

Lorenzo Zemella & Christopher Hopman
Proposal for Project 3

Name

Dungeon Runner

Brief Description

It will be a dungeon-crawler type game, combination of the original Zelda and Diablo. You can pick from a couple of characters and customize their specialties. You can level up and enhance your attributes. Levels will have a random generator but will always look very similar, and always have the same final boss. The goal is to continue beating enemies as the levels get harder and to upgrade your character as much as possible to reach the final level and boss.

Detailed Description

We will start with a main screen allowing the player to select from different characters and name their player. Each character will have a different specialty, but all will essentially have the same power and attributes. For example, one character could be a "Barbarian" with more crude-like weapons, while another character could be a "sorcerer" with magic-like attacks. But both will have melee and ranged weapons, that would essentially behave the same and have the same result. We will also be able to save the player and load it later, so you don't have to start from 0 every time you play.

Then, the game will start. The player will start with a basic melee and ranged attack and will begin to learn how to use them and what strategies to use to defeat enemies more efficiently.

The goal is to survive, kill all enemies, and finish the level by defeating the boss. Levels will be randomly generated to a degree, but always finish in the same boss "room".

The player can "level-up" with experience gained from killing enemies, and can be rewarded more by killing them more effectively and more quickly.

The controls will be simple. The player can move around with keys (WASD) and fire or attack with mouse clicks by clicking in the direction of the enemies. Can also continually attack by holding mouse down. We'll have a health indicator bar at the side of the screen, weapon feedback and experience at the top, and a mini-map in the corner.

Melee and ranged weapons. As the player levels up, the weapons will also get stronger. The physical model will also get larger relative to the enemies. The player can get a certain amount of upgrade points that he can choose to upgrade more weapons than other.

There will be a penalty for dying. You lose experience but never drop a level. This will be to discourage the player from dying and to become better.

The goal is just to have the most upgraded player by the time of the final level and boss. Your experience level would be like a score, and if so desired, the player can replay levels with their upgraded character. Possibly set the difficulties of all the levels higher, to keep game-play interesting and not too dominant.

Scalability Plan

If we were given a lot of time resources, we could scale our game to include more levels and more weapons and enemies. This is easy to scale and would only help the player be more involved in playing the game for longer, since he/she would have more levels to explore or more weapons to find or unlock.

With the smaller amount of time we are given for this project. We don't have to invest as much time in these aspects of game-play and still build a fully playable game. No extra time would be needed to expand the weapons portfolio or number of maps.

To still make it interesting, we would implement a random aspect to making levels. We would

have some guidelines and themes for 2 or 3 levels, and write a random generator so the player would not be able to memorize the level when playing again. Also, these 2 or 3 levels can be played again but could be made either larger, or harder by adding more enemies.

Game Principles Discussion

We can keep the game fun and challenging by making the enemies harder as the player continues to play. We can have level ups, and weapon upgrades, power-ups. Reward the player more consistently and more often as the player's skills improve. The player would be able to save their progress, and be proud of the character they upgraded.

Have the player make decisions between high-risk and high-reward actions vs low-risk and low-reward actions. An example could be "charging-up" a weapon, rewarding the player with a higher reward if used more skillfully.

Design Challenges

The primary design challenge will be in balancing the increasing difficulty and the player rewards to maintain the player's interest and enjoyment.

Increases in difficulty will mostly come from different enemy behaviors, and combinations of different enemies requiring the player to adapt and use new strategies.

Rewards will be introducing new player mechanics or improving the effectiveness of existing mechanics.

Designing the different enemy behaviors and player mechanics will be very important for a successful game.

A design challenge we will avoid is the distribution of skills across the different character a player can choose from. We will avoid this by technically having each character have the same exact skill levels (same strength and power for attack, etc), but their weapons will be different (melee: sword, or club... range: staff or bow and arrow..).

Technical Overview

The game will be played on a 3-d environment, with 3-d graphics, but on a 2-d map and mechanics.

A random map generator could pose a challenge, to make interesting maps. The goal would be to make the generator simple but also make the maps interesting enough to play over and over again.

Technical Challenges

Creating the engine to display graphics will be a challenge. Ideally the graphics will all be 3-d, but could be done in 2-d as well. Implementing the mechanics of the game is simplified by the fact that they will all be done in 2-d rather than 3-d.

Creating interesting enemy behavior is another technical challenge. If enemy behavior is too limited, players will quickly become bored with the game. This is one of the areas that can easily be scaled as incorporating new enemies/behaviors into the game is easy. Also, creating interesting bosses may require significant work, as they should be both visually and mechanically distinct from all normal enemies.