Design Concept

Iron Will

Player goals and objectives

Will, the iron block, has a dream: he dreams of becoming a marvelous sword! Help him overcome dangers and obstacles on his way to make this dream come true!

Like in the saying `You forge your own luck` so it is also up to Will to fulfill his dream. The player helps him to make his dream become a reality step by step. In each level Will has to find an anvil and a sack of coal to open the gate to the next level. At the end of each world Will can go to a smith and exchange the items in return for being forged a little more into a sword form. At the completion of all worlds and containing levels he will then have become a glorious sword and with his has achieved the dream of his life!

Avatar

Will is a block of iron. He walks slowly on his big feet and has no other limbs. He cannot jump because he is too heavy. His walk is therefore a bit sluggish. In the course of the game Will is morphing more and more into a sword. These changes happen at the successful completion of a world. Will can go into fire and start glowing. In this state he can kindle other objects, but he can also be pounded to ground because he has become transformable.

The camera in Iron Will is attached to the player and has a free horizontal rotation. Vertical rotation is locked at high degrees for better player comfort.

Main rules and procedures

Operational rules

Will's starting position varies and depends on each level. Principally he has to follow a parcour through the level end, finding the anvil and coal, overcoming obstacles and solving puzzles.

The only resources in the game are anvil and coal. Lives or health points are not planned.

Main game mechanics

Mostly the player will be busy looking for the anvil and coal and trying to figure out how to get to them. The player can move freely through the 3D world and will only be stopped by obstacles or the edge of the level. Falling over the edge of the level results in repositioning at level start, but progress is not reset.

Obstacles can be:

- moving platforms requiring timing
- objects blocking the way that need to be disabled
- puzzles to be solved

To get into the glowing state will needs to walk into a fire source. When glowing Will can then kindle certain objects, for instance a wooden wall that blocks the path or ignite a bomb which then opens a new way. While glowing he is also easily formable and can therefore be pounded easily. The glowing state only lasts a certain time and Will then goes back to his initial state.

The glowing state will be implemented in puzzle design. For instance Will needs to kindle an object in a certain time (before he cools off again), however to get to the object he has to pass dangers and obstacles. So time but also the dangers have to be managed by the player.

The free rotating camera is intended to be fully used by the player to understand all elements of the level and to be able to solve it. For instance, the player needs to move the camera in order to reveal the location of the anvil. In this context the camera and its use by the player is incorporated as a game mechanic into the game.

For later levels it is an option to include more resources: gold and diamonds (or equivalent). Will needs to collect those to truly become a splendid and marvelous sword that is distinct from a regular sword.

Also an option is to use Will's different transformation stages to introduce powers or skills which then are incorporated into new game mechanics.

On a second by second basis (or Turn by Turn Basis)

The player needs to manage the timing to overcome obstacles or step on moving platforms. He needs to solve puzzles to advance in the level.

On a minute by minute basis

The player will mainly be busy with collecting anvil and coal to unlock the level exit.

Elements that make this fun or interesting

Anvil and coal don't just have to be collected, they are hidden or blocked by obstacles and puzzles which make it more exciting to find or reach them.

Will's step-by-step transformation into a sword during the game is visible in the character model. This is a direct and motivating feedback for the player about the progress of the game.

So it is not just about reaching the next level but also about helping Will to fulfill his dream of becoming a sword.

Rewards

The player can see the transformation process in Will's character model. At the end of the game he has helped Will to have the dream of his life fulfilled.

Player Resources

Anvil and coalsack; have to be collected to open level exit.
Optional: Gold and diamonds for later levels.

Boundaries and Constraints

The player can move freely and will only be blocked by obstacles. Jumping is not possible and therefore moving platforms have to be used to change altitude.

When falling over the edge of the level Will will be reset to the start of the level.

World and Story

Look and Feel

The art style will be comic influenced but not too colorful and cartoony. An industrial setting is suitable for levels with mechanical elements. A world with levels full of stone and a grass world are also planned. Light is used to enhance the visuals and feel of the game world, although it needs to be confirmed how far Unity and the project time allow this to be realised.

The game world reminds of a snow globe, you look from the outside and see the whole level and the view is rotable.

Back Story

Iron can be forged into anything conceivable. Something practical, something mundane or something special, all possibilities are open. Will doesn't want to leave his fate up to some smith and instead takes charge of fulfilling his lifelong dream. Like in real life, you forge your own luck. That's why Will goes on this adventure!

Spaces/Worlds

Each level is small and overseeable, a little complete world consisting of the parcour from start to finish including obstacles and puzzles.

Some parts of a level sometimes have to be unlocked. Sometimes anvil and coal are not visible at first and need to be unhidden.

The game consists of several worlds, each containing around five to eight levels. After each world Will has the opportunity to visit a smith.

At the end of each level the next level will be loaded as a fresh scene. There are no direct transitions from one level into the next.

Characters

Apart from Will and the smith there are no characters.
Enemies are not planned.

User Interface

Main Controls
W = forwards
S = backwards
A = turn left
D = turn right

Mouse = camera rotation

Save & Load

There are no manual save points.

The game saves the progress after each level is completed. The player can then restart the game at this level the next time he plays.

HUD-Elements

Only HUD elements are for the anvil and coal.

Optional is an element showing the progress of Will's transformation into a sword.

Game Shell

Start- /main menü

Controls

Technical Requirements

Engine

Unity 4

Tools

Unity3D, OpenOffice, Photoshop, 3DSMax, GoogleDocs

Technical Risks

Most likely there will be difficulties programming the rotating camera. Here it is advisable to check relation of priority with time at hand. Possibly a simple camera movement is more realistic in the given timeframe.

Smoothly working player and world physics are not easy to solve with my programming knowledge and can lead to issues that I might not be able to solve by myself. This shouldn't impact the main game mechanics too much, however, and can be more likely put into the context of finetuning.