**Fellowship Planning Document**

**Project Concept**

2 gladiators are chained together and need to fight their way through waves of enemies while avoiding the obstacles and hazards that emerge from the floor. Mood should be tense.

**Overview**

The game, working title Chain Combat, is a co-operative arena brawler in which the two player characters are physically connected by a chain which inhibits their movements away from one another, but also provides other opportunities to aid one another. The story of the game, is that the two characters are lovers who have been captured and forced to fight in a gladiatorial pit. Together, they must fight through 10 waves of enemies in hopes of escaping. The chain is joint based so that it will bend and wrap around objects, but will not stretch.

The gameplay is a 2D isometric brawler where the players have only a few individual moves and a few co-operative moves to aid them in their fight. The action all takes place on a single shared screen and at no time will it be divided into multiple screens. The gameplay is inspired by games such as the Gauntlet series and the Legend of Zelda series.

**Engagement Techniques**

1. Tether Players Together – this forces the players to be aware of their partner and prevents one player from abandoning the other or doing everything themselves.
2. Cooperative Abilities – the chain based abilities all involve the players working together to deliver the most devastating attacks
3. Team Aid – the berserk and aid abilities are designed to make the players care about the other's survival as well as their own
4. Shared Defeat – if one player goes down, both lose the game. This will encourage greater teamwork as a team cannot succeed if they are not working together
5. Shared Victory – The players can only win by working together. There is no solo victory
6. Story – as the characters are related, the players are likely to want to keep them safe

**Mechanics**

Chain Connection – players are connected by a chain which bends but does not stretch and keeps them tied together, restricting movement away from one another

Movement – players can move freely left, right, up, or down, with chain restriction

Attack – player attacks individually with their weapon

Dodge – player dodge rolls away from an attack (limited by length of chain when dodging away

Chain Tug – pulls other player towards activating player

Chain Spin – spins the players around and attack enemies in a circle

Clothes Line – players simultaneously charge and knock back enemies with their chain

Berserk – if a character's health drops below 20%, their partner goes into a brief berserker rage dealing additional damage

Aid – if a player's health hits 0, their partner has a brief period of time to revive them before the game is lost, their maximum health is reduced by 25%.

**Controls**

The game is controlled using two gamepads connected to the computer.

Gamepad inputs (assuming Xbox controller):

Left Analogue Stick – Move

X – Attack

B – Dodge

A – Chain Tug

Y – Chain Spin

Triggers – Clothes Line

A (When standing over downed teammate) - Aid

**User Interface**

The main menu is fairy sparse, just the image of a chain and the options.

The gameplay screen includes two health indicators, shaped like hearts to represent each players’ health. Each heart is split into three pieces each one counting as a single hit. There is also a round counter at the top of the screen. The hearts will be color coded to the players and player 1’s will be in the bottom right, while player 2’s will be in the bottom left.

A medical plus symbol will appear over a players’ head when they are downed.

**Learning**

At the beginning of the gameplay, the controls will be written on the floor of the arena, and the players will be provided a brief grace period to figure out how to play. The first round of combat will also be against very simple enemies that don’t attack very often.

**Feedback**

Feedback will be created for all player made actions such as attacking, dodging, etc, and also combat round completion or failure. Enemies will also provide feedback by making a sound when hit or preparing to attack. Animations will be utilized on any object that may harm the player, to draw attention to it.

**Focal Points**

There is one primary landmark in my game, and that is the arena. It will shift and change as the player progresses, but it will always be the environmental focal point. If I get to the point where I can implement a boss that will also become a focal point when it is on screen, and have its own health bar that spans the screen.

**Art Assets** (All art assets will be self-made)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Male Player | Female Player | Chain |
| Slime Enemy | Skeleton Enemy | Minotaur Enemy |
| Sword | Axe | Arena Floor |
| Arena Walls | Arena Blade Trap | Arena Fire Trap |
| Arena Pillars | \*Boss |  |

\*Optional

**Audio Assets** (All audio assets will be self-made)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Player Attack Hit | Player Attack Miss | Chain Rattle |
| Player Grunt Male | Player Grunt Female | Dodge |
| Spin | Slime Attack | Slime Hit |
| Skeleton Attack | Skeleton Hit | Minotaur Attack |
| Minotaur Hit | Arena Shifting | Fire |
| Spinning Blades | Maniacal Laugh | Victory Fanfare |
| Defeat Dirge | Combat Music | \*Boss Roar |
| \*Boss Attack | \*Boss Hit | \*Boss Death |

\*Optional

**Risks & Mitigations**

Risk 1 – Enemy Variety – Large number of enemies to program and create art and audio for

Mitigation 1 – Can cut enemies if time does not allow. Will implement slime alone at first, then work on others once core gameplay is in.

Risk 2 – Stale Combat – If the enemies are not interesting and players do not feel challenged, combat could become bland

Mitigation 2 – Different kinds of attacks, different kinds of enemies, and a changing arena should keep players on their toes

Risk 3 – Art Assets – This is a large number of art assets to create in a short amount of time

Mitigation 3 – I will be reusing as many assets from previous projects as possible. This includes the sword, axe, and some of the environment assets.