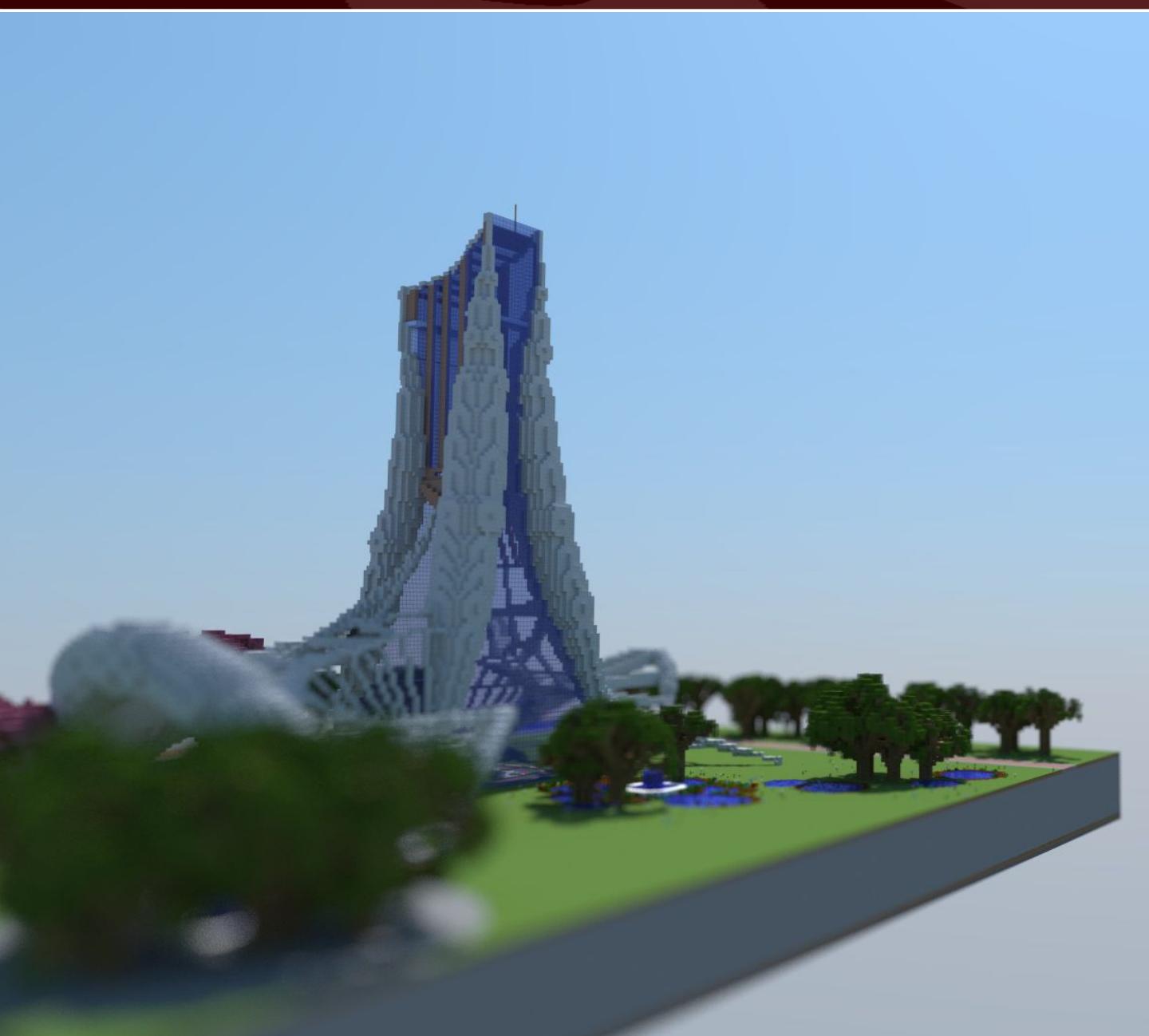


The Free and Open Independent Minecraft Map Maker's Magazine

MAPMAG

ISSUE 7 - COMMUNITY



@MapMakingMag

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THE LOBBY

Welcome back to the Minecraft Map Making Scene!

Welcome to the seventh issue of Map Making Mag. This project started mid-2016 and has successfully grown into an open platform for community articles and art. It is written by the map making community for the map making community. With this in mind, this issue's theme is "Community", and our feature articles celebrate the diversity and power of people working together to realise a shared map making vision.

There is a lot of talk lately about changes going on in the Minecraft universe, with exciting new features being released across the different editions. It was recently announced at E3 that the Pocket, Console and Windows 10 edition will get cross-play through a common "Bedrock Codebase" and renaming of these non-java editions as simply "Minecraft". Against this backdrop there remain loyal hobbyists and commercial builders who continue to work on what they love - realising immersive 3D environments using only what they can discover for themselves about how this platform works.

In the face of increasing Mojang and Microsoft commercialisation of the game, Map making is changing. There are many opportunities opening up for exciting new adventures and games, even as doors close on much loved features we used to rely on for tricky effects and wizardry (does anybody remember mob spawners? See last issue!).

In this issue we take a trip through something that does not change very much: our sense of community and our unwavering support for each other. Even when we have disagreements, map makers find a way to move forward together. Thank you for being a part of the first year of MapMag!

If you like what you see in this issue and would like to contribute, please see the side panel for submission guidelines. Until next issue - Happy Map Making!

- Adrian Brightmoore, Editor

Twitter: [@abrightmoore](#)

Submission Guidelines

We are interested in what YOU have to say. Content you make for **Map^{Mag}** can be sent to:
mapmakingmag@gmail.com.

The best letters, articles, art, and other work may be selected for inclusion in **Map^{Mag}** editions or on affiliate websites and other communication channels. Because **Map^{Mag}** is made by the community for the community, **Map^{Mag}** is free for readers and we don't pay you for anything. We ask for permission to include your work in the magazine.

Any content you submit must be your own work, or work that you have the right to submit. By sending us your work you agree that we may edit it for readability or make changes we think are necessary for the magazine. If we decide to include your work you acknowledge that you have granted us the right to publish your work in **Map^{Mag}** and you understand that your work may be quoted or discussed on the internet by anyone in the world without limitation.

All other rights to your work remain with you. You own your work. We are allowed to use it for **Map^{Mag}**. It is that simple.

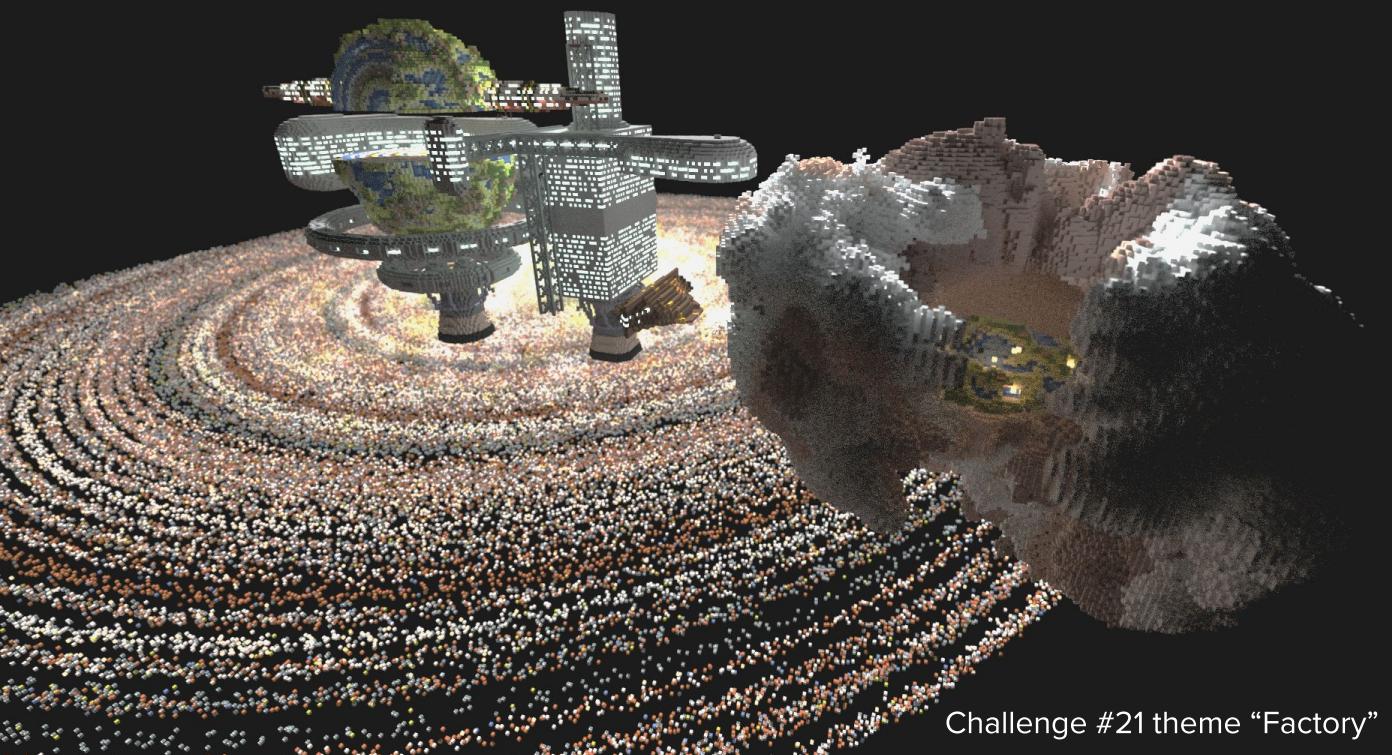
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If we refer to you or your work in **Map^{Mag}** you acknowledge that we do so in good will and our intention is not to damage or harm.

DISPUTES

Writing about what you enjoy and hearing from other people with similar interests can be great fun. When people are excited about what they are doing sometimes things can get a little heated in a large community. If you have any concerns over what **Map^{Mag}** is doing or how we are doing it then please contact us describing your concern. This will allow us to understand how we can do better. We can be reached at mapmakingmag@gmail.com.

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Challenge #21 theme “Factory”

Challenging Builds

Reddit's fortnightly themed community competition

Reddit has been a community hub for Minecraft players since Notch first went looking for feedback on new features in 2009. Over this time a group of dedicated moderators has been diligently curating the /r/Minecraft subreddit to ensure tired old content doesn't win over new and exciting discoveries.

A friendly competition has emerged in this community which sees people regularly testing their skills on a topic by building in Minecraft.

Every two weeks a different theme is thrown out to the community and builders from everywhere are welcome to submit their creations before the deadline 13 days later.

Did you know...

Build challenges have been around ever since Minecraft became a popular way to pass the time after work and school.

Planet Minecraft is one of the popular sites for sharing community creations and has been running frequent themed build challenges. Check them out for an exciting look at what the best builders in the world can come up with!

Outside of regular build competitions there are occasionally friendly competitions run between well known build teams for charity events, or as part of conferences. The winner has bragging rights until the next competition!

Challenging Builds

Reddit's fortnightly themed community competition

At the time of writing 22 themes have been attempted with participation from over 120 players from most gaming platforms. Submissions must be images or a YouTube video walkthrough.

The judging criteria includes:

- How well the architecture, color scheme, and textures work together
- The atmosphere of the build
- How well terrain has been incorporated
- The level of appropriate detail
- Uniqueness

A highly unique build can be a gamble worth taking.

There are four judges assessing each entry and awarding placement to the top three. The judges decision is final, and also transparent. Competitors are offered feedback to help improve their efforts in subsequent weeks. The judges are /u/Tilnit, /u/KrinonGaming, /u/kidmania01 and /u/Akaed.

To participate, navigate to <https://www.reddit.com/r/Minecraft/> and locate the "stickied" post near the top. Read the rules for the current challenge carefully and ask any questions you may have on the thread.

The community is ready to help, so don't wait: get building!



Challenge #22 theme “Wonders of the Ancient World”



Lynne Telfer is a Minecraft Global Mentor, MineGage Director of Education and Australian Educator with a passion for bringing the power of Minecraft into the classroom.

ANZAC HISTORY *COMES ALIVE!*

History is not a glorification of war, facts and figures to be given back through tests and activity sheets. It is about us and about the human spirit... and it got me thinking...

What if Anzac Soldiers wrote letters to my students? What they were not a stranger from the past, but a valued friend of 1915 that desperately wanted us to know not only what was happening, but how he was feeling, his opinions, his fears, his spirit, and bravery?

If that is the case, I want my students to meet them. I want them to empathise and to have a true sense of compassion for the thousands of ANZAC soldiers that served in Anzac Cove.

...and we could use the amazing virtual learning space Minecraft offers to create an interactive virtual world of Anzac Cove in 1915 that will empower my students with far deeper learning.

...so we did.

"The moment I stood on the virtual Anzac Cove I got chills."

Enter the brilliant build team friends of mine, **Athion**. You will not meet a better team of enthusiastic people! I have known Athion for years and have a great respect for their skills and professional quality. True to their form, they were instantly excited about making a real life world for education and got to work! Now I was imagining a simple world edited bay - but no. These guys and girls had much better plans. Using real GIS data, the group made an accurate map of not only Anzac Cove but the whole area!

With this wonderful foundation, we went to work studying primary sources to determine how we can best represent the lives and experiences while being respectful to the historical reality. To be honest, it exceeded my expectations. Building tents, hospitals, shelters, docks, ships, boats, supplies and even cannons was not only possible, they looked amazing!



"History is ... a dialogue between the present and the past."

Edward Hallet Carr. 1961. What Is History? New York: Vintage Books.

As an Educator, I can say I had a sense of thrill as I stood on the beach taking reference shots in relation to real historical photos. Being there in a virtual world is completely different than looking at the historical photos! I went for strolls from one end of the Cove imagining how cramped and scary it would have been. Those hills above had snipers constantly sending bullets. The dugouts were facing the sea and were safe from the bullets above but those tents looked exposed. I imagined running down for a quick swim to clean braving the snipers. Visiting the hospitals was though provoking. I know these filled up instantly on the first day and many were seriously injured as they waited to be placed on nonexistent ships for Egypt. Yes, the diary entries and letters I have read now became real for me. This is exactly the experience I want for our students.



Minegage, a company I am very proud to be part of, have come on board and are assisting with getting the resources ready for schools. We have beautiful renders and a walk-through of the world for videos and presentations to

"History isn't about dates and places and wars. It's about the people who fill the spaces between them."

Jodi Picoult, The Storyteller

enhance the experience for our students and Educators. The map itself will be available for download and ultimately I would like the map to be available in many platforms and Minegage and Athion are researching this - but for now we will make it available in java. I am very pleased to say Minegage and Athion will be working together on many more educational projects in the future in a professional partnership.

With all this in place, it is my turn!

"I am very pleased to say Minegage and Athion will be working together on many more educational projects in the future in a professional partnership."



I have a 3d printer right here beside me. It's a basic one, the typical school first printer. I am starting with a small high quality detailed panel to see what is possible at a tiny scale. Now, I imagine that parts can be printed much bigger and can be used as sets for videos, static displays, oral and visual presentations. Small figures can be printed to accompany the map.

The great part is the students can decide what they want printed and at what scale!

Designing the Anzac Experience Lesson

I am linking to the Australian Curriculum for Year 9 History. The lesson I plan to place on the Minecraft Education website will link to Australia, the US Common Core, the UK National standards and Ontario Canada frameworks.

Australian Curriculum Framework

- investigate key aspects of World War I and the Australian and New Zealand experience of the war, including the nature and significance of the war in world and Australian and New Zealand history.
- The places where Australians and New Zealanders fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign
- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past

Visit education.minecraft.net

The screenshot shows the Minecraft Education Edition homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'GET STARTED', 'HOW IT WORKS', 'CLASS RESOURCES', 'COMMUNITY', 'SUPPORT', and 'MY CLASSROOM'. Below the navigation is a large image of four students sitting around a table, looking at laptops and interacting with the Minecraft game on them. Underneath this image, there's a section titled 'LESSON PLANS' with the sub-instruction 'Find lessons spanning primary, intermediate, and secondary school for use with your students.' Below this, there's a section titled 'FEATURED LESSONS' with four cards: 'CHINESE TANG DYNASTY CAPITAL CHANG AN' (Math, History), 'LEARNING ECONOMICS WITH...' (Math, Tech), 'CREATE FRED THE HUMAN B...' (Digital Science), and 'PIXEL SELFIES' (Visual Art, SEL). Each card includes a brief description and a 'VIEW LESSON' button.

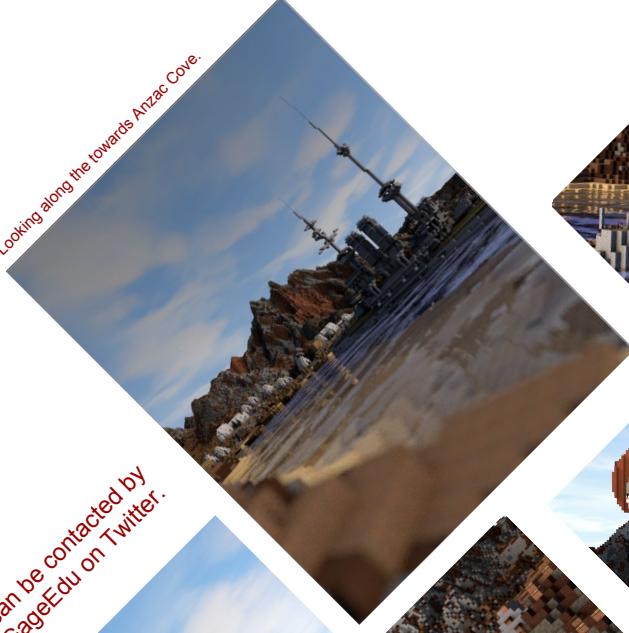
"It's imperative that we teach history in a way that's captivating to our students. By creating the battlefield at Gallipoli, we've made creating that connection much easier: having a map the students can interact with makes it much easier for them to understand what the soldiers felt like, and when students are able to physically move an avatar around and see different perspectives, they begin to get a grasp for what that battlefield was like. It creates a connection between the black and white photographs from 100 years ago in their books and the students today. That would have never been possible 10 years ago."

David Johnson, Historian and Athion Community Manager

Overall Lesson Structure

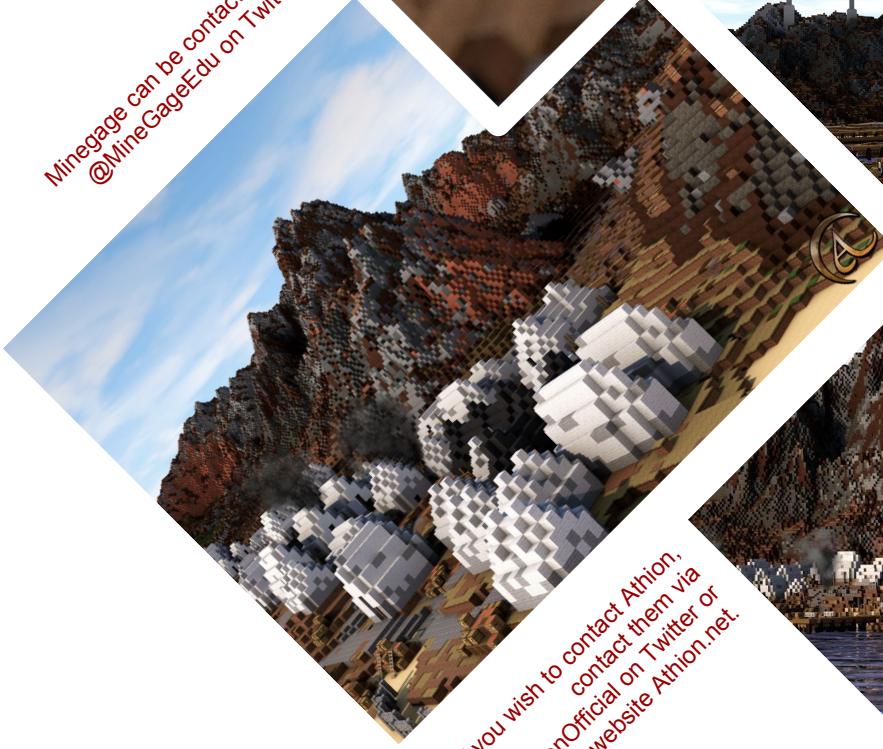
1. As you log onto the Anzac World, you will notice you spawn on Anzac Cove.
2. You are surrounded by the tents, supplies, carts, dug in dwellings and hospitals. What is missing are the people.
3. Your teacher will give you a card representing a soldier who represented their country in Anzac Cove. Each of these people wrote diaries that give us an insight into their lives on Anzac Cove. Read their stories.
4. Make an NPC with the name of that person. Allow them to tell their story by typing in their words on the NPC.
5. Use the URL link to link to their diaries on the Internet.
6. Once you and your class have completed the NPCs, your Cove is now populated with historical figures ready to be interviewed! Take time to read the stories of all the NPCs and get a feel what it was like on the Cove.
7. Make signs for others to read around the person.
8. Place the following information on the signs:
 - Name
 - age when in Anzac Cove
 - Date of Diary entry
 - What were they feeling during the time of the event or moment they are talking about
 - What personal qualities have the soldiers displayed?

ANZAC COVE PROJECT 2017



Looking along the towards Anzac Cove.

MineGage can be contacted by
@MineGageEdu on Twitter.



If you wish to contact Athion,
contact them via
@AthionOfficial on Twitter or
see their website Athion.net.



If you would like to get in
contact with Lynne Teifer,
follow her on Twitter
@lynneteifer and search for
#minecrafedu.

In closing, I truly wish this project to be a rewarding, rich learning experience for not only New Zealand and Australian Schools, but throughout the world. we have much to share about our cultures and thanks to builders like Athion and support from MineGage, we have the opportunity to allow our friends of the past to teach us all.

Enjoy!



EFBS

A DIFFERENT APPROACH BY HEMPED

I recently made a build about how we can live more efficiently. I call it EFBS, which shows how if we edit or change our current methods, we can live a more productive and safer life on Earth. In the build I make work with vertical farming, rain collectors, solar panels, water piping, and more space reserved living.

The creation of this piece was done on Builders Refuge.



Is this the “Dark Ages” of Map Making?

There is concern about the uncertain future of our art



[Nickflame20]

I think those things will come in the next several months. The issue has been that redstone/mechanics people haven't bothered with Bedrock until now because it's so far behind, but with the marketplace now offering real incentive for strong mapmakers to work in Bedrock, we'll see more people dipping their toes in and finding out just how much is possible.

The next big wave of "redstone concept" youtubers will come once those people realize the power of creative applications of add-ons. They're already much, much more powerful than most people realize.

[Avondale]

Add-ons let you take behaviors from mobs and apply them to other mobs, cause events to happen, change the size of mobs, reprioritize behaviors, etc. It's still pretty new, so you can't interchange everything, but it allows for a few things you couldn't do at all in java

**What is wrong with Map Making right now?
To some established map makers it seems
like something vital is missing.**

**Are we in a dark age of map making where
the player base is on mobile but map
makers can't tap into them effectively
because of lack of tools, an increasing
flood of features, limited access to them
because snapshots aren't available on
non-Java platforms, and an acute lack of
showcase channels and concept makers
explaining how to use them?**

**Has Microsoft missed a vital ingredient in
the shift to Bedrock?**

**One problem may be that mobile and
console platforms don't have the tools
and culture of customisation present on
Java because by their nature they are
'closed' platforms. Time will tell if we can
work out how to overcome these hurdles.**

[SirBenet]

<https://minecraft.gamepedia.com/Add-on> is a good place to start. They include things like mob behaviour and loot tables

[Onnowhere]

I wouldn't know for sure but it feels like PE plays minecraft more just to play it, and PC plays it more to modify it? because I can't see anyone significantly modifying the game while on a phone and neither (but a little less so) on consoles

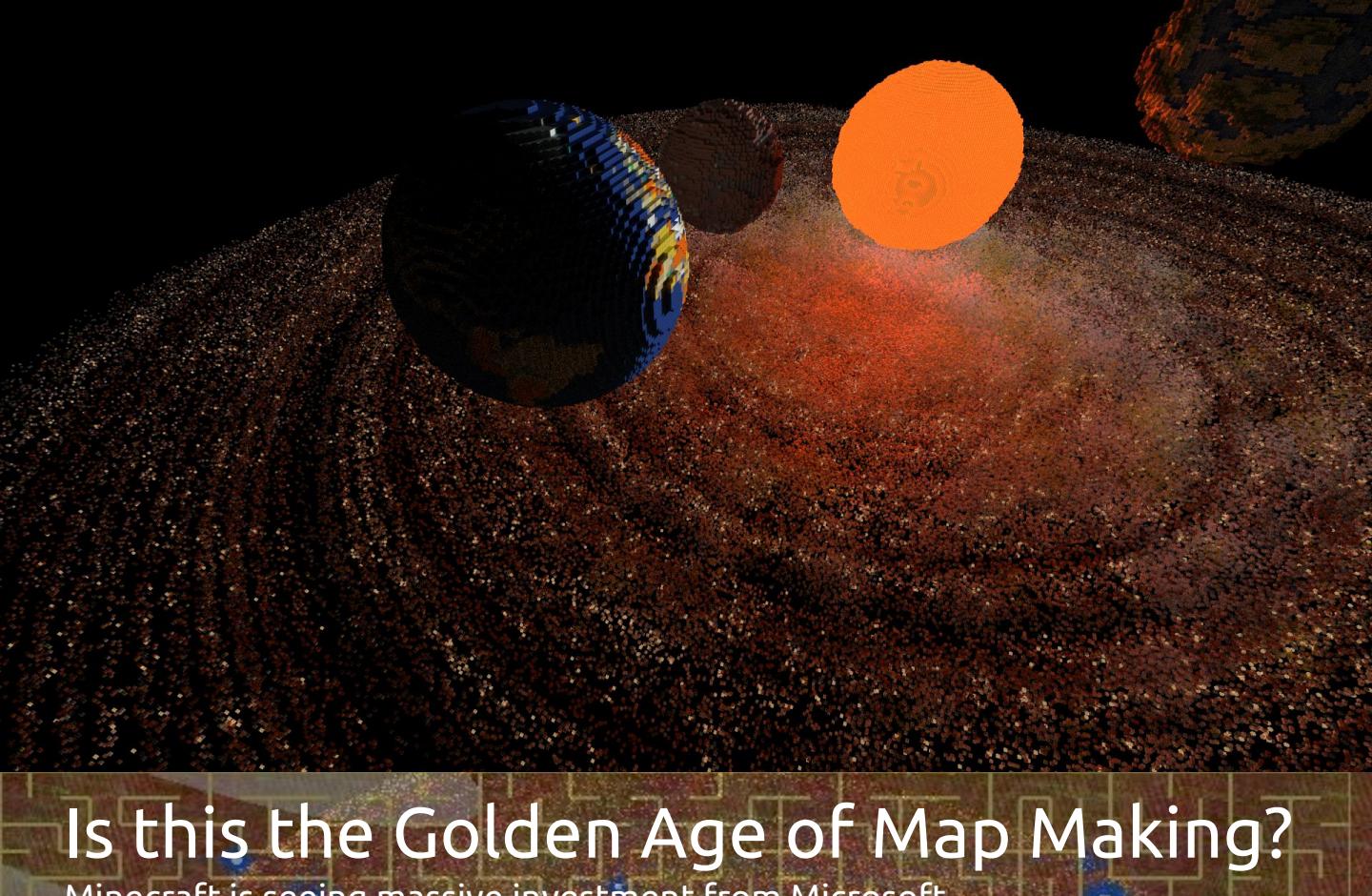
[Sybillian]

I feel like a large part of the reason for that is that the lack of dedicated servers (save for Realms) encourages people to group up with friends in place of reaching out to a larger community. So it becomes less of a "go out and meet people and socialize and share content" and more "play this game with established friends with no real reason to branch out"

CDFDMAN (AKA: "CDF")

Yeah less people are doing videos overall

Thanks to contributors to this article,
including @Onnowhere_ @Qwertyuiopthepie
@Nickflame20 Sybillian @CDFDMAN
Avondale and SirBenet



Is this the Golden Age of Map Making?

Minecraft is seeing massive investment from Microsoft

Map making is almost a 'meta-game' in Minecraft, feeding the hunger of solo players, gaming groups, YouTube channels, servers, and concept creators alike. Things have never been better for Map Makers to practise their craft.

Let's start with the players. The audience for maps is the biggest it has ever been. Minecraft has never been more popular than it is today. At the time of writing there are over 26 million purchases of Java edition, and a year ago Owen at Mojang reported over 100 million players across all editions. While the in-game experience is good, there are plenty of people in that pool who want new custom gaming experiences in the 3D platform they know and love.

Microsoft have made available easy-to-use safe server hosting for collaborative play in Minecraft Realms. At the same time, Mojang have created a program for content creators to have their work hosted and easily accessible as Realms worlds. As if that were not enough, the Marketplace has been created to provide map makers a way to get paid for working on new maps, models, and worlds. The commercial ecosystem available to map makers has never been as solid.

Perhaps sensing a need for better channels to market for community creations, Mojang has also hired map makers from the community to develop new features for custom Minecraft experiences, and to facilitate the onboarding of new content onto Realms.

There is a lot going right for map makers.

Minecraft for PC / Mac has sold a total of

2 6 , 3 8 1 , 2 0 0

A Problem with YouTubers and Storytelling

by Defectus



About a month ago, I published a map by the name of Arrendor. It was a 7 month long project with one to two hours of gameplay. I was very proud of it and I was sure it would go well.

And it pretty much did. As of now, Arrendor has reached over 17 thousand downloads, and a pretty good rating on minecraftmaps.com. It was played by PopularMMOs, one of the largest YouTube channels playing Minecraft with almost 12 million subscribers. It did really well.

And here comes the problem. If you search on YouTube "Arrendor", and scroll down, you'll first see the 5 episodes of PopularMMOs on Arrendor. They did fairly well. Okay, keep scrolling down, and... nothing.

No other large Minecraft YouTubers played Arrendor, except for a Chinese one with about 450 thousand subscribers.

What's going on here?

I've been scratching my head over this for the last few weeks. It seems like a very odd problem. Why would a high quality map that got a lot of attention not get but one Let's Play from a big YouTuber?

What's more mysterious is that my previous map, What It's Like, had gotten more Let's Plays by popular YouTubers than Arrendor. In comparison, What It's Like had about 15 minutes of gameplay, and took about one month to create. Why is this happening?

Well, eventually I found the answer, with help from a fellow map maker. It's quite simple: Long maps don't appeal to a lot of YouTubers nowadays. After many episodes of the same map, their viewers might get uninterested.

So, the mystery is solved: The ultimate reason why Arrendor wasn't getting any Let's Plays by popular YouTubers is because... **it was too long**.

I had put too much time and effort into my map.

You could probably say "Quality over quantity", but Arrendor was, in my opinion, a high quality map. It wasn't just a bunch of rushed scenes that were ultimately long enough to be an hour long together; Every scene and detail in the map was worked hard on. I suppose the phrase you'd say in this instance is "Quality over quantity; actually, no quantity".

This bothers me quite a lot. Ever since I published Arrendor, I've been trying to think of new stories to create, since I don't have much else to do. But so far I haven't gotten any ideas for stories that would fit well into a Minecraft map, because of the game's limitations. So, now there's another limit: Length. My story can't be too long, otherwise no YouTuber would play it.

It's quite depressing, really, if you think about it: You're not going to get promoted unless your story is short enough. You seem to be kind of punished for working hard.



Storytelling in Minecraft

By BhunaBoy

Stories are a form of art. Whether expressed through a book, a movie or a minecraft map. Like all kinds of art, there are specific rules and characteristics that help define it.

An art student must learn the rules of colour, shape, texture, shape, pattern and form. They learn from the experienced, the "masters". If they learn well they themselves can become masters. Then they can transcend the science and break the rules to create new styles of art.

As you walk through an art gallery some pieces may make you feel angry, sad, happy or elated. However some you simply ignore.

Art is designed to make you feel emotions, it stimulates both positive and negative feelings and if you experience these feelings when you look at the art, then you have become immersed in its story and world.

And so, you have become immersed into the map.

Storytelling is the same. It starts with technique and science and ends in immersive art. It seeks to arouse emotions in its audience and make the audience invest in the world and the characters.

This has been shown across the countless minecraft maps, across the versions and across the generation of mapmakers. People begin by following "master mapmakers", growing in their skills and being influenced by their "masters" style until they break out and redefine mapmaking with a new and interesting style or even a new genre!

I believe that any map can have a story interwoven within it, whether it be a minigame or a parkour map and in doing so makes the map unbelievably more fun and interesting to play.



Making Maps Based on Chance by @PepijnMC

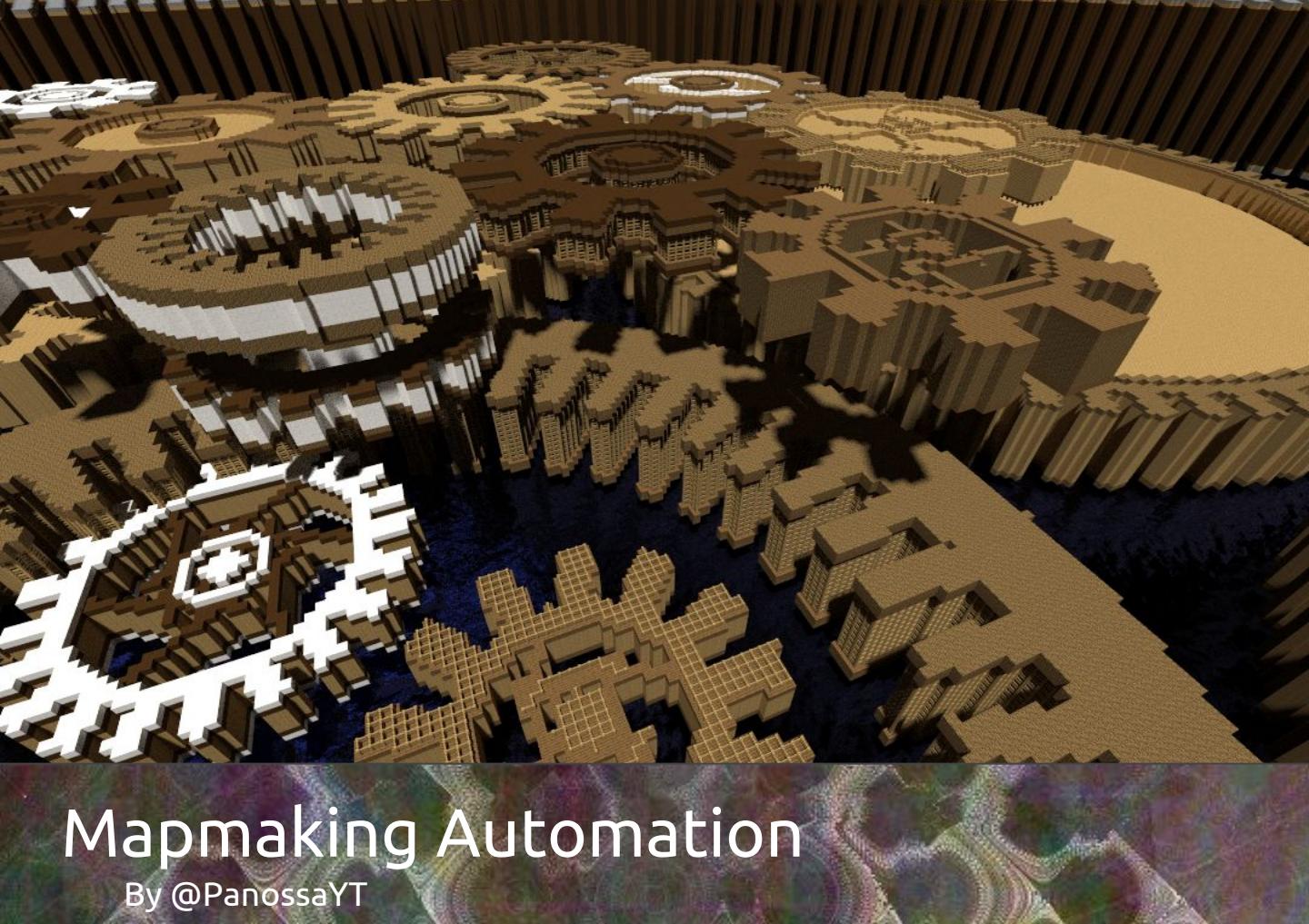
Chance and randomness are very interesting concepts in the game industry. They can create variation and replayability, but too much can overwhelm the player. So what can you, as a map maker, do to keep randomness in your map enjoyable while also rewarding skill?

A general solution is to limit each random element. If you have random loot, limit low tier loot to beginning areas and high tier loot to the end of the map; give the player a choice between 3 random options; or maybe introduce synergies and anti-synergies between items. If you have random encounters, make sure that each possible outcome is realistically possible for the player to overcome. I think you get the point. By limiting random elements through distribution and choices, you can create variation without making the map feel like a dice roll which takes no skill to play.

Extreme examples of minecraft maps based on chance are “lucky block” maps. There are a lot of subtle variations, but the common goal is to open “lucky blocks” which then randomly do something from a pool of predetermined outcomes.

So how does a map which completely relies on randomness manage to be pretty fun to play? First of all the “pool” from which the lucky blocks pick is predetermined. Good lucky block maps (even though they are relatively easy to make) will have to have thought put into this to make the lucky blocks feel somewhat balanced. Randomness restricts the control you have as a map maker, so you have to use every little bit of control you have to its full extend. Another way some lucky block maps limit randomness is by restricting it to only one part of the map. For example: players can gain “points” from gathering loot from lucky blocks in the first half of the map and these point are then used in the second part of the map.

Of course not every single map follows these basic guidelines. It can be fun to sometimes embrace the randomness and have a good laugh with your friends or viewers about the outcomes. The common “problem” with this type of map however, is that players can get bored or annoyed by it quite quickly. So think carefully about what type of map you want to make and remember that the most important goal is for the player to have fun.



Mapmaking Automation

By @PanossaYT

What happens if a company like Mojang gives their community the power to create whatever they want? Of course one big part of the Minecraft community is custom maps: Making maps, making mechanics for maps, and/or playing maps. One very important and cool aspect of letting the community be creative is that the community helps itself.

There are tools on the internet which help people across the world with their maps and mechanics. Those tools reach from simple, straightforward tools like QualityHeads - which is a site where you get player heads for decoration purposes - to the most advanced software products you can imagine. See e.g. Cubik Studio or the armor stand animator by [MrGarreto](#).

One small example of a “tool” I made just before writing this article: A batch script for Windows computers. What does it do? It starts a Minecraft test server and opens the functions and advancements folders of your map in Sublime Text 3 (Sublime has cool multi file editing features if you open whole folders in it). There are a maximum of 7 lines you need for that script. About half a minute of work but it can save so much time if it stacks.

A video about this tool can be found here:
<https://youtu.be/DeLOkIYyOvM>

A list of useful resources for minecraft is available on the /r/MinecraftCommands subreddit:
<https://www.reddit.com/r/minecraftcommands/wiki/resources>

Brand-craft by @PepijnMC

What does the recent rebranding of editions mean for Map Makers?

Not too long ago it was announced that Minecraft for mobile (iOS, Android, Fire OS), Windows 10, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, VR, Apple TV and Fire TV will gain cross-play in the form of a “new” Minecraft edition simply named *Minecraft*. The codebase of this edition is referred to as the *Bedrock Codebase*. *Minecraft: Education Edition* will also make use of this codebase but will remain a separate edition and won’t gain cross-play.

So what does this mean for the game? You might have noticed that the Xbox 360, Playstation and Wii U won’t be getting this new edition. Instead they will keep the current *Console Edition* of the game, which will continue to be updated by 4J Studios. Players with the current *Console Edition* on the platforms that will gain this new edition will be able to upgrade for free, but the old *Console Edition* won’t be sold on those platforms anymore. For mobile and Windows 10 players it is “just” an update.

But if this new edition is called *Minecraft* what should we call the Minecraft edition it all started with? The official name will now be *Java Edition*, which makes sense considering it is the only version written in the Java programming language. But why name this new edition just *Minecraft*? Do they want to push this edition as the main edition, is *Java Edition* dead? I personally think this was not Mojang’s reasoning (yes indeed, it was Mojang/Minecraft Studio that came up with these name changes instead of Microsoft), they explained that they wanted to make it easier for potentially new players to get into Minecraft. It can be pretty confusing if you just want to start playing Minecraft and there are so many different editions you have to look into. If you believe

that is up to you, but know that the original *Java Edition* is still the edition you get when buying the game from the official minecraft website.

So reducing the amount of editions and names is probably for the better, but why *Minecraft* and not *Minecraft: Bedrock Edition* for example? It was stated this was done to keep things simple. Some people argued however that it’s very annoying to talk about the game now, if someone says Minecraft do they mean the entire game or only this new edition? We will have to see if this becomes an actual problem, but many websites decided to just call it *Bedrock Edition* anyway.

Now the most important question of all: What do these name changes mean for us, the map makers? For such an important question the answer is quite disappointing because to be honest, it probably won’t change much. Names are just names and there are way more important factors to consider when talking about *Java Edition* vs *Bedrock Edition*. But that’s a whole other topic and I will need a lot more space than I have left here, so maybe in a future issue!

What do you think about these changes? Are they necessary or has Mojang gone crazy? Tell us your reasoning!

Helen Zbihlyj
@HelenAngel

No “yet” about it. We are NOT stopping development of Java Edition. Period. End of story. I’m the community manager for Minecraft.

death? of Java Minecraft

Is Minecraft dying?

Idea. We’ve messaged everywhere repeatedly that we are continuing to develop Java Edition.

Is Minecraft real?

I can assure you that no one in the Minecraft studio sees Java as second-rate. It’s just to eliminate confusion since there are SO MANY editions of Minecraft- it’s really difficult to keep up for the average person which ones can play together and which ones can’t. Also, this isn’t a Microsoft decision- this was a Mojang/Minecraft studio

Do you think minecraft is dying

Minecraft is not dead.

Releasing a Successful Map

Is there science behind getting your map played?

Many Map Makers enjoy seeing their work played and enjoyed, but letting players know they have created a new map is a bit of a dark art.

This month we followed the release, via the Minecraft Maps web site, of the Arrendor custom adventure map for Java edition, from @newDefectus. With 17 thousand downloads in the first few weeks, the map has received very positive feedback from those who have played it. As you can see from the article by Defectus in this issue though, he was surprised by the apparent lack of uptake by YouTubers.

YouTube channels have traditionally been the "go-to" place for new maps to find their audience and to generate discussion. New maps can often appear as posts on the Minecraft forums and sit for months, or even spend a year working their way onto the Realms release schedule as @Kris_Madas' Realms map "Fishing for Gold" showed.

We threw the topic open on Twitter and received great feedback from the community. You can check out the full thread here:

<https://twitter.com/MapMakingMag/status/885130124739215360>



DJ EAR @Huepow00 · Jul 13
There's plenty of LetsPlays out there with 30+, 60+ 15-30min episodes of the same game.

Defectus @NewDefectus · Jul 13
There WERE. Times have changed, my friend.

EaterComputer @EaterComputer · Jul 13
Replying to @NewDefectus @MapMakingMag
This also affected #PokeCA map. It was like 15 hours long and nothing could get youtubers to play it. (Maybe a little but like 10 min of it)

Defectus @NewDefectus · Jul 13
I was going to put this in the article too, but #PokeCA DID get a lot of videos made on it, even if barely actually finished the map.

Pandawan @PandawanYT · Jul 13
Well, most of the videos/attention was from the press, not really from big Yters, and it's the latter who bring all the players

Sarc @SimplySarc · Jul 14
I'd say the solution to this is to remove linearity. The reason MC LPs are so successful & watchable is because each playthrough is unique,

Ron Smalec @rsmalec · Jul 15
Replying to @SimplySarc @abrightmoore
I caution this. If meant to be linear, so be it. Open world adventures can come off empty or confusing if not done right. Don't force it.

Panossa @PanossaYT · Jul 14
That's why lucky blocks or pvp maps are more played in videos I suppose

Releasing a Successful Map

Is there science behind getting your map played?



Dragoz @dragoz · Jul 14

Replying to @dragoz @abrightmoore and 2 others

If just 1 person plays your map, enjoys it and learns something, the map is a success



Sarc @SimplySarc · Jul 14

That 'overly long' phenomenon isn't exclusive to MC maps, any other game that feels like a pre-scripted rollercoaster does poorly on YT too



Ron Smalec @rsmalec · Jul 14

Replying to @abrightmoore

Mostly agree. Also when 1 big channel plays an adventure, other 'big' tubers don't want sloppy seconds.



Sarc @SimplySarc · Jul 14

Give the player more control. Design the map so each experience genuinely stands out from the rest.



Ron Smalec @rsmalec · Jul 14

Replying to @SimplySarc @abrightmoore

Yep. And if you REALLY want to tell a long story, tell a long story. But set your expectations low.

Clearly there are lots of different ways to define 'success' with map making. Some people are happy if their friends play and enjoy a map they have made, others see the number of map downloads as a key metric in determining the level of success. For this conversation we are going to take a look at strategies to maximise the number of downloads. We will look at the most downloaded map in the world, @theQMagnet's "Diversity 2", and see what worked for this Guinness World Record holder.

Diversity 2 development started after the release of its predecessor "Diversity". Diversity itself was a very popular map with players and with YouTube channels. Diversity 2 therefore was able to engage with an existing community of players who enjoyed the previous release. In this way, Diversity 2 built on groundwork laid down previously.

The Diversity 2 format is around stages of completing a monument. Modular games challenging the player to complete tasks for a reward. The tasks are varied by common and popular play styles, such as combat against mobs, survival, jumping, solving puzzles, and obstacle avoidance while falling. The map requires no custom models and uses only vanilla textures. It provides a standard well known Minecraft gaming experience without the need for a tutorial and without the need for the player to familiarise themselves with custom game mechanics.

Community engagement played an important role in Diversity 2's popularity. @theQMagnet did not just release Diversity 2 fully formed onto the scene. Instead he took an approach of sharing development updates and including

DIYERSITY 2

Releasing a Successful Map

community members in the process of building the map. This took these forms:

1. Announcement videos at key milestones, including early on in the process with the intent to work on the map,
2. Development video blogs on progress, thoughts on features in snapshot releases, and tutorials on interesting topics
3. Including 'easter eggs', or small shout outs, to YouTube personalities who supported the original map
4. Including community members within the Arena portion of the game by running a competition, of sorts, and placing custom heads in-game to watch the player battle monsters.
5. Crediting map contributors and testers in a dedicated post-game map area for the player to explore

The development and release of Diversity 2 occurred in partnership with the Minecraft player community and other map makers. YouTube videos and comments were an integral part of the communication. @theQMagnet replied to video comments in a timely fashion sharing his vision and progress. Social network management was low-latency, positive and on-topic.

The map caters for a wide variety of play styles and offers the players choice in how they solve the game. There is a game hub where players can select the order in which challenges are attempted, giving a degree of freedom that adventure story maps do not always have.



The map punishes failure with a quick death and respawn to a nearby recovery point. Success and fun is its goal with good humoured mini-games like the small arenas the player finds themselves in when failing a question in the Trivia branch.

The map supports success using hint books to provide clues to solve puzzles and challenges. Extensive playtesting was performed to tweak the difficulty and hints.

The partnership approach extended to assembling and managing a team of specialist map makers who contributed to sections of the map from around the globe. By involving others as needed collaboratively the work was shared and the quality of the gaming experience ended up being superior to the map's predecessor.

@theQMagnet also required appropriate team credit on Let's Plays, and he actively policed it. This caused some friction as it exposed the disdain some YouTube personalities have for the contribution Map Makers make to supplying new and interesting content to keep channels fresh and interesting. There is a demographic in the Minecraft community who values collaboration and sees crediting creators for their efforts as an essential part of the process.

With over 2.2 million downloads, excluding unauthorised mirrors and Realms hosting, Diversity 2 has proved a popular map. This has not translated into financial returns though, with an estimated \$30 received via donations.



qmagnet @theqmagnet · Jul 14

Replying to @theqmagnet

An amazing feat. I'm certainly grateful, especially for my team. But guess how much I've received in donations since 2014's map release

\$30

Guinness World Record
Most Downloaded Minecraft Project



Diversity 2

A black and white photograph of a massive, sprawling city built entirely from Minecraft blocks. The city features numerous tall skyscrapers, intricate road networks, and various architectural structures, all constructed from the game's signature 3D blocks.

<https://mods.curse.com/worlds/minecraft/224139-diversity-2>

The Best Map

By @PanossaYT

There is something in the internet that is common but commonly false. Clickbait titles like "The best XYZ", "The most unbelievable XYT", "The most something something...". And there is a problem with that. This article goes through some reasons why, regarding Minecraft maps.

First of all, we should look at the subjective side of the phrases. There are currently seven billion people our planet. Of course there are different opinions on what is good or bad. One could like puzzle games and therefore say e.g. "The Code" maps by @JesperTheEnd are the best maps ever. One could love story based adventure maps. He would maybe hate on The Code. But from all currently existing maps there is no subjectively best map because you would need to decide regarding the (mental) likes and dislikes of the map. You would possibly have to make sure that everyone played every map themselves. Just because a map is famous it doesn't mean that it is better than a map no one played so far.

What problems could occur if someone decides one map is the best map?

1. There could be another map with way more people loving it. But that map could be from another genre of maps. What is the best map now?
2. There will be lots of people online arguing about how the map got to be the "best Minecraft map". Certainly they love another map more.

Objectively, the best map of all is either the map which most people will like once they play it (which is impossible to know because -remember - not every player plays every map and assuming whether someone will like it is subjective again). Or the best map is a map which at least goes deeply into every aspect a map can have. Adventure, puzzle, story, co-op, fights, sound design, textures/models and so on. Which no existing map currently has, really, cause a map usually needs a focus on a few of those. I don't know any map to combine the best of every other map that exists out there. Do you know one? Write about it in the next issue of MapMag :)



How to Make a Dropper Map

Game mechanics in Minecraft can be made with powerful command block machinery using complex and advanced features in the latest snapshots or beta builds. And then there's "the Dropper".

Like the name suggests, a Dropper map involves sending the player falling from a great height, through obstacles, to land safely in a target area. Similar to popular mobile games like "Falling Fred", Dropper maps can also be punishing to play. Unexpected failure occurs when the player misjudges the distance to a ledge by a few pixels and takes sufficient fall damage to kill their character and force a restart.

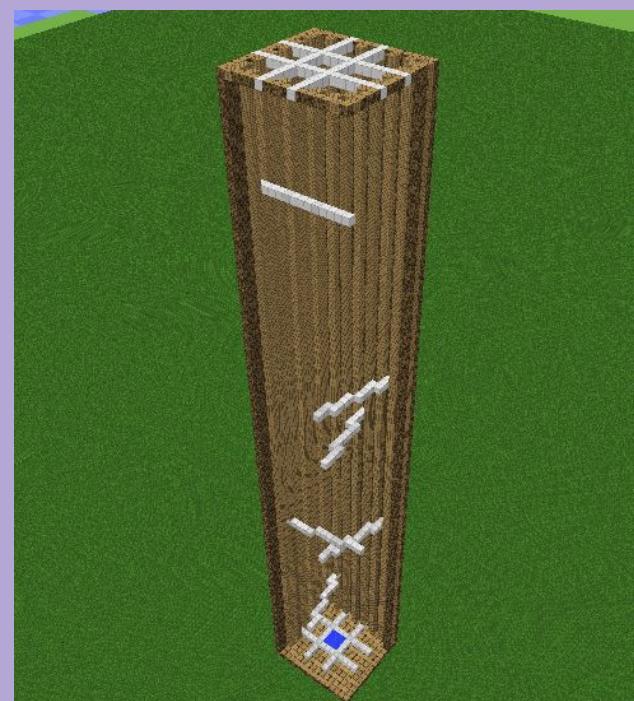
The falling mechanism in Minecraft allows for some small navigational changes while the player is airborne. You can move slowly through space to dodge and glide using the directional keys.

A well designed Dropper teases the player to try just one more drop before giving up, and rewards the player with a stunning visual environment and exciting special effects.

The most popular Dropper maps of all time were created by master Map Maker Bigre, whose Planet Minecraft profile shows his six year career has propelled him to the stratospheric level of 100 on this community site. "The Dropper" and "The Dropper 2" have secured 2.8 million downloads between them, and countless play hours from happy Minecraft gamers. The Dropper maps have also been ported by Bigre to consoles and PE, making them highly accessible examples of the genre.

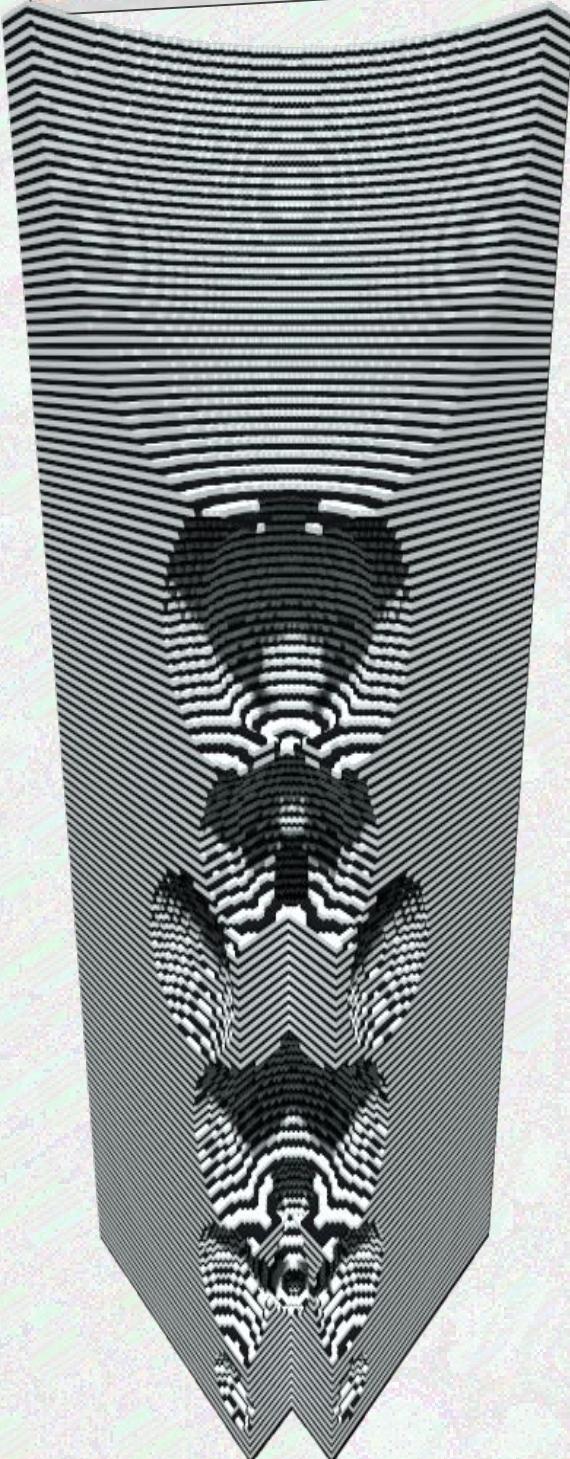
DID YOU KNOW?

An MCEdit filter exists that can be used to generate random Dropper levels. Using a small set of input material types and a single numeric 'simplicity' value, a tall Drop can be generated in seconds!



How to Make a Dropper Map

Bigre
Level 100 : Transcendent Engineer



By Bigre

So what do you need to create a Dropper map?

Bigre's maps give us some great ideas to use in our own creations:

1. **Scale:** Impressive built environments. Bigre's maps are composed of large scale builds that offer variety between each Dropper level. One is a large scale room, another is a psychedelic tapering tunnel. Even a giant skeleton makes an appearance!
2. **Variety:** Each map has many levels, offering episodic gameplay on the journey to complete all the challenges.
3. **Quick gameplay** which avoids frustration of travelling to retry each drop.
4. **Single and multiplayer compatibility** to support playing with friends.

In many ways Dropper maps are ideal for quick casual play and so are appealing to YouTube channels seeking entertaining gaming experiences to share with their audience.

Before getting started, some other Dropper maps to explore include:

- @TheQMagnet's Diversity and Diversity 2 projects, both of which include Dropper branches.
- @MegaStrikerMCPE's SuperMegaDropper released in 2017 for Minecraft PE it includes highly original designs and art,

How to Make a Dropper Map

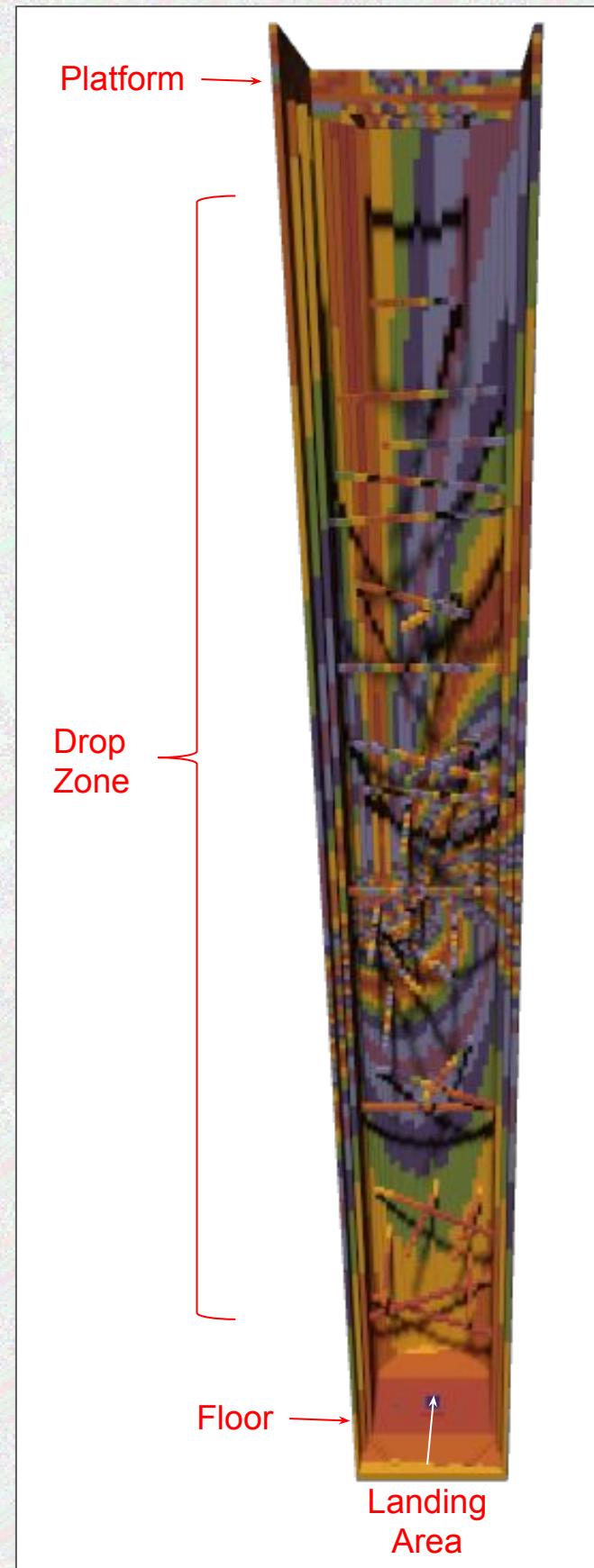
There are at least three zones of play for a Dropper level:

1. **The platform** where the player stands ready to drop. The drop mechanism can be as simple as a redstone mechanism to retract the floor, triggered by a button, or a complex command sequence to dissolve the blocks from beneath the player. Be creative! This might be the last thing the player sees before they slam into the floor far below...
2. **The drop zone** is a vertical segment of tunnel with obstacles to avoid. Colour and block variation can provide clues to the safest path, and particle effects can be used to enhance the experience.
3. **The floor** should include a safe landing area which allows the player to survive. Water is a popular choice, though recent additions of slime blocks provide a bouncy alternative.

The formula is simple and can be mixed up a lot once you get the feel for what is fun to play. Scoring mechanisms can be deployed based on the time taken to clear the levels, number of fall-deaths, or number of attempts.

As in the Diversity 2 map players can be given the option of which Dropper to attempt from remaining drops, or as in Bigre's Dropper maps the path through the game may be sequential requiring the previous to be completed before proceeding.

Because the mechanism (gravity) is pervasive and requires very little effort to harness you can also add Dropper experiences to your maps whether they are PvP arenas or Adventures!



The End...

The Minecraft Map Making community is a diverse and creative global collective. It potentially includes over 100 million Minecraft players who are seeking a challenge beyond killing the Ender Dragon. At its core, there are professional bands of map makers who are earning money through commissions, amateur map makers who express themselves through blocky worlds, and technical specialists that focus on redstone / command blocks / custom models / terrain / architecture, and game level design.

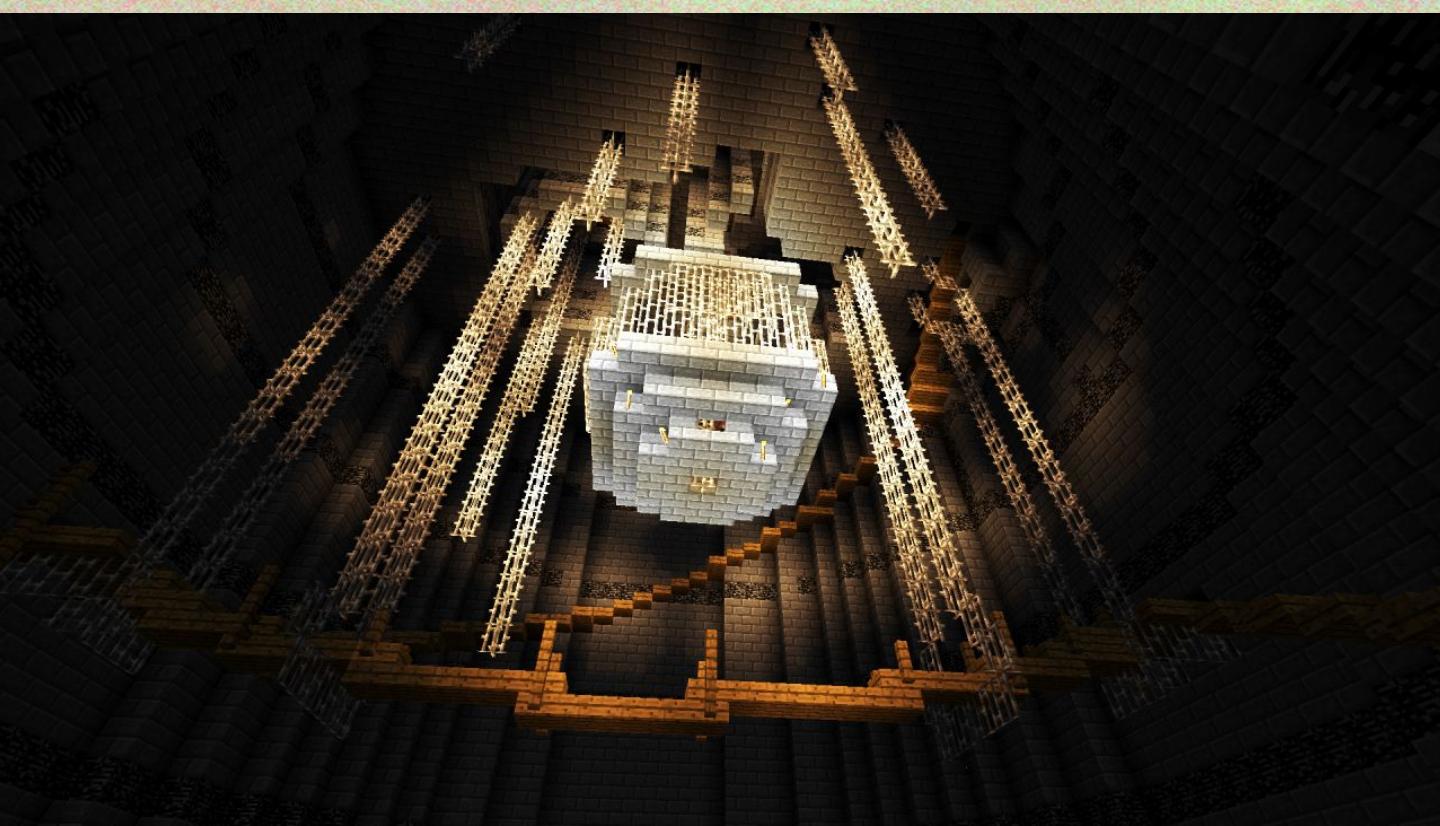
But even this is scratching the surface of the various map making communities that come together to craft unique gaming experiences. MapMag exists to bring anyone with an interest in this craft together to discuss and collaborate on the art of map making.

This month MapMag turns one year old. During the last 12 months seven issues have been published on topics as varied as Mini Games (Issue 2) through to Education (Issue 5).

During the last year, Mojang has established a commercial channel for minecraft map makers, as well as grown the Realms program.

You may have a favourite Issue or Article. If you would like to see more of the content you like, simply reach out on Twitter to @MapMakingMag to let us know.

MapMag is an Open project and attempts to involve the community as a whole through compiling and publishing articles from anyone who wants to tell a story or share their skills and expertise. This includes you: get involved!



About the Magazine

This project is a community driven and contributed magazine. By publishing we seek to develop the wonderful craft of Minecraft Map Making. All content remains the property of the respective author and is used with permission. All trademarks referenced in this publication remain the property of the respective trademark holder.

Last Issue Errata

Issue 6 - no problems reported. It must have been perfect!

The Map Mag Team

MapMag includes Articles and Art from:

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@MineGageEdu
@PepijnMC
@AthionOfficial
@Bhuna_Boy
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@theQMagnet
Avondale
SirBenet
Bigre

@... your name could be here - write an article or provide art for future editions! See submission guidelines in The Lobby.

This publication is a community effort and this issue has been compiled with input from the Minecraft Map Making community. MapMag is supported by donations from:
@immersiveminds and @cocoamix86

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Immersive Minds

ICT in Education...

Using technology creatively to enhance learning across the entire curriculum and...

-  Outdoor Education
-  Employability
-  Environmental Science
-  Study Skills
-  Motivation/Aspirations
-  Alcohol Awareness
-  Anti-Bullying/Cyber-Bullying
-  Entrepreneurship
-  Internet Safety
-  Social Media Engagement



Pioneering Games-Based Learning...

Using games and play to enhance and support curriculum learning and life skills development, in children and adults...



Minecraft in Education...

Using Minecraft to support learning across the curriculum...

A global Minecraft server dedicated to training and supporting teachers and parents.



Working with people to develop skills for:

- Work
- Learning
- Life



Communication

Citizenship

Critical Thinking

Numeracy

Analysis

Evaluating

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Problem Solving

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Negotiation

Justification

Empathy

Decision Making

Enterprise

Self Confidence

Judgment

Decision Making

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ISSUES 1-6



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We use MCEDIT by @Codewarrior0 and the community (<http://www.mcedit.net>) in the preparation of MapMag