

The Pantry- Game Design Document:

Concept:

The concept behind The Pantry is based around food pantries throughout the world. The main character would be one of many who is down on their luck and must utilize food pantries to eat from day to day. For each level, you have a limited number of choices to have a balanced diet, and each level would have a set objective to fulfill all 5 food groups: Fruits, Vegetables, Proteins, Dairy, and Grains. The player wins once they are able to successfully satisfy all food groups that are lacking for them before the food pantry closes.

The main platform we would develop for is PC since students would have access to computer labs at school, but we also have a secondary target of tablets, since the click and drag can be easily created to a touch screen. In addition, we would aim to market towards teachers, since they would be buying the game for students to use during classes. Finally, the art direction we chose resonates with our younger audience, by using an art style where there are no color limitations.

Intent:

The main intent behind The Pantry is to allow students within our target audience of 1st to 3rd graders to have a peek inside the lives of people who need the assistance of food pantries across the world. We would develop the game in a way that isn't overly challenging, but enough so that the students do need to think about how they will tackle the level in front of them, in the similar way that a person who uses food pantries would decide on what food to take for the day.

Target Audience:

The target audience would be kids in grades 1st through 3rd. Teachers would let their kids play this game to help inform them about the hardships that some homeless people go through every day, in addition to the difficulties that most of the students would not be aware of. The point and click style of game would be perfect for this potential audience, as kids that age may not have had access to games, so a point and click game is easy to pick up with no hard to learn mechanics.

Monetization:

In terms of monetization, since the game is marketed towards teachers, we would set our base price at \$3 per copy of the game. The game would also come with the supplementary material that would help the teachers create a lesson plan around the homeless and help answer any questions their students may have on the subject. We also would have to plan ahead with schools to create special packages based on the number of students and classrooms that would be using the game. In addition, we would also have a website set up where the students can explore and learn more about the difficulties that a lot of homeless go through. This would be free website access to anyone who bought the game.

Marketing Approach:

The marketing approach we would take is mainly towards teachers. We would use ads on popular teaching sites, such as Brain Pop, Scholastic, or other popular early education websites. It could also be marketed at ASCD Empower, a well-known teachers conference. We would have a booth set up where teachers could try out a demo mode and see the website along with the supplemental material, they would be getting with each copy of the game they buy. Finally, we would try to market towards some summer programs that help teach students in our target audience about the struggles of homelessness.

Content:

The game takes place in a food pantry, and the player takes the place of a person who must utilize the kindness of other people's donations to get your food. Each level will vary but contain a similar subject matter where you have to create a balanced meal for the day before your shelter closes. Through the use of tickets, you must appeal to all five food groups and reach a set amount in all of the food groups before the time runs out. In addition, your character might have some allergies that must be worked around, so if for example, you are allergic to peanuts, you are unable to use those foods for that level and must make different decisions.

Player Motivation:

The main motivation for the player is to keep their character in as good a shape as they can be. Through using the 5 food groups, and being aware of character allergies, the player must use special thinking in order to figure out this "puzzle" while also being aware that there is a time constraint that you must be aware of, making it not as easy as it sounds.

Game States:

The Pantry has three main states that the player goes through. The first is the Play State, where the player interacts with the food in the pantry. During this time, they must use the allotted time that they are given to spend their tickets on food to meet the requirements of each food group. The player may also have to look at allergies that their character might have, which limits the types of foods that they are able to take and spend tickets on. All information that the player needs would be relayed on a UI, which shows the nutritional needs, time remaining, allergies they have to worry about, and how many tickets they have left.

The second state that the player goes through would be the Win State. This happens at the end of each level when the player is able to successfully meet the needs of their character by using their tickets to fill the nutritional bars in the UI. Should the player meet these requirements before the timer is up, they are able to force end the level.

The third and final state is the Lose State, which only happens if the player is unable to successfully reach the goals given to them by the end of the timer. Should the player run out of time before they fulfill all nutritional needs by the time the pantry closes, then they enter the lose state and must restart the level.

Mechanics and Systems:

- Player is able to click on food on the shelves and drag them into their basket
- The player has food tickets that they spend to take food from the shelves
 - When a player drags food into the basket, it automatically takes away tickets
 - If a player removes food from the basket, it gives the tickets back
- The player has 5 food groups they must fulfill by the end of the level:
 - Protein, Dairy, Vegetables, Fruits, and Grains
- The foods in the pantries will cater to at least one of these 5 food groups
- The player has a limited amount of time before the pantry closes
 - If the pantry closes before the nutritional needs are met, the player loses the level and must restart
- The player may have allergies that restrict what food they can take from the pantry
 - I.e. if the player is allergic to peanuts, they cannot take any peanut based foods to fulfill a part of their diet, and must supplement through other means
- To win, the player must fill all nutritional needs by the time the pantry closes
- To lose, the player must fail to fill all nutritional needs by the time the pantry closes

Game Engine:

To create The Pantry, we would use the Unity engine, specifically the Unity 2D tools. The main motive behind this is it is very user friendly and allows for easy creation and iteration among the entire team. In addition, the Unity engine holds a lot of helpful tools to port to different platforms, so even though the game is currently being developed for PC, we would be able to develop and ship to different platforms such as mobile or consoles, with some alterations to controls.

Art Direction:

The main art direction we would use is very stylized, with lots of highlights. This allows the food to pop and stand out from the brown wooden background we will be using. In addition, we are using a very light outline and trying to avoid any black all together. This is mainly due to the fact that there will be a lot of food on the screen, so using as little black as possible makes the screen less busy for the player to look at. This is especially important for our target audience, since the students may have difficulties distinguishing what can be interacted with and what is background.

Sound Design:

The main sound design we would take with The Pantry would be using mellow music for the main game scene. Since it would be used for primarily teach, we don't want to draw away from that. A low volume genre, like mellow jazz music, would be ideal to use. Similarly, we would use the same type of music for the main menu as well. However, we may speed up the main game scene music when the player has a certain amount of time left. This gives the sense of urgency, but not overly fast so that the player gets overwhelmed and can't focus on the task.