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CLASS:	**GAME DESIGN**
UNIVERSITY:	**WITS UNIVERSITY**
DEPARTMENT:	**DIGITAL ART DEPARTMENT**
GAME:	**THREES**
ASSIGNMENT:	**MDA FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS**
DUE DATE:	**05 APRIL 2021**

Plagiarism Declaration and Assignment Cover Sheet

ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Kamogelo

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Course: Game Design

Due date: 05 April 2021

Topic: MDA Analysis Essay

Plagiarism declaration

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and to pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the author date convention for citation and referencing. Each significant contribution to and quotation in this essay from the work or works of other people has been acknowledged through citation and reference.
3. This essay is my own work.
4. I have not submitted this work, or a substantial portion thereof, for assessment previously.
5. I have not allowed and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
6. I have done the word processing and formatting of this assignment myself. I understand that the correct formatting is part of the mark for this assignment and that it is therefore wrong for another person to do it for me.

Signature: K.Maimela

Date: 05/04/2021

Introduction

Threes is a number puzzle where the player slides like-numbered tiles together to create higher value tiles. It was created and released by an independent development team named Sirvo and was released for multiple operating systems such as IOS, Android and the Xbox console. The aim of this report is to analyse *Threes* regarding its formal components as well as implementations through the MDA framework.

Formal Components

1. Objective and outcome

The objective of *Threes* is to obtain the highest points possible by matching the same numbers in the puzzle before the grid fills up completely.

2. Rules

The player slides a group of numbered tiles on a four-by-four grid to combine numbers, specifically, multiples of three. Each number has a dedicated colour and face to it and the colour of the incoming tile is shown at the top of the grid and players can preview their move by sliding the grid without letting go. The game ends when there are no moves left on the grid.

Mechanic

The game includes a single mechanic:

1. Sliding like-numbered tiles

Players slide numbered tiles in the grid to match other numbers.

Dynamics

Table 1: Dynamics that arise from the game's mechanics.

Mechanic	**Dynamic**
1. Sliding numbered tiles	With only 16 tiles available on the grid, the player needs to make sure that they are regularly merging tiles and matching combinations to ensure the screen does not fill up too soon.

The games mechanic provides certain limitations towards the player. However, certain dynamics can come about due to the player wanting to discover more.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics are based on the MDA framework (Hunicke, LeBlanc, & Zubek, MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research, 2001).

1. Challenge

The game only has limited space (16 tiles) where the player is afforded movement and the player has to ensure that they are always using their tiles wisely and efficiently. However, despite the player carefully laying out their strategy and plan, an unlucky number tile could easily stump the player and their progress.

2. Submission

The music is ingrained to the game itself and enables the player to fall within the entrapments of the game. Higher value tiles have names and each time the player unlocks them, a message pops up. This gives the game a welcoming jovial tone.

Communicative Feedback

Threes using multiple ways to efficiently hand out feedback to its players.

1. The colour coordination of the tiles makes it easier for the player to recognise everything that is happening on the grid. This allows the player to be able to notice which number might be next so that they can plan ahead.
2. Each numbered tile has its own face. This also allows the player to distinguish the difference between the tiles that have the same colour.
3. Each time a combination is produced, tiles flip and produce a higher value tile. This flipping effect is indicative of a combination that has been made by the player.

Conclusion

Threes is a numbers puzzle game with a mechanic which is elegant in its simplicity but punishing in its challenge.

References

Hunicke, R., LeBlanc, M., & Zubek, R. (2001). *MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research.* San Jose: Game Design and Tuning Workshop at the Game.