

WSOA3003A

Student Number: 2090024

Name & Surname: Yianna Yiannakis

Assignment 03

Level Design Micro Project

Analysis

In the third prototype of my game, there was a focus on communicating some sort of level design. In this analysis, there is a clear intention, process and reflection. Mainly following the brief, the intention is to design levels within the prototype. Building up from the previous iteration, the game was made to slowly fit in new mechanics and grow. There needs to be a feeling of progression, but in my way of creating this is the understand of game mechanics from the player to be able to achieve more difficult tasks. Using the simple mechanics, the player understands it from the beginning of the game and manipulates it later to be able to win. This will be discussed further along the analysis, however for now, the intention of the game needs to be discussed.

What the brief wanted from this iteration of the game is to provide some sort of level design. Level design does not have to be complicated, in my own opinion. A level creates the feeling of progression. When a player completes a level, they move onto the next one and in most cases, are more challenging. There are new obstacles to overcome, and when completed, gives the player a sense of accomplishment. In this instance, I want to keep the design simple. I intend to demonstrate a change of game state with noticeable edits on Horse Stamina, as well as increase difficulty. The following process was followed.

Keeping the first iteration of the game, it presents information of what the horse level is and the player level. This is an indication of how strong each unit is in comparison to each other. In Figure 1, it can be said that the player will expect the horse to be a struggle to tame according to the level difference. The UI clearly communicates this with the boxes on the top, above the stamina bars.

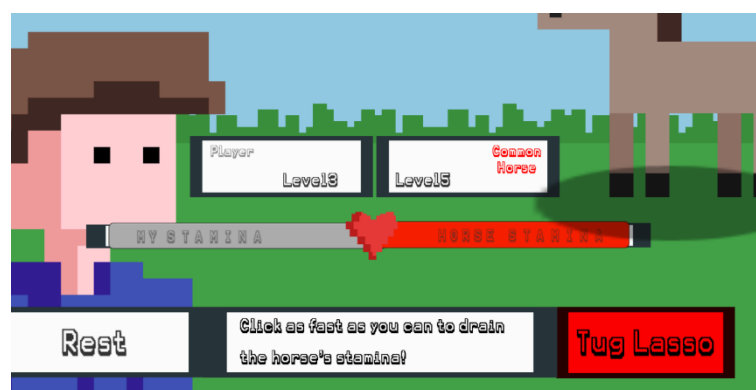


Figure 1: A screenshot of the beginning of the game.

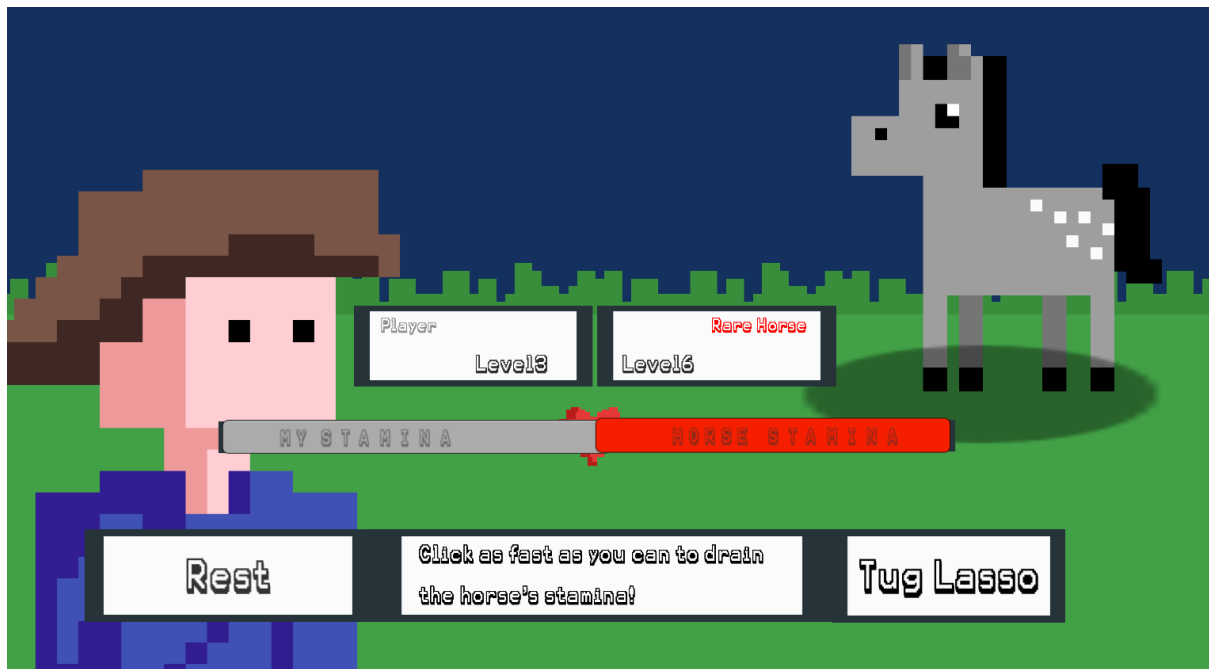


Figure 2: A screenshot of the second level of the game.

As seen in Figure 2, however, this is the second level of the game. This is when the player has succeeded in taming the first horse. There is a clear indication of the number changes in the same blocks, and the name of the horse has changed to “*Rare Horse*”. A player will expect this horse to be even more difficult to tame because of the number difference between them and the horse. There are no experience points that level up the player, however, can be implemented at a later stage. Instead, this is to demonstrate that Level Design does not have to be complicated. When a player has succeeded in taming their first horse, the information given to them in the beginning is used when taming a second, stronger horse.

To go into more detail, a player will understand mechanics in the beginning of the game and see that their method worked. When faced with a more challenging unit, they will use their method again. If this method does not work, they will retry and figure out how to tame the horse with the same mechanic. In this case, the player can choose to slowly tug the rope and wait for the horse’s response, or quickly pull the rope and hope they do not run out of stamina by the time they have tamed the horse. The game asks the player if they want to go slow and steady, or swift and aggressive. Having this in mind, there are different horses that they can tame, with different methods of taming them. An example of another game that does this is Cuphead. It does not level up the character’s skills but puts them in different situations with the same skills from start to finish. It is up to the player to adapt to the difficulty level.

With a concept like this, new horses can be added, and different mechanics can be placed when eventually the player reaches a very difficult horse to tame. This comes with playtesting however, but in my opinion, is a wonderful way to start developing a more interesting game.

In my reflection, it can be seen in parts of the process analysis. Having this concept and demonstrating a difficulty level system, it can be expanded on easily with more interesting features. As this was a rapid prototype, the point was to show that there is a level design in creating more interesting ways to tame a horse. The UI (User Interface) improves the communication of level design, as it indicates to the player the certain necessary information to play the game. The player will know if a horse is easier or harder to tame according to their name and level. However, the most important aspect of all of this is how the mechanics tie into its level design. Simple mechanics can create an interesting start point for a web of ideas.

References

Cupheadgame.com. 2021. *Cuphead: Don't Deal With The Devil* / Available on Xbox One - Windows 10 - Nintendo Switch – PlayStation 4 - Steam - GOG - Mac. [online] Available at: <<http://cupheadgame.com/>> [Accessed 7 April 2021].