workflow

The DevNotes for each stage are written in the corresponding sprint and later polished

The designers (Moony and Lars) manually write the content of the notes and place them in the level

Designers set up DevNotes by adjusting the exposed variables on the parent object of the DevNote prefab

DevNotes should be placed close to what they refer to in the level

5. Content of a DevNote

First name of the author (the fictional developer who wrote it) -> e.g. Finn

Primary role of the author in the development team -> e.g. artist

Date of when the DevNote was written (month and day) -> e.g. April 27

Short text with the actual message -> e.g. Player didn't get it. Need to adjust parameters. But how?

> Character limit: 400 characters

6. Content Example

Percival   May 05

Designer

Can't get rid of the invisible collision here somehow. Maybe something wrong with the nearby model? For now, please just take another way. Or use the console commands to disable player collision. Over and out.

7. Audiovisual Intentions

DevNotes should be perceivable from further away (e.g. by adding a beacon/light shaft)

The content should not be visible immediately

Players consciously decide which to consume and which to ignore

DevNotes should not interfere with the basic shooter gameplay

DevNotes should differ from the game environment and style

It's a developer tool independent of the underlying game

Already read DevNotes should be visually distinct (e.g. by removing the beacon and adjusting the color)

8. Variation

Traitor added their own DevNotes later on

Were added just for the 'leaked' version

Other DevNotes don't reference them because developers don't know they exist

Visually distinct from other notes (e.g. different color or font)

Author name, development role, and date are missing for these DevNotes

Placed at central positions so players learn about the meta-story

9. Exposed Variables

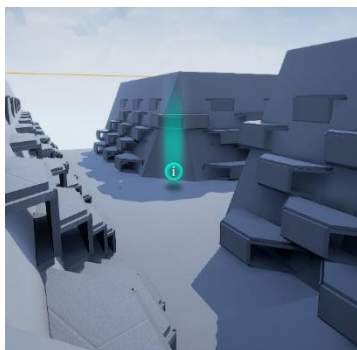Enum for the author name and their development role

Bonnie (Programmer), Nicolai (Designer), Sandra (Designer), Alejandro (Artist), Iver (Artist), ???

??? is used for traitor notes

Enum for the month of the date (January, February, …), integer for the day (slider from 1 to 31)

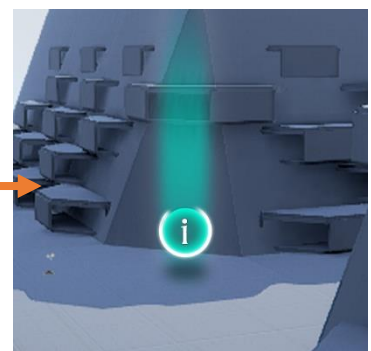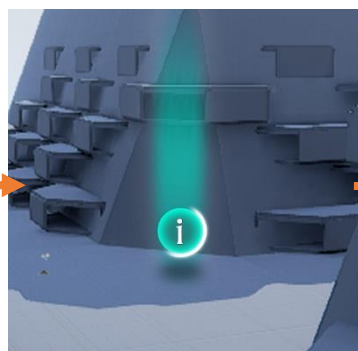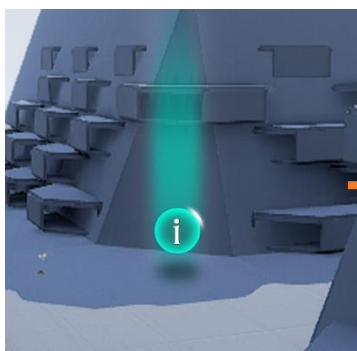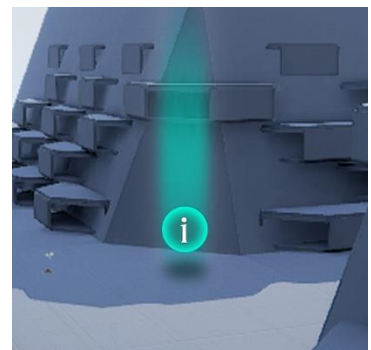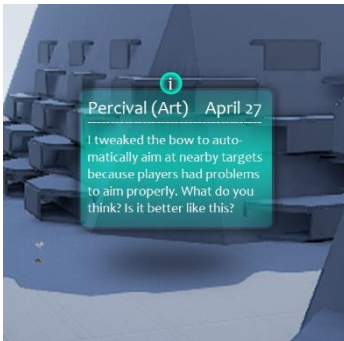String for the message content

10. Functionality

1. DevNotes are clearly visible from a distance

2. While far away, the content of the message is not visible

3. To read a DevNote, you must get close to it and look at it for some time

4. While in the view, a progress bar fills up

5. Once the progress bar has been filled up entirely, the actual message is shown

6. Only one DevNote should be readable at a time

7. The message is rotated to face the player position (only yaw) when it appears but then remains static

8. A DevNote includes the name of the author, their role in the project, the date of when the note was written, and the message

9. The content is hidden again once the player is no longer facing it or too far away from it

10. DevNotes can be re-visited and re-read as many times as you like

11. Read DevNotes are marked visually (e.g. by changing the color) and no longer emphasized (e.g. by removing the light shaft/beacon)