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Writing Games

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Project 3 Essay

This project was much different than the previous, despite having similar themes and work style. In making a game that incorporated themes five different individual games, the first creative difficulty came from finding a way to transition from one location to another while still forming a coherent storyline. Some of the individual games were rather similar, like the rocker and the ballet dancer, so connecting the two performers was a bit easier. The hardest connection was finding a way to incorporate the game where the player character was a vending machine. Initially, I had thought of just putting a vending machine into the game for the player to interact with, but we finally decided that it would be much more fun if the player could still be the vending machine in the final game. My initial game involved an artist and paintings, so we came up with the idea of the player hopping into paintings of the other worlds, not unlike *Super Mario 64*. This provided a simple way for seemingly unrelated ideas and locations to be connected in a way that could still follow some sort of linear plot. The main puzzles in the game revolve around finding items missing from some paintings that can be found in others, with the final puzzle requiring the player to paint their own exit in order to leave the gallery.

Once we had an idea of what we would like to do for the game, the next difficulty came in finding a way to code the game to do everything we wanted it to do. For the most part, the individual rooms were fairly simple, as the player character was more or less the same, but with minor appearance changes in the description. The hardest part was working to make the player character the vending machine, but also having the player acquire something from the room to be used in the rest of the game. It took a lot of manipulation, but I made the room so that the player could not interact with any objects in the vending machine, and they could see “themselves” attempting to interact with the vending machine. Beyond that one room, the rest of the interactions were fairly simple. I just had to ensure that object names and actions were not reused, and that every action could work in every room.

The biggest difficulty during this project was communicating with my other team members. During class, we worked well on making ideas and discussing timelines for our project. Once we were not in class, however, it was not easy to get anyone to respond to requests to meet, and much of the code that I was sent was not compatible with the rest of the game, if I was sent code at all. I found that I did most of the work for this project, which I did not mind, but it was still frustrating trying to arrange meetings when other team members were not willing to put in the effort. Overall, I think that we put together a good game, but it would have been much easier if we were able to work more as a team.