ZOO WORLD
Usability Report
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Testing conditions

- I was able to test my friend's daughter Abigail who is 6 years old and currently plays a Flash game online based on the cartoon Kim Possible. I tested her this past Sunday after church with my laptop and mouse.
- Another friend of mine was also sitting next to her helping me to get feedback from Abigail and she even tested it a little bit.
- It took about 30 minutes long for everything and she kept playing it over and over again.

Visuals/Interface feedback

- I already knew of some of the problems she pointed out before even testing her because my priority was to test her on other things. However, she did help me make sure to fix it for version one. One of the problems I had was making the bus disappear when clicked but it wouldn’t work.
- Some visuals were mistaken for something else such as the bus and the bears. Abigail kept calling the bus a car and the bears, seals. It's not that important for her to get them correct completely anyhow. However, she did need to know more of a distinction between the visual of what animals she needed to unlock and what were not unlocked. The instructions said that but it was still unclear to her. I will need to change that.
- I did not have the visitors move into the zoo after they paid for their ticket and wander around because I still could not get that to work with the visitors in the ticket line. She asked if the visitors fly away after you click on them and I had to explain that. Abigail was so focused on making them disappear that she didn’t really care about the idea I had for the visitors to wander around. I can see why though because the visitors keep coming down by themselves without stopping. I am still toying with the idea of having them wander around. Her focus was only on the ticket line portion but later asked about the unlockable animals in how those come into play.
- Even though I had the “how to play” button, Abigail still automatically pressed the “play” button to play the game therefore she did not know what to do in the game right away until noticing there was a “how to play” part she had to read. She actually read the Mission instructions though since those were located after pressing “play.” I may add the how to play instructions in the Mission instructions screen instead or in addition to the “how to play” screen. She knows it is there now though.
- She asked if there was a pause for the game. I’ve known her for a long time and she’s really smart. She was trying to pause it so that she can easily click the visitors. The visitors keep moving down the screen so she had to click them to get money. I told her yeah there was but
- Something I did not know was that you can still see the visitors coming if you do not meet the goal of the first mission. After the time is up and you don’t meet the goal, it returns to the title screen and you can see some visitors that were on the screen already before the game ended on the title screen. That is a bug I will need to fix. She still clicked on them and was like, “Hey, I can still make them disappear!” She thought that was fun. She found fun in the bugs I had not fixed which is so typical of kids. There is something about clicking the visitors as they're moving down the line on their own that keeps her focused and amused.
• I think overall she liked the concept of clicking the visitors which made them disappear before they leave the screen. That was something she knew right away that she had to do. She kept trying to click on the bus to make it disappear.

Ideas she gave/desired for version one

• After the first time Abigail played the game, she said “this is too easy” yet still kept playing it over and over again which was a good thing. She wanted them to either go down the line faster or more objects to click or both. I told her that I had those ideas already but this was just a simple version to test on her so that it is more open for feedback. So that was successful because I did not implement all the ideas I had in mind in the prototype on purpose. She wanted ways to make it harder. It was for sure engaging already though, I could tell. She also talked about making the visitors fall slow then gradually faster and faster which was supposed to happen in the prototype but it was not distinct. I need to fix that.

• Abigail even gave the idea of having all of the customer types in one level but after thinking about it she thought it might be too difficult having 5 things fall down.

• Another idea I had in mind was to make bonus rounds if the player got more than the goal amount by the end of the level but did not implement that yet. After testing the prototype on her, I asked her what do you want in the game that will make it more fun for you? She said ways to collect extra points. So I asked her, so a bonus round where you would do the same thing as the first mission? She said no, maybe getting food for the animals; bonus rounds are good.

• I wanted to make the player’s total subtract whenever s/he loses a visitor a.k.a. the visitor passes the ticket booth line without being clicked on. At first, Abigail thought that would have been too difficult but after many times of playing she thought it would have been good. She loves a great challenge but she probably was just getting too used to the game. She played the same level over and over again since I only had her test that same level. I tried to add that into the game too but because I have the movie clip go to a blank keyframe once clicked on, the movie clip is still moving down the ticket line but you just can’t see it, I think, since when I tried adding the subtract function, the player’s total wouldn’t subtract per miss but per pixel it moved down since it kept moving without the player being able to see visibly on the screen.

What will I change for the next testing session, if anything?

• I think I will need to be more careful about telling her what to do when she doesn’t know what to do. Sometimes it’s just easier for me to tell her exactly but I tried to give her hints instead for the most part in what she needs to do to find out the answer of her question.

• It was actually really helpful to have someone there to help me get feedback from her just to explain things better. I did not even think of having someone there outside of Abigail and me when I was laying out the testing plan but that friend is a teacher of elementary school kids after all so that was also why she was really helpful. Next time, I may or may not have someone there with us in testing. It was helpful but it would have been okay without it too I think.

• I kept rewriting the points I had to make sure to get feedback from before testing her especially since I kept adding/changing things to the original prototype that I showed in class. That was a helpful guide in testing her because she, at the same time, hit a lot of the same points I wanted to get feedback from without even asking her first.

• The amount of time allowed for the session was very flexible which was a good thing. She was free to give any suggestions and not in any time crunch. Usually Sundays after church is a good time to test her since it’s the only day I get to see her and allows the most time so in my testing plan I always put the testing session on a Sunday.