

# Managing Suspense in Games: Gameplay and Artifact Layer

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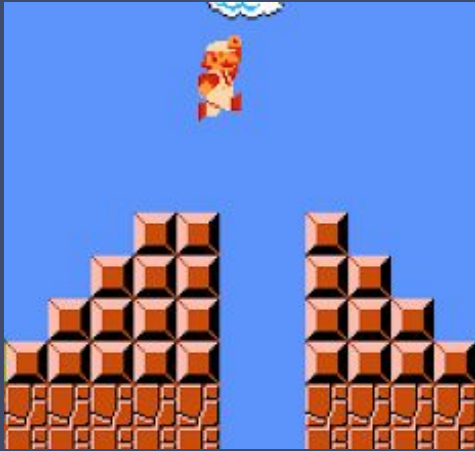
# Gameplay Layer

# 1. Desire



- Essential to create suspense
- This value of something must be revealed to the player to generate desire
  - Either by showing the value
  - Or by directly informing them of the value
- Can be generated through competing with other players
- Desires in gameplay often translate to some sort of goal to reach or progress to be made

## 2. Outcome



- After action, there are a varying number of outcomes that can occur
- Desire is just one of those outcomes
- Suspense ends once one of the outcomes is reached

### 3. Events



- Act as sudden changes in suspense between initial desire and the outcome
- Random Events create uncertainty
  - Works to increase anticipation and suspense for Random Events during gameplay
  - Too much randomness can cause frustration

## 4. Conflict / Time



- Conflict works to extend time between desire and outcome
- Two Major Conflicts in Gameplay
  - Obstacles: Physical Obstructions
  - Enemies: Combat Obstructions
- Conflict creates fear and uncertainty when implemented
  - Manipulates suspense further while slowing progression

# 5. Information



- Information is a critical part of manipulating suspense
- Can create fear through threats
- Can create hope through promises/opportunities
- Can create uncertainty through hiding information
  - This can also be accomplished through conflicting or false information
- Timer Example

# 6. Power



- Another element used to manipulate suspense
- Manipulate power, manipulate frustration
  - Which, in turn, manipulate fear and hope
- Taking power can generate fear
- Giving power can generate hope



# Artifact Layer

## 7. Tools



- Tools act as expansions of power for the player
- Giving the player a tool will create hope
- These may not be limited to actual tools
- Power-ups and abilities are another type of “tool”

# 8. Lighting



- Lighting is an artifact that varies in uses
- Lighting most directly influences the emotions of the player through
  - Color
  - Direction
  - Intensity
- Can highlight certain desires or goals
- The presence or absence of light can create uncertainty

# 9. Audio



- The main use of audio is to highlight emotions
- The presence of audio can create uncertainty, hope, or fear depending on the situation
- The type of audio is essential to determine the type of emotion generated and how suspense reacts

# 10. Setting



- Setting is an artifact that will naturally generate desire or influence emotions
- Physical settings, decorations, can invoke certain emotions, which will influence the current level of suspense
- Actions of characters in a setting can generate fear, hope, or uncertainty, which may either influence current desires or generate new desires

# Managing Suspense Through Gameplay

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GSU REU Program

## Goals:

- Compile a list of Game Mechanics
- Identify which Game Mechanics generate suspense
- Create classifications for each Game Mechanic
- Explore if gameplay generates suspense and how



## Results:

- Identified elements on the Gameplay and Artifact layer that generate suspense
- Created classifications for elements in both the Gameplay and Artifact Layers

