Harry Potter Platformer

ENGL108P Assignment C

Overview

In this game, the user plays as various characters in the world of Harry Potter attempting to navigate the final battle (end sequence) of each of the books. Each level is described in further detail later in this document.

Standard gameplay has you playing as 1 of a set of characters available to you in the level. Each of these characters plays a pivotal role in the sequence in the original novel and the actions the player can take are guided by the personalities of the characters. For example, since Ron is the best at chess, he is the only one that is successfully able to win the chess game in the first novel.

The levels are designed as a combination of a few different game styles. First, we have platformer style levels where the player is able to move in 2 directions and jump, similar to what one may experience while playing a Super Mario game. Then, we have portions where the user simply has to click on the appropriate action as the correct character to continue. This is similar to room escape flash games of the early 2000’s. Finally, we have world navigation levels in which we have a top down view and the player must navigate the world or a maze to find an objective.

In each level, the user has simple controls. They can move in a direction allowed by the map and they can take an action. The action is determined by where they are. In addition, they are able to switch between the characters available for the current level, possibly changing the action available.

Level 1

Characters: Hermoine, Ron, Harry

Level description

The first level has the player navigate from the third floor corridor to get to the Philosopher’s Stone. We chose to start here as there is a continuous sequence of events that lends itself well to a single level in a video game. Unfortunately, this means that Neville’s attempt to stop the three main characters does not get an appearance although it is part of the end sequence.

The players start in the first room which represents the third floor corridor. To simplify matters, rather than sneaking around the sleeping Fluffy, the player needs to use the harp in the room to play music, putting Fluffy to sleep in order to pass by Fluffy safely. If they try to pass Fluffy without first playing the harp, they get eaten. Once past Fluffy, the players open the trapdoor and go through it. In this room, the only actions available are “Play harp” and “Open trapdoor” as appropriate and are available to all three characters.

Once players go through the trapdoor, they fall into the Devil’s Snare. Here, the players are up against the clock. If they are stuck in the Devil’s Snare for a minute, the players die from being trapped in the plant. In order to escape, the player must switch to Hermoine and cast flames in order to escape. As Hermoine, your action in this room is “Cast fire” and as Ron or Harry, the action in this room is “Escape” which just cuts 5 seconds from the timer as your squirming makes the plant secure itself faster. Once you fall through the Devil’s Snare, each character has the action “Open door” if they get close enough to the door to the next room.

Once you open the door, the players are in a room filled with keys. One of these is visibly different from each of the others. Here, the player needs to first mount a broomstick by the door and then try to catch a key. Accordingly, the actions in this room in sequence are “Mount broom”, “Catch key”, “Unlock door”, where the door to unlock is the door to the next room. In this case, only Harry is able to catch the key successfully and anyone is able to perform the other actions. The door is only unlocked if the key caught is the key that looks different from the others.

Once through the door, the player is dropped into the chess room where there is a chess set in the middle of the room. Here, the player needs to win a game before being able to get through the door (“open door” is an action but will do nothing). To play a game, the player walks up to the board and takes the action “Play Wizard Chess”. If the current character is Ron, you win the game and can proceed and otherwise you lose the chess game, resulting in you losing the entire game as a player as each of the characters died in the process of playing the game of Wizard chess. We chose to make chess only a simple interaction since a full chess simulator with artificial intelligence would be far too difficult and not make sense in the context of the game. After winning the game, the player is forced to play as Harry to move to the next room.

The next room is the final one in the first level containing the Mirror of Erised and Professor Quirrell. We chose to skip the potions room due to the complexity it would take to implement and the amount of benefit it provides the game (chess is only there so that Ron’s character is actually useful). In this room, the player just needs to use the only interaction in the room “Look in Mirror” to get the Stone and proceed to the second level.

In between levels, there is to be a brief video of Quirrell attacking the screen and burning up as the screen fades to black from Harry going unconscious.

Level 2

Characters: Harry, Ron

Level description

The second level has the player proceed from Moaning Myrtle’s bathroom into the Chamber of Secrets and save Ginny from Tom Riddle.

The first room in this level is the bathroom in which you as Harry need to “Speak parselmouth” to open the entrance to the Chamber of Secrets and then fall through a long tube to reach the bottom. In the second room, Professor Lockhart who came through the tube with you attempts to disarm and place a memory charm on the player. If you are playing as Harry, you forget who you are and what you have done, thus losing the game. As Ron, the spell backfires from Ron’s broken wand, and collapses the roof of the cavern injuring Ron and forcing you to play as Harry for the remainder of the level. The player then has to climb over the rubble and reach the final room where Ginny is lying on the ground and Tom Riddle is standing there.

Once you are in the final room, you get a brief video of Riddle calling the Basilisk out of hiding, Fawkes appearing with the sorting hat and Harry pulling the sword of Gryffindor out of the hat while Fawkes blinds the Basilisk.

After this you have to avoid the Basilisk’s attacks and then take your action to “Stab Basilisk” killing the Basilisk. Once you have killed the Basilisk, you have to “Grab Basilisk fang” and “Stab Diary” using your action. If the Basilisk attacks you, you die and if the whole sequence after the video takes more than 15 seconds, Ginny dies and you lose. Once the diary is stabbed, you win the level and proceed to the next one.

Level 3

Characters: Harry, Hermoine

Level Description

The third level attempts to simulate the end of the Prisoner of Azkaban from the time that Harry and Hermoine use the time turner until the time that they return to the hospital wing. Here we start in the hospital wing as might be expected after a brief scene in which Dumbledore instructs Harry and Hermoine that 3 turns should do it. The player is given the action “Turn timeturner” and needs to do this three times. Fewer turns results in Buckbeak’s death and more turns results in Harry and Hermoine being seen, causing major issues to come up and in both cases the player loses.

Once the player uses the time turner, they are taken to just outside Hagrid’s shack. Here, they must wait for the Minister and the rest of the killing party to see Buckbeak in Hagrid’s yard and then free him within 10 seconds by the action sequence “Bow to Buckbeak”, move next to him and then “Free Buckbeak”. Approaching without bowing results in Buckbeak becoming aggressive, alerting those inside and the player loses. Failing to free Buckbeak quickly enough results in Harry and Hermoine being caught, again losing the game.

Once Buckbeak is freed, they player is again transported to a new environment where they are on the far side of the lake and witness Harry, Hermoine and Sirius under attack by Dementors. As Harry, you must cast “Expecto patronum” and then guide the stag that appears towards the Dementors, causing them to run off. Failing to do so, results in all three losing their souls and predictably, the player loses. Once they have saved themselves from the Dementors, we get a scene of Harry and Hermoine bringing Buckbeak to Sirius in the tallest tower and allowing him to fly off to safety on Buckbeak.

After the video, the player is brought to a traditional platformer stage meant to simulate navigating back to Hogwarts. You have to dodge the obstacles and not be caught by Snape who is out patrolling the corridor and get back to the hospital wing in time. This sequence is once again timed and if the player doesn’t reach the door in time, Madam Pomfrey will notice something wrong in the hospital wing and the two will be caught helping a fugitive.

This level cuts out many of the details and simplifies a number of the interactions that take place at the end of the book for continuity sake and because some components are extremely difficult to translate into a video game directly.

Level 4

Characters: Harry

Level Description:

The fourth level asks the player to complete the third task of the Triwizard tournament and then fight Voldemort in the graveyard. Here we start at the beginning and get the first top down experience of the game. The player needs to navigate themselves through the maze. When you come across an enemy, using the action button takes the appropriate action to safely get by. Once you reach the end, you get to the triwizard cup which teleports you to the graveyard.

Once you arrive in the graveyard, there is a scene depicting Voldemort killing Cedric, regaining bodily form and summoning the Death Eaters. Once this has happened, as Harry you need to cast “Expelliarmus” which gives you a brief three second window to run to Cedric’s body, use your action to “Pick up Cedric” and then move to the cup. Failing to do so quickly enough allows Voldemort to recover and kill you. Once you reach the cup, you proceed to the next level.

Again the sequence here has been simplified to still represent the storyline but make the game more playable with its simple control scheme.

Level 5

Characters: Harry, Dumbledore

Level Description:

This level attempts to recreate portions of the battle at the Ministry of Magic in the Department of Mysteries. Due to the complicated nature of the scene, we chose to skip much of the conflict including the large fight that results in Sirius’ death. Instead, the player is first taken to the room of many unmarked doors. In this room, you have to open the correct door to find the room containing the prophecies. However, the contents of some doors are so powerful that the player dies instantly upon opening them. Other doors that are incorrect just lead back to the same room for simplicity in the game.

Once you enter the correct door, there is a scene depicting the ambush in the room of prophecy and the following fight where Sirius Black is killed.

After the scene, the player becomes Dumbledore. As Dumbledore, the player fights Voldemort using a simple mechanic. You can either attack or defend. Doing each at the appropriate time will scare Voldemort away and win the level, but missing too many of Voldemort’s attacks will cause you to lose too much strength and be defeated, losing the game.

Level 6

Characters: Harry, Dumbledore

Level Description:

Rather than the main part of the end sequence, the fight at Hogwarts that results in Dumbledore’s death, we chose to use the cave as the part of the story to use in the video game as it lends itself to more interesting gameplay and is a more typical video game sequence.

Here, you first land in the outer area of the cave. In this section, you must play as Dumbledore and first cast a spell that reveals the door. Trying to do so as Harry will do nothing. Then, again as Dumbledore, the player must take their action to make a blood sacrifice, allowing Harry and Dumbledore to pass through to the next passage.

In here, you first use your action to summon the boat from the lake. Then the player must get in the boat without touching the water, touching the water will cause the inferi to come out of the lake and attack the player, causing them to die. The player must wait for the boat to cross to the island in the middle where the player as Dumbledore must drink the potion there. Once the “drink potion” action has been taken three times, the player must switch to Harry and use the “feed potion” action another seven times to force Dumbledore to drink the remainder of the potion. Once the entire potion has been consumed the player must walk to the water and use “Collect water” to get some water for Dumbledore. At this, the player is attacked and needs to use the action provided three times in quick succession in order to subdue the inferi, give the water to Dumbledore and then get back in the boat. Once the boat reaches the other shore and the player heads back towards the previous room, the level in complete.

Level 7

Characters: Mrs Weasley, Harry

Level Description:

The seventh level is based on the final fight in the battle of Hogwarts. For simplicity, this chooses to ignore the vast majority of the fight and focusses or two combats at the end. First, as Mrs Weasley, the player needs to defeat Bellatrix in a combat similar to the one in the fifth level. If Bellatrix wins, Harry and the others become demoralized and you lose as the player died. After defeating Bellatrix, the player becomes Harry and has another combat, this time with Voldemort. Once the player defeats Voldemort, they win the game.

This simplifies the final level dramatically and jumps straight into the mini boss (Bellatrix) and boss (Voldemort) as much of the rest of the battle is hard to discern the importance of or translate effectively into a video game.