Characters

Creating an Identity
Types of characters

• Playing characters and avatars
  – Avatar – on screen representation of a character
  – Hindu Mythology. the descent of a deity to the earth in an incarnate form or some manifest shape; the incarnation of a god.
  – An embodiment or personification, as of a principle, attitude, or view of life.
  – Computers. a graphical image that represents a person, as on the Internet.
• Non-playing characters (NPC)
• Character Types
  – Animal
  – Fantasy – no counter part in real world
  – Historical –
  – Licensed
  – Mythic – from mythology – Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Norse…
Classic character archetypes

- Hero
  - Hero’s Journey: problem – journey - solution
- Shadow
  - Represents the hero’s opposite – dark side
- Mentor
  - Guides hero
- Allies
- Guardian
  - Blocks hero’s progress until worthiness is attained
- Trickster
  - Neutral – enjoys making mischief
- Herald
  - Facilitates changes – eg: princess who calls for help
Classic character archetypes

- **Protagonist**
  - Main character
  - Drives story forward
    - Makes things happen vs reacting
    - In control
  - Strong physically and/or morally
  - “fatal or “tragic” flaw
    - Bad temper, jealousy

- **Antagonist**
  - Opposite of the protagonist – bad
  - Transformational
    - Anti hero who could have been the protagonist
  - Mistaken
  - Exaggerated
  - Realistic – toughest to create
Classic character archetypes

• Co-protagonists
  – Team members
  – MMOGs
  – Have a common enemy

• Supporting characters
  – Pivotal
  – Often start the action
  – The friend who calls the protagonist to action
Character Development Elements

- Character triangle
  - Love triangle
    - Protagonist and antagonist have same love interest

- Character arc – character’s growth
  - Maslow’s heirarchy of needs:
    - Intrapersonal
    - Interpersonal
    - Team
    - Community
    - Humanity
Point of View

- **First person**
  - Player sees through the eyes of the avatar
- **Third person**
  - Avatar can be seen on the screen
Character development

• Choosing a type
• Choosing a name
  – Strong, distinctive, memorable
  – Should have meaning
    • Gordon Freeman (Half life) – fights for freedom
    • Sonic the hedgehog – faster than the speed of sound
    • Luke Skywalker
• Visual character development
  – Gender, age, body type, skin color, health, abnormalities or distinctive characteristics
  – Costumes
• Style consistency
Verbal character development

- Narration
- Monologue
- Dialogue
- Reveal character
- Reveal emotion
- Advance the plot
- Reveal conflict
- Establish relationships
- Comment on action

- Text
- Cartoon balloons
- Actual sounds
- Voice simulation
Movement

- Signature
- Idle
- Walking cycle
Character Description

• Background story
• Character description
  – Name
  – Type
  – Age
  – Physical appearance
  – Personality characteristics
  – Vocal characteristics
  – Class and skills
  – Relevance to story
Inanimate Objects

• Descriptive name
  – Sub names
• Description
• Actions
• Relevance to storyline
## Character/Object Interaction Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stationary or moving</th>
<th>M o v i n g</th>
<th>Wall</th>
<th>Bumper</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Pinball</th>
<th>Stationary Flipper</th>
<th>Gravity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stationary</strong></td>
<td>Pinball</td>
<td>Angle of incidence = angle of reflection</td>
<td>Pinball will slow down</td>
<td>Pinball rolls over – points accumulated as pinball enters circle</td>
<td>Angle of incidence = angle of reflection</td>
<td>Pinball will slow down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flippers</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Pulls flipper back to resting position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moving</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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