

Archipelago of talents

In the Centre for Experiential Education (CEXE, (CEGO in dutch) @ University of Leuven) where I work, we developed a map

(<http://www.talentenarchipel.be/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/kaartkleur1.pdf>) to talk with children about where their talents (*not so much where you're good in, as where you want and try to grow in*) and passions are, and let them develop talents or discover new passions by exploring different islands (and tinker on/with them). And share their discoveries with peers, teachers, parents, so we learn to look at each other growing.

There is think/math/logics-island, language-island, musical artistic-island, visual artistic island, social -island, handy -island (fine motoric skills), move-island (other motoric skills) world-island (about the physical world (= nature, science, technology,...)) and the arrow/wooden leg is (don't know how to translate this, is a dutch tool) something like selfmanagement: knowing what you want, make choices, and realizing what you want, making your ideas and dreams come true.

These talents are not about specific activities:

For instance: If you like playing soccer/football, you can have a talent for the motoric aspect, you shoot with precision, you feel the way the ball will move the moment (or even before) you hit it; you can have a talent for selfmanagement and leadership, you get a kick out of motivating your team members, without you the team is half that good, not because you score or make perfect passes, but because when you play, the rest of your team plays better; you like the social aspect of playing together, you reach out a hand to pull up a fallen opponent, because for you the game is about having fun together; You can be good in analysing the game (think-island) so you are always on the right place at the right time; ... So your passion might be soccer/football, but in that game you use talents that can be used in a lot of other domains.

I was thinking about making a game where you have to map an island, learning about coordinates. then i figured that would be a fitting challenge to discover the think-island. So i started to think about other challenges for other island, like pressing space on a certain rhythm for music island, ...

So the idea grew to making the talent-map into a game where children can play minigames on the different islands that let them discover the things/talents they like doing. After finishing a minigame on an island, they get a list of ideas/books/games that they might like if they enjoyed the island and they can then take a ship to another island (where they have already been (island is colored), or that they still have to discover (island looks blank)).

The ideas i have so far:

- intro: plane (one person plane, cartoon-style) that flies in the air (maybe only nose visible, as if viewer is the pilot), smoke from motor, nose down, island in see, island becomes bigger, so you see shape, then crash, flash, black, fade in, in middle of islandjungle (i made a start on the plane: <http://scratch.mit.edu/projects/20342512/>)
- think island (= Game 1): map an island:
inspiration:
 - carcassonne (boardgame) >> island divided in squares (you only see square you're on)
 - the big bang theory: sheldon plays an old text-based computer game ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8al0RzkDggMJ\[1\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8al0RzkDggMJ[1]) , on 3.20) >>> navigate island without seeing the whole picture, building the picture in your mind
 - connect computergames with extern world (don't know where i heard this) >> to get a good idea of the island, the players must map the island on paper, maybe pick something up in D6, and then find their way back to B3, so combining their paper plan with orientation on screen
 - frustrating racegames where you steer with your arrows, but when the car is faced to the right, the right arrow becomes the arrow to push to go straight ahead >> (think Excell) you go from D4 to D3. Then you want to go from D3 to F3. Means 'choose turn left' = E3, 'then go ahead' = F3 (maybe get a compass in a corner that turns (keeps pointing north, but player turns))
- music island: 'drumming on keyboard' , making song on keyboard
inspiration:
 - <http://android-apps.com/news/save-humanity-with-your-drumming-skills-in-flow-a-space-drum-saga-for-android/> = game i played on tablet (and something i think is possible programming with scratch.)
 - giving different keys different sound, first give time to experiment, than memorylike game: click on card, you hear sound >> press matching key
- language island:
 - <http://kotaku.com/5900846/meet-the-fifth-grader-who-made-a-video-game-for-his-blind-grandmother/all> >>> rining game to find way on misty island (something with echo's)
 - let them find the way through the island by following signposts where the directions are in different languages, so they have to use google translate to find their way.

Don't have concrete ideas yet for visual artistic island, social -island, handy -island (fine motoric skills), move-island (other motoric skills), world-island (about the physical world (= nature, science, technology,...)) and 'selfmanagement'-island.

some more ideas:

- make travelling from one island to another look like dotted line that appears on map (just because i like how that looks, travelling indiana jones style)
- if possible involve real-world tools in the game

REFLECTION

I wrote a lot of ideas, hope you understand most of them, hope i didn't give you the idea that all these ideas have to happen "my way" by being too specific, it's just ideas, your ideas are most welcome, even if they go totally different direction. Just wanted to give you as much insight in my thoughts as possible.

James and I discussed about building it in scratch or in python/pygame. it depends on what the core is of what we wanted from the project.

- *I'm tinkering with python for the moment (long live the print-function) and i want to learn more programming (hence python) + i like text-based programming because after a while writing is faster and i find it easier to get an overview if it becomes a complex game,*
- *but scratch gives more opportunity to make a game that can grow and to work together with others, so if more people want to collaborate, scratch might be a better place to start, especially when there is not much time.*

This is a big project, but you can think about it as a group of small projects, so it's less overwhelming. We could tackle one island at the time and see where we get. Or each work on a different island that we like.