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This document will detail the thought process behind how I decided to design my level for MP2. Before jumping into the level details, it is important to first cover the custom enemy I implemented. This enemy is a shooter-type enemy which fires targeted projectiles at the Player when the Player enters the enemy's line of sight. While it is stationary, it also rotates its view angle to continuously follow the Player if the Player cannot escape its range fast enough. Just like with the Pursuer enemy, the Shooter enemy can be destroyed by jumping on its head, but it is a lot harder to do due to the nature of the projectile knockback when hit by the Shooter.

Looking at the level, the goal is to ascend up the spiral of obstacles and platforms in order to reach the finish point at the very top island. When the game begins, the Player is spawned on the starting island which consists of an open plain with coin collectables and a single Pursuer enemy. This start is meant for the Player to learn what the coins do (i.e. collect points and guide the Player throughout the level) and how the Pursuer enemy functions. Going up the stairs, the Player then enters another open island, this time with the Mortar enemy firing randomly firing projectiles all over the island. Since the island is pretty big, the projectiles aren't very hard to dodge, and again serve more of a purpose to introduce the Player to the Mortar enemy. From here, the Player has two routes to choose from: one route is the easier route, jumping in between small islands with a Pursuer on each of them, or performing a harder sequence of platform jumps in order to earn a healthpack. On an initial run, the healthpack route isn't too useful as the Player will likely be at full health, but if the Player has fallen from a higher point in the level, it can serve as a nice health boost as the Player begins to ascend once more. These two routes converge to enter a third section where the Player has to cross a bridge with two Shooter enemies on either side. Just like the initial Pursuer and Mortar enemy encounters, the actual obstacle isn't that hard as the Player can just run across without getting hit, but it introduces the Player to the Shooter enemy mechanic.

Now that all three types of enemies have been introduced, the rest of the sections in the level are designed with increasing difficulty as the Player progresses higher up. Since there are multiple sections of the level, I will explain a few examples and the rest will be shown off in the demo video. For example, the first section after crossing the bridge is an island that combines both the Shooter enemies and the Pursuer enemies, where the Player has to reach the end of the island by taking strategic cover behind walls to avoid enemy fire. From here, the Player can either exit the island to the left or right side: going to the left will take the Player along a longer route that includes harder platform jumps and Pursuer enemies, but the opportunity to earn more points, while going to the right will lead straight to the next island but miss out on the extra points. Another example is the section right before the end. Here, the player can choose between two types of platform sequence jumps to reach the end: in one route, there is constant Mortar fire in the air which slightly increases the difficulty of completing the jumps - in the other route, there are Shooter enemies all around the jumps which severely elevates the difficulty of completing the jumps. However, since it has a higher difficulty, this route includes a rarer type of collectible which is worth 4x the amount of points as a regular coin.

One thing that I tried to highlight while designing this level was giving the Player more choice in how they want to approach the level, whether that be taking the safer but less rewarding route or going for more points with higher risk of failure; personally, I've always found games that include these types of choices more engaging rather than just having a single linear path towards the goal. Finally, I also implemented sounds and particle effects throughout the game to make it feel more immersive and engaging beyond simply jumping through the level.