3 minute video for Goldfields thru time

Goldfields Through Time aims to educate children about the history and development of the West Australian goldfields. Covering such areas as: Historical significant events and key historical figures; environmental changes and demographic and social data.

The Goldfields Through Time team encompasses:

Nadia – a digital humanist who is currently researching the goldfields of Western Australia.

Richard – a game developer specialising in Unity3D

And myself:

Daniel – a data scientist who is helping the team bring together a diverse range of data sets to gain a richer picture of the goldfields.

DATA SETS

Goldfields Through Time uses a diverse range of data sets, including:

State Records Office (mining leases, historical maps)

Australian Bureau of Statistics (population census 2011)

Atlas of Living Australia (Carnaby’s Cockatoo moving from the eastern goldfields to the western coastal plain)

Trove (archival photos and newspaper articles)

Bureau of meteorology (rainfall data).

Interestingly, looking at the Bureau of Meterology rainfall data we saw a strange occurrence in 1948 where a year’s worth of rain was dropped in two days. This lead us to find newspaper reports in Trove about a cyclone hitting Kalgoorlie at this time.

Goldfields Through Time has the ability to include other data sets that can be incorporated in the future, like: genealogical data; archival data, images of ephemera from the area, Landgate data, or even bird calls.

PROGRAM - The Program language is C# (sharp)

Goldfields Through Time is based on a Unity3d engine. Due to the nature of Unity3d, this can be either exported as a stand-alone package for a variety of devices, including PC and mobile devices, or as an online version accessed through a web browser.

HOSTING:

We are currently looking at hosting Goldfields Through Time on the Amazon servers.

FUTURE:

In the future, we’d like to develop it to include: a database of richer questions, answers and imagery ideally linked to the primary school syllabus. Potentially a multi-player element could be incorporated. This could be as a teacher guiding the students through the environment or a competitive element to the game.

BENEFIT:

Our hack will benefit primary school children. It adds educational value to our society.

Due to its online nature it could be used by children in remote communities, allowing them to have a direct interaction with a teacher in a virtual environment. The hack can also be modified to focus on different regional areas, such as the Pilbara or the South West, showcasing their rich history and development.