

# The Legend of Zelda- Series

By: Austin Lanphear

# Research Questions

1. How has the game series effected the video game industry as a whole
2. How are the games developed? From idea to reality.
  - a. a.k.a The game development process
3. What was the impact impact Zelda in pop culture? (Minor)

But before we tackle these questions, let's talk about what the series is first!

# Meet the Cast

Link - Triforce of Courage



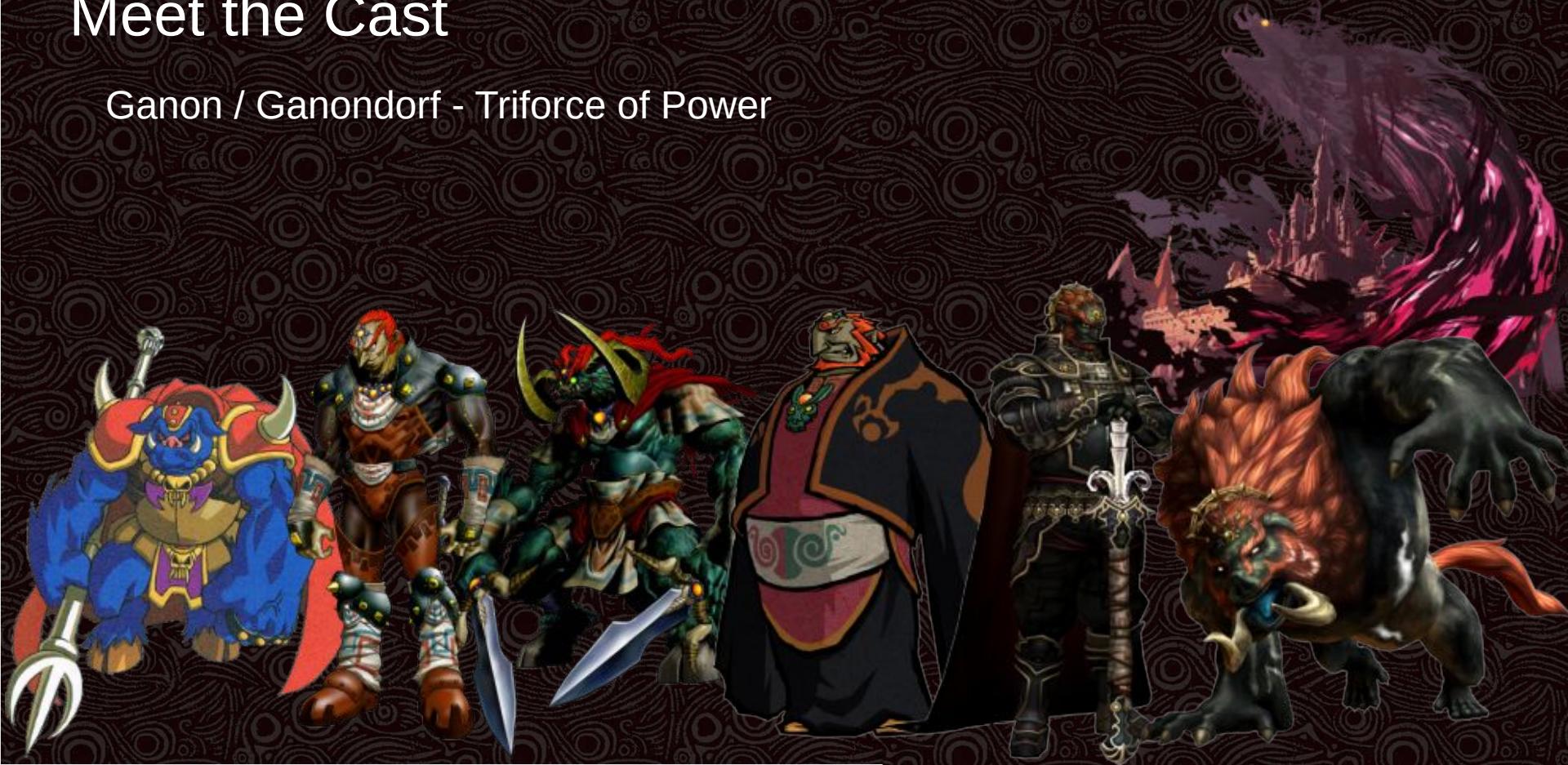
# Meet the Cast

Princess Zelda - Triforce of Wisdom



# Meet the Cast

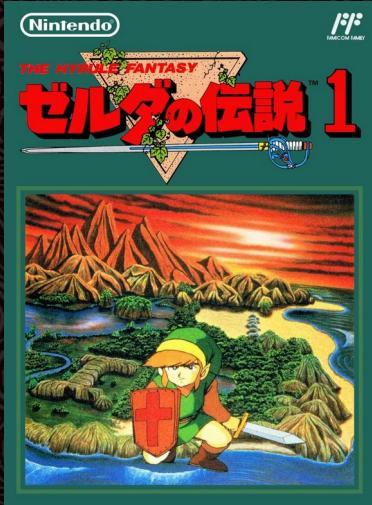
Ganon / Ganondorf - Triforce of Power



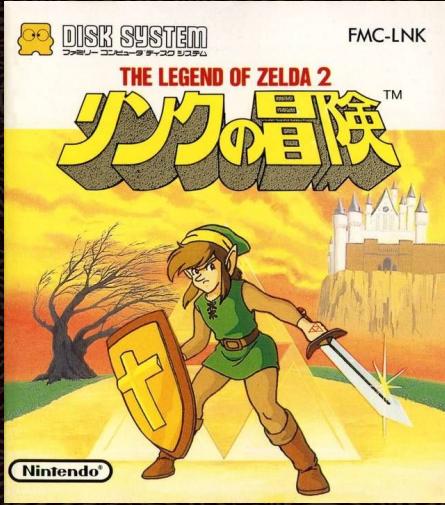
# Meet the Cast - Others



# The Games



Famicom/NES  
(Switch)  
1986



1987



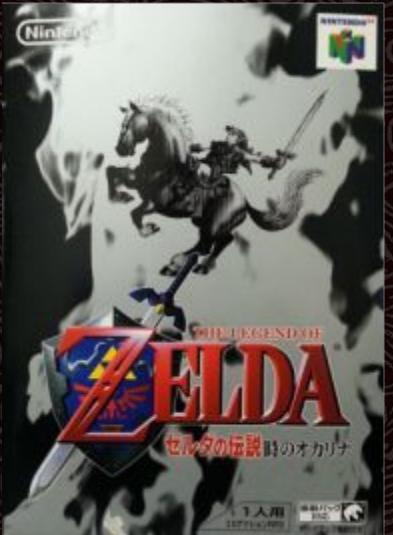
1991



1993/1998 (2018)



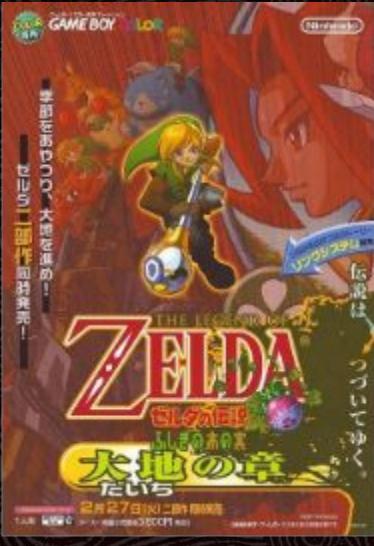
# The Games



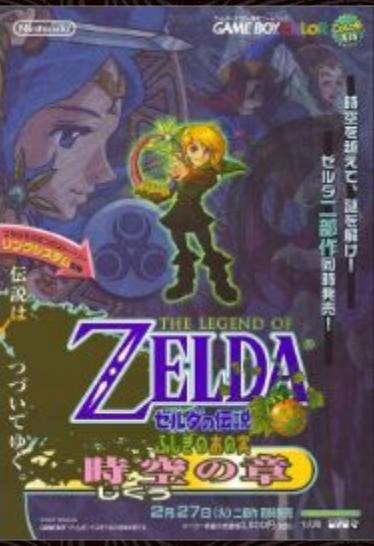
Nintendo 64 (3DS)  
1998 (2011)



Nintendo 64 (3DS)  
2000 (2015)



GameBoy Advanced  
2001

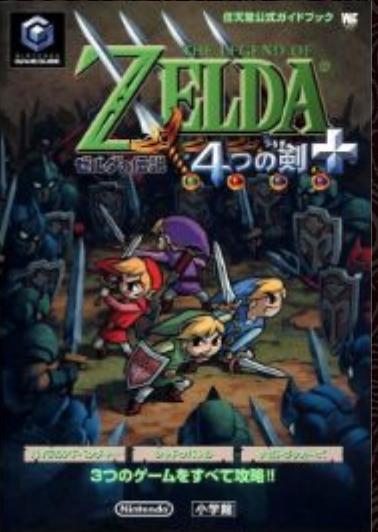


GameBoy Advanced  
2001

# The Games



GameCube (Wii U)  
2002 (2013)

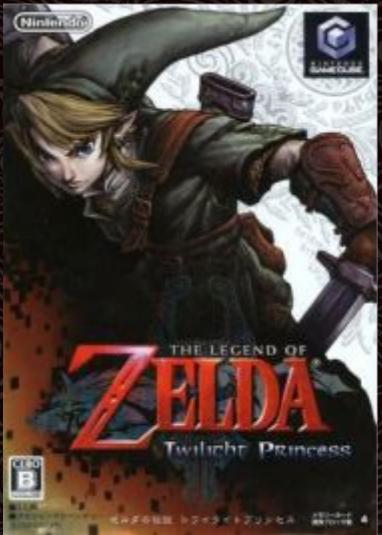


GameCube  
2004



GameBoy Advanced  
2004

# The Games



GameCube/Wii (Wii U)  
2006 (2016)



Nintendo DS  
2007

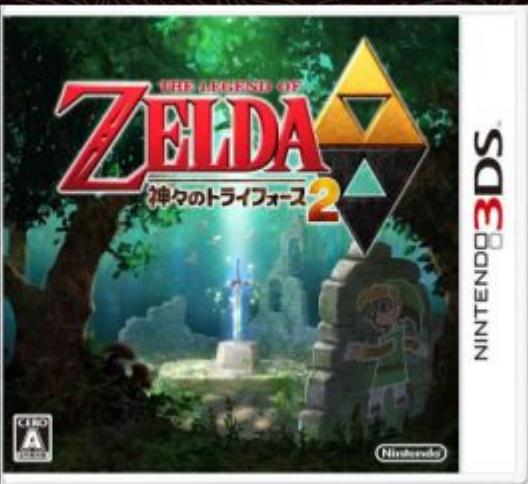


Nintendo DS  
2009

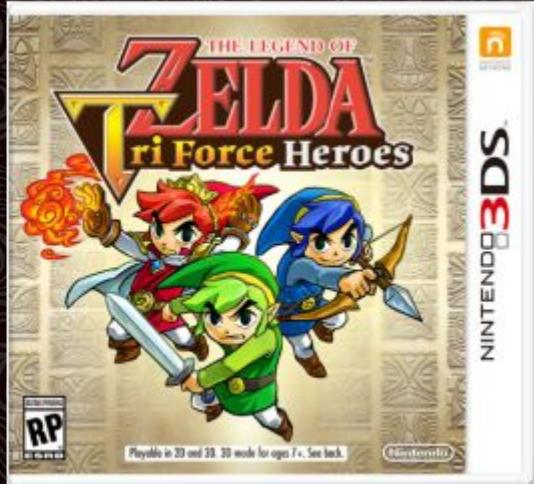
# The Games



Wii  
2011



Nintendo 3DS  
2013



Nintendo 3DS  
2015

# The Games



Wii U / Switch  
2017



Switch  
TBD

# Enough with the History & Lore

Into the reality and impact the Series has had on the world



Shigeru Miyamoto (Game Director until Breath of the Wild)



Eiji Aonuma (Game Director from 2017 and onwards)

Image Sources: [https://www.gonintendo.com/system/stories/promo\\_images/000/265/407/original/maxresdefault.jpg](https://www.gonintendo.com/system/stories/promo_images/000/265/407/original/maxresdefault.jpg) & <http://images.nintendolife.com/f4df8d5b7e985/eiji-aonuma-nl-img.original.jpg>

# The Origin Story

## ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

**Shigeru Miyamoto, senior executive director of Nintendo Corporation and general producer of the *Legend of Zelda* series**

I started working on the first *Legend of Zelda* project with a small staff in a corner of Nintendo's development office in Kyoto. It was the mid-eighties, and the Famicom [Editor's note: Famicom is the Japanese name for the Nintendo Entertainment System or NES] console had been out for about two years. At that time I was working on a *Super Mario Bros.* compilation for the Famicom, but the Disk System [Editor's note: The Disk System was a peripheral for the Famicom that was not released in the United States] was about to come out, and we needed to develop a launch title for it.

I thought that we should take advantage of the Disk System's ability to rewrite data by making a game that allowed two players to create dungeons and then explore each other's creations. We designed that game, and the

overall response was that playing through the dungeons was the best part. We made a one-player game with dungeons under mountains that surrounded Death Mountain, but we couldn't shake that "I want to play aboveground, too!" feeling, so we added forests and lakes, and eventually Hyrule Field.

Of course, the title of the game wasn't decided right at the beginning. I knew I wanted it to be *The Legend of* something, but I had a hard time figuring out what that "something" was going to be. That's when the PR planner said, "Why don't you make a storybook for this game?"



He suggested an illustrated story where Link rescues a princess who is a timeless beauty with classic appeal, and mentioned, "There's a famous American author whose wife's name is Zelda. How about giving that name to the eternal beauty?" I couldn't really get behind the book idea, but I really liked the name Zelda. I asked him if I could use it, and he said that would be fine. And that's where the title *The Legend of Zelda* was born.

We named the protagonist Link because he connects people together. He was supposed to spread the scattered energy of the world through the ages. The old female storyteller who feeds information to Zelda is named Impa;



# Public Reception of Series at its launch

- Was the first NES game to sell over 1 million copies
- Placed 1st in Nintendo Power's "Top 30" game poll in 1988
- Continued to dominate the list well into the early 1990s
- Still reviewed highly even in recent years with (8-10) star ratings, even among critics.

Serious game players, especially CRPG players, have for years looked down upon the dedicated game machines as "mere arcade toys", and for years they were right. Those coin-ops without a coin slot did provide a lot of fun for people, but when they wanted a *real game*, they turned to their Apple II or Commodore (IBMs were too snooty, in those days, to stoop to having games on them). Even when the Second Wave of game machines debuted in 1987, no one felt any different. These new machines were actually powerful computers, but expressly dedicated to game play. Then *The Legend of Zelda* arrived from Japan on the **Nintendo Entertainment System (NES)** in the fall of 1988, and heads began to turn.

When *The Legend of Zelda* burst upon the scene in fall of 1988, it hit like a nova. Although it still had many action-adventure features, it was definitely a CRPG. Fine graphics, exciting monsters, intriguing puzzle mazes and a wide variety of items to acquire were hallmarks of this game. But above all, it was entertaining. For most of the year, *Zelda* and *Super Mario Brothers* (the original) traded places back and forth as to which would be number one on Nintendo's charts, and the race was on. *Sega* came in with *Aztec Adventure* and *Alex Kidd* on the **Sega Master System** about this time.

# How It Changed Gaming - General Points

Although it wasn't the first game to do introduce saving, it was the first mainstream game in Video Gaming that pioneers saving being commonplace; no more passwords for save points.

Again not the first game to do so but it was one of the first video games to have a story within the game. Mainly within the game manual due to size limits on the game cartridge but it was rare for games at the time to have stories.

It was the first open world game that let players move through a huge world without having to do things in certain orders. Some speed-runners today have beaten the game without a sword.



# How It Changed Gaming - Targeting is Important

In the times of the Nintendo 64, when the Ocarina of Time (1998) came out Nintendo pioneered the idea of “Z-Targeting” which is holding down a gamepad trigger to lock on to an enemy. The name was given from the controller layout of the Nintendo 64’s “Z” button; where if the user held it, it would lock on to the nearest enemy.

This technique is used in almost every third-person game no matter the genre even today. It was also one of the first 3D games at the time that didn’t feel clunky to use since the camera self adjusted unlike most 3D games of the time. Due most games of the time having only one analog stick (which controlled movement) the game made use of the “Z-Targeting” to alleviate camera control issues.



# How It Changed Gaming - Convenience & Atmosphere

Warping while not a new feature by the time A Link to the Past (1991) came out, it the first mainstream 'quality of life' improvement that was added to the game. The ability to quickly move from two points on a map instantaneous in an open world game was unheard of before its release. Warping is a feature in every Zelda game.

Thoughtful stories with set tones were a huge impact on the gaming industry as well. Games were mainly seen as 'mindless fun' where you turn on the game, relax, and have fun. But games like Majora's Mask made you think. Why the characters feel the way they concerning: loss, hope, etc. And lastly of course silent protagonists.



# The Development of a Legend

The original Legend of Zelda in 1986 started out as Shigeru Miyamoto's (Game Director at Nintendo of the time) interpretation of his childhood experience living in Sonobe, Japan exploring the woods, finding caves, and etc. Alongside his want for bringing a sense of adventure seen in movies such as "Indiana Jones" to a video game [5].

The original Zelda in 1986 was created from Miyamoto's idea of simply wanting an adventure game where you save a princess. The name **Zelda** coming from "a famous American author whose wife name is Zelda" [1 - Pg. 2]. Not for any particular reason just that "I couldn't get behind the book idea, but I really like the name Zelda. I asked him if I could use it, and he said it could be fine." [1 - Pg. 2]. In essence he just really liked the name and wanted to use it.

Link's name is direct, meaning that his name is supposed to represent the player's **Link** between their personality and the game. Meaning Link is them, and they are Link. As well as that he connects people together.



# Ocarina of Time - A Game Changer

1998 was a transition time in gaming, most game companies were making the change from 2D games to full 3D graphics. Nintendo already released their smash hit **Super Mario 64** two years earlier in 1996 and Miyamoto wanted to really make sure that Zelda made a smooth transition over from a 2D top down perspective to a full 3D world perspective.

Development for Ocarina of Time began as early as 1995 with their presentation during **Nintendo Space World** with the game originally being named **Zelda 64**. The game was also slated to release on the **Nintendo 64DD** but due to time constraints and failure of product worldwide.

Before the game was even developed Nintendo artists posted ideas on a wall and the game's producers picked the ones they wanted in a 3D game. Especially the ideas that seemed impossible to do at the time. They wanted to create a game that no other developer had ever created. So they settled on an open world adventure game, where Link goes back and forth in time to save the world. Alongside a plethora of puzzle solving dungeons, collectables, and etc. Suffice to say in 1998 this had never been seen before in gaming. Before release however tons of content was cut.



[Space World 1995 - Tech Demo](#)



# Development - Where to go now?

Once Zelda transitioned over from 2D to 3D with amazing success Nintendo had to now upkeep the Zelda series in product quality so making a game 3D wasn't simply enough anymore.

This was the point in which Zelda went into the numerous art styles it is commonly known for now. **The Wind Waker** was developed with its controversial (at the time) “cel-shaded” art style, **Twilight Princess** went for a more realistic look, and Skyward sword for a “water-color” style.

After the release of **Ocarina of Time** the series tried different gameplay features with new items to use each game, game specific gimmicks, and etc. Zelda is known for throwing new ideas into game and seeing what people like and don’t like. **The Wind Waker** although a linear game allowed vast open world exploration, **Majora’s Mask** was gripping in the time constraint players had to navigate around, and etc. Every game has a self contained story and independent from one another. Only a few games being direct sequels: Majora’s Mask (from Ocarina of Time), Phantom Hourglass (from Wind Waker), and Spirit Tracks (from Phantom Hourglass).



# Example of Gameplay

Backup Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=10GfeB-eICIVIXvP1lgkvA7My6Us07Sez>



Four Swords Adventures  
2004 - Nintendo Gamecube

# Pop Culture

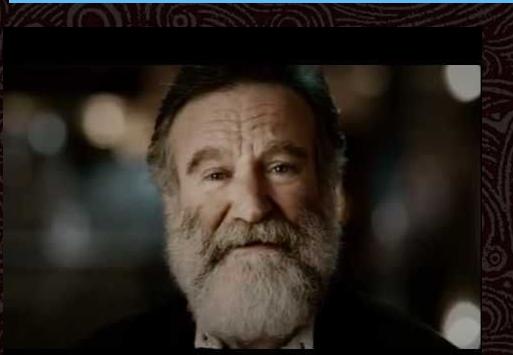
The Zelda series is extremely popular and people who don't play video game may recognize Zelda symbology.

Anyone recognize the **Triforce**? ---->



The series is referenced in a plethora of video games, Terraria (on the right) being one example.

The series isn't only popular in gaming circles however. Many famous people and artists have sourced the series as inspiration. Evangelion's music composer Shirō Sagisu has sourced the series as a musical inspiration and has used the "Fairy Fountain" theme in one of his musical pieces "Evangelion 3.33 - Theme Q". Even the late Robin Williams named his daughter Zelda after the game series.



Video Links:

[Evangelion 3.33 - Theme Q](#)  
[Ocarina of Time - Great Fairy Fountain Theme](#)  
[Zelda Commercial](#)

# Pop Culture - Fan Creations

Game modding and fan games also have their place in pop culture as well, since people can share their creativity in relation to what they love. In this case The Legend of Zelda.

The series creator of Dark Souls even said that their inspiration from gaming was from The Legend of Zelda series, although different games in almost every aspect. The ideas and gameplay features brought by them are what inspired him to create the series.

People have created fans games using game assets from previous games, some mod old Zelda games, and others recreate older Zelda games. Others create musical recreations of the music in the games, some do fan art, and etc.

In short, The Legend of Zelda has inspired many in creative areas to pursue what they love.

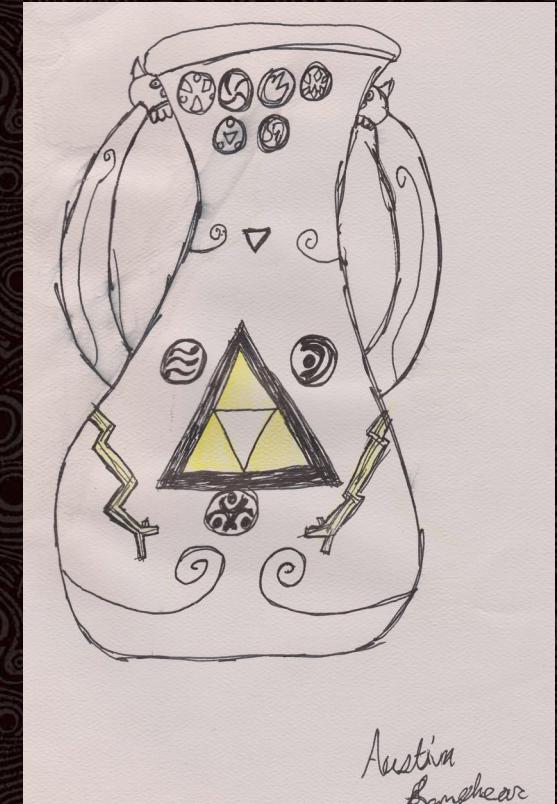
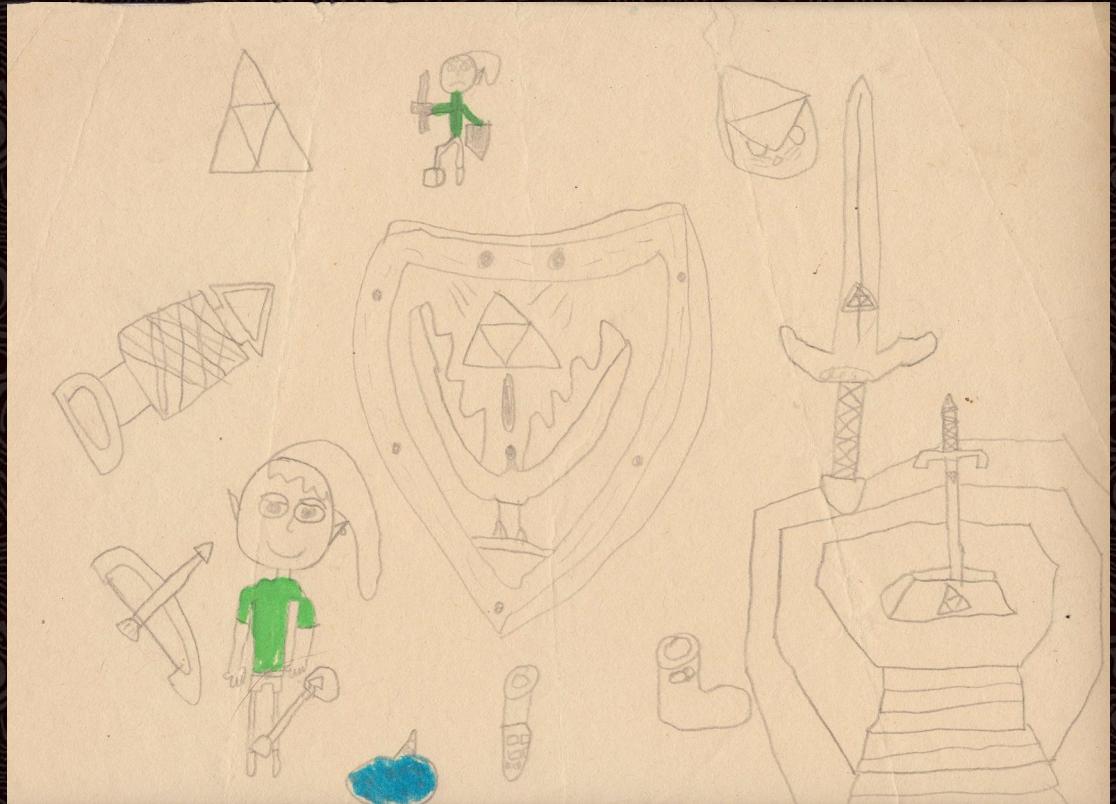


# Influence on my life

- Reason I'm into Video Games
- A source of why I want to learn Japanese
- Why I like exploration, landscapes, nature, history, orchestra music, etc.
- Developed some of my personal morals
- My online aliases
- And much more

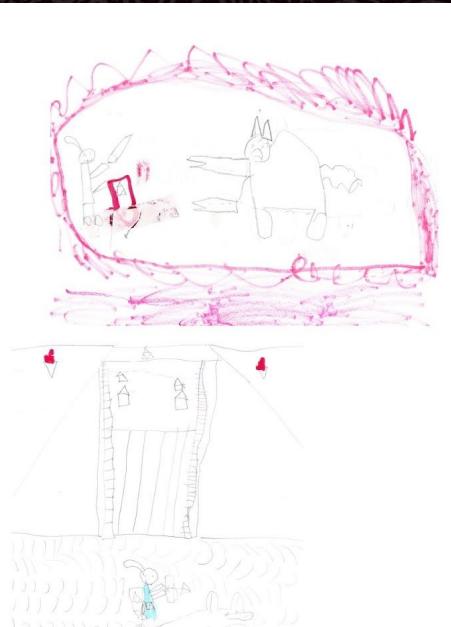


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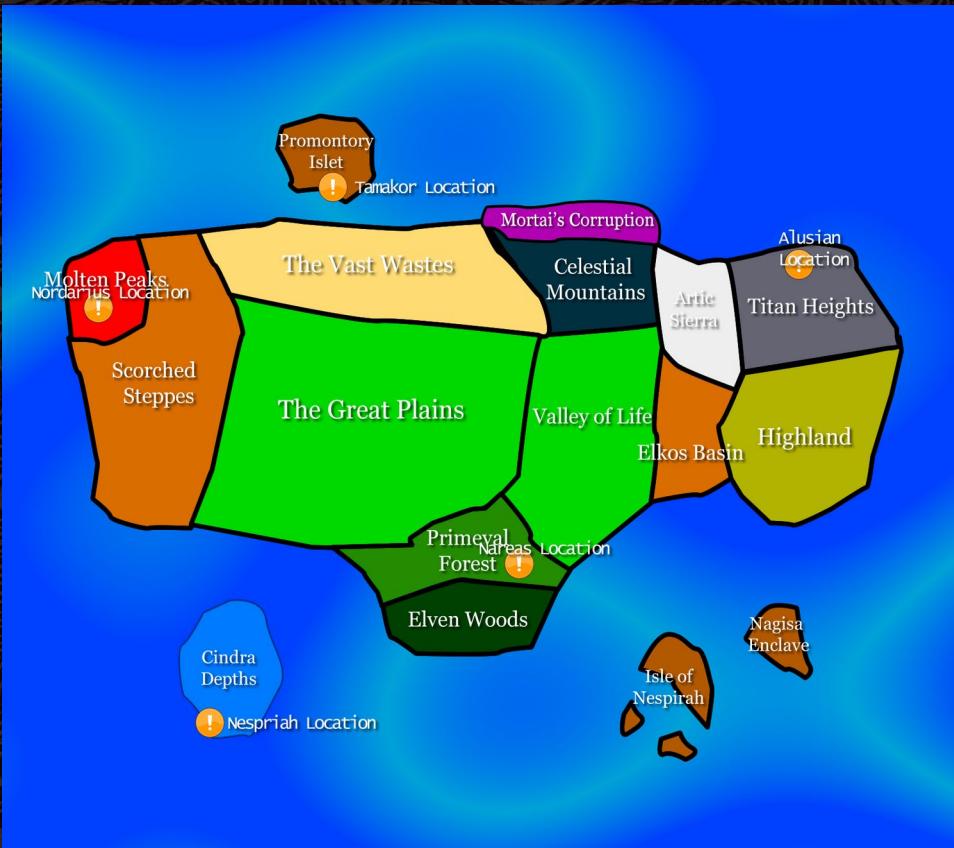
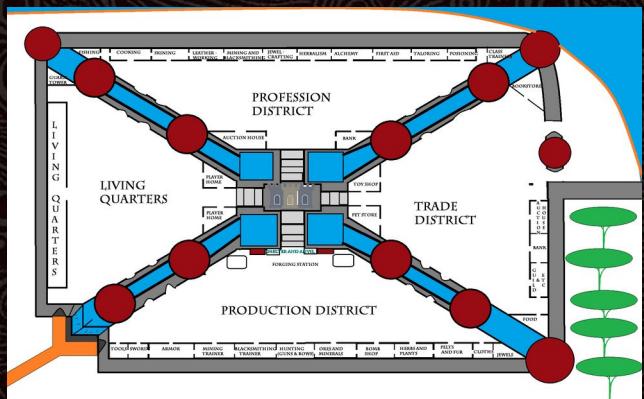
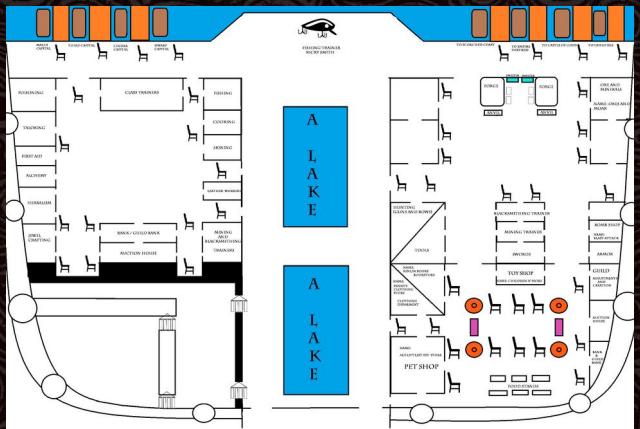


Austin  
Gamebear

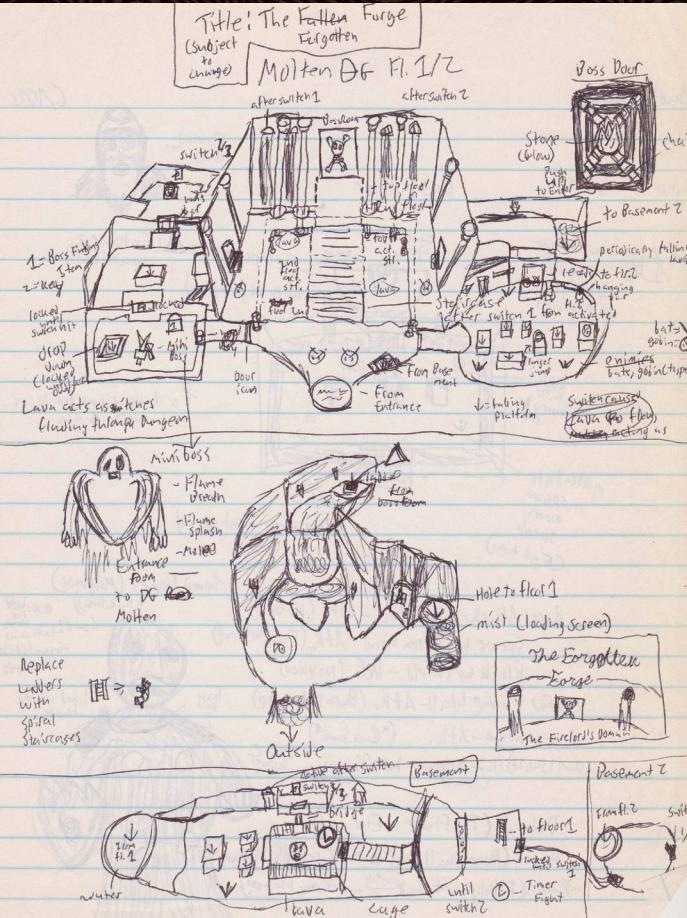
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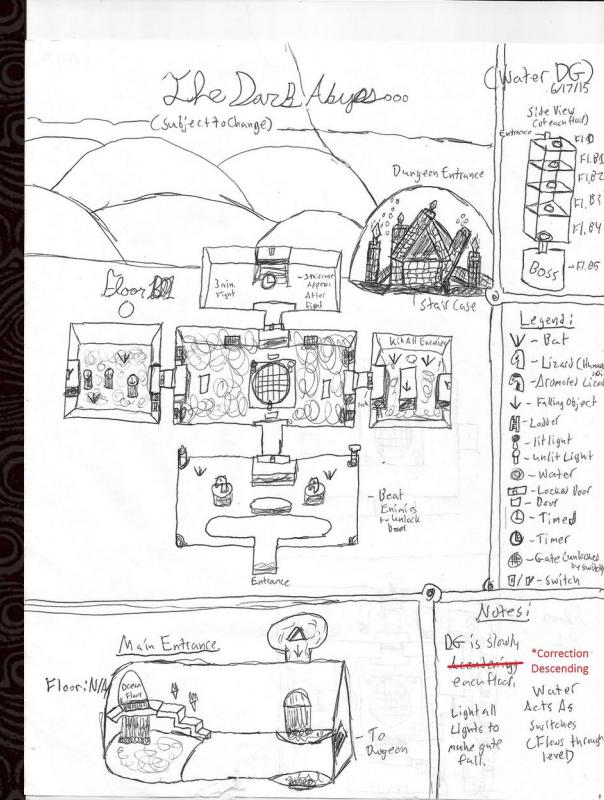
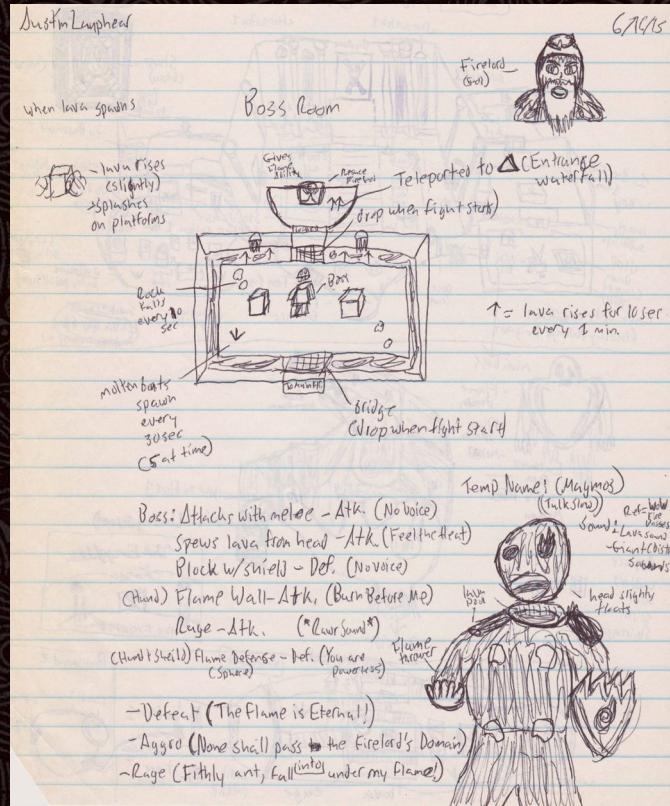
# Influence on my life



# Influence on my life



# Influence on my life



Thank You For Watching

# References:

Primary Source: The Legend of Zelda: Hyrule Historia

Secondary Sources: Game Review Websites & Gaming News Websites

[1] Gombos, Michael, et al. *The Legend of Zelda: Hyrule Historia*. Dark Horse Books, 2013.

[2] [http://www.cgwmuseum.org/galleries/issues/cgw\\_76.pdf](http://www.cgwmuseum.org/galleries/issues/cgw_76.pdf)

[3] <http://www.escapistmagazine.com/articles/view/video-games/16779-How-The-Legend-of-Zelda-Changed-Gaming>

[4] <https://www.denofgeek.com/us/games/nintendo/21231/the-legend-of-zelda-history>

[5] <https://www.nintendo.com/nes-classic/the-legend-of-zelda-developer-interview/>