

CS 491: Homework 1

Puzzler

1 Introduction

In this homework, you will create a puzzle game. Because there’s a lot of debate about game genres, we should first agree upon a definition. By “agree,” I mean you should accept this definition:

1. Famed puzzle designer Scott Kim says a puzzle is “fun to solve and has a right answer.” Honor his definition as much as possible in your game. Doing the dishes by itself is not fun. Chess has no right answer. Neither activities are puzzles. A corollary to this is that a puzzle usually loses its challenge once it has been solved. However, sometimes we must relax the “right answer” clause. Tetris has no one right answer, but many folks still classify it as a puzzle game.
2. A puzzle game is a game in which the player’s primary concern is solving puzzles. Leveling up, acquiring inventory, and narrative are minimal if not absent.
3. Objects in puzzle games tend not to move until acted upon by the player, but stillness isn’t a requirement. Tetris falls into the puzzle category and has plenty of independently moving objects. However, asking the player to move a character through an expansive and continuous space deviates too much from the puzzle genre.

2 Requirements

To receive full credit for this assignment, you must:

- Create a puzzle game.
- Declare your audience (mothers, kids, grammar fiends?) and serve it faithfully.
- Implement some measure of progress. This could be done through increasing levels of difficulty (e.g., growing challenges, increasing speed), through stages to some overarching goal (e.g., assembling a machine part by part), or through a visual display (e.g., a diminishing pile of tiles).
- Host your project source repository on Github/Bitbucket. You are invited to keep it public or share it with me privately. (My username is `twodee` on both sites.)
- Publish your game to the WebGL target—not the Web Player, as it isn’t supported in the latest browsers. Make a ZIP file out of the exported game directory, and upload it to your itch.io account. Add a new post on the course blog with categories `fall 2015`, `gamedev2`, and `postmortems`. Find the `iframe` embedding code from

your game's Distribute tab. Enter this shortcode in your post, using the `iframe` attributes instead of the capitalized placeholders: `[emunity src="URL" width="WIDTH" height="HEIGHT"]`. Hit Publish and make sure we can play your game.

- Complete all this by the end of September.