

Need.Moar.Sheep

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1 Game Description

a Dramatic Elements

i *Storyline*

For years, little Jimmy has been watching sheep jumping over a fence every evening. Counting them, over and over, leading him to the land of dreams. But one night, just counting sheep didn't seem to work... He needed more sheep, and he wanted them go faster! So he went on a journey to find the source of all sheep. Will he find them? Can he make them jump over his fence? Is he asleep already? Nobody knows...

ii *Theme*

The game is our interpretation of a dream that resulted from the mundane practice of counting sheep. The player, while still counting sheep, enters a dreamy world where he follows his plan to get more sheep. He will learn how to drive the sheep and discover strange power-ups and different sheep. During the game, the player gets presented some quests (achievements).

After taking some quests all by himself, there are suddenly other people, trying to steal the sheep. What's up with that?

iii *Characters*

The main characters of the game are the flock of sheep and shepherds, which drive the sheep towards their fences, so they can jump over it.

- A player takes the role of a shepherd, who has to get the sheep into jumping over his own fence.

- The sheep will walk around randomly, waiting for the shepherds to take action.

Apart from the main characters, the game will have additional, supporting or hostile characters, which will progressively increase the difficulty of the game.

- Colored sheep will take different abnormal behaviors, such as opposing to run away from the shepherd, eating the power-ups or getting stuck on the fence.
- The disguised wolves will enter the sheepfold and will eat the sheep - to combat them, the shepherd will be helped by the dog he needs to adopt.
- The dog is, therefore, a character which supports the player.
- As a special extra, a guy who couldn't find his shirt now needs a new one, so he scares away the sheep with his wool shaving machine.

b Formal Elements

i Players

The main game will be multi-player based. There will also be a single-player mode.

ii Objective

The objective of the game is to get more sheep than the other players. In single-player mode, the players motivation is following quests (achievements) and beating high scores.

iii Rules

The rules of the game are meant to be intuitive from the user interface, and easy to approach. In the following part of the proposal, the intended rules are explained in detail. However, depending on the players experience and testing, these rules are subject to change.

Basic rules of the game:

- The setting of the game is a sheepfold of a dreamy world
- The sheepfold consists of a 2D terrain bounded by walls and one or more fences; the sheep are able to escape the sheepfold by jumping a fence

- Each player has the role of a shepherd, which has free movements all along the 2D plane of the map
- The players share the same terrain, competing over the sheep
- The movements of the sheep and the shepherds are bounded by the walls and the fence of the sheepfold. Additionally, the sheep can jump over the fences.
- Every sheep will move away from a shepherd if within a certain distance to the shepherd or move randomly otherwise.

Points:

- Each sheep which jumps over the fence brings a fixed amount of points
- Different colored sheep can bring different amounts of points
- In addition to points, the player can earn achievements (e.g. by making multiple sheep jumping over the fence at the same time)
- In order to pass a level, the player has to acquire a certain number of achievements. Some achievements include reaching a certain amount of points.

Restrictions:

- The levels end after a certain amount of time.
- The player will have an energy level which allows running for short amounts of time. The energy level runs out while running but will regenerate slowly while not running (walking is still possible any time).

Power-ups (superpowers):

- On the map, there will randomly appear superpower-giving plants, which can be acquired by the player by picking them up
- The black sheep is able to eat the superpower-giving plants
- The power-ups include, but are not limited to, invisibility of the player, bribing food to attract the sheep, helper dog
- The invisibility power lasts a limited, fixed and displayed, amount of time, from the moment the player acquires the invisibility power
- The invisibility power makes the player's avatar invisible for the sheep, and the player can thus move freely on the map, without influencing the movement of the sheep

- Once the bribing food is collected, the player can choose to use it at any point in the game to attract the sheep towards him, by selecting it
- Once the dog is acquired, the player can call him for help at any point in the game
- The dog helps the player by scaring away the wolves and sheep stealers

Negative characters:

- Each level has a black sheep, which behaves differently from level to level
- The player discovers the behavior of the black sheep by going near it
- The black sheep has antagonistic and abnormal behaviors, such as refusing to move or scaring away the other sheep
- The black sheep is able to eat the superpower-giving plants
- Wolves can randomly appear in the attempt to steal the sheep
- The wool-stealing guy can appear randomly in the attempt to steal the sheep
- The player can use the dog to scare away the wolves and the wool-stealing guy

iv *Resources*

The assets that a player has are the superpower-giving plants which, once collected, can be strategically used to help a player accomplish the main goal of making the sheep jump over the fence the player has.

v *Conflict*

Each level lasts for a limited, displayed amount of time. The appearance of the antagonistic characters of the game (the black sheep, wolves, and wool-thieves) progressively increases the difficulty of the game.

The main conflict is gaining more points than the opponents by making the sheep jump over own's fence. This is achieved by a combination of collecting sheep really fast, scaring away the sheep of the other players and stealing the sheep another player is currently driving.

vi *Outcome*

The number of sheep which jumped over the fence determine the number of points which will be saved in a per-level high score per each player. Collecting achievements enables new levels. The long term goal of the player is to enable all levels and collecting all achievements.

The players will be ranked according to their points after every game.

c **Technical Aspects**

i *General setup and goal*

The world is limited by walls which contains fences. Each player owns a fence. There is a herd of sheep strolling around. The goal of a player is to drive the sheep and make them jump over the fence during night. The night time is limited and the players must try to make as many sheep jump over their fence as possible within the given time.

If there is more than one player, they can compete by disrupting others and trying to take over their sheep. The player who got the most sheep wins.

ii *Camera and HUD*

The camera will point at the player in bird view. Every player gets his own camera/screen.

There will be a heads-up display showing the collected power-ups, the energy level and the remaining time.

iii *Controls*

The player will be able to run for a limited time. Running will drain his energy. Once the energy ran out, the player can't run anymore, but only walk. The energy will regenerate while not running.

Driving a sheep works the following way: in general, a sheep runs away from a player, depending on how close it is to the player. So the player must find a way to direct the sheep to his fence using this principle. The exact behavior of the sheep will have to be evaluated experimentally.

The player will control the movement of his avatar with the left joystick of the gamepad. The right hand will be used to trigger additional mechanics.

iv Power-ups and special abilities

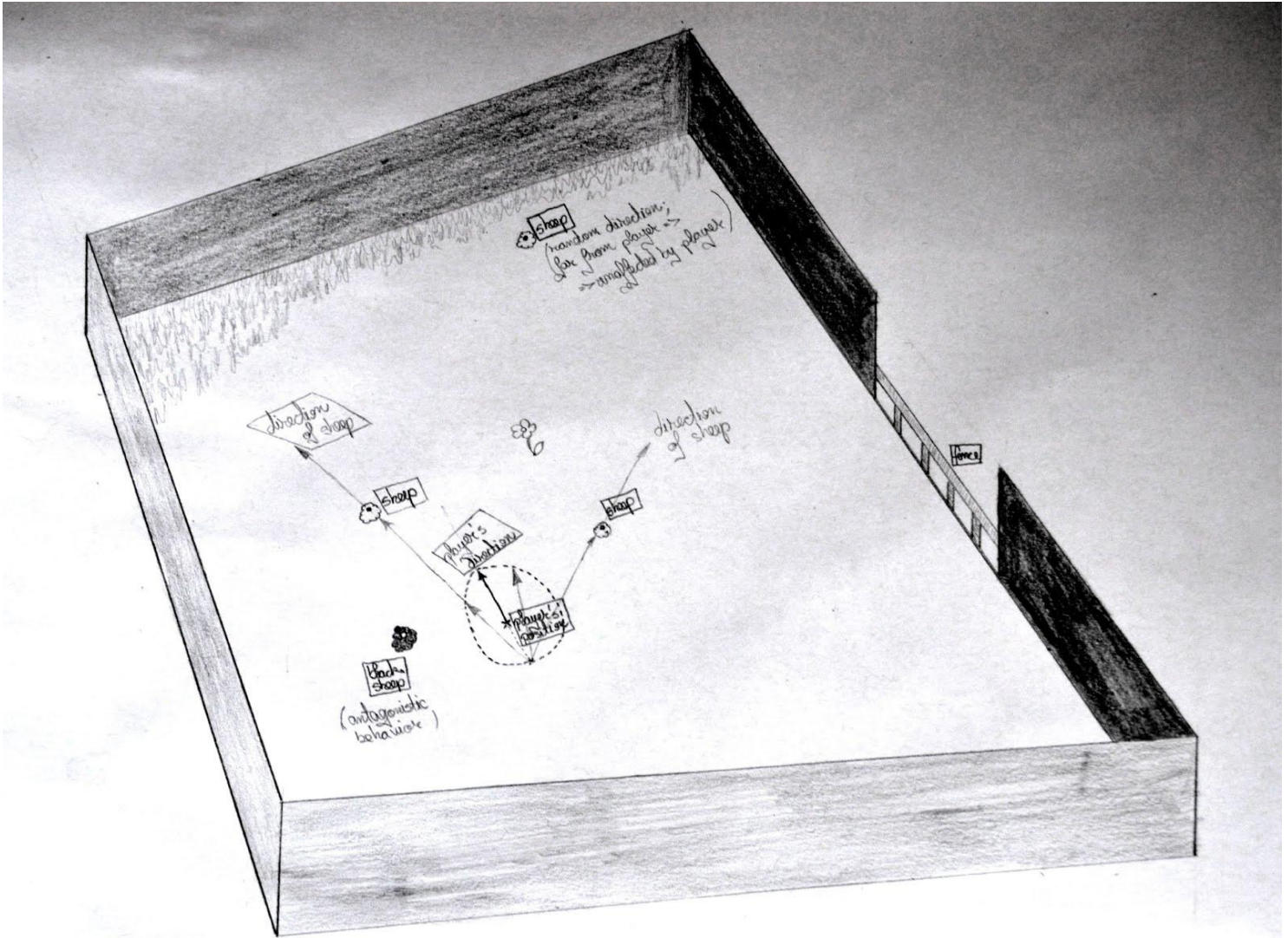
Different power-ups will appear randomly on the map and disappear after some time if not picked up. They are picked up by the player that first moves over them and will be stored in his inventory.

After collecting power-ups, the player can select them in his inventory and activate them. Their effect will fade out after a certain amount of time. The player can also cancel the effect manually.

The power-ups are selected by pressing the right or left shoulder key (cycling through the inventory). It will be activated by pressing the A button and deactivated with B. Running is enabled while holding X.

d Game Sketches

The following sketches give a first glimpse of the atmosphere set by the game and provide a visual clue of the rules of the game.



Setting plan. The setting of the game is a sheepfold, which bounds the movement of the characters. The player takes the role of the shepherd, who guides the sheep. The flock will run away from the shepherd, in the direction that opposes his position. In order not to make the movement of the sheep overly divergent, the direction of each sheep will be given by the ray which leaves a set point behind the player's position, and the position of the sheep. As the levels progress, the map will become increasingly complicated ("bad" fences, superpower-giving elements, antagonistic characters etc.).



Sketch of a gameplay instance. The camera will be positioned above the ground, with the orientation towards the ground. The game will have fantasy elements, and the characters will be animated to react in diverse manners. The player will be able to interact with the other characters of the game mainly by approaching them. The player will also be able to view the directions of the chased sheep. Since the camera follows the character, and each player will have a separate view, the screen will be split to fit the views of all players.

5

sheep counter

169

remaining time

power-up inventory



power level



Heads-Up Display sketch. The player has to know, at any point during the gameplay, the remaining time, the power level, and the acquired superpowers. The sheep counter keeps track of the number of points gathered.

2 “Big Idea” Bullseye



3 Development Schedule

The game will be developed progressively, following the 4 layers: functional minimum, low target, desirable target, high target.

Functional minimum

- singleplayer
- multiple identical sheep
- sheep can jump over fence
- sheep walk away from player if player close, otherwise stay where they are (no free-will movement)
- goal: end game as fast as possible, making as many sheep as possible jump over the fence
- end of game: no more sheep / all sheep jumped over fence
- simple world (flat plane), simple fence
- static camera
- no character animation

Low target

- competitive multiplayer mode, each player tries to get as many sheep as possible
- refined sheep (randomised) movement
- collision detection
- individual camera for each player (split screen)

Desirable target

- character animation
- different “levels” - different fences, worlds, obstacles
- improved graphics
- extra abilities for players (e.g. “invisibility”, goodies for sheep)
- achievements/points for players
- special sheep (black sheep)
- power-ups
- sound effects / theme song

High target

- extra creatures (“evil” creatures such as wolves, “good” creatures such as dogs)
- additional constraint e.g. for time between sheep jumps
- different “difficulties” - speed of sheep, different behavior of sheep

Extras

- custom map editor
- kinect integration
- characters with different abilities
- networked multiplayer
- character selection (different looks - same abilities)

4 Assessment

We want to build a casual game that is easy to play but hard to master. Controlling the sheep should be fun, but controlling them fast, precise and many of them at once will require some excellent shepherd skills.

The world will be friendly and a little bit dreamy. An inviting place where not only the players but also the sheep enjoy themselves. Nice music and fun animations that would make everyone happy even if there wasn't anything to do at all.

The game should be played with friends and enjoyed by everyone who loves casual gaming. Even if it might be called a party game, we hope to achieve enough depth so people try to master it and will spend hours playing. Highscores, achievements and different levels will help keeping the users excited.

The success of the game will be measured by how long the players keep playing before they are getting bored and whether they want to play the game again after already knowing it.