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CMS.611 Project Four

Focus Test Two Report

For this focus test, mostly aesthetic questions were asked. I gave instructions to play through the game and comment on all the visuals. This “stream of consciousness” test style generated lots of feedback about various parts of the game; if we had instead provided a google form, as conventional wisdom suggests, our feedback would have been limited to issues large enough to be remembered after a player finished playing. This was a more difficult test to run, as I had to sit next to every player and take notes, but I believe that the diversity of feedback made up for the difficulty of running the test.

This was a very fruitful focus test: there were several parts of the board that we didn’t realize were frustrating or confusing. In general, I tried to copy quotes word-for-word to record the feedback as accurately as possible. I took down so many quotes that it would be impractical to include them all in this document, but some are included here. We are of course addressing all the feedback, but each of these quotes is accompanied by a change we made because of it.

* “Is it intentional that I can’t see the ball?” (We have since made the ball larger and more brightly colored).
* “It’s hard to tell what my controls are, because if the ball was rolling around in the shadows I wouldn’t be able to tell”. (To make controls less confusing while not explicitly telling the player what the controls do, we will display the name of the control scheme on the HUD.)
* “I lost the ball again… it’s somewhere in the shadows and I don’t know where.” (The number of light sources in the level has since been roughly doubled)
* “Not sure why there are blue grids” (The brightness of the grid is being diminished)
* “I would like to know where the goal is” (The goal is now much larger and brighter)

Though I gave instructions to comment on the graphics, this focus test also illustrated that, despite the low level of graphical polish, our game did teach players about control schemes. One player said, and I quote, “Moving forward [with up arrow] while also turning [with left and right arrows] feels weird. I’m not sure exactly why.” This shows that that player was gaining insights about controls, even if they didn’t know it. Overall, this was an excellent and productive focus test.