P2 Research

TetraBlox is a multiplayer platformer game that includes some elements typical of the puzzle genre. Platformer games often require player(s) to achieve a goal by interacting with the environment in some way, such as avoiding obstacles or utilizing game objects to solve a puzzle. One classic example of platformer games is the Mario franchise.

Games from Platformer / Puzzle Genre

Super Mario Bros. (1985)

Mario is a popular platformer game where you play as the protagonist who embarks on a journey to save the princess and the Mushroom Kingdom.

Metroid (1986)

Metroid is a popular platformer game where the player plays as a futuristic super agent Samus, as she battles against space creatures known as Metroids.

Tetris (1984)

Tetris is a unique puzzle game where the player aligns different combinations of a set of four-tiled blocks, known as tetriminos, to cancel out the tetriminos and prevent them from piling up.

Game Contrast:

Super Mario Bros.

Although my game belongs to the platformer genre, it is fairly different from the iconic platformer, *Super Mario Bros.* In *Mario*, game progresses as the camera follows the player who (usually) moves from left to right. This allows the player to feel a continuum, as humans naturally

associate a monotonically continuous movement with progression. In *TetraBlox*, however, the camera doesn't really move. The game also doesn't have a clear progression, and instead is just a static room. This helps a player understand immediately where the goal is, since it is always visible, but without game progression, the player may grow tired fairly soon. Depending on the feedback I get from the playtesting session, I will consider incorporating some form of indication of progression into my game.

Gameplay, however, between the two games, is quite similar. In *TetraBlox,* one player plays as a white block who moves around in order to reach a final goal. This is similar to *Mario*. This allows the game to have a clear objective and makes it feel like a race. It is different from *Mario*, however, in that it is impossible to reach said goal without a second player, who manipulates the environment via tetriminos (four-tiled blocks).

Metroid

Metroid is fairly different from *Tetrablox* in the amount of game mechanics available and player input. In *Metroid*, the player can choose to shoot an enemy, jump, roll, or even attack by rolling. This allows the players a variety of choices when faced with a certain task. On the other hand, currently, my game really needs to find a balance of diversity between the two players. Diversity is certainly present on the player who control the tetriminos, while the player who plays as the white block really only as the option to move around or jump. I am thinking of somehow fixing this by allowing players to compete against instead of cooperating with each other.

One other difference between *Metroid* and *TetraBlox* is that *Metroid* has a strong theme and background story to give the players motivation and a sense of urgency. This allows the game to become more engaging and may help players develop a connection with the characters overtime. Although coming up with a story may take too much time for p2, I think it is still a good idea to communicate some setting or backstory of my game to the players, so they view my game as interesting, instead of looking at the game objects as tiles with no emotions.

Tetris

My game shares many similarities to *Tetris*. The blocks that the player uses are tetriminos that make up the game objects in *Tetris*. However, the tetriminos' purpose in my game is very different from their purpose in Tetris. In *TetraBlox*, the tetriminos makes up the platform of my game, as they are used to pave a path for the protagonist to reach the goal. Since *Tetris* is such a famous and popular game, the different usage allows players to engage with the familiar tetriminos in an unfamiliar way.

The goal in *Tetris* is also very different from my game. In *Tetris*, the players' goal is to prevent the tetriminos from piling up and losing the game. However,iIn *TetraBlox*, the first player's goal is to build up tetriminos as high as possible, so that the other player can reach the goal. This requires cooperation between the two players, who shares the same objective of reaching the "win tile".