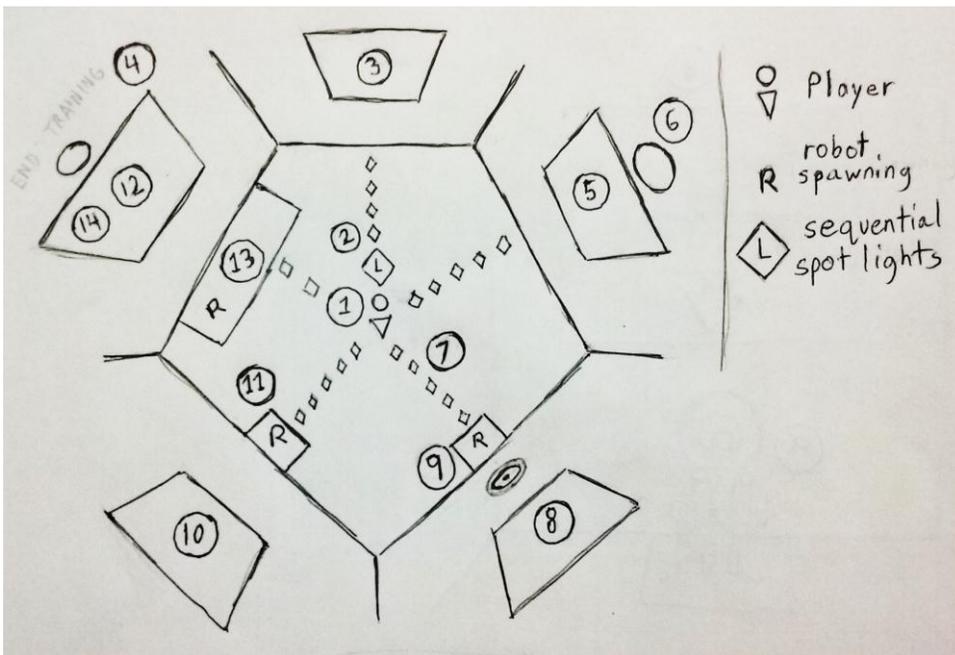


Teaching Gameplay in a VR Game: Research, Design, and Iteration

As my first major task on Team Telexistence, I had to create the game's tutorial. Up until then, playtesters would have to run through our game being told what to do and how to do it. Indeed, there was a lot to cover, and I had never worked in VR before, but I was up to the task. This was my process in designing and iterating.

To start, I liked what the team already had for a "main menu". Players, start off in a small room. In this small room, is a door with a button on it and a text prompt telling players how to complete the fundamental action in our game: shooting an arrow. It occurred to me that menus in a VR game have to be more interactive and diegetic because of the nature of the beast; players already start off **in** the game. This is an aspect in games I have always loved. Being able to hop about the menu items or "walk" into your preferred option instead of just selecting it has a very novel charm to me. I then began to think of interesting ways I could incorporate this, knowing our mechanics.

I came up with this:



INTRO

(1.) Player start in a completely dark room. We may want to add a HUD element here that goes "Initializing Training Module" It won't matter because the entire world is pitch black anyway. (2.) After it fades out, 5 spot-lights come on in sequence in front of the player (apart by 0.5 secs). (3.) At the same time the final light comes on, a screen on the wall also lights up. It reads: "Welcome to the Resistance"

It continues:

"If you are already familiar with this training module, turn to your left (4.) and shoot the button labeled "End Training"

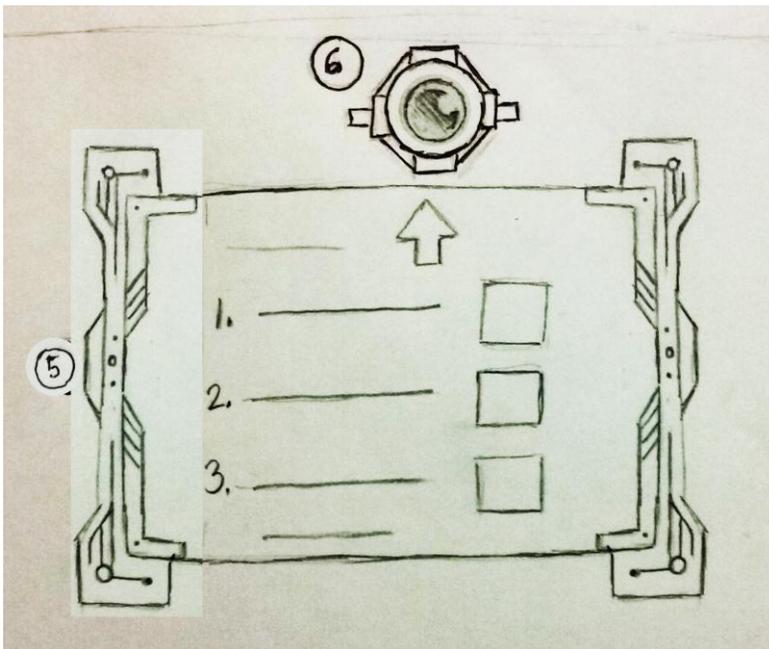
Otherwise, turn your attention to the screen on your right."

After about ~5 secs (to give players time to see acknowledge/process both options), the 5 lights shut off and the first screen and its text goes half transparent to draw attention away from it.

(5.) Then another set of 5 sequential lights turn on in the same manner of the first toward the second screen (72 degrees clockwise to the first screen).

*Note: Originally, the room was a cube with 4 walls, but I changed it to 5 because it allows for more screens to cover more material with an added bonus of making it easier for players to catch the sequential lights turning on since, with 72 degrees away (5 walls) from the first screen as opposed to 90 degrees (4 walls), they are more likely within players' fields of view, just in case.

Teaching Objective: Letting players know they will be turning around constantly to interact with their environments.



WALL2

(5.) This screen reads: "You have been equipped with state-of-the-art, [Insert Model Name] Bow."

It continues:

"To Fire an Arrow:

1. bring your free hand to the bow's drawstring [PIC]
2. press and hold the Trigger button [PIC] and pull back[PIC]
3. Release the trigger button [PIC]

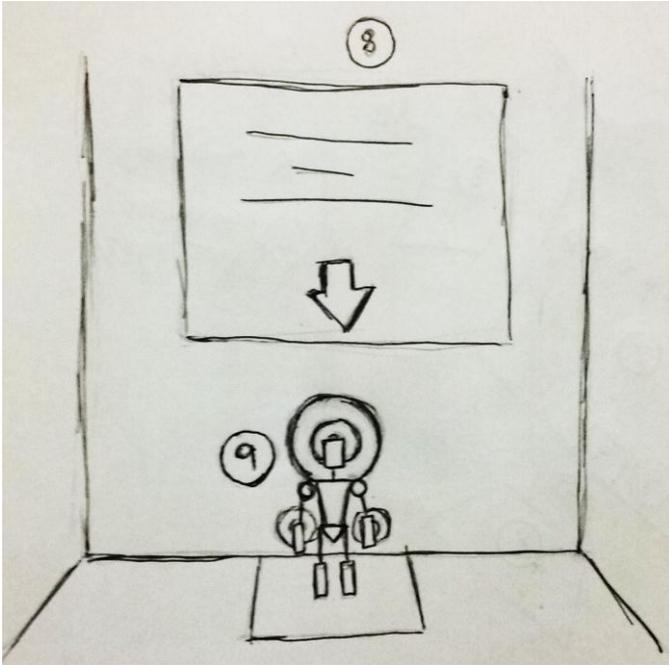
Objective: Hit the target above this screen. "[Pic of blinking arrow pointing upwards]"

(6.) A previously unlit, red button target lights up above screen.

Once players hit the button target, it turns green and plays a "CORRECT!" sound effect.

Teaching Objective: 1. How to fire an arrow. 2. How to fire an arrow and hit a target.

=====



WALL3

(7.) Then a sequence of 5 lights turn on to the third screen. The previous lights turn off and the previous screen goes half transparent. It begins: (8.)

"Good. But it's not red buttons you're here to protect us from. Try destroying this training bot. [Pic of blink arrow pointing downwards]"

(9.) From here, a bot is revealed, **SOMEHOW**. (I'm not exactly sure how we want to do this. My first thought was a hidden door under the screen opens up to reveal a small room with a stationary bot, OR if that's too much work/ wouldn't work, the bot just materializes in with a particle effect. What do you guys think?)

Just behind the robot, on the wall, are bulls-eyes hinting at where the most damage will be done. One large red one behind head and smaller yellow ones behind other body parts. Point here is to emphasize the headshot mechanic and let players discover it.

Once players destroy the robot, the screen continues:

"You can do extra damage by hitting a robot's weak spot."

Teaching Objective: 1. Exposure to first robot. 2. Headshot extra damage mechanic.

=====

WALL4

Then a sequence of 5 lights turn on to the fourth screen. The previous lights turn off and the previous screen goes half transparent. (10.) The current screen reads:

"Look at your free hand. You'll notice a series of icons over it. [PIC of equipment icons L, D, R]. These are the special arrows that we've started you off with." (*Note: the Ultimate Icon and Health are completely missing, so as not to dilute the player's focus)

"Select one by using your thumb to press on the left, right, or down directions of the pad. [PIC of pressing down on D-Pad]"

After selecting an icon, it goes: "You have now selected a special arrow to use."

"Now, grab one from the quiver on your back:

[PICs]

1. With your free hand, reach over your head, towards your back, and hold the trigger button to grab your selected special arrow.
2. With the trigger button still held, bring your hand back to the front and to your bow. 3. From there, just pull back and launch."

After about 10 secs to give player a chance to use it, another line is added: "Hit the robot with a special arrow"

(11.) A robot is spawned, again SOMEHOW, and players can try it out. *Note: We may want to make them impervious to standard arrows, just so they are forced to use the Equipment arrows.

Once the robot is dead, the screen reads:

"Once fired, you need to wait for ALL THREE abilities to charge back up before you can use another. Choose wisely."

Teaching Objective: Selecting and using Equipment arrows.

=====

WALL5

Then a sequence of 5 lights turn on to the fifth screen. The previous lights turn off and the previous screen goes half transparent. The current screen reads:

(12.)"Look back at your free hand. We have re-enabled the top icon [PIC of red Icon]. This is your Ultimate ability. Use it in the same fashion as the other special arrows."

(13.) A large group of robots appear, like 12 of them.

The Player defeats them all with the Ult. *Note: We may want to disable the equipment or make the group of robots impervious.

Note2: I'm not sure what the default ultimate ability for this tutorial should be (Or even if teaching the Ults should be in this tutorial, instead being in the Main Menu level.

(14.) "Looks like you're good to go. Shoot the 'End Tutorial' button when you're ready. Good luck!"

Teaching Objective: Selecting and using Ultimate arrows + destroying a lot of enemies at once with a cool ability (first real "WOW!" moment).

=====

I also gave my team a list of what we would need to get this done

What we need to get this done:

- Sequential light blueprint
- Reactive Text system Reactive buttons
- Possibly a new player with specific tutorial modifications (disabling certain features until a certain object has been completed)
- Tutorial zombie bots who are stationary and may or may not be impervious to different kinds of arrows.

*For this tutorial I intend the passive/charge arrows to be disabled as I want to focus on the player can physically SEE first (the icons on the hand)

MAIN MENU LEVEL

Same beginning: Cube shaped, dark room with sequence of lights ending with a singular red button above a closed door. On either side of the door are three unlit buttons that players should NOT notice. The extra button on the bottom is going to be the back button. Shooting this brings the room to life with lights and opens the door, revealing the menu options

Start, Options, and Quit.

START brings you to the MODE SELECT screen and, from there, to the SELECT CHARGE ABILITY screen:

This screen is labeled:

- [TRY] SPLIT ARROW [SELECT]
- [TRY] SNIPER ARROW [SELECT]
- [TRY] HARVEST ARROW [SELECT]

The 6 buttons on the sides of the door, light up and the color of the text corresponds with the color of the button.

This is akin to Bayonetta where you can try abilities as much as you want before you buy them, in this case, select them.

Hitting the TRY button will cause a sequence of lights to open to your right, revealing a screen on the right wall. The screen explains how to use passive abilities, and the ability itself, and spawns robots to try it out on.

There is a button *under* this screen labeled "BACK" to get light the main menu screen back up. Or should it never be faded out to begin with?

After selecting a passive/charge ability, the screen becomes the SELECT ULTIMATE ABILITY, where players experience something similar to the previous screen.

From there, they begin the game.