Analysis of Stardew Valley:

Stardew Valley is praised for the level player agency and choice.

Relationships and Storytelling

• The game allows players to befriend NPCs which unlocks narrative content (playing out the pre-written stories).

• The NPCs behaviour towards the player is based on their personality and relationship level with the player

• The player chooses who to befriend/romance allowing them to define their character's story.

• Through choices, the player influences the environment (restore community vs support Joja).

Quests

The game has two quests systems:

• 'Help wanted' quests - short term (deadline), low reward tasks

⇩

Motivation without pressure (good for 'Achiever'[1] player type)

• 'Story' quests - long term (no deadline), high reward tasks

⇩

Low pressure (good for 'Explorer'[1] player type), can Min-Max (good for 'Achiever'[1] player type)
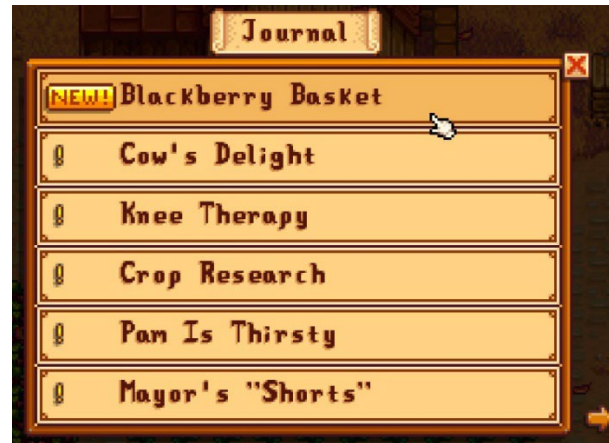
Quests can be viewed in the player's 'Journal'

Figure 1 - Quest Log in Stardew Valley

Skills

• The player can learn new abilities through levelling up skills, upgrading equipment or progressing narrative:

• Using a skill (e.g. farming) improves efficiency in this area (e.g. more valuable crops) as well as unlocking new gameplay/ability (e.g. allow the player to craft and use fertiliser).

• The player can invest resources to improve tools, improving efficiency (e.g. water larger areas of crops) and unlocks new abilities (e.g. able to break down bigger rocks).

• Befriending characters also allows the player to develop new skills (e.g. Fishing, reading encrypted text).

• This gives the player a unique experience with progression depending on the types of tasks they pursue.

Economy and Resources

• Stardew Valley has a gold-based economy system with set values for items, no supply/demand.

• The player can make profits in any area they pursue (fishing, foraging, mining, growing crops), giving the player freedom to choose without struggling as a result.

• There is a strong sense of progression with the economy, however, the player ends up with too much money in late game.

• Resources are required to unlock new gameplay including upgrading the farm, repairing the town and completing bundles (quests).

• Resources are gathered, gifted, farmed and traded.

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[1] Bartle's Player Types for Gamification

Analysis of Spirit Farer:

Spirit Farer boasts a well-balanced progression system which is very satisfying for the player.

Relationships and Story

- Spirit Farer's NPC play a very important role in the players progression. New spirits introduce new mechanics and abilities to the player while exploring narrative about the new spirit.
- Completing a character's story allows the player to collect obols (orbs) which are vital for progression.
- The story of the game is set in stone and the player just must play it out - there is no player influence on this.

Quests

- Quests come from NPCs - there are no time restraints, and the player can acquire any number at a time.
- Quests of type 'requests', 'upgrades', 'shenanigans'.
- Quests can be viewed in the 'Captain's Log'. The log can also be used to track upgrades and side quests.

Skills

The player unlocks new skills through quest completion, building and spending Orbs:

- When a player completes tasks for a spirit, they will receive a blueprint for a new building type - when built this provided a new skills/system e.g. Smelting ore.
- The player must gather the necessary resources to build new building to unlock these skills.
- Orbs can be spent to unlock new abilities e.g. Double jump, glide.
- Upgrading this ship also allows the player to enter new areas.

Resources and Economy

- Obols are a very precious resources need to progress (unlocks abilities need to reach new areas and 'quality of life tool upgrade').
- Resources are required to upgrade the ship (allow travel to different areas) as well as build and upgrade rooms on the boat (progress narrative and unlock abilities).
- Resources are gathered, gifted, farmed and traded.

Figure 2 - Quest Log in Spirit Farer

[1] Bartle's Player Types for Gamification

Tool Case Study 1 - Achievement System

Mechanics

- Achievement systems
- Display updates/completion in game

Tool Functionality

- Allow users to create achievements and choose how they are displayed
- User Interaction with Tool (uses custom inspector)

Custom editor with two tabs

- Achievement list allowing users to
- Add achievements
- Define requirements
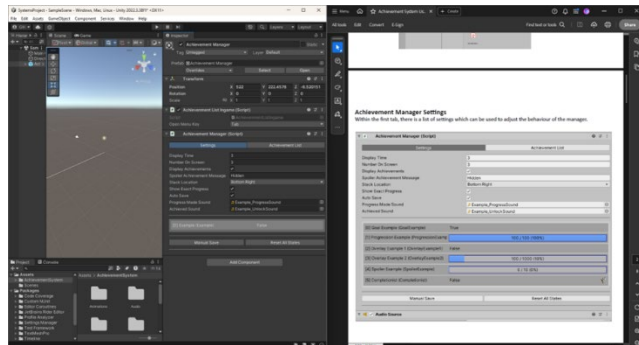- Setting to choose display options (Progress, Duration, Quantity, Location etc.)

Figure 3 - Achievement System Tool

[1] Bartle's Player Types for Gamification

Tool Case Study 2 – RPG ADVENTURE ENGINE

Mechanics

- NPC Interaction
- Quests
- Skill Points and Skill Tree
- Items, Upgrades, Repairs, Sale
- Combat
- Swimming/Ledge climbing
- Misc. Items e.g. Health Elixir, Crafting Materials, Keys

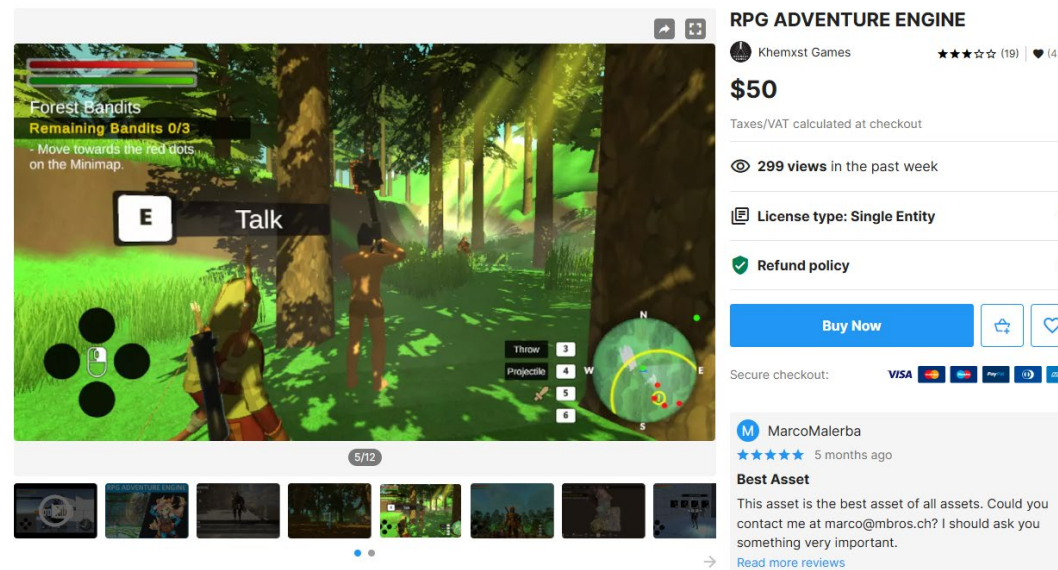**Tool Functionality**

- Allow users to define characters and dialogue content
- Create quests, including form NPC interaction
- Set up ledges and swimming area
- Functional weapons and items for games

User Interaction with Tool (custom inspector)

- User can define new quests (Name, Level, Description, Type, Current Objectives, Rewards, Complete Status, Waypoints, Dialogues)
- Enter dialogue with questions and answer, along with appropriate responses
- Prefabs for swimming objects and edge climb objects to add to level

Figure 4 - RPG ADVENTURE ENGINE Tool

Tool Case Study 3 – Love/Hate

Mechanics

- NPCs with complex personalities, relationships, emotional states and actions
- Track inter-character and inter-group relationships
- Characters witness, judge and remember actions
- Character share information with other characters

Tool Functionality

Creative NPCs with different traits

User Interaction with Tool - custom windows

- Create and customize deeds (actions to take towards a character)
- Define name and description
- Set impact
- Can be over-heard/reacted to by others
- Impacts on the precepted traits of the player
- Create factions
- Define traits
- Define relationship with other factions
- Set personality traits

[1] Bartle's Player Types for Gamification