

Individual Report

by Justin Brighton

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Portal 1 is game made the Valve using Source as its game engine. Portal is more on puzzle solving, first person and platformer for its genre as it shows the player a puzzle that they have to complete and jumping through obstacles to progress throughout the story, it also has a plot twist at its halfway point through the story.

Portal was released back in 2007 on the Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and PC. This all came out with a bundle called the "orange box". This bundle consisted of portal, half-life 2 with episodes 1 and 2 and team fortress 2.

"Portal received critical acclaim, often earning more praise than either Half-Life 2: Episode Two or Team Fortress 2, two titles also included in The Orange Box. It was praised for its unique gameplay and dark, deadpan humour." [11]

During 2007, the visuals weren't that bad during its time as it tried its best with realism. Its calmer and simpler and not over the top with its graphics so players can play the game without the strain on the eyes or the lights being too bright.

The audio in Portal sometimes isn't important but can be helpful with what been activated and what it activated. This is a setting that can be found within the game that allows the player to choose whether to have the subtitles only be closed captions or hear everything. The player can hear the character when either picking up, running, pressing something, or firing the portal gun. They have their own sounds and effects when the player has done either of these actions. The gameflow can be varied from either enjoying puzzle solving games or hating puzzle solving games. This is because of how complex the puzzles get when you progress more and more into the game, eventually the player would either google the answers or not play the game till a later date.

"The soundtrack mostly consists of minimalist ambient pieces, with long, drawn out notes. They're mysterious, somber and futuristic, appropriate for a video game set inside an abandoned research facility in the aftermath of an alien invasion. Unfortunately, it's too monotonous to enjoy on its own" [12]

The songs from Portal are ambient, as it says in the reference above, that if the player just listens to the soundtrack, it would be appreciated to all. The end credits of Portal "Still alive", composed by Jonathon Coulton [13], goes through the credits, being sung by GLaDOS, with recapping the events in Portal and leaving a smile on the players face.

Portal is an Australian extreme metal band whose style is an unorthodox fusion of death metal, black metal, dark ambient and experimental music. [14]



[2]

This picture shows subtitles can be enabled for the player to see if they have trouble hearing. When this is enabled, it will appear when GLADoS speaks or, if the closed captions subtitles are enabled, it will appear when sound effects are made, like interacting with a button, guns firing/talking from turrets, Lasers, and more sound effects that can be heard other than GLADoS as seen in the picture below.



[15]

The picture above shows 4 sound effects happening. It shows GLADoS talking to the protagonist, Metal clanging, a portal closing and the portal fizzling out.



[3]

Although it can't be heard, this radio that the protagonist wakes up to plays some music when the player gets closer to it, and it could sound like it would be great as elevator music. The radio can be found in different areas of the game, sometimes having music playing or just silence fills the room.

The game has been rated as 7 but it can be played by all ages. The puzzles within the game will be hard for young players as it does get progressively harder the more you play but can be done after looking around and experimenting where to go using the portal gun.

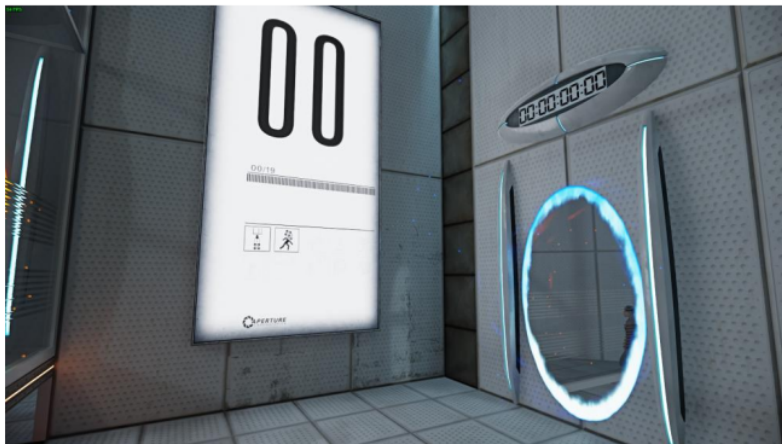
"Portal uses a concept that's a bit hard to wrap your head around without actually seeing it in action. The only "weapon" you're given is a portal gun that can shoot a portal entrance with the right mouse button and a portal exit with the left mouse button. Once both portals have been placed, you can walk through the entrance and find yourself at the exit." [1]

This could force the player to either search up the answer or spend a few minutes looking around the puzzle to figure it out themselves. The game supports the infinite life system. This will allow the player to come back from the dead after they mess up within the game and respawn. The game also provides an auto save feature as this will bring the player to the last save point whenever they mess up within the game.



[10]

There are different hazards within the levels that the player must overcome if they want to complete the chamber. An example of this is one of the chambers has a plasma ball going back and forth and if you get in-between its path, it will kill the protagonist and send the player back to its recent checkpoint save. Portal does not have a time limit/counter it can be played at the player's own pace without worrying about time running out and having to restart from last save. This would mean that a player can be stuck in a level and figuring out how to complete the puzzle presented without worrying about time. When playing through portal, I've noticed that the levels in the game are test chambers, starting from the beginning till the end of the game. The signs that show the chamber number also shows hazards that are within the chamber, an example of this is chamber 00, this chamber shows what level you are on and what hazards will appear. This picture here shows only 2 hazards, being a cube will fall from a tube and a safety caution of getting hit on the head. After completing the game, the game will reward the player with the Cake GLADoS has promised and challenge maps will be unlocked for the player to play and complete. There are 6 levels for the player to complete and each challenge has its own set of rules.



[4]

This picture shows a sign of what the level is and what apparatus it will entail. Right now, the starting level shows caution for cubes falling from a tube and a chance to hit your head.



[5]

This picture shows a camera that is shown throughout the game of Portal and shows that you are being monitored and tested by an AI called GLaDOS, overseeing the tests that the player goes through and is final boss.

The replay value of Portal is that it allows the player to play the game again to either speedrun the tough puzzles or find hidden secrets and lore about the mysterious rat king. There are also 15 achievements within the game as there are 2 easy achievements that are easy to obtain without knowing. These add to the replay value due to each achievement has its own requirements of obtaining than portal 2 with its single-player, Co-op and community maps. You can just play this game for even nostalgia purposes. When the story has been completed the player then unlocks special challenges which consists of 6 challenge maps.

"While the main game is short, Portal doesn't only finish with one of the best credits songs ever created. After the story is done new challenge levels are unlocked. These extras are six levels that you've already played. The difference is that they have new challenges associated with them." [9]

Due to Portal being popular to all, Portal has been remastered as another version that enabled RTX. This update was released to the owners of Portal, that have a GPU that supports RTX, completely free either way.

Some positive outputs for Portal are that the story is you play as a test subject under Aperture science labs and finding an escape for the cake at the end (turns out to be a lie). The tutorial at the start shows the player how to move, look around, the basic stuff while waiting for the timer to go down so you can leave the room.



[6]

This picture shows how long till a portal will appear underneath where the timer is in the room and where you can progress through the level. This allows the player to examine their surroundings and listen to the voice says over PA.



[7]

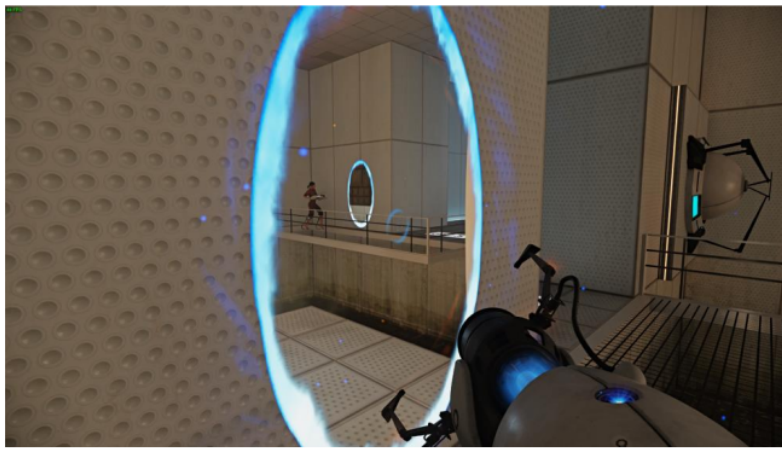
This picture shows the basic controls, showing the player how they can move their character. Later, within the same level, the game will show you how to pick items up and placing it down on certain buttons to activate various doors or platforms that help you to reach areas that can't be reached by jumping means.



[8]

This picture shows a prompt to pick the object up with the interact key.

Once you have progressed a bit further, the game will teach you about how portals work, needing an input and output to travel and to make sure the portals are on the applicable surface or else it will not work.



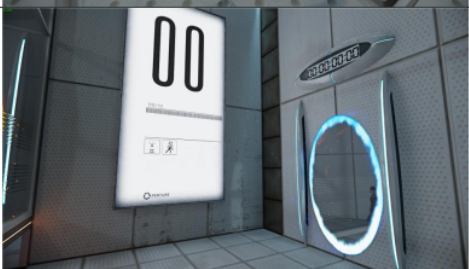
[16]

This picture shows the Portal Gun shooting an entrance at a white wall and showing at a different angle. The other angle is the other entry/output Portal where we can see our protagonist in a 3rd person perspective view.

Some negative outputs of portal are that although I haven't really found any bad about it, but I have found areas within the game where players that first play this game will find difficult and will have to consult google for help. Another is that Portal is a game that has been released back in 2007 with its game engine being Source so the graphics within the game won't be breathtaking like how current games are like. Another thing I found is that the games story is a little too short for most players that have played this game as the story

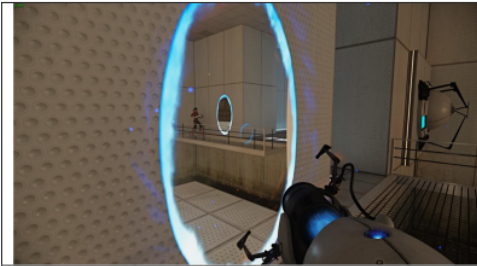
has about 3 hours of gameplay. The reason the game was this short because Valve wanted to keep it at a reasonable play hour time in case the game didn't go well with the players.

References

The reference	Where it's been found
Portal uses a concept that's a bit hard to wrap your head around without actually seeing it in action. The only "weapon" you're given is a portal gun that can shoot a portal entrance with the right mouse button and a portal exit with the left mouse button. Once both portals have been placed, you can walk through the entrance and find yourself at the exit.	https://www.ign.com/articles/2007/10/09/portal-review [1]
	Portal 2007, Valve [2]
	Portal 2007, Valve [3]
	Portal 2007, Valve [4]

	Portal 2007, Valve [5]
	Portal 2007, Valve [6]
	Portal 2007, Valve [7]
	Portal 2007, Valve [8]
While the main game is short, Portal doesn't only finish with one of the best credits songs ever created. After the story is done new challenge levels are unlocked. These extras are six levels that you've already played. The difference is that they have new challenges associated with them.	https://www.ign.com/articles/2007/10/09/portal-review [9]

	Portal 2007, Valve [10]
Portal received critical acclaim, often earning more praise than either Half-Life 2: Episode Two or Team Fortress 2, two titles also included in The Orange Box. It was praised for its unique gameplay and dark, deadpan humour.	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal_(video_game)#:~:text=Portal%20received%20critical%20acclaim%2C%20often,gameplay%20and%20dark%2C%20deadpan%20humor. [11]
The soundtrack mostly consists of minimalist ambient pieces, with long, drawn out notes. They're mysterious, somber and futuristic, appropriate for a video game set inside an abandoned research facility in the aftermath of an alien invasion. Unfortunately, it's too monotonous to enjoy on its own	https://metacriticdoesntreviewthis.wordpress.com/2012/02/07/review-various-artists-portal-1-ost-2007/#:~:text=The%20soundtrack%20mostly%20consists%20of,to%20enjoy%20on%20its%20own. [12]
Still Alive	Portal 2007 Soundtrack [13]
Portal is an Australian extreme metal band whose style is an unorthodox fusion of death metal, black metal, dark ambient and experimental music.	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal_(band)#:~:text=Portal%20is%20an%20Australian%20extreme,dark%20ambient%20and%20experimental%20music. [14]
	Portal 2007, Valve [15]



Portal 2007, Valve

[16]

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GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

53 / 100

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. Engagement With Literature Skills

Research has been conducted and references have been cited in text, but the Bibliography does not adhere to IEEE format. Follow the library guide or ask tutors/study support for assistance on this as it is an easy way to obtain marks and also serves as practice for all future written assignments.

Entry 14 in the bibliography is nothing to do with the game Portal. It is in reference to an Australian metal band. Not sure why this has been included as it has no relevance to the assignment.

2. Knowledge & Understanding Skills

An appreciation of the assignment's purpose has been demonstrated in the review. There is a lot of descriptive content and some of this would be enhanced with information retrieved from game theory sources in books or online articles and cited in text – this would allow more marks to be awarded for applied research and demonstrating an understanding of game theory concepts.

A good example of a statement that could benefit from backing up with information would be the closing statement about the game length – this would be an ideal opportunity to include a quote or statement as this would re-enforce the point you've made.

3.Cognitive & Intellectual Skills

Analytical evidence is present in describing certain game elements such as sounds, visuals, gameplay elements, hazards, etc. Appreciation of replay value through achievements has been evidenced – this is good to see as it does help people engage with games.

4.Practical Application Skills

(Not assessed in this assignment)

5.Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice

Inclusion of screenshots of the game are useful as this helps contextualise some of the points raised in the review. Good work.

The work has been completed successfully and submitted to Turnitin by the deadline specified on the assessment brief.

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