

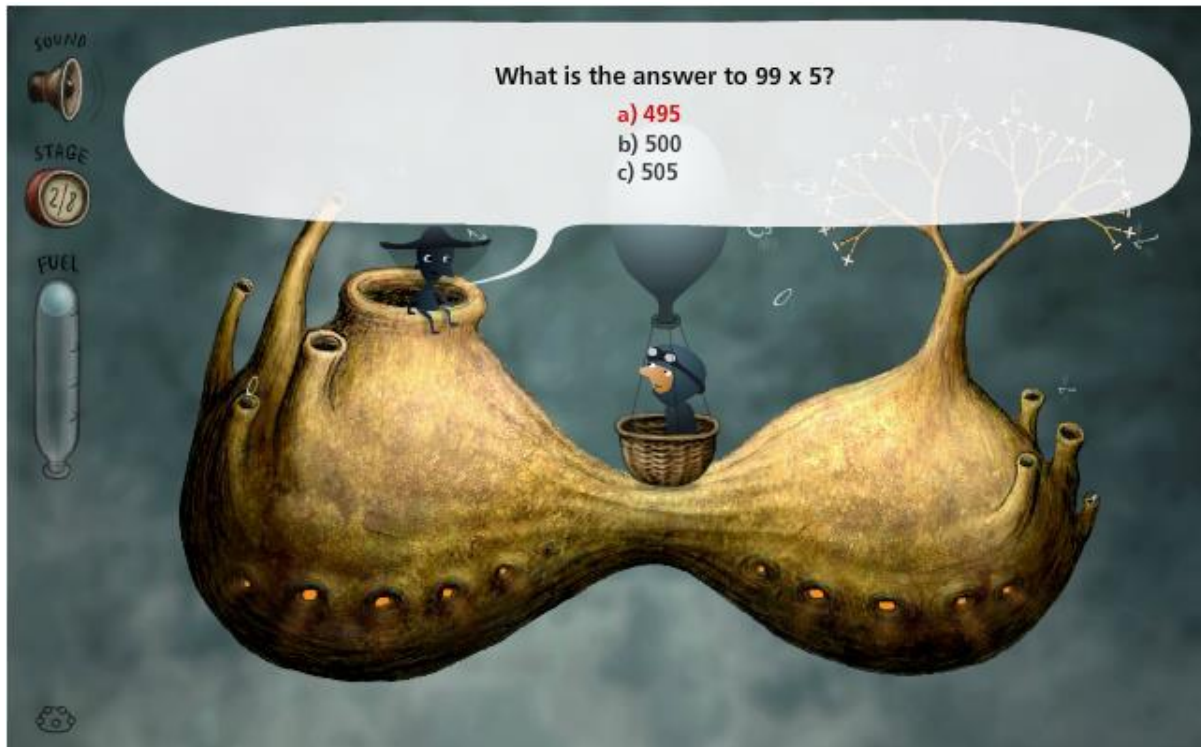
Research the Problem: Questionaut

This is an educational point and click game. While the intended audience is KS2, I feel that this is a good example of an educational game that could be reused for any target.



Like most games that focus on education, it pays off to try keep the introduction short. In the case of Questionaut your friend's hat has flew upwards due to a blast of wind. It is up to you to hop on your balloon and chase after it.

Each level has a certain interaction, as you need to talk to someone (or something) in order to progress. This starts off simple in the first level by unplugging a light, but increases in complexity as you progress through the games eight levels.



After you manage to figure out what interactions will get something to talk to you, it will then proceed to ask you questions based on a subject. This subject relates to the themes of the level. Every time you answer a question right, it will go into your balloon, fuelling it, every time you get a question wrong, it removes one bubble from your balloon. When you hit five bubbles in your balloon, you proceed to the next level.



The first thing to say about this game is that it has great design. Each subject is represented as a floating island and most of the interactions try to stay in theme (This is not always the case). I also

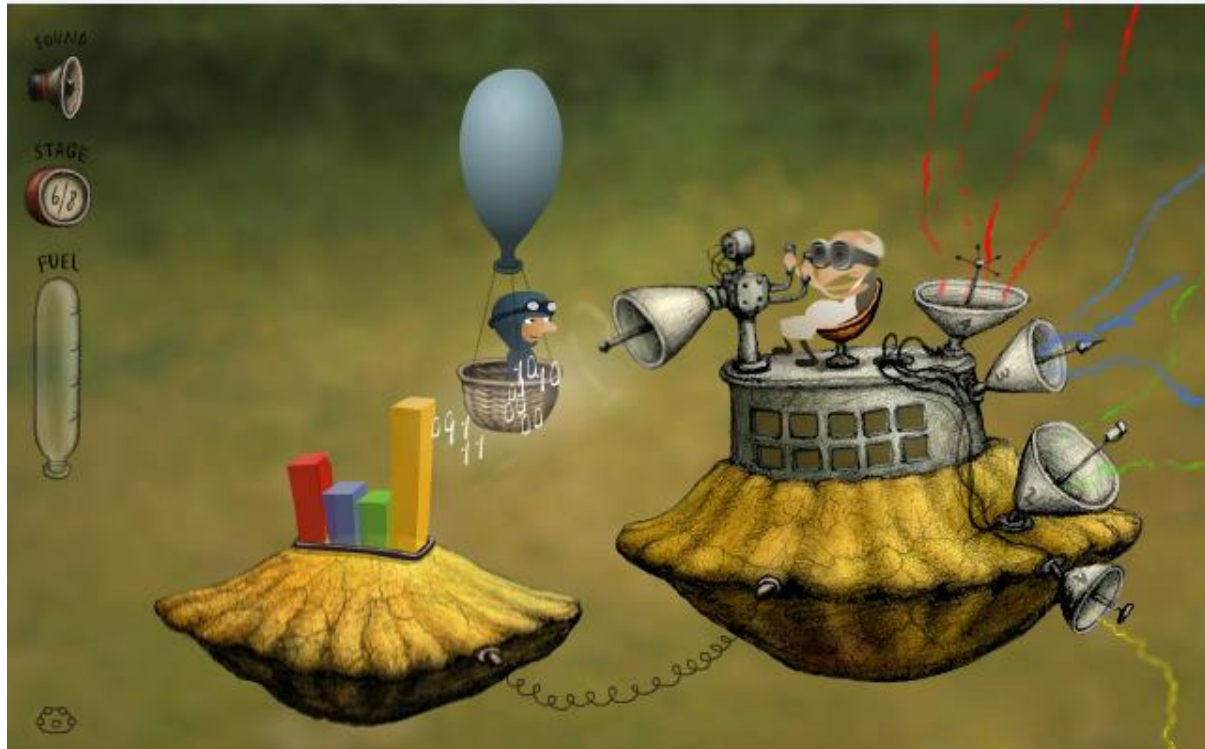
used this idea of themed levels in my game. This is very relieving to see that an actual educational game sharing themes with my promotional game. It allows me to consider being argue the ability to call my solution education.



Oh course, unlike this game, I removed any chance of there being questions. I understand that if you attempted to do that in this game, not only would you lose a strong mechanic of the speech bubble system, it would also vastly shorten the game time.



One important thing I am noticing is that all these point and click games seem to include impressive artwork. I feel this really adds to the quality of the game overall. This is a problem, as I do not have any type of artistic talent. I feel that this game works so well because of its beautiful art. Furthermore, I don't think the game would go quite the same if it wasn't for its strong art, visuals are definitely an important asset for games, as humans use sight as their primary sense.



There are some weak points in this game. Firstly, some of the puzzles are very easy, like levels two and seven. Some puzzles are very hard due to not being very clear, an example of this is level six, shown above. To get the person to talk, you have to get the little glowing squares to match the colours of the streams going into the machine. This wasn't very clear.



Other levels like seven and five follow the theme of the subject better than the others. Like my own game, not only did the level have a theme (both being a science as well), but the solution to the puzzle also followed suit very well. It is those kinds of levels that I want in my game, the ones that take you through a process while level progression is happening.



I haven't really talked about this in depth, but this game actually has some sound issues. The music had the purpose of providing a background ambiance. This was fine, as The Company of Myself did the same and Little Wheel actually had good music. The one thing those two games had but this didn't was the option to completely mute the music. Towards the final three levels, the sounds started to become painfully shrill, when I pressed the speaker under the impression it would mute the game, it only slightly lowered the sound. This forced me to manually mute the tab.



This brings me back to my game, I haven't mentioned music in any sense. I would like to think that the user is forced to go through the whole experience in silence. Rather than looking for royalty free music, I know many programs where I can easily produce looping background music. The issue would be how to implement sounds into the game. I know it's possible, I just don't know how. I would also need to take a day to go around recording sounds for objects as well. There are lots of small things that really tie a game up that can be easily over looked if you don't see it happen in other games.