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February 15, 2014

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CISC 3665 – Game Design

Assignment 1

One game that has occupied the time of millions of people, and one that I just started playing, is played on your smartphone, frequently during your daily commute, and is called *Candy Crush.* The game involves a matrix of multicolored candy that requires you to match up candy with the same colors. You must match up a minimum of three candies of the same color in each move. However, the game limits you in how you can move around each piece of candy—you can only swap positions with an adjacent piece of candy. The goal of the game differs by the level, but all incorporate either accumulating a given number of points or collecting special tokens within a set number moves. If you do not achieve your goal within the given number of moves, you lose. By allowing you to only move adjacent candies, the game designer provided a boundary or limitation that becomes the crux of the difficulty, and fun, of the game.

In regards to the game’s user interface and feedback, the game features a pretty standard countdown of the number of moves left for the user, which allows the user to plan accordingly before the game ends. The interface clearly displays the candy in a matrix layout, which makes it easy for the user to deduce the position of each candy. To move a piece of candy, the user just swipes on the piece of candy, almost physically moving it to its new position. One piece of feedback that is especially useful is when the user attempts to swap a piece of candy that does not result in matching up three or more candies of the same color. If that occurs, the candy is moved into the position that the user wished, but then quickly moves back to its original position. This simple move back and forth illustrates that the move was invalid, without using any sort of text or explicit feedback.