

Group 2 - The Chimps Save the Day
Game Proposal Revision
Cover Letter

Dear Teachers:

Group 2 would like to thank you for your invaluable insight into our design proposal. We have all read through your notes of our design and have drafted a response to your questions and remarks. Please note that the original question/comment is bolded before each response.

Are the shapes tangram or pattern block shapes?

We are unsure of what is mean by pattern blocks shapes. We assume this means Tetris like shapes. If this is the case, the shapes are tangram shapes.

Students are given the option of flipping the shapes by X or Y axis on the workbench. Are students going to know what the X and Y axis are in 3rd grade? When are they introduced to that? Do they know the terms horizontal and vertical? How would you solve this dilemma if they don't know either terminology?

After the game startup, when the students choose to play a new game, he or she will be presented the game tutorial. The tutorial will guide the students and walk them through the basic game concepts. Concepts such as: game layout (what are laid out and where they are located on the screen) and game maneuver (how to interact with the game). An example tutorial would be a basic level, and the students are shown the game play screen. There will be arrows pointing to different areas of the screen showing them the importance of these specific areas. For example, the work bench area has a text and voice description that informs the students of its function. It will guide the students to pick a shape to work on and how to pick it either by double clicking or dragging it into the work bench. From there, it will show them the concept of rotation and also flipping. The concept of flipping through the x or y axis may be unfamiliar terminology but, our tutorial will teach them what those interactions do. They may not know what it is at first but they will understand it after plaything through the level. This will help them pick up the terminology faster. If they do not understand the terminology throughout the game but understand the concept, then maybe when they learn the terminology at a later time, they might reminisce about our game and where they saw that term used or applied and they now might know what those terms mean.

Rather than the shape description appearing and telling the students the attributes of the pieces, could the students fill in the attributes themselves?

Though this is a possibility to our game but for our current game concept, it is to teach the students about geometric patterns, solving by visual and spatial skills. There is no doubt that this can benefit the student learning. If given more time and thought, we can

definitely incorporate this into the game. It can help the students learn each shape terminology quicker. An example, we would ask them what the shape is and have multiple choice answers for the students to select from. This can be a part of the scoring and/or the post assessment for version 2 of our game.

You have some non-traditional pieces (even some concave ones). How do you plan on identifying those by name? For example, the blue concave pentagon. I actually LOVE that. Kids don't get exposed to the more elaborate figures like they do triangles, rectangles, and other convex polygons ...

Though our flash mockup demo presents odd looking shapes, these were just some shapes that we threw together to make up the demo. Our game would incorporate all kinds of shapes such as: triangles, rectangles, squares, circles, octagons, and more elaborated odd shapes. These shapes will be obtained in different colors and sizes. At the beginning level of the game, we would like to present simple shapes like triangles, rectangles, squares, etc. for the beginner students to play around with the game. As they go through the levels and reach near the end of the game, there will be more difficult or unfamiliar shapes (e.g., moon shapes, concave and convex shapes) presented. Hopefully, those will give them a challenge.

Arnie Car Destroy Flash demo works very well. It sets up the premise nicely. It would be somewhat better if the pieces of the mini-van broke up in different shaped pieces.

That is exactly how we want it to be. Once Arne jump on the mini-van and it explode, the students will be able to see slightly some of the shape pieces that they will be working with when putting the mini-van together. To make it a little more realistic, some they might see two or three shapes joined together but upon smashing on the ground or against another object, it breaks into it own shape. Give the short time, our flash demo can only show the mini-van explosion. You would be able to definitely see this if we had more time.

Interactivity Flash demo worked well. I would like to see a demo where the students have to reflect or rotate some pieces. These were all translations or slides.

Our flash mockup demo only provides a quick overview of how our game is like. We will not be able to put together another mockup demo of actual shape rotation and flipping through symmetry. The work bench is already being used to do the rotation and flipping of a shape as seen from the appendix. That will be our final layout of the game if it were to be fully developed and deployed. But for our curtain flash demo, the translation or sliding of shapes is the base minimum of how the game will look and feel.

I appreciate and honor the experience of your mother in Special Education but I continue to beg to differ. Special Education students may need to have games reserved for special circumstances but I have found in my thirty plus years of teaching experience that some games can be included very effectively in the

classroom. It may be the definition of a "game" that is part of our disagreement. I consider something like this: <http://mathforum.org/alejandre/java/jam/Jam.html> to be a game!

We believe that deploying the game for an in class activity is very effective as well. An introduction to playing the game can be done by the teacher at school, but through out the game, the students would be more comfortable playing it at home. Having the game as a home activity gives the student the freedom and the ability to play and learn at their own pace. We are saying that the majority of the game should be play at home while learning the beginning game play concept can be play at school. However, students are free to play it at school through the use of the school or other publicly accessible computers.

Being a middle school teacher I have developed the habit of not pointing with my middle finger. Is there a reason that you chose that finger for your "Monkey Palm Cursor" and not the index finger that might not be as controversial?

Even though we played through our game demo many times, we did not realize that our monkey palm cursor was pointing with the middle finger. This will be changed on our mockup flash demo to the index finger.

Thank you again for your time in reviewing our game proposals. We are excited to show you how your feedback has helped us to develop a better game.

Sincerely,

Group 2