

Polished Projects and Mechanics

Documentation

Semester - WiSe2020

Lecture - Polished Projects & Mechanics

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Introduction (Annika)

This document displays our thought process while creating the game 'Hiding in the closet' and our reflection on the making of this game. We will explain our design decisions and reflect on what went well in the process in comparison to what did not go as planned, with a look at specific milestones and project planning. Each team member will speak out on their key learnings in this semester and how they were able to bring our learnings from the classes into the project. How we polished the game and added elements which benefit the game feel, will also be included in this document. Rounding up this documentation we will state all the assets which have been used in the game.

Summary of the game

Description (Annika)

Hiding in the closet is a 2D sprite based platformer game, which displays the story of a young gay girl, who is willing to come out but is confronted by her inner demons along her journey, which makes her journey harder than expected.

The game takes a focus on spreading awareness on the topic of coming out and should represent the struggles of a young teenager who is unsure about their sexuality and how to deal with it.

We used real stories for our game to make it as authentic and as close to reality as possible. Still, we were aware that our represented story in the game is only one of many others and made this clear at the end of the game to be honest to the player and not raise false hopes.

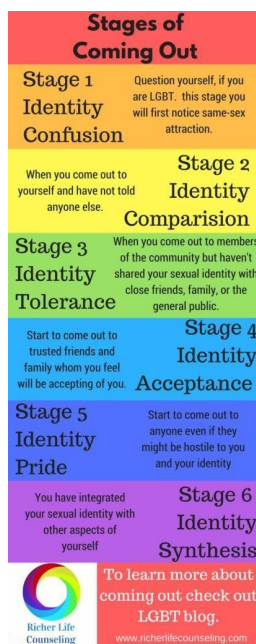
Used Tools (Annika)

We used Unity as our game engine and Visual Studio for coding. The art and animations were done on the Ipad Pro in Procreate. The music assets are from the Unity asset store and from a copyright free source on youtube, which license we included in the credits and in the end of this documentation.

Gameplay Ideas (Annika)

The game idea came to us after Alessa and I decided that we wanted to create a more serious game this semester. We wanted the game to have some kind of message, which connects to the player. We decided on spreading awareness of the struggles of coming out and show that teenagers often feel left alone with their struggles. We wanted the player to understand that it may not be as easy to come out to their loved ones as one might think. The game should be very story driven and represent 'coming out'. I had the idea to visualize the term 'Coming out of the closet', which is used as a synonym for coming out as gay to others. We changed up the

term to 'Hiding in the closet' to not give away the essence of the game right away after the player reads it and make the game title a bit mysterious. To visualize the term of coming out of the closet, the idea was to have the player being stuck in a huge closet, with the goal of finding a way out of it. We also wanted to cooperate the pride flag into the game, but were unsure how at the beginning of gathering our ideas. We researched on the meaning of the different colors in the flag and found several explanations and therefore had different ideas. The first idea was to represent the different emotions which one experiences when finding their sexuality and then is on their way to accept it and come out to others. This idea was not used in the end because it did not fully fit with the order of the colors of the pride flag. Having blue, representing sadness, but having it almost at the end of the game seemed very unfitting to us. So we researched more and found another image (shown below) which displayed the different stages one experiences when finding out about their sexuality and how a person handles this experience. Each color represented a different stage, which we used in the end to color code the levels and build up our story on.



We changed up the colors a bit and only used one blue stage but added the red one instead to create the pride flag again.

We decided on creating a jump and run platformer game at an early stage because it seemed very fitting with the idea of exploring a closet and finding a way out of it. Our inspiration were the games 'Limbo' and 'Little Nightmares', as they were simple jump and runs but had a great atmosphere and game feel to it. To incorporate the pride flag into the games we decided on having six color coded levels in the order of the pride flag and one level at the beginning as a tutorial level. We did not want the player to know they are in a closet right away, therefore we decided to have the levels being very dark at the beginning and clarify after some levels in the environment that the character is actually in a huge closet. Another idea was to have the player work their way up in the closet, so we decided to have the player start at the bottom with some shoes and shoe boxes and walk through each section a closet might possibly have.

Because we wanted to visually show the inner demons, which represent the bad thoughts and doubts one could have, we were also thinking about having a combat system in the game to fight the demon. This was one of the hardest decisions that we had to find a solution for in the development process. The team agreed that a real fighting mechanic would not fit the main idea of the game so we were discussing a puzzle solving feature as well as an explore feature. Having the game tested in class helped us to find a solution to this, which in the end was the most fitting to our game idea. We decided on having story elements in each level, which progress through each level but also little collectable lights, which are needed to approach the inner demon, which is placed on the end of each level to represent the overthinking which is done before entering the next stage of the journey to come out. Having the player engage with the story elements and actually read the story we had the feedback of a classmate, who suggested having the demon ask questions about the story which the player needs to answer in order to progress to the next level. With adding the collectible lights we have the player explore

the game environment and with the demon asking questions according to the story in the level, the player is forced to read through the story, which is a nice solution for our game. Also, the demon is being approached and defeated by answering the questions correctly, which creates a feel of achievement.

Description of the game playthrough (Annika)

The game has a tutorial level, in which the player learns the basic game mechanics and gets used to the controls. After this, six color coded levels follow, in which the player gets to know the story of the character through story elements, which are placed in each level. The story elements in every level convey the story of the character through old diary pages, which have been written in the past. The levels are color coded according to the Pride flag, having each level owning its own color and representing their own stage of coming out, as stated above.

At first the character is confused about their sexuality and actually questions their sexuality, next they are coming out to themselves and accept for themselves that they are gay. In the third stage and level the character come out to people of the LGBTQ+ community, in the game the character comes out to some young gay girls in a group chat. In the fourth level the character starts to come out to their close friends and actually family members, who they feel comfortable with. After that the character comes out to others, which could react negatively, like their parents and hockey team. In the end their sexuality is expressed in public and the character feels comfortable in their own skin.

At the end of each level, the player is confronted by a demon, who asks the player different questions, according to the story. If the player answers correctly, they earn the light, which the demon keeps in a cage. This light will be displayed in the loading screen to the next level, as well as in the user interface as a part of fairy lights, which shows the player their progress of the game and also has the colors of the pride flag. To have an explore aspect in the game, we added little collectable lights, which the player needs to collect to be able to approach the demon and therefore progress to the next level. In the end of the whole game we added a little disclaimer, to state that the story displayed in the game is based on true events but also only one of many other coming out stories. We want to make sure that the players do not misinterpret our game and reflect it on their own coming out story which they might be planning, so we do not raise false hopes, like already mentioned before.

Summary / protocol of the development (Alessa)

In order to reach the goals for our final product we tried to set milestones until which we needed to accomplish certain tasks and held weekly meetings. We used discord to share our progress and work and met there for the meetings. Furthermore we used codecks for tracking our tasks and for assigning it to certain people at least in the beginning. Because the more we worked on the tasks and the further we got into the process of development the more we forgot to update it. Whats App was used for short term arrangements to make sure everyone is up-to-date. Sadly we did not use any time tracking, which we regretted afterwards but did not think of in the beginning. In hindsight we think that it would have been very useful for oneself and for the group.

02. November. 2020: First Milestone- Alpha Version

The Alpha milestone meant that we wanted to have a playable version which shows the basic mechanics of the game and brings the story broadly across (so the player knows what is going on). For that we tried to keep everything as simple as possible, meaning just some basic movements, having some collectables and a simple player sprite without any animations. In general we can say that we reached our goals for the alpha milestone and were on a good track.

24. November 2020: First Playtest Evening

In between the first and second milestone we set ourselves another "milestone" until which we wanted to complete certain tasks which was the playtest evening. Originally we planned to participate in every playtest evening but in reality we only attended one. This was mainly because we did not really feel like making any major progress with which we were happy with and which should be shown outside of the classes where we already gathered feedback which needed to be implemented. But the one playtest we were part of was actually really helpful because we got a lot of valuable feedback which helped us improve our game.

07. December 2020: Being Playable

When it comes to the second milestone which was being playable we still achieved that one more or less. Our game could not be played through totally due to an unfinished story and level design but the basic functions were implemented and most of the story could be presented.

18. January 2021: Final Presentations

Originally we thought that the game needs to be totally done at that date. If that would have been the case we probably would have failed since a lot of other deadlines were coming up which also needed to be matched. So when the deadline got delayed we actually really benefited from that as we were more or less able to keep our plans up. So we basically would have needed an extra month for our game. At this state we at least had the tutorial, the first two levels and the full story finished.

Weekly Goals to accomplish

Besides the monthly milestones we also set ourselves smaller goals to accomplish within a week or a few days. Usually we tried to have at least one meeting in a week, which took place on Mondays. During these meetings we talked about the progress we made the past week and what we want to achieve until Da's class on Friday, where we tested our game regularly. Annika and I normally also held an extra meeting on Fridays during or after class. In these meetings we specifically discussed the feedback we gathered and talked about our specific tasks for the next steps, how to go on from there and how to improve. At the end of the development process we increased the number of meetings held to update everyone on the changes made and to keep an eye on the progress towards the deadline.

Workflow

In general it can be said that we were often lacking a good workflow. Work which needed to be done could not be completed because the work it was based on was not finished. For example we couldn't really test our game fully because the level design was not completed. We were still able to test the story but of course that does not replace testing the whole game and we feel like we missed a lot because of that. Also some work which was prepared and ready to use was totally ignored for some reasons and also needed to be implemented later on (parts of the art assets for levels, audio manager)

But at the end of the project we had a nice and dynamic workflow between the art and the coding department especially when it came to redoing and fixing the levels, animations etc. For the purpose of getting to finish the game and reduce and crunch we were constantly cutting down our scope and therefore were able to implement some extra features we did not plan for at the beginning.

Comparison

What went well and what didn't?

(Alessa):

In my opinion the communication was one of the biggest problems we were facing.

Arrangements and promises were not kept which led to a lot of extra work that wasn't expected in the beginning and resulted in a lot of stress. Most of the tasks I had to fulfill were not even my tasks since I mainly wanted to focus on coding but I sometimes felt like doing everything but that. I took over these tasks because for one thing they were not completed at all by the ones they were assigned to and then again they were worked on but not to my satisfaction.

But on the other hand Annika and I had a great workflow. As usual we didn't really face any major issues. If needed we were able to hold spontaneous meetings and the other one was reachable. We had the same vision of the game and same approaches when it came to design decisions etc. what really simplified decision making in general.

I still had a lot of fun creating this game in general and also working on the tasks which were not assigned to me at the beginning because it was super interesting and I got to learn a lot. I definitely wanted to work on stuff like that in the future, originally not in this semester.

(Annika):

I think the workflow was an issue we were having. The lack of communication led to an ineffective workflow, with which it was hard to progress in the game development. We had a conversation about creating a better workflow and being reachable for other team members, which helped at first with the communication issues but went back to the same state after a few weeks. A lot of promises were not kept and our self determined deadlines were not met by all of the team members, which was very frustrating to me. Also, some of my art assets which I worked on were not used or used, not the way we discussed by the end of the development process, which was frustrating as well. I am glad that Alessa and I had a nice workflow and were able to work effectively together, as we are used to. We had a fixed day to have group meetings every week, which was also nice and helped to keep the project on track. Codecks as a project management was useful to me and I tried to use it as much as possible. All in all, I still am happy with the end product and think that we really were able to add a lot of game feel to the game and polish it a lot, which was a nice experience.

(Nicolas):

We had a lot of communication errors but for the most part I did what I had to do. We also almost never had merge conflicts. Overall other than that there wasn't anything that really went well or bad. It was rather consistently okay.

Key learnings

(Annika):

Having good communication is very important. After meetings you have to ask if everything is clear or if anything is left to be discussed. Before letting a new team member join the group, you should talk to them and clarify the tasks. Giving everyone a chance is also important but it should be expected that some tasks will not be achieved in the given time and that communication can lack. Also, when a teammate promises something, it is not given that this promise will be held. At the end of the semester I did some tasks which were not assigned to me, which created crunch time for me and reflected bad on the team work. I was not assigned to do level design, nor looking for sound assets but at the end I rather have a polished and finished game, than an unfinished one.

I have also learned some new things in and about Unity and know the program a bit better by the end of this semester. I also did learn how to create better animations and how team management is very important. Because I did the narrative design, which I have never done before that much in depth, I learned how to write stories a bit better, which will come in handy for my next projects. Another learning which i made this semester was to polish a game fully and add game feel, which was very interesting to me and also will be helpful in my future games.

(Alessa):

What I took away from the things that did not go well is definitely that communication is important but cannot solve everything. Now I know that I need to communicate more and that I should not think that other people necessarily notice when things don't work out. Also I should not expect things like keeping promises etc. to be natural for everyone.

In the future I will be more careful when it comes to adding a new team member or just working with new people in general, because I can't know their morale, their skills and neither if they really are reliable or not. Also I should draw necessary consequences earlier if needed and don't just hope for it to get better even after communicating the problems.

When it comes to the skills I could improve on I would still say that I learned more about coding, but not as much as I would have liked too. On the one hand I think that is because I already worked on a 2D platformer last semester so it was not completely new to me, especially because we did not implement any exceptional features and because as I said I mainly took over work which was not assigned to me at the beginning.

But I learned a lot about particle systems and animating small things in 2D in Unity. Also I used post processing for the first time and I really want to learn more about that in the future but sadly did not have more time for that in this current project.

One of the biggest takeaways for me is that I started questioning in what direction I wanna develop further because I really had fun doing both, code and working on different fields in Unity.

(Nicolas):

I learned that working on a level does require much more polishing than initially thought. Also that consistency between levels makes a difference in terms of gameplay. There should always be some resemblance in each level to make the game feel more tied together. Testing a level is something that is important and I was aware of, but working on this project I again realized the importance in iterations. I am now also more aware of the impact that different mechanics have while working on a level. For example if you add a double jump, you have to change your level to give that mechanic a place to be. Just adding mechanics but never require to use them is a waste of resources that could have been spent somewhere else. It was challenging to create levels that needed to be easy but at the same time fun. For this story driven game it was hard to sacrifice gameplay for storytelling as the levels became very simplistic, which was needed for the player to not get stuck in a certain part and be more engaged in the story rather than not being able to progress. After adapting some levels to achieve the desired type of story driven gameplay I realized sometimes a whole level needed to be changed to reach that goal. Planning beforehand while working on level design became that much more important to me.

Goals of the semester

(Alessa):

Originally my main goal for the semester was to dive deeper into coding and to mainly focus on that. But due to the reasons named before I needed to put that behind and also focused on gaining more knowledge about the work done in unity, like animations, particle systems, lighting, etc. which in the end took most of my time but that was fine since I really had the feeling that I

learned something from what I can also benefit from in the future.

When it comes to the specific goals for polishing I wanted to improve on the menus and the scene transitions as well as on the camera movement and implement a sound manager for the first time, what went pretty well I would say, but I will elaborate further on that later on in the text. In general my goal was to get the game done in time without crunching too much and stressing myself. I think that worked out in parts when it comes to avoiding crunch, but just because I used most of the breaks we had to work on the game. Thus I did not achieve my goal of not stressing too much, which is of course partly my fault but was also unavoidable and not predictable due to reasons named before. Also I really wanted to get to work at least a bit on the polishing of the game, which we achieved I would say. Lastly one of my goals was just to be a bit satisfied with the final product, which is in parts the case but not totally of course. But in comparison to the last semester projects it is still an improvement.

(Annika):

My goal for this semester was to get better and more into 3D modelling, which was sadly not fully possible because we did not have a course according to this topic. Therefore I decided to help out another game project and provide some 3D assets to them. Working on two projects, this game project still being my main project, taught me to organize myself better, which was a great learning experience after all. Another goal of mine was to improve on my 2D animation skills. Gladly, I had the opportunity to achieve this, even though it was not as much as I intended it to improve. I am certain that I will be able to improve my 2D animations even more in the upcoming semester. Also, I set myself the goal to create a serious game this semester, which carries a message to the player and has meaning. I am glad that Alessa had the same approach and idea as me and that we were able to create such a game.

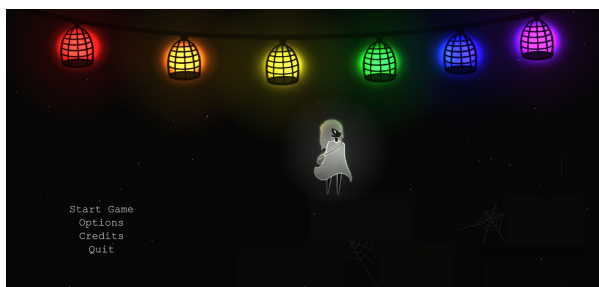
(Nicolas):

My goals in this project was to create a satisfying level design. I was to exclusively work in unity and implement everything given to me by my other team members. Level design became my main focus. Aside from that I made some unity builds for showing in class and testing. Solving bugs was also something I did although it was not my main activity.

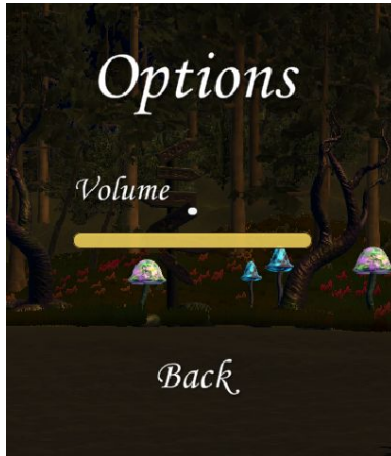
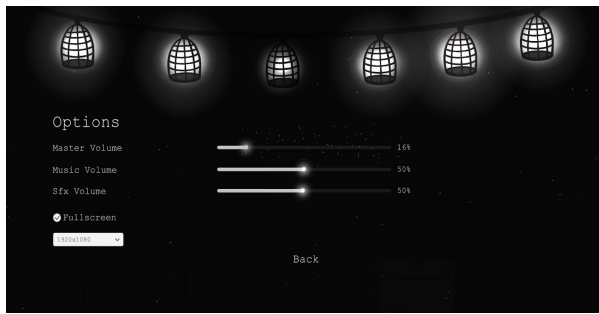
Polishing

(Alessa):

As already mentioned I achieved the goals for polishing I set at the beginning of the semester, although I think that the game benefits more from other polishments implemented.



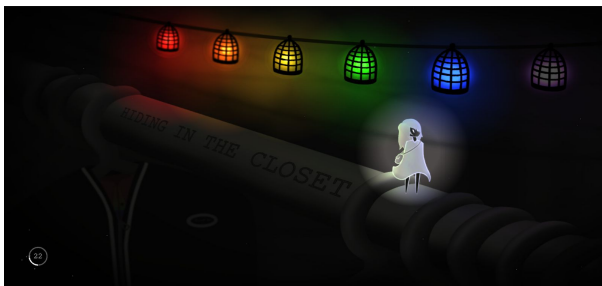
The first point I wanted to improve on were the menus, meaning the start, pause and options menu. Beginning with the start menu I implemented some camera movement. First by letting the camera fly to a starting point from which the camera moves on to the credits and options menu. We also tried out to rotate the



camera but decided on a simple left to right movement, since the player moves in a 2D world and we did not want to give a totally different feeling. I created two different particle systems which should simulate some dust the player is moving through. One of the particle systems is in the 3D world space and the other one is sitting on the canvas. Besides that I created some button animations instead of just changing the color tint, because we thought that

it just adds a better and more interactable feeling to it. While doing that I had the idea of adding a small extra animation when hovering over the fairy light and turning it on by that. By implementing that feature we were hoping for creating something a bit more exciting out of a standard start menu and letting the player interact with the world from the beginning on. For the options and credits menu I created two different light flickering animations to make sure that they are not too repetitive, but also because we didn't only have one light to flicker. Also I wanted to give the player more options to choose from especially in comparison to the options menu from last semester where we only had a volume slider which was a bit

rare. Further I added a particle effect to each slider, which appears whenever the slider gets moved. Because of that I created several different sliders as well as full screen toggle and a resolution dropdown.



Another goal for polishing I set at the beginning of the semester were the scene transitions. Besides the crossfade we already implemented in our games before we added a simulated loading screen with a loading circle showing the progress on the bottom left. The loading circle picks up the theme of the dust particles implemented in every level. To polish the

loading screen a bit more and make it more interesting I created another light animation which appears at the beginning and shows at which state the player currently is. Another problem we had in our games before was the transitioning from the end back to the start menu so by adding the loading screen we were able to reuse it at the end as a disclaimer scene and therefore created a smoother transition.

The third polishment I set was a better camera movement. Originally I was only thinking of the camera movement for the player but as already mentioned I already tried to implement in the start menu. Instead of simply snapping the camera to the player with an offset I added a movement which follows the player with a bit of a delay and smoothes out.

The last polishment i wanted to implement was a sound manager to simplify the playing of sound via script. During the last projects we always tend to implement the sound at the end, which was really annoying when it came to setting the audio sources and the references in the scripts. With the sound manager coded it was now much easier and cleaner for me to implement new sounds and to call them without setting that many references. In the end that saved a lot of time, especially because I decided to code it pretty early at the beginning which reduced a lot of stress in the end when we decided on the final sounds.

A polishment we did not think of codewise at the beginning was the player. In order to give the player more control over the movement and jumping we decided to add a variable jump height depending on when the player lets go of the jump button. I also added a fall multiplier which drags the character to the ground faster. On top of that I check for ground even a bit before the player actually lands in order to make the control feel more responsive. To create a better game feel for the player I created some particle systems at the feet of the player which appear when running, jumping off and landing on the ground. Another particle system implemented is the particle system around the player, again simulating a dust effect.

In addition to that I created some small animations instead of simply activating and deactivating UI objects. For example the pause menu, the quiz and the diary page slowly fade in and the fairy light which appears after completing the quiz flickers when appearing. The same goes for all of the already activated fairy lights at the start of each level. The diary page or rather the dialogue we had at the beginning had a writing effect but we decided to cut that out due to logical reasons. I also added a small particle system which appears on the top right when collecting a light. Another small animation I created via Unity is the animation of the collectable light which is moving up and down a bit and from the left to the right and the particle system that gets activated when collecting it.

Based on your recommendation I switched from 3D lights to 2D lights which added a lot to the game feel. This also opened the possibility of adding some sun rays, made of the 2D free form lights. Furthermore I added some post processing. In order to really let the collectable lights shine and to highlight them I added a bloom effect, which is color coded depending on the level. And based on Murats recommendation I also added a slight Vignette effect to our game.

Polishments I would have liked to implement but couldn't due to a lack of time are further polishments of the player since I am still not happy with the way it feels. I would definitely change the horizontal movement as well as the jumping. But also I would still improve on the particle effects and when they appear because that still does not work the way it should (landing Particles sometimes also appear when hitting a wall). Additionally I would think about compressing and stretching the player when jumping and landing through the animations made inside of unity.

For the Demon I think it would have been nice to implement some more dialogue and to work on making his part of an inner demon more obvious to the player.

Besides that I would have liked to work on the post processing and the 2D lights more because I needed to keep it very basic. A specific improvement on that would be to remove the post processing from the UI through implementing a second camera in order to increase the Vignette

effect a bit and having the chance of making it more visible.

When it comes to the audio I would try to add a fading in and out of the music, but I did not think of that when I created the audio manager at the beginning which made it a bit more difficult in the end. Also I would like to add some more sound effects for example when closing UI objects etc. but searching for sound was really time consuming for us.

And finally I would have of course liked to fix all of the leftover bugs like the highlighted button which stays that way after closing the game object.

(Annika):

As already mentioned in my goals for this semester, I wanted to polish my animations, which I gladly achieved, even though not as much as I intended.

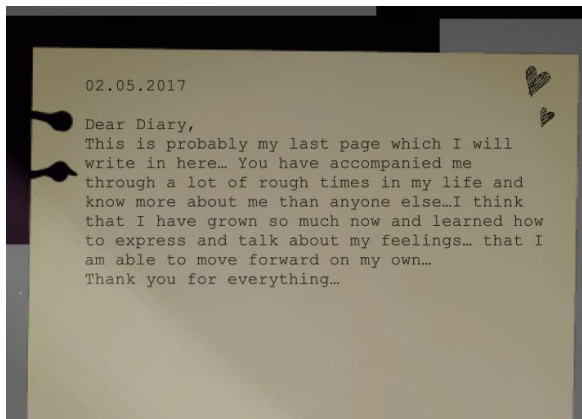
With the ongoing progress of game development we were able to find more things which we could possibly polish. As my position of the lead artist I polished the environment with the feedback of Murat a few times, which helped us a lot and changed the environmental art and our key visual a few times to the better.

When creating the character for our game, I tried to focus on our character reference from the game 'Limbo'. The first character I created was very little and chunky and looked very child-like, as shown on the left. The character also did not fully fit the story we intended, so I polished the character and created a new design for it. I made the character look more like a teen and added a bag as an accessory to represent the journey aspect and show the player that she is an explorer. I also made her look more modern and like a today's teenager, as shown right. Just as in the game 'Limbo' I gave her black skin and white eyes, which also benefited in the game environment because it



made her stand out more than before with the dark cloth and darker appearance over all. Because of the light cloth, which the polished character is wearing, it was way better to extinguish from the background of the first levels, which are very dark.

Another thing that I polished was our basic mouse cursor. I designed a new one, which is fitting to our game style. Also for the first time creating games, I created a logo for our game which will be shown on the desktop, when someone downloads our game.



One thing which really adds a lot to the game feel were the little sketches which I created, shown on each diary page (shown left). They display the characters emotions and create a connection between the player and the character.

After the basic level design has been done by Nicolas, I looked over it and polished it, to make it color coded as we planned and fit together with the other levels. Having color coded levels also really added to the game feel and gave the player a direction in which level he is at the moment and how many levels he already mastered and how many levels are to come.

In the end of the game development process I am happy with all the polishments I was able to implement. It added a lot to the game feel and let the player emerge into the game world.

What I would have liked to polish some more would have been the animations and the portrayed emotions of the character. Maybe even have a little cutscene of the character leaving the closet.

(Nicolas):

I ended up working on only polishing the level design (sprite placement and arrangement, jump height, diversity in levels and consistency). I had to give the mechanics we implemented a place to be. For example after adding the double jump I had to make jumping obstacles that required said double jump to be solved. Using sprites in different ways was one of the methods I used to make the levels more diverse. Separating interactable sprites (jumping elements with colliders) from non-interactable ones was also one of my tasks. This was mainly done by color coding. Every level had its own color. So jumping elements were colored and background sprites were grey to make the level more understanding and accessible.

Reflection (Alessa and Annika)

Game Design

Reflecting on our game design decisions, we implemented a lot of changes, based on the feedback that we received from testers.

Pretty early in the beginning we decided on having a light that surrounds the player because we wanted to keep the game pretty dark and players were struggling to see the game world. By using the point light on the player it is now constantly visible and also highlights the next elements to it, like background and jumping elements.

Besides the point light we also added the sun rays which highlight the important elements on top of that to make sure that the player does not miss them (shown below).



One of them would be the change of our dialog system, which at first was a simple textbox which popped up and then changed over time into a diary page with little sketches

for the story elements and into a full quiz screen for the demon quiz at the end of each level. The diary pages were implemented at a late stage of the development process but added a lot to the game feel. While we had a type writing effect implemented in the dialogue boxes we decided to cut that out for the diary in order to keep the logic up that it already has been written in the past and not when encountering it. The quiz screen was implemented late as well but clarified and tidied up the demon encounter scene of the game and clarified that it is a quiz. The basic textbox which still pops up when the demon reaches out to the player character changed in design and is a simple grey box with low opacity and white text. It slides up and down from the bottom of the screen and is therefore a more clean interface than the textbox before, which had white ornaments on it.

We decided to have our levels color coded, to represent each stage of coming out and clarify the different levels, which was received well by many testers because it also brings the pride flag aspect with it as well. Because of the color coded elements in each level a contrast between the monochrome dark background and the colorful jumping elements is being made and clarifies the jumping elements for the player even more.

Also, we decided to have a parallax scrolling effect for our game to create the feeling of depth and make the character seem like it is in a huge closet. It added a lot to the atmosphere and received a lot of good feedback.

Since we wanted to have smoother scene transitions in this game we wanted to add a loading screen. First we had a typical screen with a loading bar which got activated when switching scenes. But because our scenes are pretty small and load fast we did not see any point of keeping it like that. Especially because we thought that we could use the small pause in between the levels to implement something like a small recap. Because of that we used the key visual Annika created in Murats art class and activated lights depending on the progress the player just made eg. after finishing tutorial global appears, red light gets activated when finishing the red level, etc. Furthermore we simulated the loading bar by a loading circle with the typical particle systems to indicate the time until the next scene loads.

At the end we added a disclaimer to prevent that someone might be offended. For that we tried to keep it simple and just added some scrolling text. To round it up we picked up the dust particles again but changed the white color to rainbow. By that we wanted to give a final recap and a proper ending to the game.

Tech decisions

Due to changing the dialogue in the game we decided not to use the dialogue system used before because it seemed to make things more complicated than they needed to be. So for the sake of simplicity we just used our own classes for the demon and the diary entry instead of trying to work around it with one general system.

Art decisions

The biggest decision and change that we made art wise in the development process was to create and design a new character for our game.

Having the new character added to the game feel as well because the new character looks more modern and closer to the teenager nowadays, which lets the player identify more with it. Before, the character looked very childlike and tiny, also not too human like. Because of the longer legs and bigger character, the new character design also made the animations look more natural and flowy, which felt satisfying while playing the game and running around with the character.

Having Murat and Steven as testers of the game environment, we received valuable feedback from him, which led us to change up the color values of some levels and artworks, which the game benefited from in the end. We made the first levels a bit lighter, so the player can actually navigate in them and we gave the jumping elements an actual color, the color of their specific Pride flag color, so that the player can extinguish the jumping elements from the background elements.

Another art decision, which also added to the game feel, was to add little sketches to each diary page. Therefore the player actually had a connection to the character and knew how they felt during this time of the diary entry, by seeing little sad faces or smileys skribbles on the pages. The little sketches also give a bit of bonus information to the player, which lets the player emerge more into the story and each story element even more.

Credits of the group (Alessa and Annika)

At the beginning of the project we decided that Annika will take over the art as usual. Since Alessa wanted to mainly focus on coding we added Nicolas to our group, who wanted to focus on the work which needed to be done in Unity, especially level design. It was clear that Alessa will support him doing so, to reduce the amount of work for him. Another task assigned to Nicolas was to search for possible sound assets.

In the end, Annika fulfilled her work on the art assets as planned but also needed polish the levels as well as completely redo level 4 and 6.

Alessa did the programming as discussed but also took over all of the other work in Unity, which was not being done. That included the particle system, animations, implementing and importing the assets, the UI design, lighting and setting everything up for designing the levels.

Nicolas designed every level, from which some of the levels were not designed as expected and therefore needed to be redone.

The first music assets were collected by Nicolas, which turned out to not fit the style of the game. The final music assets were collected by Alessa and Annika.

At first, our group had an extra person for storytelling, project management and documentation, but it was communicated that it might be the case that this team member has to leave the team, due to another project. Sadly, this case came true and we lost our main storyteller and project manager. Because of that Alessa and Annika also managed to do the storytelling together, as well as researching on the topic and asking around for testers, especially testers from the LGBTQ+ community.

Assets/sources

SFX and music:

For our music we decided to have a different song in each level, to display the mood of each level. We start off with slow and rather sad piano music and end with happy acoustic guitar songs. The music that we choose is also emotional, which adds to the game feel, fits the story and lets the player dive into each story element and level even more.

Tutorial: Track: Such Memories Music by Oak Studios Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 https://youtu.be/GspVwN-9_Fs

Level_01: Track: Someday Artist: Federico Fabbiano Music provided by Oak Studios Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 <https://youtu.be/mHQoInkZ9b0>

Level_02: Track: #4 Music composed and recorded by Oak Studios Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 https://youtu.be/d-be_O0yWhw

Level_03: Track: The Play - Acoustic Version Music composed and recorded by Oak Studios Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 <https://youtu.be/ZZm4jaP5EVI>

Level_04: Track: Every Little Thing - Music composed and recorded by Oak Studios - Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 <https://youtu.be/udOBhsuWEJM>

Level_05: Track: Eventide Music composed and recorded by Oak Studios Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 <https://youtu.be/jQqEzyD6aik>

Level_06 and start menu: Track: Woods Music provided by Oak Studios Creative Commons - Attribution ND 4.0 <https://youtu.be/eAiAlg22gqQ>

Loading Screens: Horror Ambient Album - 082318 GWriterStudio 02. Dark House <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/ambient/horror-ambient-album-082318-127190>

Quiz finish: MGWSoundDesign Dark magic DarknessImpact_23 <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/dark-magic-90658>

Button Hovering: FREE Casual Game SFX Pack Dustyroom DM-CGS-30

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/free-casual-game-sfx-pack-54116#content>

Demon Encounter: MGWSoundDesign Dark magic DarknessContact 7

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/dark-magic-90658>

Light collect: FREE Casual Game SFX Pack Dustyroom DM-CGS-23

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/free-casual-game-sfx-pack-54116#content>

Quiz Fail: FREE Casual Game SFX Pack Dustyroom DM-CGS-05

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/free-casual-game-sfx-pack-54116#content>

Button click: FREE Casual Game SFX Pack Dustyroom DM-CGS-01

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/free-casual-game-sfx-pack-54116#content>

Pause Menu: FREE Casual Game SFX Pack Dustyroom DM-CGS-44

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/free-casual-game-sfx-pack-54116#content>

Open Diary sound: Broken Robot Audio- The Accountant

AddingMachine_PAPER_handle_03

<https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/audio/sound-fx/the-accountant-134417#content>