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**Turn-Based RPG Prototype 1**

A Genre Analysis

In my game you play as a paladin hero saving a priest and his family. Throughout the game there are 2 different phases. The combat phase focuses on the Turn-Based combat style. While the Second is much more story driven using dialogue which drives the RPG element of my game. Turn-Based RPGs typically put the player in the shoes of a hero that saves all and everything. The same is true for my game. Turn Based combat uses a Turn Based system where the enemies and heroes each get rotating turns. Within these turns the players can choose different attacks or strategies to help them win the fight. This type of combat allows for gameplay complexity, because players get all the time in the world to decide the best course of action. Turn-based RPGs rely heavily on players using their brain to help their characters survive different situations. These games also usually have a lot of UI that can become quite complex spending on the game. The UI almost always consists of Health bars, names, character portraits and mana bars to clearly indicate to the player who is at risk and what their combat options are.

Since it is not only a Turn-Based game but also has RPG elements, Turn-based RPGs use dialogue systems for all story related content in their games. Dialogue systems are an if not the most important piece of creating a Role Playing Game. As the name states, you are put into a role which conventionally is usually the hero of the story. The MOST important character that drives ultimate victory or defeat.Through dialogue, the state of the world, outcomes and story impacts are communicated to the player which places its importance very high. As a subgenre RPGs are also famous for their usage of character stats and levels. With complex calculations with damage, health, and mana it creates a progression for the player to feel that they are constantly making progress and also makes the combat more complex.

I have chosen the pokemon genre or more specifically Pokemon Scarlet/Violet and the old Final Fantasy X as the inspiration for my game. Both pokemon and Final fantasy use Turn-Based combat as their main compelling system that places them in the genre but with their differences. Pokemon has a mechanism in place where only 1 pokemon and 1 enemy are on the field at a time while final fantasy mostly has multiple enemies and your party or group on the battlefield all at the same time. These 2 different mechanisms change gameplay drastically however, due to the turn based instances it still remains in the Turn-based combat genre. Both of them also fall under the RPG category since you are placed in the shoes of a hero, whether that's a pokemon student or one of the few main protagonists in Final Fantasy. They both use stats such as HP and stat modifiers such as potions that change their respective stats for the instance of that battle. RPGs infamously use a level system in their games for progression. In pokemon each pokemon you own has a level that is kept track of. With each level increase, their stats are also increased. These levels are extremely important as they ground you to only being able to progress through certain parts of the game where enemies are of similar level.

Lastly, Turn-based RPGs love having an RNG system for attacks. This is something that I have also implemented in my game. Each attack has damage that scales with these modifiers and the higher your character's level is the higher these modifiers are. In pokemon, every attack has a chance to be a critical hit which does far more damage than normal but every attack also has a chance to be a bit weak. This modifier system is a staple throughout Turn-based combat and will continue to be.

Design Goal/ Process & Reflection

I wanted to create a Turn-based RPG but with a little bit of experimenting on the RPG side of development. I knew from the beginning that this would be challenging however if I just got the base system going then I could just add alterations of the main system to create variety. I thought of how pokemon battles work. Every single battle is the same, when it's your turn you get to choose an attack or item then it is the opponent's turn, and the AI randomly chooses an attack. Then according to what option was chosen, subtract from a certain stat or increase a certain stat. In pokemon this is basically what a fight is, however, the variety is in the different pokemon, and animations, except all of them in the end either increase or decrease a stat. This meant that all I had to do was create these stats and the turn based system to then be able to have variety and overall make a more interesting game. This understanding that creating the systems first, then adding my own alterations is an understanding that only properly developed toward the end of my development cycle. And now I feel far more comfortable in what I am doing when creating a Turn-based System.

So overall, my goal was to create the Turn-based system first, then create the different fighter stats, and then finally add different enemies to the game to make it feel more whole. However, I needed each enemy to be different and progressively become more difficult. This was not all I needed for the assignment. So once I had done everything above, I wanted to create a short story in which your character was the hero and you would go through dialogue that put you in the shoes of someone saving the day. In the same way that other RPG’s do.

Firstly I had to create the Combat system which is the main component of the game. This was by far the most complex coding I had done in my life. I knew that I could do it since last year we had an assignment to create one but the challenge was to create something far better than last year's assignment. So I asked myself what did I do last year that I know now that I am more experienced I can do better. I realized that my previous game had no art, lame UI, no different abilities and no enemy variety. So I cut my Combat System design goals into little chunks that were as follows:

* Create a Combat system with at least 2 abilities on the UI.
* Have some sort of inventory or item pouch included in UI
* Have different Enemies, maybe 3 of them.
* Clearly represent important stats, like Health and Magic.

Creating the 2 abilities was not difficult and was accomplished quite quickly. After this was the health and magic bars that displayed to the player their corresponding stats. Again not a difficult task. After almost all of the Combat system was done I had to create the different fighter stats that were impacted by the choices made in combat. This is where the complexity of my Combat system lies. Each stat was different and was impacted throughout the game and certain stats were and were not visible to the player. Such as the health stat which is linked to the health bar on the UI or the speed stat which secretly chooses whos turn it is first without the player noticing. Then lastly I needed to create an item pouch for the player that they can use to quickly change their strategy for the rest of the battle. This was more of a hassle than expected but I did eventually get all of the items to work.

Overall creating the combat system taught me a great deal of coding methods than before and also taught me the importance of planning the order in which to design your game and how it can impact other aspects. If I had created the potions whilst doing the player stats it would have saved me a lot of hassle and time. Coding is the part of creating games that I enjoy most, and especially when there is a frustrating problem that I manage to fix but I suppose that is why we are given these assignments. To learn as much as we can from them.



I wanted each stat to change with each increase of level . Between every

fight in the game you get a level up ,all the way up to level 3.

This was because each level's enemy got more health, magic, melee etc.

However, all of this was not enough to hand in since it still needed more RPG elements besides the stats, levels and items. I looked at other games for inspiration until I came across Neon White. A game I played a while ago and has a really unique dialogue system that I took inspiration from. Simply, each character stands on either side of the screen to communicate to the player that there is conversation back and forth. Then put the conversation dialogue in between the characters. This way I can communicate a simple instance and ease the players into their role of the hero.

Hereafter was the easiest part of creating this game. Now that I had a base dialogue system, and a base Turn-based combat system all I needed was to make slightly different alterations. I just had to change backgrounds to a different location, the music, and change the enemy sprite and stats. Which all in all is about a 15 minute job. This way the player would feel like they are fighting different monsters, with different attacks and therefore are in a different situation to the last. Which is exactly the variety I wanted. Finally, to finish up the game I had to rotate the player between these dialogues with the only NPC in the game and the combat instances to create a whole game that you can play from start to finish.

After playtesting the game a whole lot I found sweet spots into the challenges each combat instance gave the player. At first I thought it would be fine if the player had 1 of each potion per level. However after letting my father playtest I found that half of the time he wasn't making smart decisions and would die too often. So I increased the players' health on every level. But then I found the player would run out of magic too quickly while they still have majority of their HP and after some more testing I found the right thing to do was after each level up, increase the amount of potions they had. So the more difficult the fight the more resources the player had at their disposal. I gave the laptop to my dad again and he managed to complete the game at a satisfactory pace with some struggle, but he managed.

I wanted to create a Turn-based combat game with RPG elements. I’d say I managed quite well to create a Turn-based combat system where each fight felt more unique than the next. The UI clearly displays to the player your character and the enemy’s health and does a good job at not letting the player choose multiple attacks at once (Hence Turn-based). Furthermore to make the game more “RPG” like, I added tooltips to the items in your item pouch. So when you hover over them you can see exactly what they do.

Therefore, I accomplished my goal of creating a Turn-based combat game with RPG elements. The games core system allowed for me to easily create a new and fresh fight every time a new enemy appears whilst also having a simple dialogue system allowing for players to ease into the shoes of the hero.