

**SHALL
WE GET**

Lost in Play

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OLTD 508**



TRAILER





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STORY



STORY

What's it About?

Lost in Play is about a pair of energetic siblings named Toto and Gal. They start out their day by playing at home and as time passes by they get lost in a world made up of their own imagination. If they don't make it home by the time the waning moon turns to a new moon, then they will be lost there forever. It's been described as a "classic kids adventure story, but one that really relishes in its own sense of playfulness" (Lost in Play Review: A Gorgeous Point and Click Puzzler, 2022).

The siblings are tasked with finding their way back through their imaginary world while solving a variety of puzzles. The puzzles differ wildly in style and solution, but most require the player to 'think outside the

box' in order to find success. The environments themselves are numerous and creative, all offering a glimpse into a child's imagination. One minute the characters are being chased by blackbirds up in a cloud village, and the next they're underwater asking a robotic fish for help. They also meet "monster fighting frogs in a dark forest, board game-playing seagulls on the high seas and even a heavy-metal loving sheep on a floating island in the sky as they make their way home to their messy childhood bedroom." (Lost in Play Review: A Gorgeous Point and Click Puzzler, 2022).





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FAQ



FAQ

Quick Details

Platforms

Developed by Happy Juice games, Lost in Play costs \$20.79 and is available on pc platforms Steam & GOG, as well as the Nintendo Switch eShop

PC Requirements

Minimum Requirements:

OS: Windows 7 or later
Processor: i3-7100 or better
Memory: 4 GB RAM
Storage: 3GB

Played on:

Windows 11
Processor: i9-10850k
Graphic Card: RTX 3080
Memory: 64GB RAM

Single/Multiplayer

This is a single-player game (although if a child is playing it, they will need a puzzle savvy adult nearby).

Length

This will depend on the age of the player and how puzzle-savvy they are. Multiple online reviews report that it takes anywhere from 4-6 hours. (It took me almost the full 6!)

Necessary Accessories

Lost in Play can be played with a mouse and keyboard or a controller. Handheld controller was recommended however I used a keyboard and mouse – because I was thinking about implementing it in tech class.

Target Audience

The target audience is wide! Spanning from 8-year-olds to adults who enjoy a good throwback to point-and-click classics like Kings Quest or Monkey Island.

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FEEDBACK



FEEDBACK

Hints, Feedback & Navigation

Something important to mention here is that there is no dialogue or language throughout this game. However, there is gibberish language (no subtitles) that the characters use to communicate with each other which surprisingly wasn't annoying. Whenever this happens, a visual illustration or pictorial clue appears which is meant to help the player understand what to do next, which is helpful to the player as they are never left wondering what to do. There are no real 'hints' while the characters are exploring their world, though puzzle solutions are cleverly peppered throughout the environments in a way that is unrecognizable to the player until presented with the puzzles themselves.

There are a variety of ways this game provides feedback to the player based on their circumstances. When a player is exploring the world, they are able to pull items from their backpack that they can then

use on characters and objects in the world in order to progress. 'Lost in Play' provides feedback on what can be used and where by displaying an object as transparent when it is unusable, and opaque when it is usable. Each one of the countless puzzles provides its own unique form of feedback as well.

Navigation in Lost in Play at first glance is a classic case of moving left to right across the screen. Quickly, however, the player discovers that on some screens they can explore right to left, left to right, up and down, and even in some instances into the background itself. Navigation is achieved by either WASD on the keyboard, using the stick on a controller, or by using a mouse to point and click and having the character move to that location.



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VISUALS





VISUALS

How Pretty is it? Very.

The hand-drawn, animated art style gives *Lost in Play* a charming, unique aesthetic that is hard not to like. “Everything is clean and vibrant, and the animations are smooth with no framerate issues. There are layers of depth to the environments, as well as dramatic lighting effects. For all its cutesie aesthetic, *Lost in Play* is a gorgeous game on a technical level” (Hawes, 2022). In some cases, even seemingly unnecessary animations were created to help draw the player into the world. While playing, I just wanted to cozy up on the couch with a bowl of cereal and get back in touch with my Saturday morning, cartoon-loving self.



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BENEFITS



BENEFITS

Benefits to getting Lost in Play

Lost in Play wraps up its very dynamic, logical problem-solving puzzles inside of a fantastical bubble of imagination that envelopes the player in such a way that they forget that they're even problem-solving. You essentially become – Lost in Play.

There are many elements of a good STEM project to be found here. A STEM activity or project (science, technology, engineering, and math) often focuses on problem-solving strategies and how they can be applied in real-world scenarios. Lost in Play has many elements of a STEM project as much of the time, the player has to work backwards, use what they know, and what items are

available to them in order to solve the problems and puzzles put in front of them.

Another benefit of playing this game is that there are plenty of opportunities to flex the growth mindset muscles. The reason people love puzzle-solving games is that there's an immense sense of accomplishment, and players are left feeling brilliant after solving a puzzle that they have been working so hard on. There were many 'pleasantly frustrating' moments, but that's part of why it's engaging.



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FISH TANK





FISH TANK

Gee's Principles Included

Lost in Play opens with a fish tank, broken into a dream section and a house section. It's in these locations the player is introduced to the mechanics of the game before the gameplay opens up when the characters leave home. "Fish tanks are stripped-down versions of the game. Good games offer players fish tanks, either as tutorials or as their first level or two" (Gee, 2005). At the beginning of Lost in Play, the siblings are in their childhood bedroom and the sister (Gal) needs to wake up her brother (Toto). In order to accomplish this task, she needs to use the alarm clock, however, the alarm clock needs a battery. So the player gets a sneak peak into how the items can be found, how they are stored, and how they are used. There are several more 'fish tank' scenarios that take place before they get lost in their

imagination. This way the player feels relatively familiar with how to explore and find the clues necessary to solve puzzles.



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**PROBLEM
SOLVING**



PROBLEM SOLVING

Well-ordered Problems

For me, most of the ‘problem puzzles’ came later on in the game, though there were one or two tricky ones in the mid-game. The escalation of difficulty pointed out to me that the game itself in design and layout was well thought out. If the challenges came on too early and proceeded to get easier, then I would have questioned the overall order of the puzzles. “Early problems are designed to lead players to form good guesses about how to proceed when they face harder problems later on in the game. In this sense, earlier parts of a good game are always looking forward to later parts” (Gee,2005).





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CHALLENGE



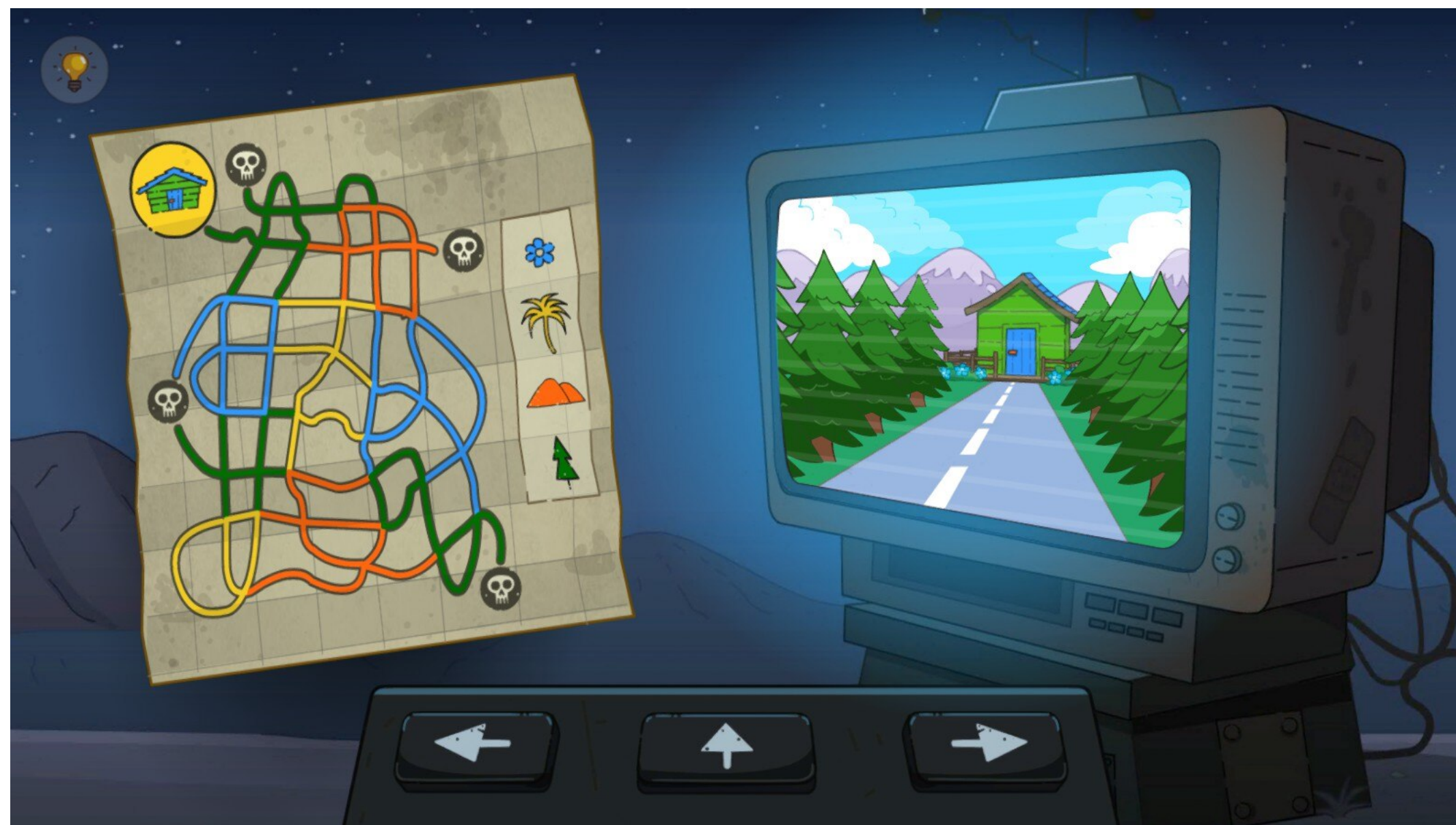


CHALLENGE

Pleasantly Frustrating

I experienced multiple moments of pleasant frustration, but I think that's because I'm impatient. I have realized that seasoned gamers understand that problem-solving throughout a video game can sometimes take an ample amount of time. "Learning works best when new challenges are pleasantly frustrating in the sense of being felt by learners to be at the outer edge of, but within, their 'regime of competence'. That is, these challenges feel hard but doable"(Gee, 2005). Personally, I'm a very busy body and a multitasker that wants to get things done yesterday, so while playing the game I was expecting to solve problems quickly but began to understand that solving the problems themselves was meant to be an enjoyable experience.

For example, when I stumbled upon a puzzle that was taking a little too much time (by my standards), I became frustrated that I wasn't figuring it out quickly. When I did figure it out, I was happy that I finally did! Side note- I went for a hint after spending about 5 minutes on a puzzle and the hint basically gave me the answer to the riddle. The hint pointed out something that I would have noticed had I spent some more time with the puzzle. The hint was a 'give away' and I wish I had been more patient and spent more time puzzling it out, because I felt crappy that I didn't solve it independently.





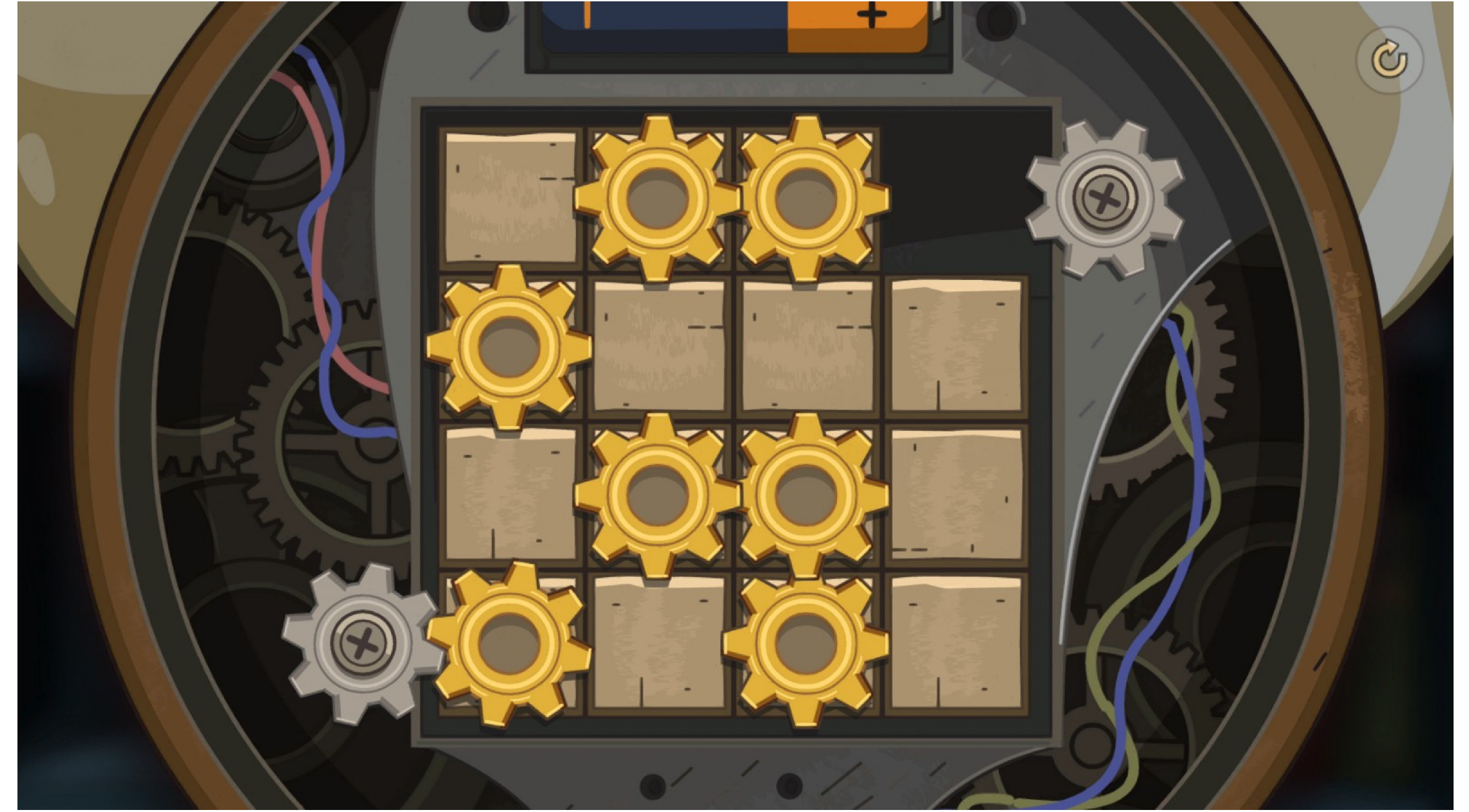
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REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS

Probing Questions for Players

1. Did you find the visual clues helpful?
2. Would it have been more helpful to have had English dialogue or subtitles?
3. Is it fair to say that the puzzles were challenging enough but doable?
4. Were the 'hints' helpful to you in solving the problems? Why or why not?
5. Which puzzle did you find the most difficult to solve? Why?
6. Did you find the story engaging and the characters likeable?
7. How did solving a difficult puzzle on your own make you feel?
8. If you used a 'Hint' to solve a puzzle, how did that make you feel?



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REVIEW 7/10





REVIEW 7/10

Review & Rating

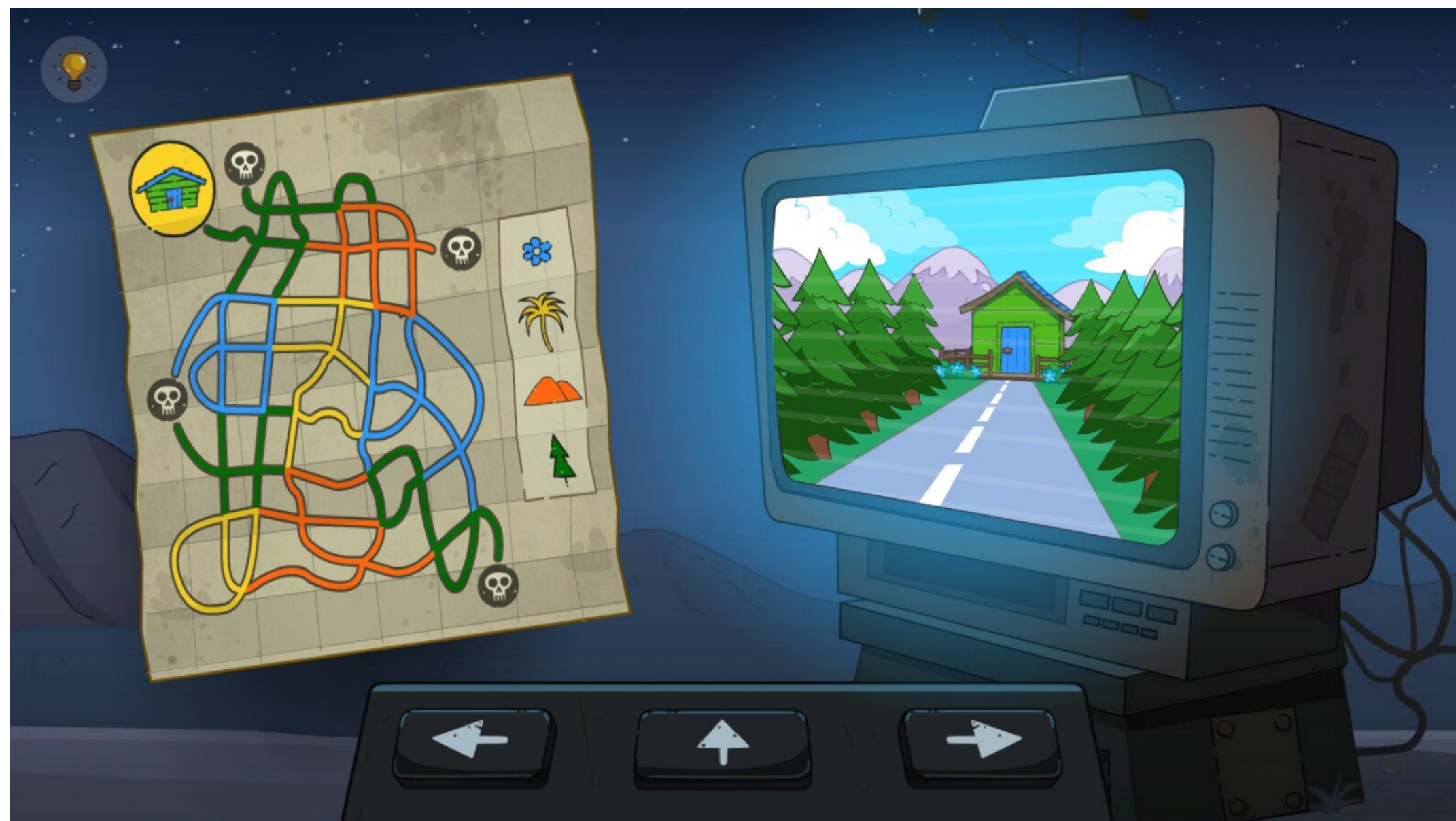
Lost in Play was a relatively laid-back and relaxed experience. The storyline was original and the puzzles were all very unique in style and challenge. The art style is charming and well executed, the player is constantly introduced to new characters, new environments and cool music. However, I am deducting 3 points for the following reasons:

The hint system was a good resource, however, I would have preferred a hint system that was gated, either through time or trial, meaning that the player would have to attempt the puzzle X amount of times before the option of a hint was given to them. That way if students were playing the game they wouldn't default to a hint straight away.

Three-quarters of the way through the game the player is presented with a montage supercut of a variety of unique characters and locations including lava caves, mountain puzzles, underwater swimming adventures and a giant sand worm which I never got to experience. With the game clocking in at under 6 hours, I can't help but feel like the developers either ran out of time, money, or both, and removed at least half of the intended gameplay.

Finally, I feel like some of the puzzles were a bit too challenging for children. If I were to use this game in school, I would have to be nearby to support students should they need some extra help, which I believe they would.

Overall, a great assignment and a great game. I enjoyed getting *Lost in Play*, it made me put on my thinking cap and explore something I have very little experience in – playing video games.



Sources



Cruz, W. (2022, August 21). *Lost in Play Review in 3 Minutes – Delightful Puzzle Adventure for Family*. The Escapist. Retrieved September 30, 2022, from [EscapistMagazine](https://www.escapistmagazine.com/articles/view/gaming/100000/lost-in-play-review-in-3-minutes-delightful-puzzle-adventure-for-family)

Gee, J. P. (2005, March). Learning by Design: Good Video Games as Learning Machines. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 2(1), 5–16. <https://doi.org/10.2304/elea.2005.2.1.5>

Hawes, H. (2022, August 10). *Review - Lost in Play*. WayTooManyGames. Retrieved September 30, 2022, from [WayTooManyGames](https://www.waytoomanygames.com/review-lost-in-play/)

Images taken by me and also pulled from Steam Community

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