Songle – Discover Songs Like You Have Never Before

An android based song guessing game.

Overview

Songle is an android game where players try to guess songs. Each song is a puzzle with the puzzle-pieces being the song lyrics. Players walk around in the real world following a map, to collect words. They use the collected words to guess the song-puzzle. More puzzles are added dynamically to keep the user interested. For more information please look at the following document: http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/cslp/coursework/songle/coursework-cslp.pdf[1].

Features

1. **Main Controls** – The user may decide to **Play**, change **Settings** or look at S**tats**
2. **Playing Progress (Bonus)** – User can see all available puzzles, BUT only play the first three in the beginning. As user progresses, and completes these puzzles, more puzzles become available to play. This gives the user a sense of progress and achievement each time more puzzles become available. The puzzle selection screen also shown your progress in each puzzle and acts as a review screen.
3. **Puzzle Attainment Level (Bonus)** – When player selects a puzzle, he is shown a map with words that he can collect. As specified in [1], maps with varying level of information is available. More informative maps are shown based on progress. Once you collect all words on Map1, you are shown Map2 and so on. Since songs have different number of words, each song will give a different experience.
4. **Guessing –** The map always shows a guess button which takes user to the guessing screen for the particular song. The Guess screen contains all the words collected yet and gives the user ability to enter the guess.
5. **Progress bar (Bonus)** in map shows how may words are collected and how many are available to collect.
6. In the guess screen, **Sentence Builder (Bonus)** is provided. The users can use the collected words to try and build a sentence which may help them in identifying the song.
7. If the user guesses correctly, he is taken to the Correct Answer screen, otherwise, he stays on the same screen and is **made aware that his guess is incorrect**.
8. The Correct Answer screen congratulates the user and shows information relating to the song. The user is prompted to go back to the song puzzle-selection screen.
9. **Stats (Bonus) –** The user can select to see his stats at the home screen. Following stats are shown: Distance covered/steps, Number of songs guessed correctly and tentative calories burned.
10. **Settings –** User can reset his progress. More options can be made available to the user in Settings in future.

Features and typical game-play are described in more detail in sections below. The sections also mention some ideas which may be implemented but **should not be expected in the first submission** of the app. These ideas provide an insight into how future features may be added or improvements be made. They are **clearly mentioned** to be speculations are not commitments. They are added so that if a feature seems very exciting, it can be discussed.

Design

Entry Point

The entry point of the game is shown in figure 1 below. From here, the player can choose to start playing, look at stats or change settings. Since the game depends on an active network connection to download puzzles, the game will insist user to connect to the internet. This is shown in figure 2. User can click the message to make it disappear and try again. If the download still fails, clicking the Play button won't proceed to next screen and display a message as shown in figure 3.

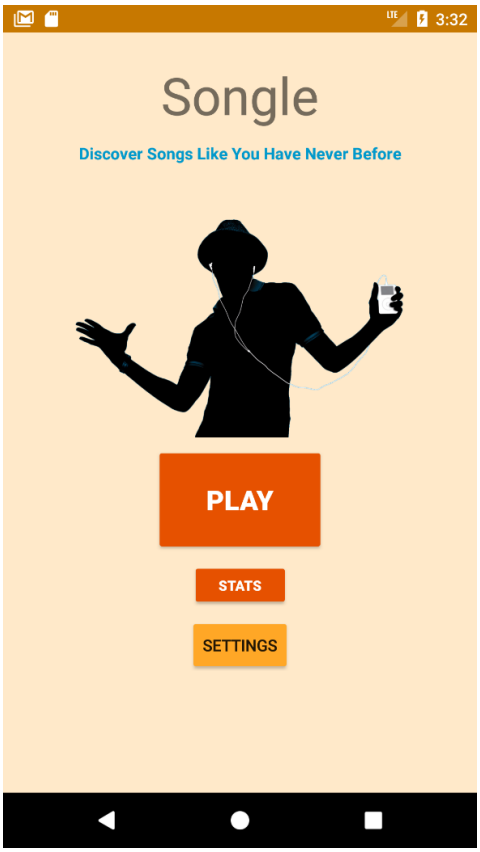

Figure 1: Entry point of the app

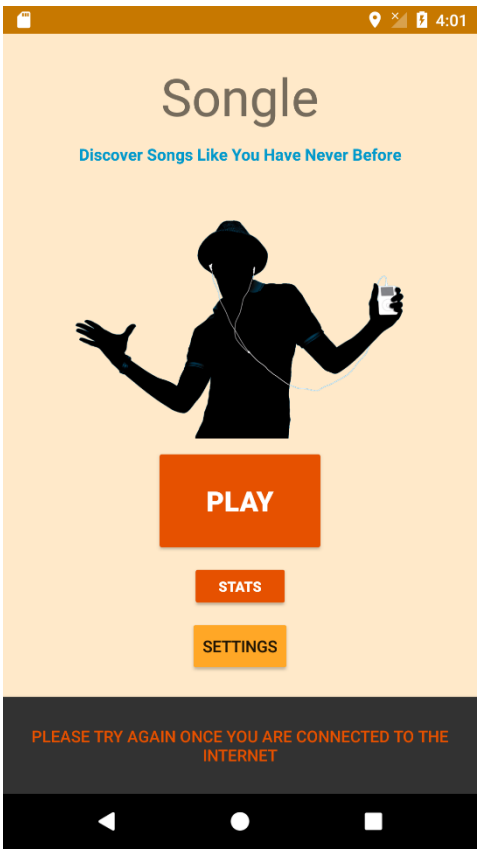

Figure 2: No internet Connection

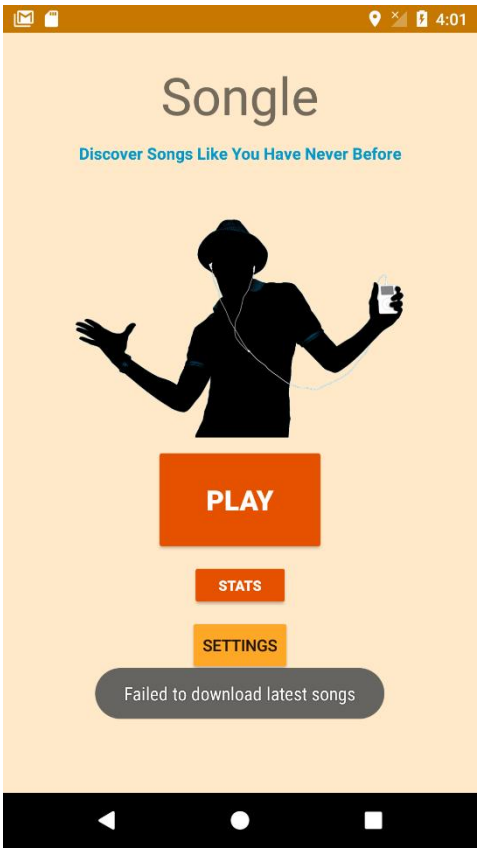

Figure 3: User clicks play but no network connection

Offline play may be allowed by using previously downloaded files. **But no commitments are made right now**. The decision to allow or disallow offline play will be much easier to make once the app is in its final stages of development.

As a final note regarding this screen, this screen lays out the colour and design theme for the whole app. All other layouts will follow similar colour schemes to provide a continuousness for all app components.

Song-puzzle Selection

As described in features above, the user will be given a chance to play a song-puzzle with a predefined scheme. Consider figure 4 below.

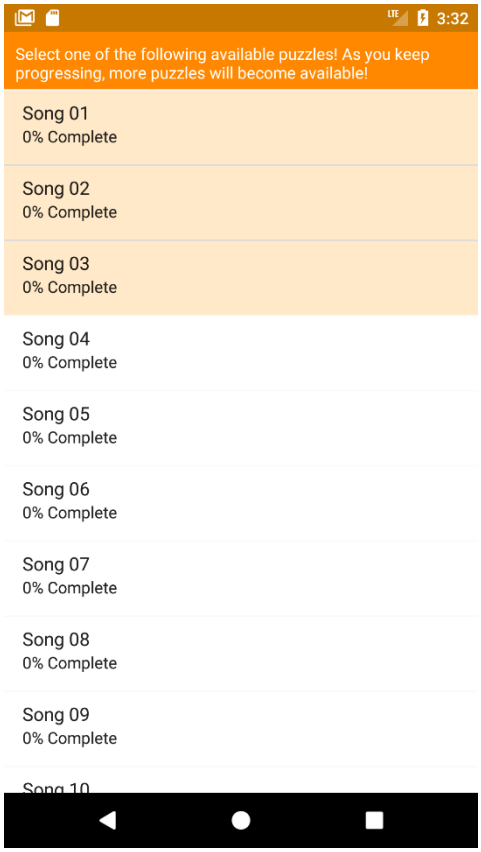

Figure 4: User may select any from the first three available puzzles.

In the figure, all songs available are displayed but only three are highlighted to indicate that they can be selected. Inactive puzzles can't be clicked but can be seen by scrolling down till the end of the list. For each puzzle, the list also shows progress. Progress becomes 100% as soon as the song is guessed regardless of the number of words collected. Progress on incomplete puzzles is determined by words collected divided by total words. This screen is where user can review all the puzzles.

Progression scheme – Once the user has completed any one of the three, next puzzle becomes playable. This scheme continues till all puzzles become available. This incentivises the user to stick to puzzles and not give up early and hence making the task fruitful for the user.

In future, schemes may be selected from settings. Scheme may be changes to opening three puzzles for every one solved instead of just one. And so on. However, **this is not to be implemented in the first submission**. This merely suggest that the scheme can be altered without losing its essence (of unlocking puzzles based on achievement).

Puzzle Map

Once the user selects a song-puzzle, he is taken to a map where he can start playing immediately. Consider figure 5 and figure 6 below.

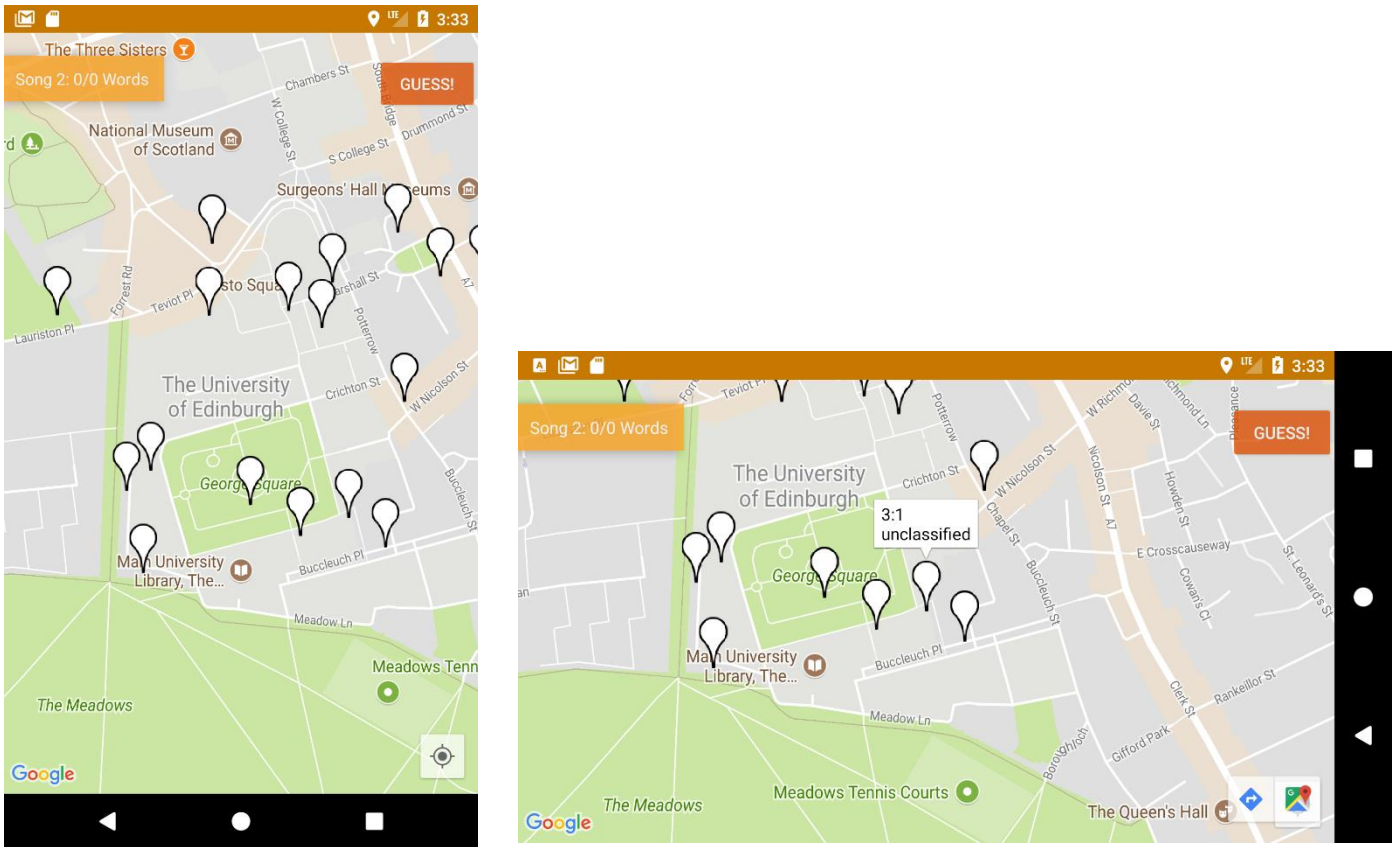

Figure 5: Shows the map screen in portrait mode and figure 6 in landscape mode. Both have, a status bar on the left side and a Guess button on the right which takes you to the guessing screen. Shown in figure 6, is what happens when a user clicks a placemark.

On top left corner and top right corner, there are progress indicators and guess button respectively. When a user is sufficiently near a placemark, user is indicated that a word has been collected and he may review the word in Guess screen. Once the user has collected a word, the placemark disappears. This is because as the game progressively shows more and more word placemarks, the map starts becoming cluttered. On clicking a placemark, user gets an option to see that placemark in google maps and get directions to the placemark (right hand side bottom; landscape mode).

Map scheme – Once the user has collected all words in a particular map (see [1]), next map is shown without the words already shown in previous map. This keeps happening till the user is on the 4th map. The 5th maps very-interesting words are given as hints for free when the user asks for a hint.

Guess Mode

When the user clicks the guess button on the Map, Guess screen is shown. See figure 6, Text field is in focus by default where the user may enter his guess and check by clicking the guess 'GUESS!' Button. User may press the back key to remove the keyboard and see the list of words collected yet. Figure 8 shows how the screen typically looks. If the user enters an incorrect guess, he is notified as shown in figure 9. On correct guess, the user is taken to a different congratulating screen.

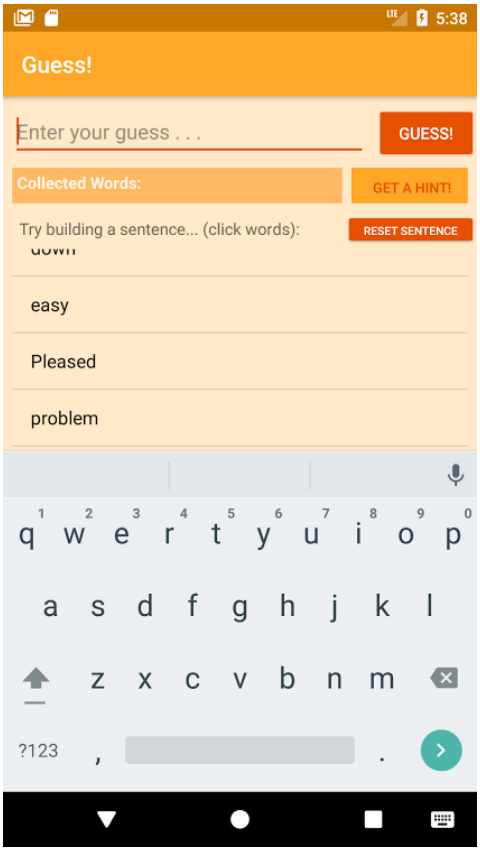

Figure 7: Text filed in focus for the user to guess the song

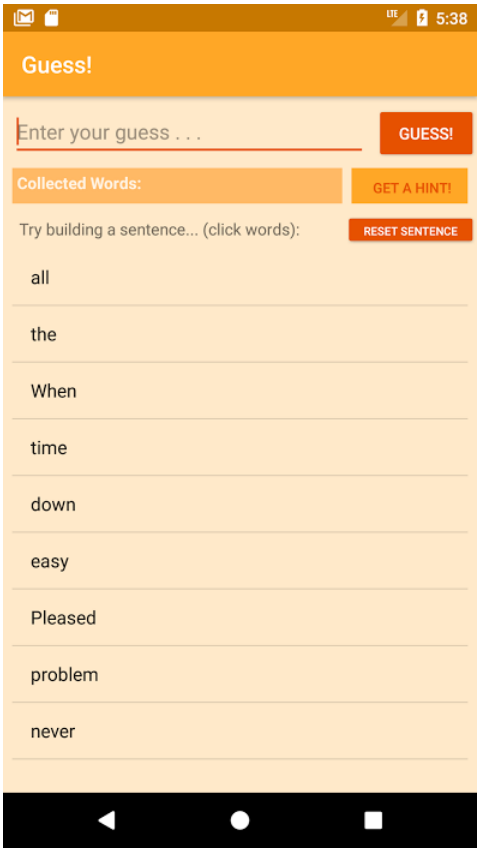

Figure 8: Typical look of the screen

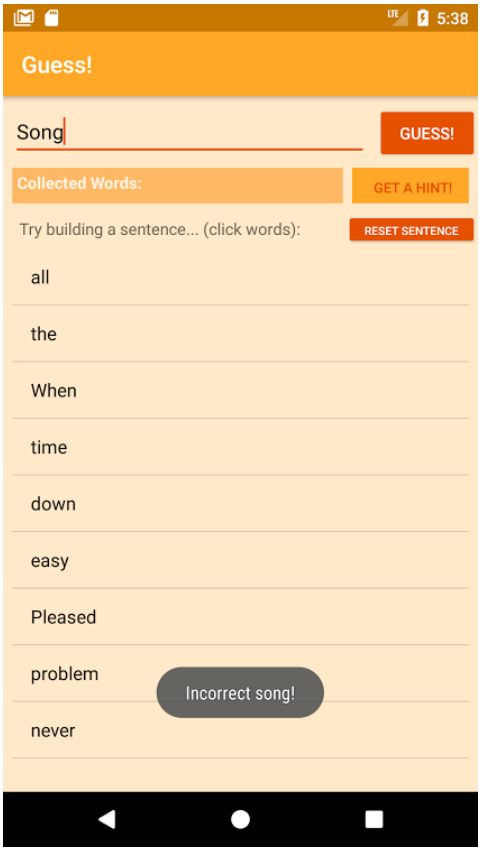

Figure 9: An incorrect guess by user

The 'Get a Hint!' button may be pressed at any time and the user will be given a 'very interesting' word for free. The free word is added at top of the list, hints are given until all very interesting words are over. If user still fails to guess the song, he may not get an answer at all. This decision was made as games are made to be won! If a user could simply get the correct answer he may be tempted to choose that option.

Just above the word list, is a sentence builder provided which is explained in the next section.

Sentence Builder

Users are given an option to try and build a sentence from the collected words. Building sentences may help user to solve the song-puzzle. The user may simply click the words in the list and they will be concatenated together to form a sentence. User may click the Reset sentence button at any point to reset the sentence. For example, in figure 10, the user builds 'all the time . . .' .

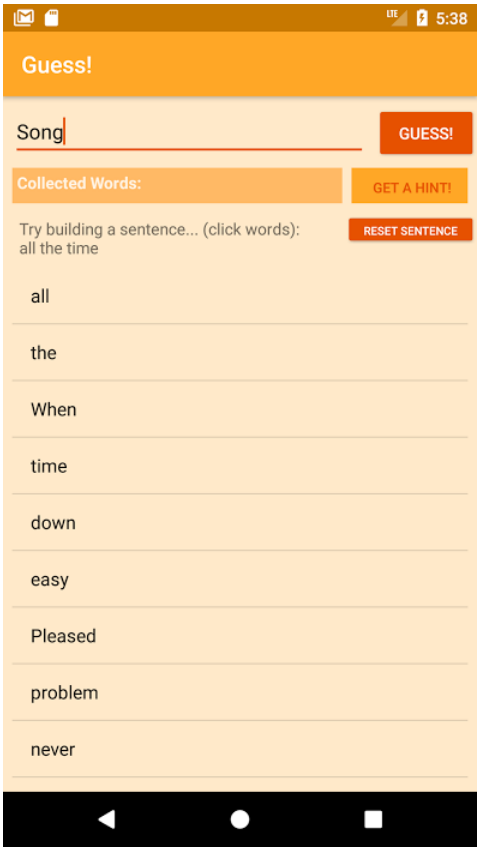

Figure 10: User attempting to build a sentence

If the sentence is longer than a line, the list shifts down making space for more lines. However, after a certain word limit, no more words can be added.

Reason for this feature – The simplest strategy to guess the song would be to try and figure out whole sentences from the collected words. This feature provides a handy way of doing this without leaving the app at all.

Congratulation Screen

If the user is successful in guessing the song, the 'GUESS!' button should take the user to a page like the one in figure 11. Once successful, appropriate changes in the puzzle review page will be made automatically. Like more puzzles will become available to play and progress for particular song will change to 100%. The user is presented with information such as song name, artist, distance covered trying to guess the song and a link to YouTube video of the song. Clicking the link will open the YouTube app and start playing the song video. User is prompted to go back to puzzle selection screen with a big button – "Back to Song List".

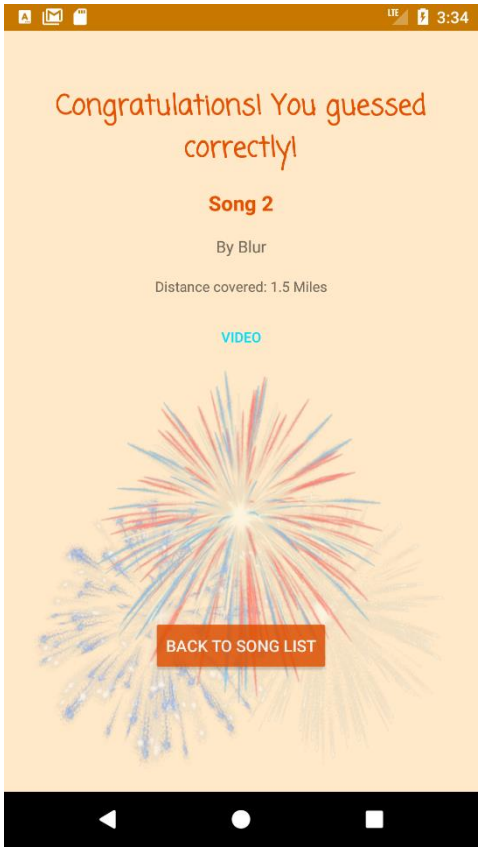

Figure 11: Congratulating user for successfully guessing Song 2 by Blur

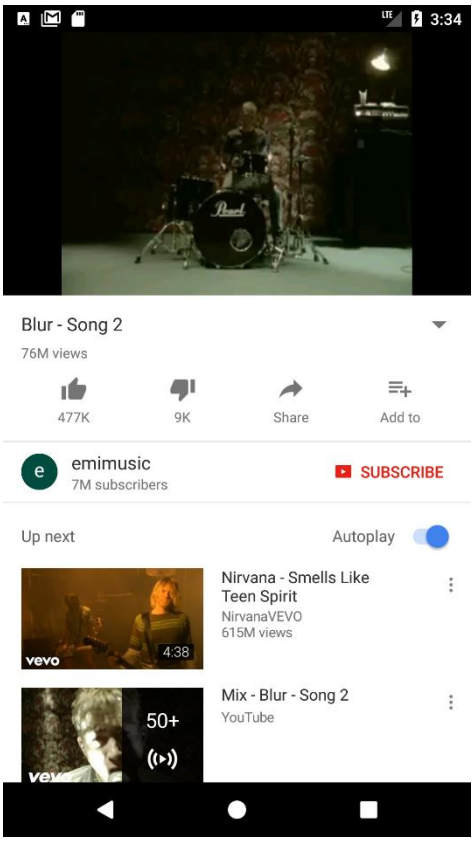

Figure 12: YouTube app opens to play the video.

Being successful should give a sense of achievement. This is done by displaying the distance covered by the user. But, more so by making more puzzles available. The price / award are the new puzzles!

Stats Screen

On the main screen, the user may choose to see his stats of game-play. This is provided a bonus feature and introduces a fitness/health element in the game. The calories-burned count should incentivise the user to keep playing and burn more calories.

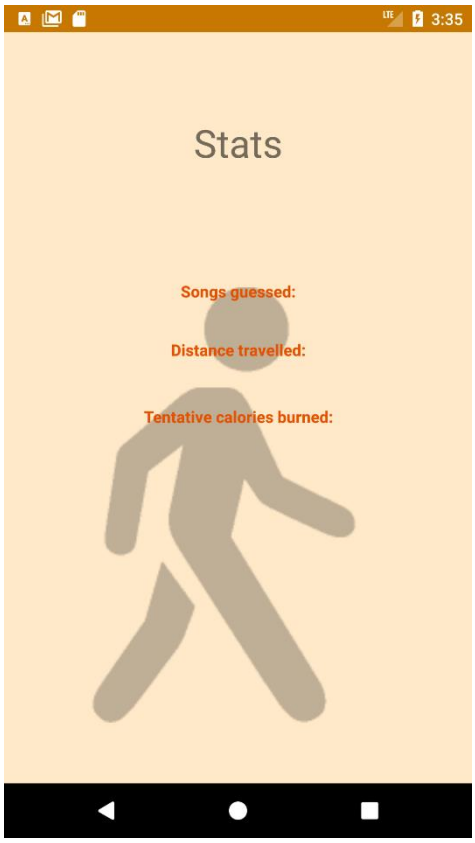

Figure 13: Stats screen. The blank values will be replaced with real game-play data.

The stats shown will be number of songs guessed, total distance walked while playing the game and a tentative calorie burn count.

Settings

The user may change setting by selecting the settings button on main screen. In the settings, user may reset game data. In future (not for the first submission), user may toggle offline play settings if provided, change background music setting and set any user preference that the game may provide as the development process finishes.

Comment on the App Design

Notice that the game play is designed to be seamless. The user does not choose map level, he progresses and gets better maps. The user does not randomly select the song-puzzle he likes, but he progresses in the game and more puzzles become available. The user can guess the song in the same screen where he can review his collected words. User is encouraged to try and guess the song every time he reviews his words by providing a sentence builder.

All design decisions were made keeping in mind that the purpose of the design is to keep user interested in the game by providing him a sense of achievement with every bit of progress. As more words are collected, a more clear and harmonious screen is presented by removing the collected word placemarks. Then, a more colourful map is viewed once first map words are all collected. And it feels like the puzzle has reached a new level.

Since everything just happens by itself as the user progresses, I believe the user interface is more user friendly. The user just needs to concentrate on guessing a song-puzzle! An then more song-puzzles!