

Cal Arts Narrative Design

Course 3: World Design for Video Games

Assignment 4

SAMPLE SETUP / GAME START SCENE

It's 1850 in The Glen, a fictional Scottish mining town tucked into a valley partially encircled by the River Irene. It's a picturesque but small village, with a few shops, a quarry, and an ironworks. The landscape is lush, with a cozy, bustling Industrial Revolution feel. Over the past few years, the railways have been expanding, and the demand for iron and steel has increased, causing the miners to dig ever deeper. Which means (if the fairytales are true), they will soon encroach upon the Underground—a cozy, bustling goblin town.

Game start:

It's a cold, late-spring morning. The sun is doing its level best to burn off the mist and warm the earth. Reenie is standing on the front step of the small two-bedroom cottage where she lives with her parents and three younger siblings. Inside, we can hear a baby crying. Reenie's eyes are closed, chin lifted toward the sun, soaking up the light.

We hear the sound of a pebble hitting the stone wall of the house, and Reenie's eyes open. She scans the garden, the dirt road, and the outbuildings. Another pebble hits the house, and Reenie's eyes light up. She's spotted her friend Gil crouched by a nearby well. She waves, but he's already thrown another pebble—he's aimed poorly this time, and we hear a clink as it hits the window glass.

Mom throws open the window, and Gil ducks out of sight.

MOM: Don't even think about it, Reenie. Headmaster says if you're truant one more time...

PATH 1: Reenie sighs heavily and heads toward the church. But as she passes the well, the mist lifts, and a shaft of sunlight shines on a pile of pebbles where Gil had been. Next to the pebbles, the light practically dances around a perfect, bright green four-leaf CLOVER. (If Reenie picks the CLOVER, she will have collected the ability to break one fairy spell later in the game.)

PATH 2: Reenie groans.

REENIE: Why can't I work in the mines like Gil? At least he's DOING something! Not sitting at a desk all day. It's torture!

MOM: You know Gil would give anything to switch places with YOU, right? That boy loved school. You're the lucky one.

REENIE: Well why CAN'T we switch? I'll go to work. Happily!

The crying baby inside has started to scream.

MOM sighs but looks sympathetic: If you really want to work, I'll tell the headmaster you're sick. You can help me with the baby, make some bread, and hoe the garden.

REENIE looks up, squints into the sun, and considers it while the baby screams.

PATH 2 REENIE: Love you, Mom!

She runs to the back of the house and picks up the hoe that leans against the wall. A shaft of light practically dances around a single yellow PRIMROSE that is turning its face toward the morning sun. (If REENIE picks the PRIMROSE, it will give her the ability to make the invisible visible later on in the game...which will allow her to see fairies.)

LOOP BACK TO PATH 1 REENIE: *House chores? Forget it. I'll take school.*

Reenie sighs heavily and heads toward the church. But as she passes the well, the mist lifts, and a shaft of sunlight shines on a pile of pebbles where Gil had been. Next to the pebbles, the light practically dances around a perfect, bright green four-leaf CLOVER. (If Reenie picks the CLOVER, she will have collected the ability to break one fairy spell later in the game.)