

The Bear – Game Vision

Theme

The Bear is a adventure puzzle game in which the player protects a growing child from different nightmares

Vision

A single player game with 12+ hours of gameplay

The toy Teddy Bear, equipped with a small wooden sword & shield protects a child while s/he sleeps by entering their nightmares, finding the child and defending him/her

Gameplay will be similar and inspired by [Limbo](#), [Inside](#), and [The Cave](#) with light combat (not action focused)

Players will start with all their abilities, however, after defeating each boss at the end of each nightmare, the player will choose which ability to permanently discard.

Battle against a variety of different enemies that will change their shape according to the theme of each nightmare level.

Boss battles also change on a different play through depending on the available abilities/skills the player has.

Themed collectibles will be available to find throughout the levels which will expand how the child suffers from the nightmares (audio cues or written dialogue)

The game will use 3D models with an orthographic camera in a 2D environment

Environmental puzzles will be dynamically placed or changed at key points in the level depending on the abilities the player still has available.

As the game progresses, the Bear will visibility show some wear and tear from the neglect of the child, but it will never be derelict in their duty to the child.

Audio will play a big role in the game to ensure the player feels that they are inside the game and experiencing some of the themes present.

Concept

Genre: Puzzle Adventure

Targeting the Nintendo Switch, Xbox Series X/S and PlayStation and players aged 14+

This game is unique in that most games have the player character gain “experience” in the game as they progress, gaining new abilities as they go. This game reverses that idea and has the player lose abilities as they progress. This forces the player to approach various enemies in different ways and explore the world without the abilities they may have become accustomed to. The game will also react accordingly

depending on the abilities or present multiple different ways in which the player can overcome certain puzzles or challenges instead of them always remaining static and the same regardless of the number of times the player experiences the level. This will allow players of all levels to customize the game around their own priorities and skills.

The game will also dynamically adjust certain points of the levels and the obstacles or puzzles depending on the skills the player has available. This should assist in balancing the game so that instead of a single puzzle/obstacle having to take into consideration all possible combinations of skills, it can simply be updated or replaced depending on what is available to the player.

Boss battles will also be dynamically changed depending on the abilities/skills the player has available. This should enhance replayability.

Each boss will be large and themed to represent the fear the child is experiencing (Giant spider, scary clown, etc). After defeating the creature at the end, the player is then presented with a choice to discard one of their current abilities and pass it on as a symbol of courage, support and love to the child so that they are no longer afraid of that nightmare.

Collectables may not be collected in their entirety in a single play through and will require levels to be revisited once the player has once again collected all the abilities available in the game.

When the player selects an ability/skill to lose at the end of the level, a small bright orb will leave the bear and go to the child, representing the passing of courage for the child to no longer be afraid.

When defeated by the bear, the Boss will flee vowing to return to take the child and feed it more nightmares.

The only exception to this loss of abilities/skills is the final act of the game. In the final level The Bear will give its last apparent energy to the child who can finally stand up to the creature him/her self and defend The Bear with all the abilities once again intact.

It is played in an orthographic camera viewed from the side while The Bear explores and travels through various nightmares in search of The Child and protect him/her from the nightmarish creature at the end. The various creatures that the player will fight throughout the level will be familiar to players in how they attack, however will look differently to fit the theme of the nightmare.

As the player progresses through the game, each level will show some visual representation of neglect from the child (which will not affect their abilities) such as occasionally stumbling, some threads come out of The Bear or even a missing button eye, however it soldiers on and continues to protect the child it loves.

Controls will be simple, standard platform like controls for jumping attacking and movement.

Competitive Statement

| The Bear | Inside | Limbo | The Cave |
|--|---|---|--|
| Lose skills/abilities as the player progresses | No changes in abilities | No changes in abilities | No changes in abilities |
| Final boss battle can vary and are chosen based on abilities available | No boss battles | | |
| Multiple smaller levels | One large level to explore | Multiple smaller levels | One long interconnecting map |
| Dynamically changing obstacles for the player to overcome | Static obstacles for the player to overcome | Static obstacles for the player to overcome | Entire portions of the level change depending on the characters selected |
| | | | |

The regression system along with having dynamic changing levels and bosses will enhance replayability as players may want to explore the changes in levels, different bosses and different combinations of skill loss.

All the games listed above (including The Bear) would have similar controls of jumping and attacking; standard like controls for most platformer games.

Essence

The Bear is an action-adventure platformer which explores various nightmare themes of a child as s/he grows. The Bear defends the child and provides them with the courage to face their fears.

Core Statement

So far as I can tell, there isn't another game with this sort of regression system in which players lose abilities/skills as they progress in the game or similar types of platforming games that have points in which the obstacles the player has to overcome will be dynamically chosen depending on the abilities/skills the player currently has. There are games in which a player may start off with all their skills and abilities to only use them near the beginning moments of the game. However typically what happens is then as the player progresses they gain those abilities back. With The Bear, these losses are permanent

Otherwise the platforming elements of the game should be familiar in control to other similar games such as Limbo or The Cave. The player will explore nightmares to find where the child is and defend him/her against whatever they fear most. Throughout the level will be smaller representations of those themes for the player to battle against with a final battle at the end against a larger "boss".

Inside and Limbo are both very atmospheric games, taking great advantage of the presentation of the game as well as music (or lack thereof) and sound effects to really emphasize certain design choices

The Cave allows players to select up to 4 of the 7 available characters in the game, each with their own unique abilities. Each character chosen changes the layout of The Cave, each character has their own level inside The Cave which expands and emphasizes their own story.

Key Features & Goals

Regression system in which the player chooses which abilities / skills to lose

Dynamic obstacles that will change in the level depending on which skills the player has available

Different boss battles when experiencing a different play through with different available abilities/skills

Tight and responsive platforming controls

Immersive audio and visuals

The goal of The Bear is to create a touching story of growing up and the fears we face as we grow older contained within a puzzle adventure. How those fears can sometimes be faced with a small toy or something meaningful to a person and eventually how that courage can be passed on to another person.

Overview

The Bear will enter the nightmares of a child throughout different stages of life. The themes of each level will be based on different things a person of that age may find scary, such as;

- Scary monsters
- Insects/spiders/snakes
- Clowns
- Thunder and lightening storms
- Unknown sounds at night or in a dark room
- Being alone
- Certain animals like sharks or other predators (or even imaginative animals that combine parts of real ones like a lion with an elephant body)
- Family members or pets who become scary and aggressive (Fluffy suddenly lets her claws out, hisses and attacks!)
- Drowning

The final level boss will reflect the theme of the level and can also change depending on what abilities/skills the player has available such as;

- Giant evil looking clown of different designs and attack patterns
- A Great White Shark, giant squid or giant Anglerfish
- Giant spider or snake or similar insect
- A boss battle in the dark in which the player has to light the room or their sword somehow to find the boss, or lightening occasionally lights the room for the player to see the boss

Various level enemies will be reskinned to fit the theme of the level but remain consistent in their attacks throughout the game. Difficulty will come as the player loses skills/abilities

- Ranged attackers
- Melee attackers
- Enemies that charge toward the player and explode

At the end of each level, the player will then decide which of their current skills/abilities they want to lose. This affects the player's abilities in the game and increases the difficulty without having to scale enemies too much to match the character to ensure there is a degree of challenge in the game. Such skills/abilities could be;

- Double jump
- Power strike
- Throw their wooden sword and have it return
- Have the sword be able to take on certain elemental abilities for extra damage (such as fire)
- Sliding/dodging
- Extra armour for damage protection, such as a shield
- Faster movement
- Long jump
- Climbing and grappling on certain surfaces

Because of the removal of abilities/skills, the levels should be designed in such a way as to ensure that the player can always progress forward, but still offer unique challenges. Therefore the game will have points in which the player will have to figure out how to progress with the abilities/skills they have. For example

- A fallen log that could be jumped over with double-jump, climbed over with climbing. Otherwise, the log is replaced with a thorn bush that can be hacked apart with power stroke or burned away by igniting their sword with fire and burning it away
- A chasm that a tree could be felled with power strike to act as a bridge, but if that's not available then the gap is such that a well timed double-jump could allow the player to progress or instead a vine is out of reach so the player has to throw their sword to cut it free to hand over the chasm and the player can swing across.
- A small gap in which the player can run and slide under (such as a solid gate). If that ability isn't available then the game will spawn a gate with bars in which the player could throw their sword to hit a button which then raises the gate.

The audio will be such that background noises will provide a deeper sense of the nightmare theme. Similar to how the audio was used in Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice to really put the player on edge

- Snakes sliding in the background or behind the player
- The buzzing, chirping or clicking noises insects make
- An evil laugh from clowns
- Arguing parents in the background or people / peers telling you that you can't do it
- The roar of a monster or animal that keeps getting closer

At the end of the game, The Bear will finally be defeated by the nightmare. With its last effort, The Bear provides the child with its final bit of courage and finally the child is now able to stand against the nightmare, take up The Bears sword and defend The Bear from the creature and defeat it for good