

Submission Worksheet

Course: IT265-002-S2025

Assignment: Case Study 1 - Atari

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Status: Submitted | Worksheet Progress: 100.00%

Potential Grade: 10.00/10.00 (100.00%)

Received Grade: 0.00/10.00 (0.00%)

Grading Link: <https://learn.ethereallab.app/assignment/v3/IT265-002-S2025/case-study-1-atari/grading/mb2297>

Instructions

1. Step 1:

From this spreadsheet, pick a game you plan to analyze (selection must be unique) and put your UCID to the left of it:

[Game Selection Spreadsheet](#)

If a selection turns red, it has already been chosen. Do not edit others' content/selection and be mindful if multiple people are working on the sheet simultaneously.

2. Step 2:

Use one of these sites to playtest and analyze your game:

- [Free 80s Arcade](#)
- [AARP Atari Games](#)
- [Keystone Kapers](#)
- [Triplets and Us](#)

If none of these work, use an alternative close to the original game.

3. Step 3:

Analyze and research your chosen game. Collect resources and include them in your responses for related sections.

4. Step 4:

Save the worksheet, export as a PDF, and upload it to the mentioned branch on GitHub. Create a pull request, merge it to main, and upload the PDF to Canvas.

Section #1: (1.5 pts.) Game Overview

Task #1 (0.00 / 0.50 pts.) - Game Details - Note the Game's title, de

Weight: 22.22%

Weight: 33.33%

Objective: *Game Details - Note the Game's title, developer, publisher, platform, genre, and release date*

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

Title: Crystal Castles Developer: Atari Publisher: Atari Platform: Arcade Genre: Maze Release Date: July 8, 1983



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Task #2 (0.00 / 0.50 pts.) - History and Industry - Note the historical

Weight: 33.33%

Objective: *History and Industry - Note the historical context of the game's release and its place in the industry*

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

Crystal Castles was originally released on arcade machines in 1983 and quickly gathered a fanbase. It gave a fresh approach on the maze genre of games like Pac-Man, where you're navigating through a level collecting every item to progress. Crystal Castles was a natural progression to this genre, adding depth with new mechanics, improved graphical styles, and experimental ideas.



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Task #3 (0.00 / 0.50 pts.) - Compare the game to similar games of

Weight: 33.33%

Objective: *Compare the game to similar games of the time*

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

After researching Crystal Castles I immediately noticed some similarities with Pac-Man. The gameplay loop in Crystal Castles is reminiscent of Pac-Man, both games revolve around collecting all the crystals or pellets to progress. Both games also include enemies that instantly kill the player upon contact, and powerups can be collected to defeat them. The sound design is also similar because there is no background music in either game, but sounds are played for each action and jingles play at the end of each level. That's mostly where the similarities between the two end. One of the biggest differences between Crystal Castles and Pac-Man is the level design. The levels in Crystal Castles use trimetric projections which means they're pseudo 3D levels in

level design. The levels in Crystal Castles use trimetric projections which means they're pseudo 3D, levels in Pac-man on the other hand are from a 2D overhead point of view. Crystal Castles is also a much faster game and has more variety in enemies.



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Section #2: (2 pts.) Gameplay Mechanics And Level Design

Task #1 (0.00 / 1 pt.) - Core gameplay mechanics and how they shape

Weight: 50%

Objective: Core gameplay mechanics and how they shape the player's experience

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

Crystal Castles was originally played on arcade machines with a trackball, which was claimed to be smoother to control than a joystick for this maps level design. In order to evade or defeat enemies there are a couple options. The player is able jump over enemies to continuously avoid them, but some specific enemies are defeatable through contact if they are currently eating crystals. If not, then contact kills the player. Also, in most levels there is a hat powerup that makes the player invincible for a short time, defeating enemies upon contact. The jump you're given is pretty large so escaping enemies is very doable in most cases.



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Task #2 (0.00 / 1 pt.) - Level design and how it affects gameplay

Weight: 50%

Objective: Level design and how it affects gameplay

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

At the time, Crystal Castles had a very unique and innovative visual style and level design. The levels in Crystal

At the time, Crystal Castles had a very unique and innovative visual style and level design. The levels in Crystal Castles use trimetric projections meaning that they give the appearance of 3D. Each castle consists of a maze with multiple levels of elevation that the player must navigate to collect crystals. This is sometimes contrasted with how fast the player moves, requiring changing directions pretty quickly. The original arcade machines played with a trackball which made these movements more natural to pull off, but playing like this with a joystick, keyboard, etc feels clunky.



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Section #3: (1.5 pts.) Graphic And Audio Design

Task #1 (0.00 / 0.75 pts.) - Game's visual appearance, artistic choices

Weight: 50%

Objective: *Game's visual appearance, artistic choices, and how they contribute to the experience*

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

Although the game has a darker atmosphere, there's still a large use of vibrant colors throughout the games characters and items. Also, the design of the castles themselves take inspiration from the works of artist MC Escher.



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Task #2 (0.00 / 0.75 pts.) - Sound design, including music and sound effects

Weight: 50%

Objective: *Sound design, including music and sound effects, and their impact on the game*

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

Crystal Castles had some noteworthy sound design for the time period it came out in. Besides some jingles that would play during certain events like completing a castle, the game has no background music. However, every action in the game has a sound effect paired with it. Since the player is collecting many crystals in short

every action in the game has a sound effect paired with it. Since the player is collecting many crystals in short periods of time while other things are going on, a lot of sound effects tend to play on top of each other creating layers to the soundscape.



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Section #4: (1.5 pts.) Narrative And Storytelling

Task #1 (0.00 / 0.75 pts.) - Narrative structure, main plot points, and

Weight: 50%

Objective: *Narrative structure, main plot points, and setting*

≡ Text Prompt

Your Response:

Arcade games from this era had very minimalistic narratives with few plot points. Crystal Castles does have a simple narrative that explains the purpose of the game at least. The main character is Bentley Bear, who is trapped in a castle filled with crystals. His goal is to escape the castle while collecting as many crystals as possible and avoiding enemies, including the Witch Berthilda.



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Task #2 (0.00 / 0.75 pts.) - Character development and how it integ

Weight: 50%

Objective: *Character development and how it integrates with gameplay*

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Your Response:

The main character, Bentley Bear, experiences no character development throughout the entirety of Crystal Castles.



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Section #5: (1.5 pts.) Impact And Reception

Task #1 (0.00 / 0.75 pts.) - Critical and player reception, including r

Weight: 50%

Objective: *Critical and player reception, including reviews and feedback*

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Your Response:

Reviews that came out at the time seem to be mostly positive. Crystal Castles was often praised for its graphics and unique take on the maze genre of arcade games.



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Task #2 (0.00 / 0.75 pts.) - Game's impact on the gaming industry a

Weight: 50%

Objective: *Game's impact on the gaming industry and its cultural significance*

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Your Response:

I'm not sure if Crystal Castles has made any long lasting impact, but it did pave the way for games that came along shortly after. With its innovative psuedo 3D visuals and multi-level movement that was uncommon for games at the times, Crystals Castles inspired games like Marble Madness. Also, the use of warps to skip levels is a feature that Crystal Castles was using even before Super Mario Bros.



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Section #6: (2 pts.) Reflection

Task #1 (0.00 / 1 pt.) - Was the game "fun"? What made it fun or not

Weight: 50%

Objective: Was the game "fun"? What made it fun or not?

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Your Response:

I don't believe this game has aged that well and personally don't think it's very fun but I can appreciate it for what it is. The movement isn't that fun to control with a keyboard since it was intended for a trackball, which not many people have access to. These older arcade games also tend to get stale after a while due to very few changes in gameplay, music, narrative, etc.



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Task #2 (0.00 / 1 pt.) - Reflection on the learning experience and ea

Weight: 50%

Objective: Reflection on the learning experience and ease of research

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Your Response:

I think researching arcade games from this time period can be a struggle depending on how extensive the assignment needs to be. Besides the widely popular games like Pac-man or Donkey Kong, a lot of these games have little documentation out there compared to modern games where even small details are easily accessible online.



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