

chloe nash Id report

by Chloe Nash

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Level design report

Firstly, my team all agreed on an idea for a game. We went through many different game ideas and different styles of games to finally come to a general agreement on what kind of game we wanted. We knew that now simulator games are popular and those are the kind of games that do well on the market now, especially indie simulator games. Eventually after going back and forth talking about shopping simulators and games involving a store, we finally decided to create a heist simulator game. We decided it would take place in a jewelry store and involve small mini games to be able to get you through the heist.

For a game like this there's a few different target audiences you can cater towards. For us we decided pre-teen – teen age. We thought around 12+ would be a good age range for this game as there's no violent content etc. it is simply just robbing a jewelry store. Another age range we considered for this game was 16+ but we decided this was too harsh considering Pegi ratings. It's a low poly game that consists purely of picking up items for money. The only sort of violence shown in this game is shooting the security guards which doesn't show much violence at all.

Moving onto the theme, we had a lot of discussions about theming with this game. We went back and forth between different ideas such as a realistic game but then settled for a low poly theme/style. We settled for this as the focus of the game wasn't really styling it was the simulator aspect and stealing (robbing) goods. We also settled for this style to save valuable time so we could put more time into planning and creating the game instead of designing and making highly detailed and highly textured models. Some games i researched on behalf of this style are firstly supermarket together [1]. I researched this game as I thought it'd be great to investigate as it has a store layout and style. This game doesn't involve stealing items but it's a similar layout to what we are going for with the basic store layout. The design/styling in this game is quite like what we had in mind for the end goal game so that's another reason I decided to research it. I thought it would be a good starting point for getting inspiration for the models and for styling etc. We wanted to really stick with the old school style theme and took inspiration from games such as supermarket together [1] and heist [2] which is a small indie game on steam which I thought greatly related to this. It's a completely different level layout and style but the concept of the game is extremely similar accept you rob a house instead of a jewelry store like our game. I thought these were a good starting point to start researching as it gave me a lot of ideas for level layout and level development, and it really helped me brainstorm and move my ideas along so i wasn't stuck on what to do. As a group we made many mind maps, and I also made individual mind maps too to be able to brainstorm ideas all in one piece. After creating all these ideas, we then collectively as a group came up with the main idea. We spoke about levels how many we would be creating and how the layout would change as the player would progress through stages. We stuck on a pretty simple level layout idea which was basically move the furniture around so things are all in different places and so all the obstacles were also in different places slowly

making the levels harder while also changing the layout at the same time. Changing the layout and increasing the difficulty would keep the levels interesting and keep the players' attention on the game for longer.

I watched a few different unreal engine 5 tutorials to try and build myself a block out for our levels and work out a few commands etc. Becca ended up creating our base block out and then we all built our levels based off that. One tutorial I found quite handy was one by a YouTube account under the name 'world of level design' [3] this shows how to create an environment block out and gives a lot of tips on how to scale your environment how to replace assets and where to start with modelling assets to go into your level. After Becca created this block out, she then uploaded it to teams so it was organized and so we were all able to access the file. She then converted this unreal engine 5 file into a maya binary file so that we could open the block out in maya and use it to scale things. I used this block out to scale a lot of my items so that they would just easily slot into the game without having to scale while creating the level this would save a lot of time creating levels and make it more of a simple drag and drop process. We could then upload all the assets into unreal and instead of constantly uploading them when creating a new level or constantly scaling them we could just simply drag and drop and place the new assets in the desired place. This meant we could speed running levels and that it would speed up the process of adding more content to the game. If this was a published game, it would make it a lot easier to bring out new levels. Making production a lot simpler.

My role in this project was to create items that could be stolen from the store and some jewelry items. I also had the task of creating the store front which is a big task as that is the main focal point and the first thing you see when you spawn into the game. I did some minor research on the role of a 3d modeler in the games industry. I also had to texture these models. As well, I used Adobe Substance 3D Painter for this as it saves time instead of creating my own textures and automatically bakes textures which creates normal maps height maps roughness maps etc. automatically with the textures you already have applied. I then uploaded these textures to unreal and teams so everyone could use them when creating their levels. I also created a jewelry box and necklace stand for the items that need to be stolen. I scaled these into the block out accordingly. I put them in Adobe Substance Painter and used a mixture of many different textures to get the desired effect. For their jewelry box I used some leather sofa textures and I believe for the inside a sci-fi cloth which was a cloth with small holes in it. I wanted the material that holds the jewelry inside the box to have a breathable material so that it looks more authentic. I also changed the colour of this material to red to give the jewelry box a more sophisticated look. I used an article by a website called Screen Skills [4] to research about 3D modelers in the games industry. It talks about how sometimes this could be a broad role where you must model, scale and texture everything. Or you could just do a small part of the modeling process such as having separate teams for modelling then another separate team for texturing and another separate team for scaling. In most indie game studios this wouldn't be the case as the budget would not allow for this big of a team but in most higher end studios this would be the case to create a good

quality game quicker. In this article it also talks about collaboration and organisation and how this is important. We discovered this while creating our levels as when some team members were busy with other activities and unable to make progress smoothly. We did have great organization of our assets as we had separate folders in teams all with each of our names on them and within the folders, we had separate folders for models and textures which were all named accordingly to what model they align to so that it would create a smooth texturing process. It also talks about tools that you can use to make your work better such as Z- brush blender etc. For this project I used a mixture of Maya and 3ds max. 3ds max is a great modelling tool but one thing that lets it down is your only able to get it on windows whereas maya is also supported with macOS and Linux. These tools are simply a preference and there isn't really a right or wrong answer about which ones to use. It's simply based on which tools you find easier to use and which you're more comfortable working with. If you have animation within your project, it's usually better to use maya as this is a lot more animation focused. Another article i used for research was an article by Kevuru games [5]. This talks about 3d modelling and outsourcing and what game developers are usually looking for within the modelling area. Outsourcing is usually a popular thing game companies do as a lot of the time it can save money and time so they will outsource to freelance 3d modelers to create some in game modelers. A lot of bigger games companies do this again to save on costs and time.

Going through some level design principles we did factor in a few of them, for example balancing indoor and outdoor spaces. Even though our game was based on a jewelry store, so it is mainly an indoor space we still had a small outdoor section at the start where you pick up a gun ready to play the game and defeat guards. I think we balanced this well. We also had strategically hidden items such as the key card for the safe that triggers the mini game and many more things that sort of factor out a story. We didn't have too many levels by the end of this project so there weren't too many levels to test but we definitely tried making the game more exciting by adding the safe that needed to be unlocked. There was also music and lighting added to the level, which made the biggest difference when it came to the atmosphere and trying to set the scene. The big chandeliers that were added really made it feel more like a high-end jewelry store and also set the scene. I think something we could do better is to add more navigation. Maybe added a tutorial or some instructions just something that would easily guide the player through the game maybe even added signage through the game to guide players on what to do and how to navigate etc. This could have been added in the options menu at the beginning of the game or even could have been added as a small playthrough after you click start but also give the player the option to skip incase, they're replaying the game or would rather work out controls on their own.

Overall, I think these levels went as well as they could of with the time, we had to complete the game. I think we managed to achieve above what we expected. There definitely a lot that we have learnt from this experience such as finding a communication method that everyone is able to use and communicate affectively from this I have taken that in teamwork everyone needs a

role, and all roles are just as important as others no matter how big or small they are. I will take all that I have learnt from this task and hopefully create a more effective work environment the next time I create a game.

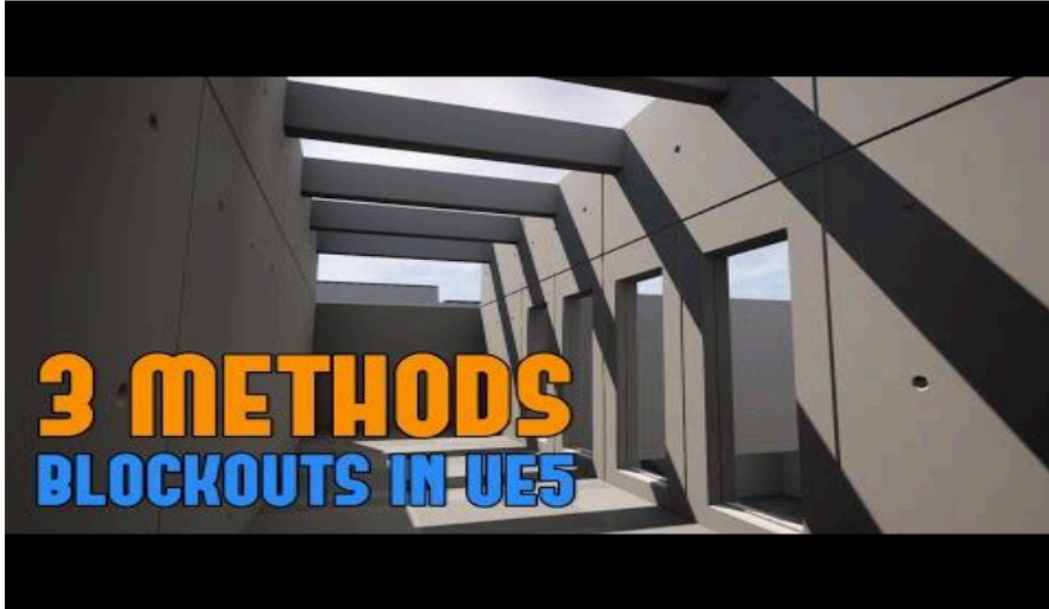
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chloe nash ld report

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

58/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Thanks for this submission Chloe. Overall a good piece of reflective work and honest review shown in this report. There are some references used throughout but it would have been beneficial to make the research more extensively evidenced as I know from in class sessions that you conducted more research than documented.

Remember in future to include everything that is relevant to your work, otherwise you'll miss out on marks for it!

 A voice comment was left for this paper.

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