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"Preflective" Essay

Last semester I found it exciting to use games as a means of storytelling. I had a lot of fun using "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll as my main source of inspiration and found it interesting to experiment with the user playing the game through the perspective of Alice. When working on the final project, I was able to show a lot more of my artistic side than I had in past projects throughout the semester. That was a lot of fun for me and motivated me to create a game I was proud of. In my final project, the main form of user interaction was through mouse tracking. This semester, I would like to challenge myself to explore different forms of user interaction. Even when incorporating something as simple as the keyboard, I would like to challenge myself to use letter keys, as that is something I did not approach last semester. Another thing I struggled with last semester was repetition. Since I was new to Java I would repeat the same code in different places. In the final project, I became better at fixing this through the use of classes. This semester I would like to focus more on writing code that is much cleaner and more organized. I also struggled when adding sound to my games. Many issues would arise and I found it to be very stressful. I think that sound is a key part of the user experience and I would like to become more comfortable with it.

A website I recently discovered that I have been addicted to playing is spiel.com. The concept of having the user create music through the incorporation of sound programmed into the code has given me a lot of inspiration. I would like to challenge myself to incorporate more synthesizers and oscillators into my future programs. I know that we worked on it a little last semester, but I have yet to incorporate it into any of my projects. I am also inspired by the incorporation of the user's webcam. After seeing Lineon's (I'm sorry I don't know their real name as they were in a different section) final project called "Nimosa Plant"(GitHub), I became really interested in incorporating machine learning libraries such as ml5.js. Using the player's hand position as a form of interactivity is very creative and has expanded my understanding

Coming from a background in theatre, I am drawn to games that tell stories such as "Oxenfree" and "Child of Light". I was also very inspired by a student's previous work that I saw on the CART 253 website called The Lessor Key (code) by Madeline Zaytsoff. I am especially inspired by their creative approach to interactivity. They incorporated the use of arrow keys to let the user move the image of whatever room they are in so that it gives the illusion that they are moving around the space. I wish that this is something that I had explored in my final project last semester because I think there are a lot of cool programming opportunities that can arise by allowing the user to explore a room/space they are in. I would like to explore this further throughout the course. For example, I could use code to let the player travel around the space, turn around, and also be able to interact with various objects.

One of my favorite iPhone games is "Sara is Missing", a horror game where the user discovers a lost phone and can go through different apps such as the owner's past calls, messages, and pictures. The game incorporates images and videos into the game as a way to jump-scare the player. I would like to experiment with coding video into my projects. Especially

since I am taking CART 212, where I am learning how to edit videos, I feel much more prepared to approach this throughout the course.

I am also interested in creating a game with multiple levels. Through the use of different states, I can make the game progressively more challenging. I believe there are a lot of creative ways to engage and challenge users when creating a game, and I look forward to experimenting with these ideas in my future projects.