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Please answer each question. This is a closed book, closed notes exam. You may not use the internet to look up any information.

When you complete the exam, upload the completed file to the “Final Exam – Bierre Section 01” dropbox. Check with me to ensure I have your exam **before logging off**. There will not be a makeup if you upload an empty or incomplete exam file.

1. Write the letter of the definition next to the appropriate term. (25 XP)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| iteration G | 1. Adding game elements to improve participation |
| gateway C | 1. A short phrase that summarizes an idea |
| collusion E | 1. A way of entering a transmedia world |
| gamification A | 1. Giving the player a feeling of power in the game world |
| handle B | 1. NPC’s and designer working together to cause players to behave in a desired manner |
|  | 1. Facilitates storytelling |
|  | 1. Repeating a process |

1. **Briefly** explain the differences between the waterfall methodology and the iterative approach proposed by Boehm. (25 XP)

Waterfall would be to go through the process of making a game once, starting from the first point and going through all the points once, ending on the release of the game. Iteration would be doing a similar process multiple times, cycling through game prototypes, fixing the game, reworking parts, and then back to prototyping until you are done with it.

1. You have just conducted a successful playtest of your game. Describe one way of getting player feedback. Be detailed in describing how to do this. (10 XP)

While play testing, you let the players play the game alone in a comfortable room, while watching from another room via a webcam. This would let you watch the prototype without affecting their gameplay, and you could take notes while they were testing.

1. Name a transmedia world you are familiar with: Star Wars (5 XP)
2. Using the transmedia world you used in question 4; explain what it has in common with other transmedia worlds. (15 XP)

Star Wars is a transmedia empire, because it has multiple gateways into the transmedia world. There are movies, novels, video games, board games, TV shows, and other forms of media it exists in, which allows almost anyone the ability to experience the world in some way or another.

1. You are creating a first person shooter game that is focused on creating an authentic World War Two combat experience from the point of view of an infantry soldier in the Pacific. The client has seen your prototype and has a suggestion: “Can we add Godzilla to the Japanese forces?” What is the best way to deal with this suggestion? (10 XP)

You shouldn’t just flat out say that it’s a stupid idea, because that would offend the client. You could either tell him that that would break the immersion of the game and explain in basic terms that the idea is bad. You could also tell him you would think about it and maybe add it as an extra feature if you get the game completely finished.

1. You have created an RPG with a very intricate maze. Playtesters generally like the game, but you have noticed a tendency of players to spend a lot of time just wandering around doing nothing. Describe two methods of indirect control that you could use to get players to the more interesting and exciting sections of the maze. (10 XP)

You could lead the players through the maze by using different aesthetics. If the maze got lighter, it would mean that you were going the right way through it, but if it got darker you could increase the amount of monsters or add in fake treasure to make them go away from the darker areas. You could also have them chase an enemy through the maze, which would let them know they were getting closer to their goal if they got closer to the enemy, and then once out of the maze you could have them defeat the enemy.

1. True/False (10 XP) [Underline the correct answer.]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Richard Bartle is known for his work in MUD type of games. | True False |
| The old saying “the customer is always right” applies to clients too. | True False |
| The Wizard of Oz is an example of a transmedia world | True False |
| Developers make the best playtesters for their own game | True False |
| string of pearls and story machine are two ways to organize game space | True False |

1. Describe two ways to organize a game’s space. (10 XP)

You can have a linear node based system, which would be like Mario, going from one level to the next in a certain order. There is also a divided space organization, which would be like The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time, where you have different areas of a map that are clearly defined that the player can navigate.

1. Describe three common gamification techniques (10 XP)

Adding points to certain activities or projects that need to be completed. You could also add a level system that would let the player choose some sort of benefit, such as a day off or extra points on the next test. Finally you could have an achievement system that would allow the players to show off their achievements to other players, making them work harder to unlock them.

1. Why do players seem to identify more with a “blank slate” type of avatar as opposed to one with detailed characteristics and backstory? (10 XP)

When a player sees a “blank slate” type of avatar, they impose themselves upon it and believe that that avatar is a virtual representation of them. This allows the player to more fully immerse themselves and care what happens to their avatar more, which is really hard to do with a defined character.

1. Your latest MMO is doing great, but the players have demanded that you create a player community. You hire a community manager. What are three things they should be doing to create a strong player community? (10 XP)

The community manager should be giving noobies, players, and elders’ different content based on their player level. Noobies should get interesting starting content and tutorials on how to get better at the game. Players should have a good amount of leveling content that keeps them interested and makes them want to play the game. Elders should be given a high level responsibility in the community, like moderation status and end game content. Managing these three levels of players and letting them interact with each other on good terms is a great way to strengthen a player community.

1. Select ONE of the following topics and write a short (1 page) essay on the topic: (50 XP)
   1. Explain how game characters tend to differ from characters found in novels.
   2. Explain why a game narrative that allows a player complete freedom of action is not currently possible.
   3. Describe several reasons why games have a place in education.

Essay Topic: Explain how game characters tend to differ from characters found in novels.

Game characters are usually very different to movie and novel characters because they act as a gateway into the video game world. If you read a book, you are usually reading from a third person omniscient perspective, just watching the events unfold and letting the characters act them out. Games, on the other hand, use the first and third person perspectives to tell their story, which puts you into the character’s shoes while experiencing the story. This makes the player generally care more about the character they’re playing, because they usually are given all the information their avatar is give, making them a part of the story, not just analyzing it from afar. Another major difference is that you can see the character in the game, and usually you are able to customize the character in some way to make them your own. In novels, the character is always strictly defined and has a detailed description and character profile, which makes them the same character every time. Games usually take the opposite approach, and make their characters loosely defined, which allows the player to put some of their own traits into the character they’re playing. Take The Legend of Zelda for example, in most of the games you are given tools to get through the dungeons and puzzles, but in the newer games the combat can be done in different ways. If you want, you can make link go into the fray and defeat all the enemies with his sword, or you could make link more cautious and defeat some enemies from afar with a bow or bomb before going in. This is an example of mechanics helping the story, because link is just an avatar for the player to use to connect to the game world. Letting the player form the character based on their own choices is something only a game can do, and that novels could attempt but never pull off as well as a video game.   
 Video games can have very defined, novel like characters, such as the final fantasy series or a game based on another form of media, like Batman: Arkham Asylum. These characters are usually defined before the game is made, so that the experience is more controlled and makes the player go where the developer wants them to go, just like a novel is written so that it can only be read in a certain order. Thus, game characters can resemble novel characters, but it can never be the other way around.

Bonus Points: **Answer the question assigned to your role in the guild.** Up to 50 bonus XP will be awarded. Each is worth 10 XP.

1. Bard: When is a focus group useful during game development?
2. Healer: Give two tips for a productive prototype.
3. Mage: Explain what the “rule of the loop” means.
4. Necromancer: Give two tips for making a good pitch.
5. Ranger: Explain why you should be careful when using gestures in a game that will be distributed internationally.

Some Gestures are interpreted differently depending of the culture you’re selling to. An example is if you give thumbs up in Australia, it’s like giving someone the middle finger. Also, a backwards peace sign in Brittan is a disrespectful gesture, which is why Left 4 Dead 2 had to change the hand’s orientation on the cover.

1. Warrior: Give two ways to prevent or reduce griefing.