# [Idea] Life in Color

**The idea?** A series of (*puzzle) games* that roughly follow the *stages of life*. (The first one can be played even by babies. Then you get little kids, youngsters, adolescence, etcetera.)

Each game has 365 levels. (Or 52, as in weeks.)

## Common Words

The games, therefore, should **not contain ANY text** and even their **names should be words known in all languages.**

In fact, I just learned UTF-8 is allowed in Play Store titles and itch.io titles. **Only use that?**

This word is then used to inform the whole theme and mechanic

Words known in all languages:

* Huh
* Ok / Okay
* Ma(ma)
* No
* Ananas
* Sugar
* Tea / Coffee
* Taxi
* Soup
* (Yogurt)
* (Aye/Yee/Yes)
* (Chocolate)
* (Aaaah! => just general noises of pain/fear/danger)
* (Most Persian origin words: pajamas, lemon, orange, bronze, pistachio, bazaar, caviar, spinach, mummy)
* (Modern words, but not *too* modern: radio, TV, internet, Wi-Fi)

General helper words:

* No
* Stop
* Internet
* Mobile (as in phone)
* Phone
* Tv or television
* Computer
* Pizza
* Sim (as in sim card)
* Salon
* Food (the word itself)
* Water

## Color Coding

Additionally, they are all color-coded. From “white” (the start), to loads of colors, to “grey” (elderly), to “black” (the end).

This isn’t just in *name*, it also determines the *palette* of the game. (They can only use that color, plus variations on it of course, and white/black.)

## General Idea

The mechanic should be **really simple**. So it can be explained **without words**, played casually, and simulated/generated easily. There should be *no* assumptions on previous game knowledge (such as the idea of grids, or bosses, or lives, or whatever)

Additionally, these games can **combine** in different ways. Once you’ve played chapter 1, its mechanics might come back in chapter 2 and *merge* with whatever you’re doing there.

(How exactly, I’m not sure. A bonus to unlock? Something you only get if you have *both* games installed? Would need to store that information somewhere then. Or are those separate games, like “Red-Green”? )

## Research

**“Kid” age groups:**

* 4-6
* 7-9
* 10-11
* 12-14

Think of children as *adults* with *much less experience*.

The one game that seems to click with all age groups: **Minecraft**.

* Can we steal its idea?
* Can we just make a game about dragging blocks to certain locations?
* Or even simpler, the game starts with blocks already there, and you just *tap* them to get something going?

Why do kids play games?

When kids are asked why they play video games, more than half of them give reasons such as **“to relax, to learn new things, and to create their own world.”**

In a [study conducted by Cheryl Olson](http://www.grandtheftchildhood.com/GTC/Research_Papers_files/Olson_Motivations%20for%20Play_final.pdf), the top reasons children gave for playing is that games are **“fun, exciting, and have the challenge to figure things out.”**

Olson also found that 45% of boys and 29% of girls said they play video games **“to get my anger out.”**

Children in the same study reported that they played violent video games to **“relieve stress, to be rebellious, and to test the limits of acceptable behavior in a safe environment.”**

Jane McGonigal, in her book [Reality is Broken](http://www.amazon.com/Reality-Is-Broken-Better-Change/dp/0143120611/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1364729000&sr=8-1&keywords=mcgonigal), writes that **“games make us happy because they are hard work that we choose for ourselves.”**

She goes on to say that we take on games that may be difficult and even stressful because **“we enjoy the stimulation and activation as long as we feel capable of meeting the challenge.”**

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s theory of “flow” has also been used to explain why kids love to play video games. Csikszentmihalyi, a Hungarian psychologist trained at the University Chicago, describes flow as the experience of **“being completely involved in an activity for its own sake.”** The sense of flow is one in which an individual does not notice time and **“every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one.”** This is not unlike what many gamers experience when they are immersed in gameplay.

# Chapter 1: Ma

**Age:** Baby/Kindergarten

**Color:** White

**Mechanic:**

It should be something a baby, naturally, understands. And nothing more.

* Even a *grid* or something feels like too much, too many assumptions.
* Colors are a no-go. We need great contrast, big things.

What would they understand? **Tapping on something.**

* The puzzle has eggs.
* **Tap to break an egg.**
* Where’s the puzzle element?
  + The *order* in which you tap
  + Which things you *don’t tap*
  + Or *how many times you tap*

I also feel that babies/kids would resonate most strongly with *animate* objects, preferably with a clear face and eyes (and hands?).

**Goal?**

**Eggs Types?**

**Alternative Mechanic:** more of an action game. In this case, something akin to flappy bird, where *tapping* means a *jump/move*.