

Sample Twine/link Playtest Report

Your team members' names

Cameron Alston, Aaron Reed, and Jonathan Pagnutti

Your team's name

Super TA Bros.

Your section time and TA

Tuesday @ 10:45am, Aaron

Your game's name

The People Outside the Light

Who played

Matt B., Melanie D.

When and where

Jack's Lounge on Saturday afternoon

How did the player come to understand the different link types?

It was obvious after the initial information-giving phase of the game that the player had to choose whether to go into the forest or into the cave. Inside each of these areas was a sort of maze of areas that eventually lead to a goal area that is the end of the game. The things that changed were what the player interacted with inside the area, which could change the path toward the goal.

Did the player ever get stuck?

No, there were 2 parts of the game where there was a possibility to have an infinite loop of choices from one state to another but after cycling back and forth a couple of times the players realized that they needed to make a different choice before they could proceed in the narrative. This was to be expected, somewhat, given the nature of the game environment.

What were some interesting choices players faced at particular moments in the game?

Actually the first pair of links that the player is given determines the majority of the game's narrative. At the beginning, the protagonists (a group of college students on a camping trip) are given a choice to go spelunking in a cave or for a hike in the forest. If they choose to go in the cave there is a completely different set of environments and interactions that the player can choose from. In the end the player would either die from losing die rolls to too many enemies or would make it to the end of the cave/forest.

What were some longer-term strategies players attempted during the game?

The game is designed to be a survival horror game. There are randomly generated enemy types that occur as the player tries to navigate either the cave or forest. It seemed that players were doing their best to learn where the enemies were spawning and trying to avoid combat at all costs. This proved to be frustrating for the players because the enemies were being randomly spawned and were sometimes difficult for the players to progress past. Once they learned the path to the goal they avoided exploring more rooms, which made it less likely that they would end up losing all party members.

What was the outcome of the game? What other outcomes seemed possible?

In either case, whether playing through the cave or the forest, if the player was able to reach the end of the scenario then they would discover an opening in the trees/ray of light in the cave wall that lead to a clearing and a path back to their campsite. In each case the outcome was the same, with the difference being that some of their original party members might be dead.

When did the player feel most engaged in the game?

It seemed that the players felt most engaged in the game on the first playthrough when they first discovered the shockingly descriptive environments of the survival horror game. This dark aesthetic and random encounters seemed to make the players very engaged with the game environment.

When did the player feel least engaged in the game?

It seemed that the players felt least engaged in the game when they discovered that they would randomly run into enemies while exploring and that the decisions they were making to combat the enemies were essentially random choices. This didn't happen until the second or third playthrough after the players died a couple times

and noticed that they couldn't really avoid the enemy spawns because they were different from last time.

We hope to improve this in future versions with less random spawns and more mechanics for allowing the player to survive the scenarios like better weapons, health packs, or other consumables that can be found and used to survive the battles.

How would the player summarize the fiction or memory?

The player would summarize the fiction as a dark and disturbing yet thrilling story about a group of students forced to fight their way through a gritty environment filled with perils.