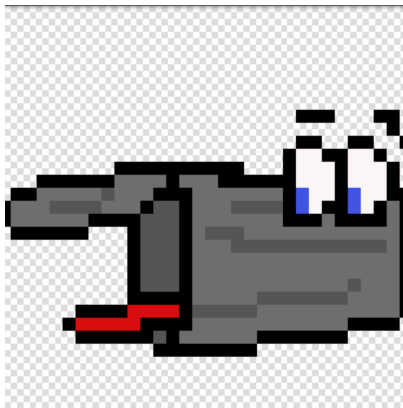Character: Trash Man

Trash Man is an 8bit inspired character who can consume garbage. Moving on his side, he slides like a snail across the screen and can jump as well. His long tongue grabs the trash and places it inside his belly, thus preserving it for his children, when he gets near trash.

When creating this character, we wanted him to look lifelike. Therefore, we added bright blue eyes to the character, which look as though they "hover" over the trash can a little. Also, in order to appear human-like, we gave the character eyebrows to convey emotion. His mouth is the lid of the can, where he ingests trash with his long tongue. His eyes move when talking, his lid opens up when he eats, and his tongue comes out when he consumes trash.

This character is a quiet, upbeat, sturdy father whose wife passed before the events of the game. His children (3 total), are constantly hungry as he works around the clock to support his family. Trash Man does talk to the user, but only when necessary because of how shy he is. He also gets tired easily, as his lifestyle allows for few breaks. This is why his idle animation shows him sleeping throughout the course of the game. His eyes bring personification to the character, and his eyebrows show his inner thoughts. The cheerfulness he exhibits when eating shows how excited and loving he is of his children. In addition, the sounds chosen for this character were selected to make the user view him in a positive way, such as the jumping sound. In addition, Trash Man is sassy. We can see this with his talking animation, where he looks at the player with his eyebrows raised.

Trash man was based off of a bird, who is responsible for feeding its young. We took the idea of collecting trash for the trash babies from this, as parent birds consume food and then "baby-bird" it to their young. Also, his trash lid mouth somewhat resembles a beak when open, which adds bird-like tendencies as well.

Objectives of the assignment:

2D animation can be seen in a lot of places. Namely with our main character, Trash Man. His expressions change as the user plays the game, from being bored to eating trash. In addition, the enemy rats have idle walking and pacing animations, making them appear lifelike as well as more difficult to avoid.

Collision detection can be seen in three ways. Firstly, the barriers Trash Man can jump on are using collision detection and ensuring that the character will "land" on the platforms when jumping. Next, whenever Trash Man collides with a piece of trash, it is removed from the game and a point is added to the player's score. Lastly, if a player collides with a rat, they are pushed backwards from it and the rat "steals" a piece of their trash.

Sound was added to convey realism and to entertain. There are sounds for the rats, eating of trash, jumping, etc. Also, we have a theme song for the game.

The title screen can be clearly seen, as well as the Logo for the game, titled "Trash Game". We also have a beginning "cutscene" sequence which starts the story and explains the objectives and controls for the game.

The credits scene is also present, with our names appearing once the game ends.

Division of work:

Kelsey made all of the assets for the game.
Taylor set up all levels and worked on collision detection of platforms.
Kelsey worked on placing items in levels and collision detection of trash and rats.
Taylor worked on speech bubbles/dialogue.
Taylor and Kelsey both worked on the Title Screen/cutscenes/credits.
Taylor and Kelsey both worked on sound effects.
Taylor and Kelsey both worked together to design Trash Man, going through many iterations of character design.

User Feedback:

We received some really thoughtful and helpful user feedback. From that, we were able to improve a lot of parts of our game. To help with users feeling confused about where to go, we added signs with arrows on them directing users to the end of the level. We added more bounce back when a user hits a rat, as well as text from the rat exclaiming that it has stolen a piece of trash. One reviewer said the enemies were useless, so we improved their significance and showed them taking points away from the user. We also worked on the timing of the collision detection with the rats so that it would not take an excessive amount of points away from the user if they got too close. Finally, one reviewer said they would have liked to have seen more dialogue, so we

added Trash Man dialogue at the beginning of every level as well as the cutscene at the beginning. The dialogue was also used to convey the two different endings that could happen, since another reviewer complained about the lack of ending for the game.

These reviews helped us look at our game in a new light, and we improved other areas not mentioned in the reviews as a result. We definitely agreed with all of the constructive criticism offered, and really appreciated that we got it.