Catnap

Catnap Prototype 1 - Jumping and Movement

Goal: The goal of this prototype was to explore two different types of movement for the character (mouse).
Interaction: The player must collect all of the cheeses while avoiding touching the cat bells, which would result in a game over.
Feedback: The jump is way too floaty and powerful, and the movement did not feel precise. The hitboxes were not accurate, which made avoiding the cat bells difficult, but it's understandable for such a prototype. The lower speed definitely worked better, we thought.
Potential Changes: Going with the lower speed would be the best way forward, we think. Reducing, or at least tuning, jumping height would also help bring movement to a more satisfying place. Fixing the hitboxes on the bells and mouse would also be preferable and relatively simple to implement.

Catnap Prototype 2 - Hiding from the cat

Goal: The goal of this prototype was to show off the hiding from the cat mechanics.
Interaction: Much like for the first prototype, the player must collect all of the cheeses. However, a timer is counting down to the cat waking up, which results in a game over if the player does not hide behind a box.
Feedback: We think the timer removes a bit of the tension that should exist in a game like this, where you should never know when the cat is about to wake up. The timer also was definitely too fast at the start of testing, which made it difficult to get anywhere.
Potential Changes: Replacing the timer with an extra animation for the cat, when he is about to wake up, would make for a more interesting challenge. Increasing the timer for longer levels would also work well.

Catnap prototype 3 - Powerups and Pickups

Goal: The main goal of this prototype was to showcase the different items, as well as how they would be used in the game.
Interaction: We controlled the little mouse character with the arrows, and moved around trying to catch items, while avoiding touching the bells. There were several items with distinct effects: One gave you an extra life, the cheese just increased your score, another allowed you to transform a bell into a jelly, and another yet gave you a portable hiding place that could be placed anywhere on the map.
Feedback: We felt that the key placement for the two distinct power ups were two far apart - S key for shield placement and J key to jellify bells. The shield mechanic is a good addition to the game, but is a bit too powerful as it allows a player with several of them to cross levels with great speed. As such the shield should be a limited resource and given out sparsely to maintain any sort of challenge in the game. The item that transforms bells into jellies is a nice idea, as it adds a new layer of movement to the game, as the jellies can be used as trampolines.
Even though it was not implemented, the lives system will make it so that as the lives reach zero, the player will reset to the start of the game - not the start of the level - this mechanic might be slightly too punishing and might need to be revised.
Potential Changes: When trying to jellify the bells, but we are too far away there should be some kind of indication, like a visual help of some kind such as vibrations or flashing colours. As noticed above, the keyboard layout should be adjusted to be more intuitive. The current lives system could be made better if when the player reset to the start of the game, there was a level select that allowed them to skip to any unlocked level.
Game References: Spy Mouse - it has similar mechanics that can be interesting for the project

Bee Trial

Movement Prototype: Mouse vs Keyboard

Goal: The goal of this prototype was to show off the different possibilities for the movement input. The alternatives were using the keyboard or the mouse to move the Bee.
Interaction: During the interaction, we controlled a small character (Bee) using the different input methods, and tried to kill the enemies using several types of attacks while trying to dodge the projectiles sent by the enemies. The player's attacks were activated using the spacebar.
Feedback: Regarding the mouse, we thought the movement was too fast, which allows the player to very easily avoid the enemies as well as their projectiles. On the other hand, the keyboard was too slow which made it difficult to deal with some scenarios. Our preferred method of input was the mouse, although the spacebar in combination with mouse movement made it quite awkward.
Potential Changes: Should they proceed with mouse movement inputs, we would suggest that the attack button be changed to the LMB, as well as a reduction of the sensitivity of the mouse, while playing the game. A possibility would also be to ask the player which input they prefer, in which case the speeds of both input methods should be brought closer together, so one is not outright better than the other.

Enemy Type Prototype: Wave vs Random

Goal: The goal of this prototype was to showcase the different possibilities for the movement of the enemies. There were random enemies, where each enemy appeared at random with a different type of movement. There were also wave-like enemies, where the enemies came in waves, with different types of formations.
Interaction: We used the mouse to control the Bee, and attack the continual waves of enemies. After some time, different types of enemies appeared that combined into a bigger enemy. We dealt with both types of enemies.
Feedback: We preferred the wave generation instead of the random enemy generator as we felt it was more visually pleasing, besides being more consistent and more interesting. The random enemy generation felt more chaotic, which might be preferable if that is the objective of the gameplay.
Potential Changes: We think they should stick with the wave-like generation, and use random enemies such as mini-bosses, or at least different types of enemy, to make the game have more variation.

General

Feedback: The attack projectiles used by both the enemies and the player were very hard to spot. Also regarding the projectiles, the enemies all had the same shooting cooldown, which led to them shooting in the same place when using wave generation. We noticed that there were no collision interactions between the player and the enemies, which feels odd and unnatural.
Potential Changes: More variation to the enemies would make the game more exciting. This variation might be in the size of the enemy, the pattern they show or even the projectiles they shoot. We would suggest making the projectiles glow, or at least using a vivid colour so that they might be more visible.
Game References: Maybe check some bullet hell games like *Touhou* for inspiration, even though it's not really related.