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15.3: Input System

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My original wireframe for this game prototype was designed for a mobile platform, containing mobile-exclusive inputs such as a thumbstick. For the sake of this assignment, and for experimentation purposes, I will describe inputs for my game prototype, Firebearer, for PC platforms.

Input #1: WASD keys - movement

Unsurprisingly, WASD will be used as the movement keys for the player to direct the character around the game world. I chose this input because it is the standard input for movement, and players with past experience playing PC games will have no trouble utilizing it. I considered the arrow keys because it is somewhat popular for smaller “indie” style games. However, I plan on using the “E” key for accessing interactable items, and therefore it makes sense to use the nearby WASD for movement.

Input #2: Left mouse button - torch swing

The left mouse button will be used to swing the torch as a way to fend off the ice sprites. This will be the only way to attack ice sprites, and players must be within close range to them in order for the swing to connect. I chose this input because most games utilize the left mouse button as a primary attack, and similar to WASD, I wanted to design according to the expectation of

experienced PC gamers. I considered the “e” key for this purpose, but decided against it as I wanted an input for interaction, which I believe “e” is perfect for.

Input #3: “e” interact button - story items and interactable triggering

The “e” key will allow players to access readable story items found throughout the game, as well as interact with various interactable sequences. I chose the “e” key because of its proximity to WASD. I intend to have the controls be intelligible and easily accessible, and I believe this layout accomplishes this task. Additionally, the “e” key is often used for interacting and accessing items in other games, making it easier for players to get used to the input in my game. I did not consider any other inputs for this purpose.

Input #4: Space bar - jump

The space bar will be the input players must use to jump in Firebearer. The game play will force players to clear certain gaps and climb stair-like structures, requiring the need for jumping. I chose the spacebar because it is also in close proximity to WASD, placed in an easy location for the thumb to press. Similar to many of my other inputs, the space bar is commonly used as a jump input in other games. I do not intend to confuse players with my input layouts, which is why I am electing to follow many of the common inputs from other games. I did not consider any other inputs for this purpose.

Input #5: Right mouse button - torch lift

Right mouse button will enable the player to lift the torch in my game. Lifting the torch is an important feature in Firebearer, as the player will be met with solid ice walls and frozen

machinery which must be melted in order to be accessed or used. I chose this input because it is directly next to the previously mentioned “torch swing” input on the left mouse button, and I believe it makes sense to position both torch related inputs close to one another. I considered using the “f” key for this input, but decided against it as that may begin to crowd the keyboard around WASD.

Input #6: Esc - pause menu

The “esc” key will pause the game for the player, bringing up a pause menu that the player could use to return to the main menu, restart the level, and more. I chose this input because it is far enough away from WASD and the other keyboard buttons that the user will not mistakenly press it, but close enough that it is not a hassle to locate. Additionally, the “esc” key is commonly used for pausing and bringing up the pause menu. I did not consider any other inputs for this purpose.