

GENERIC *EDUTAINMENT* VIDEO GAME

By: Lord Circe

Cluefinders. Super Solvers. Dr. Brain. JumpStart. Blaster.

There are numerous game series out there that are regarded as “edutainment”. They tend to feature various puzzles and mini-games that are designed to teach and test the user’s knowledge, alongside whatever story that they actually possess.

And now, you will be entering into one such game. This can either be an existing game, a new game within an existing franchise, or a completely new game that you will ‘design’ from the options below. For the duration, any powers and items you gained in prior worlds will be sealed (it wouldn’t really be a fair test, otherwise), and you will start out with 0 CP. You can gain CP via the various settings if you want any bonuses, or you can simply approach the adventure as is, and test your brain. Regardless of what happens, the worst that you will face is losing out on the prize at the end (unless you choose to add some danger).

Good Luck!

WORLD SETTINGS

You must pick one option in each of the following five areas: Grade, Danger, Focus, Duration, and Prerequisites. This will affect how the world is shaped and the rules that it operates under.

GRADE

The grade option will determine what 'education level' the game focuses on.

Preschool (200): This game is aimed at really young children. Those that are still learning to recognize letters or numbers, learning the sounds that animals make, etc. Shouldn't be too hard for you, I'd expect.

Elementary (100): This game is aimed at elementary age children, those in the first four or five years of schooling. Basic math or logic problems would be common, as well as early level spelling or very general history.

Middle School (0): This game is aimed at middle school aged children. Effectively, preteens to early teenagers. More complex math and science will be present, word conjugation, geography and history, etc.

High School (+100): This game is aimed at high school students, those in their mid-to-late teenage years. It will include subjects such as pre-calculus, political science, foreign literature, and more.

College (+200): This game is aimed at adults in college or university. A thorough understanding of multiple subjects will be required.

PhD (+400): This game is aimed at the knowledge level of those who have acquired a doctorate degree. A very in-depth and broad knowledge base will be required.

DANGER

The danger option will determine how much danger you face over the course of the game.

Museum (200): The game is more of an interactive museum exhibit than anything. No true danger is present, and 'completing' the game will generally require little more than studying all of the subjects offered, and then passing some manner of quiz on each of them.

Sport (100): This game does feature some competitive elements to it, such that it is possible to 'lose' the various tests. However, failure will just mean that one must train some more and try again, and the danger will never rise above what one might face in a properly run sporting event.

Adventure (0): This game features some sort of adventure, such as travelling through the jungle or out into space. There is a definite element of danger, though it is mainly due to high-stakes situations rather than any form of active malice.

Thriller (+200): This game features a definite antagonist, or perhaps several, who will be aiming at stopping the heroes, by force if necessary. While the 'obstacles' will still largely consist of educational problems to be solved, there will be a definite element of danger added.

Apocalypse (+400): The game features a storyline that, if not fixed by the heroes' actions, will result in wide-spread devastation on at least a continental scale.

FOCUS

The focus option will determine how many subjects the game involves.

Niche (100): The game features a very, very narrow focus of a specific and somewhat uncommon topic. Examples might include butterfly collection, ancient Irish literature, or board game creation.

Narrow (0): The game features a somewhat narrow focus to a specific school topic, such as "math", "English" or "music".

Broad (+100): The game features multiple topics, covering most topics that would be covered by standardized schooling.

Encyclopedic (+200): The game can feature knowledge from virtually any area of human knowledge.

DURATION

The duration option will determine how many games you will be participating in before the end. Note that most edutainment games feature a fairly short timeline, on the order of one or two weeks.

Single Entry (0): You will be participating in the events of just a single game.

Series (+100): You will be participating in the events of a series of games, numbering between half-a-dozen to a dozen.

Megamedia (+200): You will be participating in the events of one game every month for a decade, totalling 120 in all.

PREREQUISITES

The prerequisite option will determine how much knowledge the game expects you to have before playing.

Classroom (200): The game will feature learning sections that will fully explain all of the information that would be required to pass any of the puzzles / quizzes.

Refresher (100): The game will lightly touch on the information of the topics of focus, but it will still require some fundamental knowledge on your part.

Closed Book (0): The game will only test you, not train you, leaving you with nothing but your own knowledge and the information you can glean from the set-up of the puzzles themselves.

ADDITIONAL SETTINGS

The following options can be selected to add to the overall difficulty, if you desire, and will grant CP for doing so. You can take as many of them as you wish.

Real Consequences (Variable): If you do not select this, the moment that you face permanent injury or death, you will simply see a cutscene of what would occur, and then be booted off along your chain, sans your prizes. Now, however, you will face all of the injuries and potential death that your situation could result in.

If you have selected the "Museum" or "Sport" Danger options, this is worth **+0 CP**, as you will still be protected by the nature of the game.

If you have selected "Adventure", this will be worth **+100 CP**.

If you have selected "Thriller", this will be worth **+200 CP**.

If you have selected "Apocalypse", this will be worth **+400 CP**, and dying or failure in that case would result in Jump Failure, the same as if you permanently died in some other Jump.

Subject Shift (Variable): This option can only be taken if you selected the "Niche" or "Narrow" Focus, and the "Series" or "Megamedia" Duration. Ordinarily, you can select what the topic of the game will be, which can be a nice advantage for you. However, if you choose this option, you will only be able to pick the topic of the first game you face. The topic of all other games after that will be random. The value of this depends on what you selected.

If you took "Narrow" and "Series", this is worth **+100 CP**.

If you took "Narrow" and "Megamedia", this is worth **+200 CP**.

If you took "Niche" and "Series", this is worth **+300 CP**.

If you took "Niche" and "Megamedia", this is worth **+500 CP**.

Annoying Puzzle (+100): There is some type of puzzle that you just dislike facing, and it will be fairly common during your time here. No matter how many times you solve one, you will still find it tedious, aggravating, or just plain annoying.

Stilted Dialogue (+100): Everyone that you talk to seems to be very flat, personality-wise. They are still real people, but the way that most people phrase things and how they move their body will all seem very awkward and non-natural.

Kid Friendly (+100): No smoking, no drinking, no cursing, no sex. You will not be able to do anything that isn't "kid-friendly" while you are here.

Brain Pain (+100): You suffer from chronic headaches. They flare up more frequently when you are facing puzzles and otherwise straining your brain.

Rising Challenge (+100): While each game you are in will start out at the appropriate grade level, the difficulty will rise with each puzzle you prove competent in facing. Those you are better in will rise faster, to try and provide you with more of a challenge.

BONUSES

These bonuses will aid you in your journey for knowledge. Most of these take the form of some sort of internal power, though some do give you items as well. Any items that are granted by these bonuses can instantly be called to your hand, or dismissed when not needed, and will instantly repair from damage.

You can take two 100 CP Bonuses for free, and you can discount one 200 CP Bonus and one 400 CP Bonus for 50% off.

100 CP

Fun Hobby (100): All school and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Now, you have some sort of hobby that can help to keep you entertained in between bouts of education. This could be a sport, such as soccer or tennis; a craft, such as sewing or baking; a collection, such as stamp collecting; or some other form of hobby. You have a great deal of skill within the area of your hobby, and you will also have basic supplies for your hobby always on hand (such as a football or basic scrapbooking supplies). You can take this multiple times, but only the first purchase will be discounted, if you choose to apply your discount to it.

Mental Boost (100): Simply put, your brain works better. You are able process information faster, you can retain and recall information better, and you are more creative and flexible in your thinking. Can come with a pair of smart looking glasses, if you want.

Physical Fitness (100): There is a difference between playing a game on a computer, and going through the game in real life. You will have to run, jump, climb, swim, and any number of other physical activities. Luckily, your body is up to the challenge. You are in excellent shape, can workout for hours before you tire, and you would definitely be a champion in P.E.

Point-And-Click (100): You are able to interact with objects from a short distance away, roughly 40 or 50 feet. If you focus on an object with this power, you will see it faintly outlined in light, and then you can interact with it as if you were actually standing next to it and touching it. You could pull a book off a shelf, open a door, toggle a light switch. Anything that you could accomplish while actually physically interacting with the object.

Macguffin Compass (100): Quite often, these sorts of games will require you to gather several 'macguffins' before you can advance to the next level / save the princess / beat the villain, etc. Now, you have a mental sense that can tell you where objects you are looking for are in relation to you. The more of a 'macguffin' an object is (AKA, the more it exists only to 'advance the plot'), the stronger, longer-ranged, and more precise this sense is. This also comes with half-a-dozen physical compasses that you can link to one of the objects you detect with this power (or with other tracking abilities), which you can hand off to others to let them help you in your searching.

Storage Space (100): Whether you are collecting gemstones, machine parts, alien plants, or puzzle pieces, you are going to be carrying quite a bit of stuff. Now, you have access to a 'storage space', which can hold several dozen items at once, and which you can freely send items to or pull them from. Similar items (such as coins or keys) can stack together to take up only a single 'space'. This comes with a bag, such as a backpack or purse, which can allow those you designate to reach in and access this storage space as well.

Idling Animation (100): Sometimes, you are going to have to just stand around and wait. Maybe your friend is handling a tricky puzzle, or you are traveling down a river, and don't have a handy cutscene to cut out the hours of actual sailing. Now, you are able to go into a trance-like state, with your body appearing to be fully alert and possibly even handling a simple, repetitive task such as keeping a boat on course or balancing a heavy tray. Meanwhile, your mind can be daydreaming, thinking of other things, or even actually sleeping. The moment that something happens that you would need to react to, you will instantly snap out of the trance and be fully alert, as well as aware of what had happened around you while you were in the trance.

Course Plotter (100): You may need to choose from several different routes to meet your goal. Or perhaps you need to backtrack through territory you've been through before to collect more runestones or fish eggs or whatever. You now have an excellent sense of direction, and more importantly, a talent for plotting the best course. You would be a whiz at solving the travelling salesman problem, giving you the best course to take with the minimum of time and distance wasted.

200 CP

Puzzle Eyes (200): You have an incredible eye for detail, able to take in vastly complicated puzzles and work out the patterns and structures within them. This also allows you to memorize vast amounts of visual information perfectly. However, the most potent portion of this power will be mainly of use to you only after this Jump is over. Just as your way will be barred by puzzles here, you are able to visualize tasks you have to perform in the shape of mental tests. For example, unlocking a safe might take the form of a math word problem, or maybe a English test where you have to complete certain sentences. Once you complete the puzzle, you will have completed the task. The difficulty of the puzzles you will see will scale with the difficulty of the task. A cheap jewelry box would only require basic addition or multiplication, while a well-made bank vault might require complex calculus or building a Shakespearean Sonnet from a pile of random words.

Helpline (200): Sometimes, you just can't do it on your own. When that happens, you will need to be able to call on the help of others. Now, by talking to someone, you can establish a mental link to them, which can allow you to communicate with them telepathically. In addition to allowing you two to talk to each other, they can share their knowledge and skills with you. You can maintain up to a couple dozen of these 'helplines' at once, and they can work in the other direction as well, allowing you to share your knowledge and skills with those you are linked to.

Explanation Skipping (200): Given the age of many of the players of these sorts of games, they are generally full of explanations that often can't be skipped, to make sure that new players or those returning after a while know what is happening. In real life, there is no handy button to skip these explanations. Or is there? With this ability, your hearing has been greatly sharpened, and you will gain a full mental transcript of whatever is said around you. This will also translate commonly spoken languages for you, except in cases where a puzzle is deliberately testing your language skills. And finally, it does come with a 'skip' button, where in the middle of a lecture or explanation, you can choose to skip it. The lecture or explanation will instantly end, while everyone around you will act as if it was finished normally, and you will gain a full transcript and knowledge of what would have been said.

Rule Detection (200): Many of the puzzles that you will face are rather straightforward. For example, a picture that has several puzzle piece shaped holes in it, with small puzzle pieces sitting on the ground nearby, is obviously asking you to pick up the pieces and fit them in the correct spot. However, sometimes, the rules of a given puzzle can be more obscure, and if you aren't paying attention, you might miss what you are supposed to do. Now, however, you have the ability to study a puzzle for a minute or so, and instantly intuit what the rules of the puzzle are. This can extend to other areas as well. Studying people playing a game to quickly determine what the full ruleset of the game is. Gaining insight into both the written and unwritten rules at a new job. So long as a situation or area can be said to have 'rules', you can quickly determine what those rules are with just a bit of focus.

400 CP

Mental Reference (400): Your knowledge will be your most useful tool during your time here, but it can be frustrating when you have a bit of knowledge locked away that you just can't quite recall. Now, all of the knowledge that you gain will be stored and organized in a mental database, fully indexed and able to be searched like you would a computer database. It can automatically cross-reference the information for you, and will fact check it as well, allowing you to compare different sources and determine the relative 'truthiness' of any information you have. You will never need to worry about blanking out on a person's name or some fact or figure. Even better, your mental database will also be passively pulling in information from the area around you, specifically any sort of written sources or data storage mediums. It will pull in the data at roughly the rate you could read it yourself, meaning that you could 'cheat' a bit by sleeping with a book under your pillow, and waking up with it stored away in your mind.

Growth Through Failure (400): They say that you learn more from failure than from success, and with you, that may actually be true. When you fail at a task or test, you will find that you gain a significant boost in your understanding of the problem. What once might have seemed like incomprehensible gibberish will now have patterns standing out to you when you study it. This boost is relative to how much effort you put into solving the problem, however. If you are coasting along and barely trying, you will experience little to no improvement. If you tried your absolute best, and just barely fell short, your improvement will be extremely significant.

Take Your Time (400): The bridge is crumbling away behind you, the army of evil zombies is pounding on the splintering door, the laser that will destroy the sun is charging up, and you have to solve this one final puzzle to stop whatever is going on. But it is so complicated, you need more time to think. And somehow, you actually have it. While you are focused on a singular task, time will be moving, but it won't actually be progressing. You might take what seems like days to solve the complex calculus equation needed to open the access hatch to escape the bomb, but the 1 minute countdown still won't have finished when you are done. You aren't moving any faster than you would, you just somehow have all the time you need to focus on and complete the task. Just be aware: If part of the task itself is time sensitive, such as needing to stir a potion for exactly three minutes, time will still progress for those portions of the task. It is only time 'outside' of the task that will seem to loop.

Always Learning (400): Some people may claim that they 'just aren't built to learn math' or that 'their brain just doesn't understand chemistry'. Now, nothing like those sentiments will apply to you. You will never come across a subject that you can't make headway in when you try to study it. This doesn't guarantee genius, but it does guarantee that you will be able to come to understand any sort of lesson if you put in the effort. And strangely enough, this can apply to things that really you shouldn't be capable of learning. Things like genetic abilities or languages that should melt your brain will now be possible for you to 'learn' via dedicated study.

ENDING AND PRIZES

Once you've reached the end of your journey, you will gain the following prizes, as long as you 'beat' the main story / quest of whatever game you were in, or have toured what the game has to offer for more sandbox / open-ended games:

Bonuses: You gain all of the bonuses that you have purchased here.

CD-ROM Set: You will gain the CD versions of the games you participated in, and will gain new CDs overtime that can feature the same 'series', but focusing on topics of your choice. These new CDs will be released roughly once per month, though you can choose to skip receiving them and stockpile them to gain later on when you have topics that interest you.

Friends You Made Along The Way: Can take up to half-a-dozen individuals that you've befriended here, and take them with you. They count as a singular companion, and will share any powers and abilities that they might gain in future Jumps. As for abilities they will take from here, they will only have abilities and knowledge equivalent to regular human beings.

Now, it is time for you to move on. Unless, perhaps, you find that you enjoy this world enough to stay?

NOTES

Q. Why do you have that limitation at the end of "Friends You Made Along The Way"?

A. Because otherwise I could see people designing their own game that features, say, freeing six nigh-omnipotent genies, and then bringing them along as super wish granters.

CHANGELOG

Version 1.0 - Release