No Stupid Questions

Fostering Curiosity Through Playful Design

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Abstract

This paper seeks to validate curiosity-driven design as a method for testing an experimental game mechanic's effectiveness.

In this case, the experimental mechanic is a physical print-out of a document called the Anders Cyclopaedia; a document which serves as a puzzle element without which the game cannot be completed. The game's page on itch.io can be found here.

The research question states: *"How can I, as a game designer, measure and foster curiosity in players about the elements of a given game world?"*

Continuation Desire (CD) (Schoenau-Fog et al., 2013) and a modified version of the 5-Dimensional Curiosity Scale (5DC) (Kashdan et al., 2017) were used to measure the level of curiosity in a tester during their playthrough of a playtest version of *The Anders Cyclopaedia*.

Success would be achieved if CD remained above an average of 8 across five different moments of play interruption, and if the average from two dimensions of the 5DC (Joyous Exploration and Social Curiosity) sat above 5,5.

Results were drawn from a total of 19 participants, which showed that CD never dropped below 8,6.
Joyous Exploration had an average score of 5,27 and Social Curiosity had an average score of 5,65.

From these results I concluded that measuring CD by way of play interruptions was a valid method for measuring curiosity, the high results of which also proving the validity of the cyclopaedia's implementation so far.

I also concluded that my implementation of the 5DC questionnaire was confusing for most testers, and as such its predominant finding was that testers enjoyed the act of learning within the context of them playing *The Anders Cyclopaedia*.

Preface

"In an era when physical space has been thoroughly explored, virtual spaces harken back to the romance of the colonial frontier–as new regions to discover and conquer."
– Jules Skotnes-Brown, Video Games and the Global South (p. 144)

Building and survival games are generally focused on conquest, resource extraction, and turning the 'other' into something closer to home. While not inherently a bad thing, it unintentionally, and sometimes comically, plays into values inherited from colonial times. We live in a culture which looks at a skyline, a dam, and sees progress. We see these things as good, while remaining unaware or unwilling to acknowledge what was there before. Most games are a product of this culture of perceived progress, and as such carry these sentiments with them.
Minecraft, Factorio, Satisfactory, Subnautica, Dwarf Fortress, No Man's Sky; each of these games is enamoured by the idea of a tamed wilderness, turning the natural world into something that serves the player and their interests.

Dan Olsen's video titled "Minecraft, Sandboxes, and Colonialism" (Olsen, 2019) illustrates this well, by way of an example of himself falling into these behaviours.
In Minecraft, the most efficient way of creating a village with villagers is to "relocate" a portion of villagers, using the mechanical oddity that a villager automatically gets into a nearby vehicle and can't get out on their own. In essence, the player is encouraged by a near-esoteric web of interlocking systems to kidnap villagers and, in a way, emulate certain colonialist policies of the past.

These interesting overlaps spurred me on to start development on The Anders Cyclopaedia. This game attempts to break these clichés; to create an experience which aims to depict the other as something to explore and understand, without the ability or need to conquer and exploit it.
To achieve this goal, however, I needed to foster curiosity about the world of Anders. That's where the subject matter of this paper comes into play.

Special Thanks
This project, and this paper, would not be possible without a handful of wonderful people.
Thank you, Elie and Jana, for being there whenever I felt lost or overwhelmed.
Thank you, Sabrina, for always being an enthusiastic and supportive voice to share progress with and ask for advice.
Thank you, Christian, for your invaluable insight, advice, and enthusiasm.
And thanks to all the people who tested *The Anders Cyclopaedia*, for sharing their insights, stories, and feedback.

Introduction

The Anders Cyclopaedia is a game about accepting and learning from an untamed wilderness, and as such its leading design question reads:

"How can I, as a game designer, reframe wilderness as something to understand and live with, rather than something to subjugate and exploit?"

This design question has guided my decisions throughout the designing process, helping me stay focused on the primary goal of the experience.

A challenge soon posed by this concept, however, is its cyclopaedia mechanic.
During play, the player is meant to note down their findings in the Anders Cyclopaedia, an unfinished encyclopaedia full of mistakes, bias, and other shortcomings.
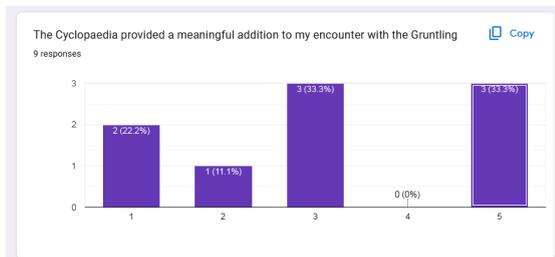

Fig. 1: Results on the playtest question "The Cyclopaedia provided a meaningful addition to my encounter with the Gruntling."
3/9 testers strongly agreed, 6/9 testers were neutral or disagreed.

From early playtests I gathered that opinions on this mechanic were strongly divided. Those who loved the idea loved it a lot, and those who didn't were either ambivalent or actively disliked it.

To reach an effective implementation of this encyclopaedia writing mechanic, where most players would engage with it willingly, I chose to focus my research on fostering curiosity through playful design. Curiosity helps drive action and decision-making to support learning

(Boudreau & Bonawitz, 2020), and this mechanism is exactly what I'm after.

I believe that curiosity plays a large part in a player's willingness to engage with niche mechanics like this one, where it requires action(s) from players which are not often found in other video games.
Some players already carry an inherent curiosity with them. For example, one of my playtesters who stated:

"I really like the concept of being an adventurer learning more and more about the world as I encounter things, it reminds me of filling out the pokedex as a kid and being like "oh shit awesome whats [sic] this scrimblo's deal?"

Not every player is the same though, and I wish for my game to appeal to a wider audience. Some might need a bit of a push into the right direction to get their curiosity jumpstarted. Figuring out what that push is, and testing its efficacy, is what this paper will be about.

Research Question

"How can I, as a game designer, measure and foster curiosity* in players about the elements** of a given game world***?"

*'Curiosity' is a desire for knowledge or information, and motivator of exploratory behaviour. In the context of (video) games, this would refer to a player's willingness to explore, experiment, and interact.
This definition was based on a meta review of academic articles around curiosity and education (Grossnickle, 2014).
**'Elements' refers to a collection of things present within the game world. For The Anders Cyclopaedia this would be the flora and fauna, but it could also refer to people, places, objects, or historical events.
***A 'game world' is the fictional space presented by a (video) game, which can be explored and interacted with in a fashion dictated by the game's designers.

Relevance to The Field

This paper aims to assist budding game designers with defining their experimental and niche game mechanic(s), using player curiosity as a primary measuring tool for effectiveness. Effectiveness herein refers to the ability of the game mechanic(s) to engage and captivate the player, holding their attention and providing a meaningful addition to the larger experience.

I hope to achieve this by providing insight into how curiosity can and has been fostered in interactive media, pointing out what benefits and drawbacks, if any, come with this approach, and by analysing the results of my own application of a curiosity-driven game design approach.

Preliminary Research

Before diving into my own methodology and design approach I analysed the approaches of existing media; how they relied on curiosity and what they did to support it.

I also looked at the paper *Exploring video games that invoke curiosity* (Gómez-Maureira, M. A., & Kniestedt, I., 2019), which surveyed 113 participants to find out what video game titles and genres could be considered reliable instruments for invoking curiosity.
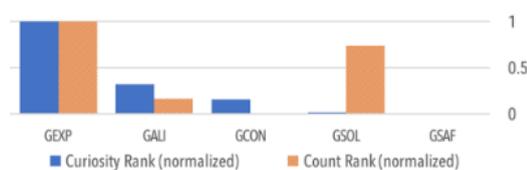

Fig. 2: Curiosity categories based on video game genres. GEXP (leftmost) refers to video games with exploration elements. (Gómez-Maureira, M. A., & Kniestedt, I., 2019).

The researchers found that games with exploration, social simulation, and/or collection elements ranked highest in triggering curiosity, which could provide guidance in my own design process.

Inversely, it found that games belonging to the curiosity category GSOL ("let me solve something") were ranked extremely low in triggering curiosity. An explanation offered in the paper is that a puzzle game like *Portal* provides little in the way of roaming; where players could happen upon parts of the game they wouldn't encounter otherwise.

An exploration-heavy game like *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild* (*Z:BotW*) offers this element of discovery in abundance; filling its game world with shrines to find and solve, and optional quests to pursue. This resulted in it ranking the highest in triggering curiosity, while also featuring puzzle elements which helped make these discoveries engaging after initial discovery.
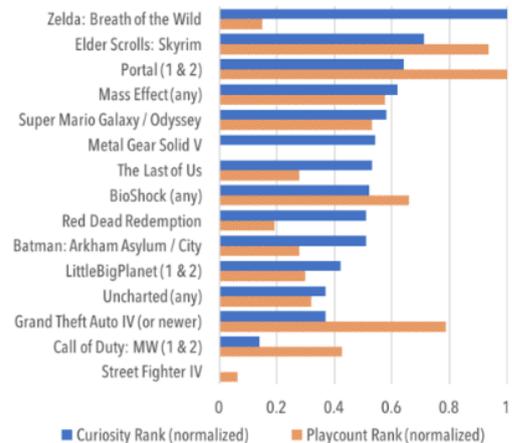

Fig. 3: Shared selection of games ranked by how curious participants felt and how many participants had played them. Values are normalised to 0–1 for comparison (0 = lowest rank, 1 = highest rank) (Gómez-Maureira, M. A., & Kniestedt, I., 2019).

Using the results of this paper, I was able to narrow my own analysis down to games and genres that are already effective at triggering curiosity; this way I could focus on deducing *why* these games are as effective at triggering curiosity as they are.

The paper also helped reassure my own design decisions, as a large part of *The Anders Cyclopaedia* hinges on exploration and collection. Playing into these elements more, tied together with puzzle-solving like in *Z:BotW*, could be a viable method of triggering curiosity.

Outer Wilds

Outer Wilds is a 2019 action-adventure game developed by Mobius Digital and published by Annapurna Interactive.
Importantly for this research, it is a game full of exploration-centric mechanics, which help the player discover the secrets of their alien planetary system, to ultimately prevent the end of the universe.

I was able to define three key components of Outer Wilds which help trigger curiosity by enabling or enhancing exploration, which I will expand on in the following paragraphs.

Slight to no penalties

Outer Wilds avoids penalising its players for failure. Even when the player dies they simply travel back in time to their starting point, from which they can quickly reach their destination again.

I believe that their primary reasoning for this choice is to support experimentation. With few penalties in place players will be comfortable to try things out, and prompted to think laterally.

To further support this notion, in the video essay *Grading is a Scam (and Motivation is a Myth)* (Bee, 2021), Zoe Bee explains how penalising systems like grading can have grave adverse effects for a person's curiosity and motivation.

People become challenge-avoidant in these cases, where looking for challenges results in a higher likelihood of penalties. In a game where experimentation is often dangerous and necessary to progress, penalties would serve little to no point in the larger experience.

The rumour map.

In a documentary on the development of *Outer Wilds* (Noclip, 2020) the creative director, Alex Beachum, states: *"So originally, the ship log; we knew we were going to need. 'Cause [sic] we didn't want people to have to take paper notes."*

To avoid this they devised a 'rumour mode' within the ship log, where connections are made between leads with lines much like a detective board. Their reasoning for this was founded in early playtests, where players weren't able to understand the game's structure, didn't know how to go about investigating, and essentially remained un-curious. By "basically displaying their design documents", upon making a discovery, they guaranteed players wouldn't forget about leads and remained curious about what the different planets still might have to offer.

Another key design choice is that by observing something, and hearing an identifiable sound which indicates something was added to the rumour map, players instantly became curious and started chasing those observed leads.

Interconnected mystery.

Related to the previous component, the numerous locations are strongly intertwined in *Outer Wilds*. The rumour map does group its information, but these groupings aren't based on locations but rather larger concepts which span multiple planets.
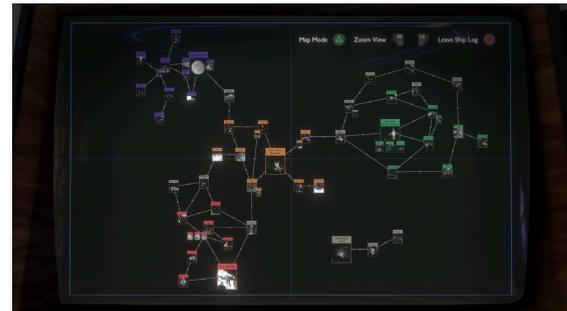

Fig. 4: The rumour map in Outer Wilds, completely filled out.

Purple nodes, for example, are related to the application of quantum theory in the game and the quantum moon mystery; while green nodes are related to the search for the Eye, the rumoured centre of the universe.

By laying rumours out this way, the designers ensure that players don't get stuck at just one location, and keep hopping in between planets to solve the greater mysteries at hand.

Rumours also act as the game's main short-term reward structure, as they only appear whenever the player directly observes a notable discovery. This pushes players to experiment and explore, to keep unlocking these rumours and work their way towards the greater mystery posed.

Conclusions from Outer Wilds

What I drew from Outer Wilds is that, as a game designer, you shouldn't count on a player's inherent curiosity. Players need to be led through your game world in some way, and the art lies in leading them on in a way that not only triggers curiosity, but results in a rewarding feedback loop of exploration, problem solving, and discovery.

Outer Wilds achieves this with their rumour map, which fills out gradually as the player collects information, while also providing an overview of leads to lead the player back into the game world.

In my own project I sought to apply this by utilising the Cyclopaedia element of the game as a lure to pull players further into the experience, and have information to put into the Cyclopaedia function as a reward.

The intended effect is that players will feel drawn to inspect the Cyclopaedia before it is strictly necessary for them to do so, and read about the different forms of wildlife they can encounter in Anders.

This will also tip them off on the fact that they can amend and add to the Cyclopaedia themselves, which should create a satisfying loop back into the virtual game.

Further on, the Cyclopaedia would need to be an unmissable puzzle element of the game. Simply put, players should not be able to complete the game without it.

Much like *Outer Wilds*, the first section of *The Anders Cyclopaedia* will be quite linear, to safely introduce these concepts at a pleasant pace. This allows for later areas to be much more open for exploration and roaming, as the Cyclopaedia can be a familiar grounding factor by then. This will prevent the player from losing track.

Methodology

For this test, a playtester will play through a limited playtest version of *The Anders Cyclopaedia* to completion.

In this playtest version, the goal for the player is to reach the narrative ending of the game as it currently stands. The experience is roughly 35 minutes in length, which varies depending on the tester's reading speed.

During this play session, play will occasionally be interrupted by a pop-up which will direct the playtester to fill out a section of a survey. Here, the survey asks them, on a scale of 1-10, how strongly they desire to continue playing. I'll also ask them to elaborate on their given answer.

Fig. 5: What a play interruption looks like in-game.
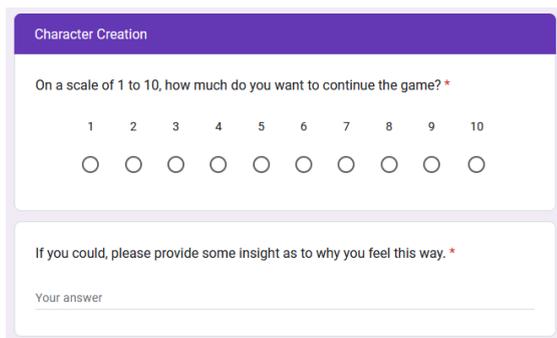
Fig. 6: Example linear scale question in Google Forms.

The experience was interrupted at 5 key narrative moments, where engagement should be relatively high:

1	In the middle of the character creation interview, after a particularly tense question.
2	After arriving in Anders, and setting their first few steps.
3	After encountering their first corpse at the farm.
4	After finishing their inspection of the Meanana corpse.
5	After the confrontation with the living Meanana.

This is based on the paper *Narrative Engagement in Games – A Continuation Desire Perspective*, wherein Continuation Desire (CD) is used to assess narrative engagement (Schoenau-Fog et al., 2013).

Using this method, I'll be able to monitor curiosity over a play session and observe how it fluctuates.

After completing their play session they will fill out the final section of the survey, which will ask questions about the tester's level of curiosity, on a scale from 1-7, over the general experience.

For this survey I based my questions on the five-dimensional curiosity (5DC) scale questionnaire (Kashdan et al., 2017). This questionnaire was sourced from Todd Kashdan's personal website. Unlike the original questionnaire, which relates to the tester's personal, real life experiences, my questions are framed in a manner which refers to the tester's experience with *The Anders Cyclopaedia*.

This method does have some limitations, as some of the questions on the 5DC questionnaire can be quite extreme when applied to a video game instead of a person's own life experience. Questions such as *"Thinking about solutions to difficult conceptual problems can keep me awake at night."* can quickly feel absurd in the context

of a video game prototype. I hope to amend this with slight rephrasing of the questions, so that these can still be answered sincerely.

The range for the dimensions was chosen as it falls in line with the game genres social sim, collecting, and RPG, which scored the highest in triggering curiosity (Gómez-Maureira & Kniestedt, 2019). The specific dimensions to focus on were chosen as these relate the most accurately to the experience I want to achieve with *The Anders Cyclopaedia*.

The CD average of 8 was chosen as it lies comfortably above the median, which signifies to me that a satisfactory level of CD is achieved. The tester's elaboration will also be taken into account to see what kept them engaged, and what was detrimental to their level of engagement. This information could prove especially useful when formulating methods to improve CD in the specific sections or over the entire experience.

This playtest version of the game, and its questionnaire, were made available on the game hosting platform *itch.io*. This page was locked behind a password to keep the audience metrics of the testing group under control.

The game itself is a downloadable executable file, and the cyclopaedia document is a downloadable PDF file. Builds of the game were made for Windows 32-bit, Windows 64-bit, and Linux.

A build for macOS was attempted, but I was unable to get it working in time for testing.

A webGL build, which is runnable in a web browser, could've been a convenient option. However, much like the macOS build, it proved unstable and unpredictable, and had to be scrapped.

Success is achieved if the computed average of the Joyous Exploration and Social Curiosity dimensions lie between the range of 5.5 and 7, and if engagement on average doesn't drop below an 8.

As I wanted to be able to observe gameplay, and as the playtest version of the game was quite long (roughly 35 minutes), I chose to undertake my playtests in controlled environments. These environments wound up being at the HKU, at home, and in Discord video calls.

The target audience of *The Anders Cyclopaedia* consists of gamers interested in games centred around exploration and narrative. My testing audience consisted of a general gaming audience. Reason for this being that I want my mechanic to have a wider appeal, and I expected that seeking out a wider audience would grant a broader spectrum of insights.

The Test

Testing consisted of three rounds, each different from the others in some form. Differences were reasonably small enough for these rounds of tests to be grouped together as one dataset, which will be touched on further in this chapter.

The first round of tests were conducted in the GI space at the HKU's IBB-laan location. This working space was chosen as there was ample thoroughfare of students who fit the target audience, and at the time of the test there was a general testing day going on.

The test was managed by myself, and consisted of my laptop with the game running and questionnaire open, a wireless mouse, wired headphones, and a print-out of the Cyclopaedia.

Here I was able to get 5 people to play the prototype, 3 of which filled out the questionnaire in full.

I forgot to add a pen to this setup, which would've enabled testers to actually write into the Cyclopaedia, and I expect that this will reflect in the analysis as the tester's ability to interact with the Cyclopaedia will be limited.

Regardless, the primary goal is for the tester to interact with the Cyclopaedia at all. However, one or multiple testers asking for a pen would be a gratifying observation, as it shows interest in the lexicology aspect of the game.

One of the testers in this round failed to accurately fill out the first of the five play interruptions, which she then filled out as 1. This happened because she had limited time, and going through the character creation process would've made her unable to experience the rest of the game. This input was removed from the pool of data to preserve accuracy.

The second round of tests were done either at my home or online over a Discord call, with the player streaming their gameplay. These were also managed by myself and the testers were picked based on the formulated target audience, and played the game using their own setup.

These testers were given the choice to either print the Cyclopaedia out or to have it open on a second screen, but it was strongly advised to do the former as it makes interacting with it easier in parallel with the virtual part of the game.

This round consisted of 3 testers, who played the prototype in full and filled out the questionnaire.

The third round of tests were done much more loosely, as I found that I wasn't getting much from observing play directly.

I sent out the playtest with instructions to various friends and online communities. These were picked in accordance with the envisioned target audience.

These communities include the Haunted PS1 Discord server, a private game developer Discord server, a Discord server centred around narrative design, and three 18+ social Discord servers.

These testers played with their own setup without me observing their playthrough, and could ask me questions over text in case they got stuck.

This round consisted of 13 testers, who each played the prototype in full and filled out the questionnaire.

One of the testers in this round failed to accurately fill out the last of the five play interruptions, which he then filled out with a rating of 1. He got confused because he missed one of the play interruptions, so this input was removed from the pool of data to preserve accuracy.

The version of the game that the second and third group of testers played already had a few improvements implemented. These were both bug fixes and feature implementations, though none of them meaningfully changed the overall experience.

For this reason I believe that these changes have minimal, if any, effect on the final result of these testers.

Analysis

Continuation Desire

CD was measured to be comfortably above the target value of 8.

CD was lowest at the start of the play session (8,61), and peaked at the end of the play session (9,22).
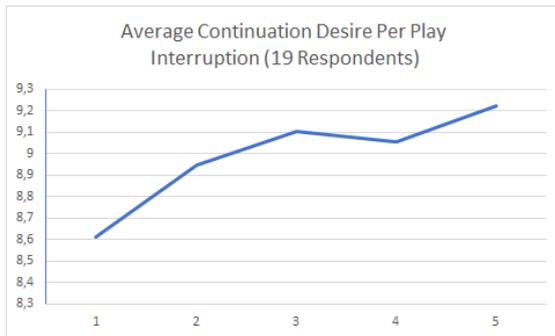

Fig. 7: Average CD per play interruption, gathered from 19 respondents.

What I've drawn from these findings is that the played section of the game functions well as an introduction to the rest of the game, as it nurtures a growing interest in what the game has to offer.

It also confirmed that the crossover between digital and pen & paper gameplay was engaging, as a number of players commented positively on this choice, and none of the testers cited it as a game element which negatively affected their play session or CD.

Fig. 8: Field notes from one of the testers.

A moment which stood out as especially memorable and positive was when players had to type out the name of the dead creature to confirm its species. Leaning even more into this kind of design in future sections of the game was desired by testers.

An interesting part of the data is the small dip observed at play interruption #4, where the player finishes inspecting the corpse of an Andersian creature.

I was expecting this to be a pretty tense moment for players, as they are tipped off about something being 'behind them' before they're given the ability to continue playing.

A potential reason for this being lower is that some players became scared or hesitant to continue, due to the expectation of a 'jumpscare'. The lowest grade given in this section was a 6, and the player stated:

"I am very worried that I am about to be jumpscared and do no [sic] wish to experience this. Game still interesting though."

An alternative explanation could be that the inspection of the corpse is a lengthy, dialogue-heavy process. This could've caused a dip in tension, but as it didn't dip below a 9 I don't believe this needs addressing.

What could be addressed is the first play interruption, as its average CD is significantly lower than the other interruptions.

An explanation for this could be that it is an extremely dialogue-centric section of the game, where the player doesn't get a chance to walk around or explore an area; unlike the other sections. In this case, implementing some form of exploration, or maybe even problem solving, could pull the player in more and elevate CD at play interruption 1.

Another explanation worth considering is that the section isn't very interesting visually, as it only shows the idling player character in a dark, dimly-lit space. In this case, movement and variation in imagery, for example by fading through different backdrops, could help make it more engaging.

I believe both of these explanations and solutions could be a double-edged sword however, as over-explaining might chip away at a player's level of curiosity.

5 Dimensional Curiosity Scale

The two dimensions taken into special account for this test were Joyous Exploration (JE) and Social Curiosity (SC).

The average value of the JE dimension was

5,27 and the average value of the SC dimension was 5,65. This means that of the two dimensions, only SC made it within the target range of 5,5-7.

It's important to note that a lot of the participants were confused by and asked questions about the 5DC survey section. A common misconception was that players thought these questions were supposed to be answered as if Anders was a real place, which was not the intention.
For this reason I will look at these results more critically, and not let them take the lead in further decision-making.

In JE, the statement *"In Anders, I enjoyed learning about subjects that were unfamiliar to me."* scored the highest with an average of 6,95.
The second highest scoring statement was *"In Anders, I found it fascinating to learn new information."*, with an average of 6,79.
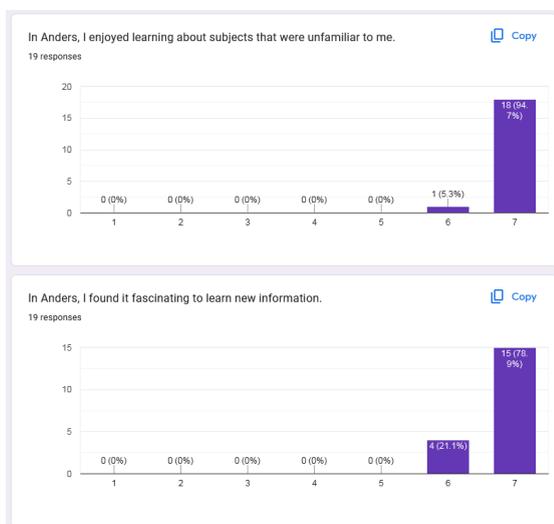
Fig. 9: The two highest scoring questions in the JE section of the questionnaire.

I was both hoping and expecting for these questions to score highly, as it would confirm that the current version of the game drives a curiosity to learn. Learning is a driving factor in the game, as it requires the player to learn about the wildlife to progress. So observing that players are enjoying and fascinated by this is an important piece.

In JE, the lowest scoring statements were:
"In Anders, I was always looking for experiences that challenged how I thought about myself and the world."
And
"In Anders, I viewed challenging situations as an opportunity to grow and learn."
These averaged 3,63 and 3,84 respectively.
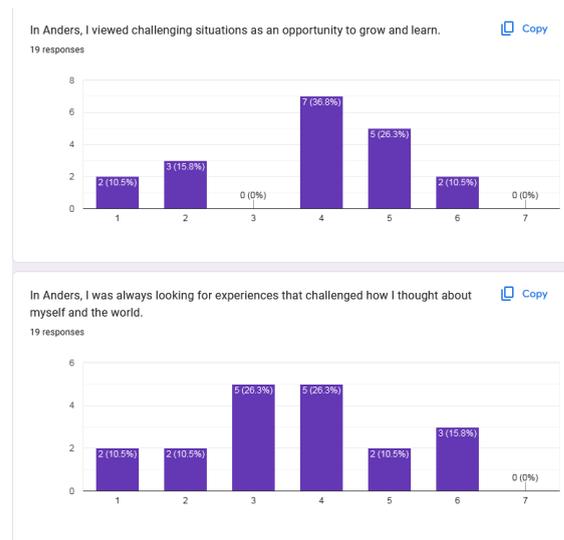
Fig. 10: The two lowest scoring questions in the JE section of the questionnaire

It struck me as an interesting contrast that, while players were excited about learning new information about the world of Anders (see fig, 8), they did not see challenging situations as opportunities to grow, and importantly, learn.
My primary interpretation is that the statement *"In Anders, I viewed challenging situations as an opportunity to grow and learn."* was too heavily worded to be considered strongly relatable in the context of a videogame. This is a very real possibility, considering that these statements were based on the ones given in a questionnaire referring to the tester's real life experiences; not the experiences they had with a game.

In hindsight, I should've reworded these statements more than I did this time. This would've enabled me to get a clearer picture of whether my designs are working as intended. The drawback of this would've been that I'd

be stepping away from the 5DC questionnaire which I based this part of the research on, which would make it difficult to relate my results to the findings of the original paper.

In SC the highest scoring statement was *"In Anders, when others were behaving in a strange or hostile manner, I wanted to know what was going on."*, with an average of 6,21.
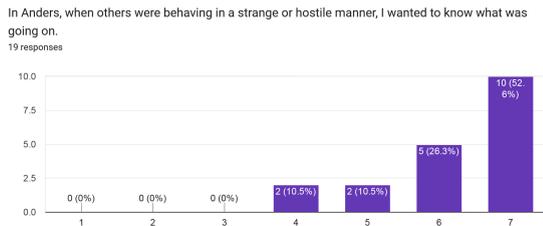

In Anders, when others were behaving in a strange or hostile manner, I wanted to know what was going on.
19 responses

Fig. 11: The highest scoring question in SC the section of the questionnaire

What sprung out to me is that this statement scored significantly higher than the other statements which, although comparable in the sense of wanting to learn about others, didn't have mentions of hostility or strangeness. These other statements are much more mellow or passive, like enjoying observing one's actions or a desire to learn their habits.
One explanation for this that I could think of is that strangeness and hostility currently is what is mostly experienced in the game. This could create a bias where, since these things are more commonly found in the play session, they carry more weight.
Another explanation could be that testers generally enjoyed this manner of interaction more, potentially due to the safety provided by the medium of video games. Since they aren't in any real danger, they feel more willing to explore situations that are risky or unpredictable.

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Conclusion

My research question was as follows:

"How can I, as a game designer, measure and foster curiosity in players about the elements of a given game world?"

Using CD as a tool to measure curiosity and engagement over a play session proved to be very insightful, as it showed trends in where engagement dipped and peaked; paired with potential reasons as to why.

Fostering curiosity was more difficult to define, as it relies on my own ability to design a game which provides enough hooks to keep a player curious about what's to come.
I was hoping for the 5DC scale to come into use here, by laying bare exactly in what ways players felt curious about the larger experience. My goal was for JE and SC to be the primary curiosity dimensions that got triggered, with average scores over 5,5 on a scale from 1 (Does not describe my experience at all) to 7 (Completely describes my experience).
This data, however, was only moderately useful, as many testers cited the questions to be confusing and strangely worded. This has made me doubt the value of this data, but I still find it worth to note how much enjoyment testers got out of learning, derived from the questions:
"In Anders, I enjoyed learning about subjects that were unfamiliar to me."
And
"In Anders, I found it fascinating to learn new information."
Considering this, I believe that the playtest version of *The Anders Cyclopaedia* managed to foster curiosity well, but improvements could be made to do so with more intent, so clearer results can be drawn.

Action Points

Taking these findings with me, I'll keep using CD as a monitoring tool for curiosity, especially when trying to validate an experimental design.

Furthermore, I took the feedback received from players to further try and improve the CD scores of the game's introductory sections. These improvements were made largely to promote immersion and increase the level of curiosity a player might experience.
These improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Turning the level transition trigger in the Gate scene to automatically fire the dialogue, without the need to press the 'E' key. This was done to prevent a bug where the player got the prompt to press 'E', but pressing the button didn't do anything.
- Making the *meanana* always look into the direction of the player character, to make it feel more alive.
- Improving visibility of the farm building's back exit, as some players struggled to spot it.
- Interrupting the dead *meanana* corpse inspection after using 3 of the 5 senses, to induce surprise in players who expect a need to exhaust all dialogue options.
- Adding a shortened character creation interview for returning players, as this section of the game has narrative exposition built into it which a returning player might not need.
- Adding the possibility for the player character to crouch down during certain interactions, where this would make narrative sense. For example, when encountering the first human corpse, or when inspecting the *meanana* corpse.
- Adding a marked tree interactable to the farm scene, to reward and encourage area exploration.
- Adding an active skill check to the first human corpse's dialogue tree, to tip players off that they probably won't be able to figure everything out in one go.
- Changing the gate scene's exit to now glow, to both improve the visibility of it

- and to connect it to the following transition scene better.
- Adding a dialogue trigger on the outside of the fences in the farm scene, so the player character now reacts as expected upon seeing two corpses in the backyard.
- Adding an interactable creature to the gate scene, to establish the connection between the cyclopaedia print-out and the digital game earlier into the game.
- Changing the living *meanana* to show up 4 seconds after the dialogue with the dead meanana starts, to prevent a visible pop-in which could kill the sense of curiosity about what shows up at the end of the *meanana* corpse dialogue.

Using my findings I will also continue my work on the upcoming four areas of the game: the bogs, the dunes, the dig, and the primaeval. As of right now it's hard to predict how this research will concretely affect the design of these areas. Some findings were relatively universal however, like how players enjoyed being rewarded for straying off the intended path, and direct connections between the Cyclopaedia and the digital game. These will also be implemented in the upcoming areas.

What is definite is that I will be using CD and play interruptions to monitor engagement throughout these sections, as I was able to glean valuable insight by doing so.

So far, these action points have helped me improve the overall experience in ways which I wouldn't have arrived at had I not employed CD.

These improvements were more guided and informed by concrete findings, arguably more so than the improvements of a standard playtest. These would be much more focused on bug-hunting and balancing issues, which in this case weren't particularly important insights to me.

Recommendations

My primary recommendation for game designers wanting to measure and foster curiosity is to interrupt gameplay at key points, specifically where you want engagement to be at a high point. The 1-10 rating scale was intuitive for testers to understand, and the ability to give further description helps with catching any bugs or errors the tester encounters in the relevant section.

Sometimes testers come with their own suggestions to improve curiosity or engagement, but these are best kept as suggestions, and usually point at a larger unaddressed design issue when they keep popping up between different testers.

For example, an observed trend in this paper's test was that players were very eager to be given control and explore the world, but only started feeling satisfied when encountering the dead meanana. The solution to this problem was to introduce a creature earlier into the experience, in the first roamable area. Although this interaction is relatively limited, it still satisfied the desire to interact with something noteworthy which also requires interaction with the cyclopaedia print-out.

It is not recommended to use the 5DC scale as I implemented it, as this implementation led to uncertain results due to cited confusion and misinterpretation.

This does not mean it can't be useful however, As the paper *Exploring video games that invoke curiosity* (Gómez-Maureira, M. A., & Kniestedt, I., 2019) uses the unmodified 5DC questionnaire to observe connections between a player's curiosity and different game genres' ability to invoke curiosity.

A suggestion would be to use the 5DC as a baseline measurement for a tester's level of inherent curiosity. A future test could weigh this inherent curiosity, drawn from the unmodified 5DC questionnaire, against the DC scores given by the tester, to see whether interesting patterns occur

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Appendix

Preliminary Test Survey

First off, did you encounter any bugs or general weirdness?
Enter "none" if not applicable.

9 responses

None

On restarting, the music stopped playing when the rodent is introduced
The game will sometimes restart on the first encounter and other times on the intro when picking the leave area option

When choosing "Leave the area" from the dialogue menu, the game returned to the title screen without closing the dialogue pane. It remained on screen behind the title card.

final menu transition

When I typed in my name in the beginning, it still said: "1. Ash", after I clicked that, it did change to the name I put in. Also the ending, in my first playthrough I clicked "Taste", and after that I glitched back to the main screen, but couldn't click any buttons. Replayed it, because I wanted to know the last option "Touch".

Yes but you already fixed it or are aware of em.

Check which things you've experienced during your playthrough(s).

9 responses

17
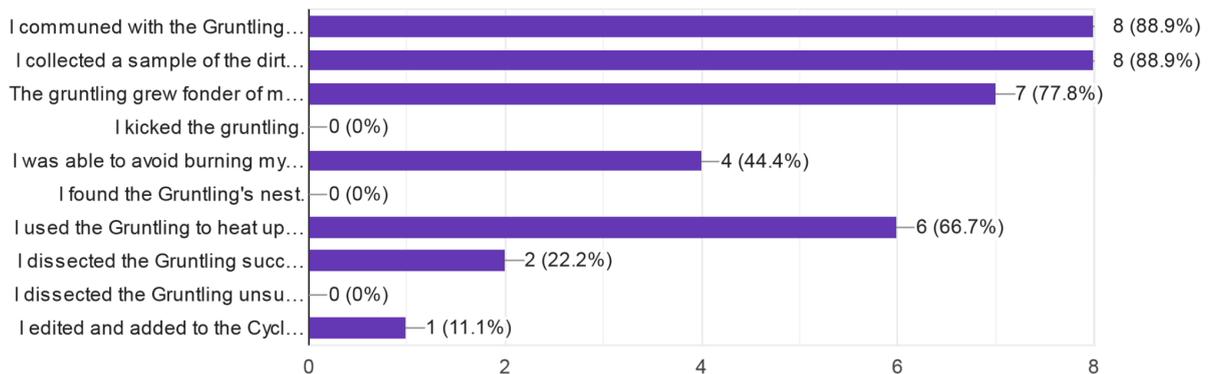
My character creation choices had a considerable influence on the following Gruntling encounter.

9 responses
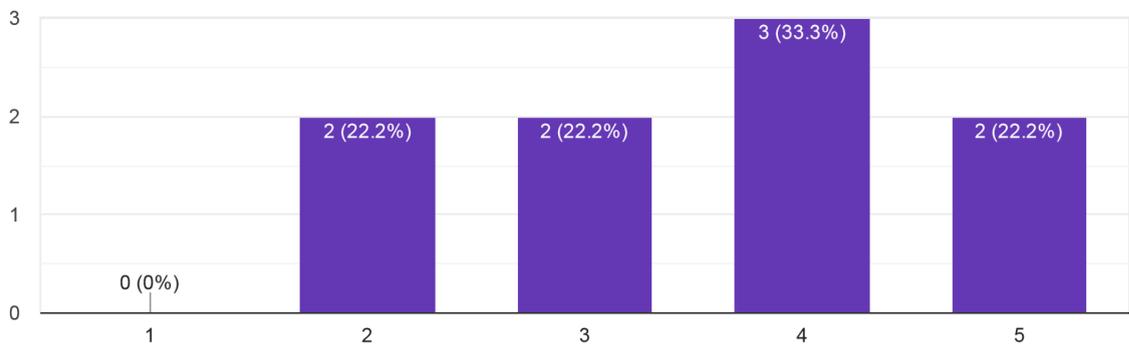
I felt in control when shaping my character.

9 responses
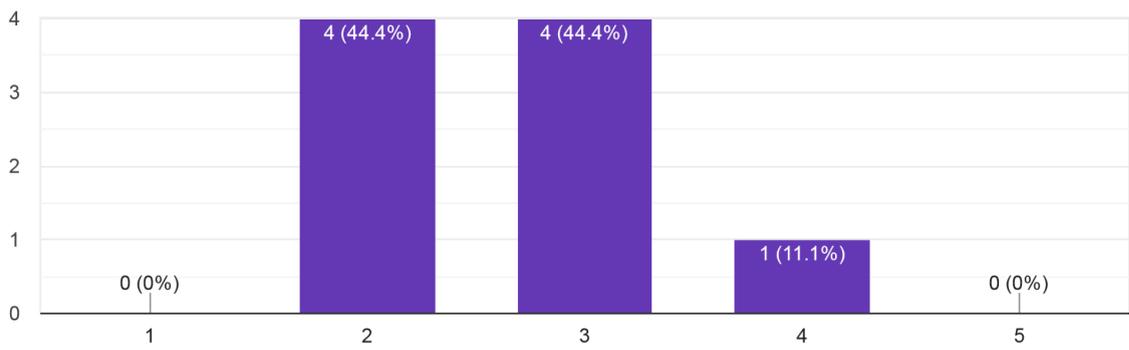
The character I had in mind is the one I ended up with.

9 responses

18
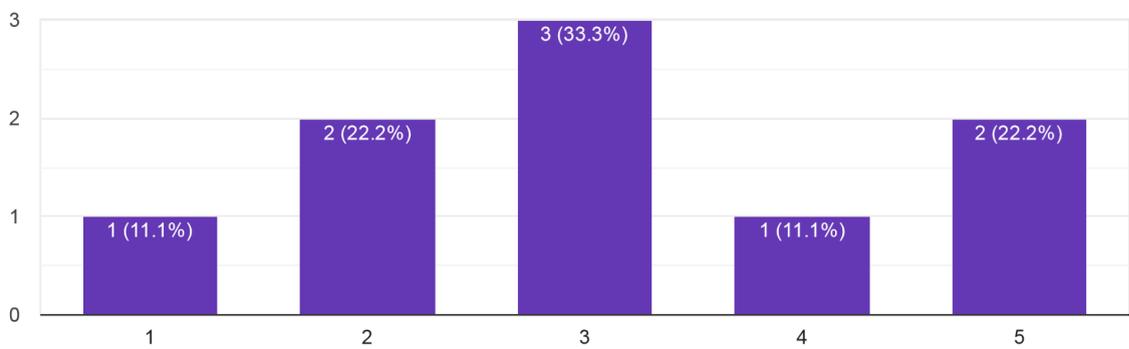
I prefer this manner of character creation over directly assigning values to my skills.

9 responses
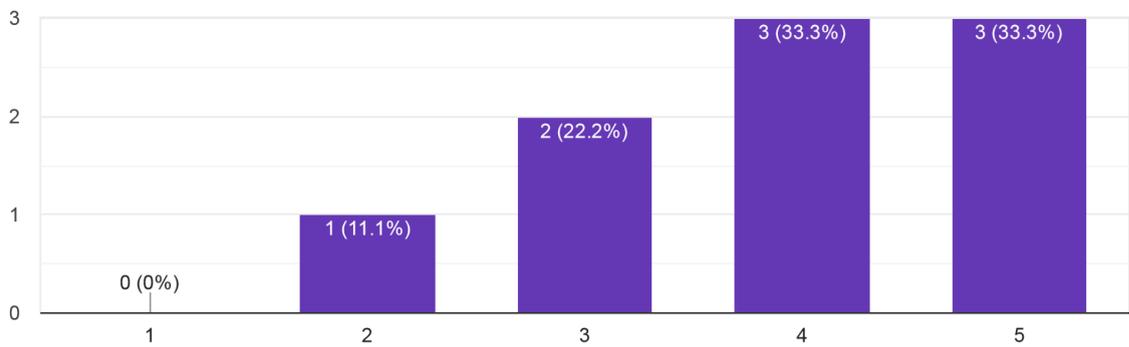
I felt a growing fondness for the Gruntling.

9 responses
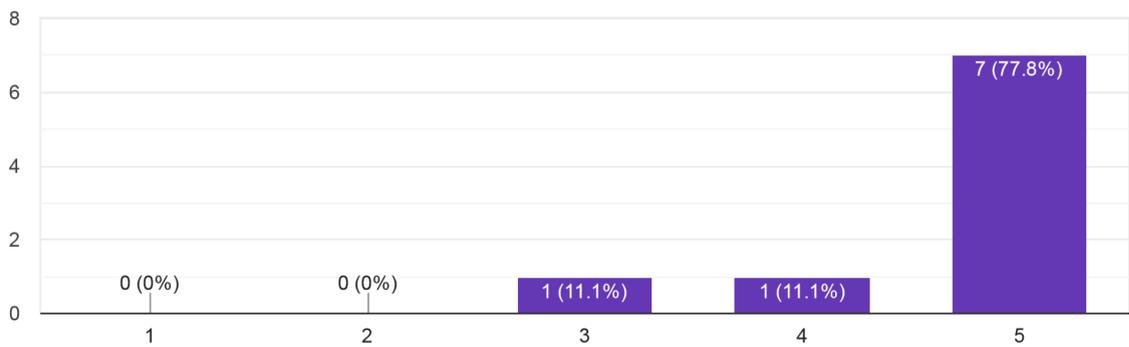
The more I interacted with the Gruntling, the more I understood it.

9 responses
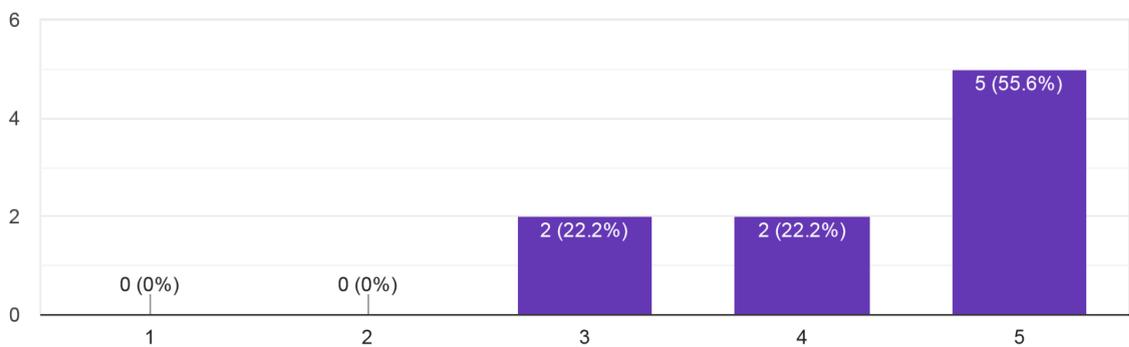
The Cyclopaedia provided a meaningful addition to my encounter with the Gruntling
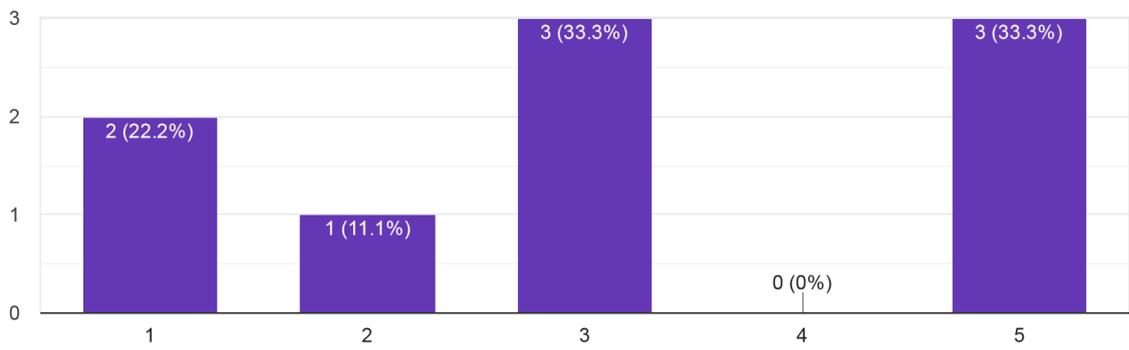
9 responses

I would protect any future Gruntlings I meet from danger, even if it's a human threat.

9 responses
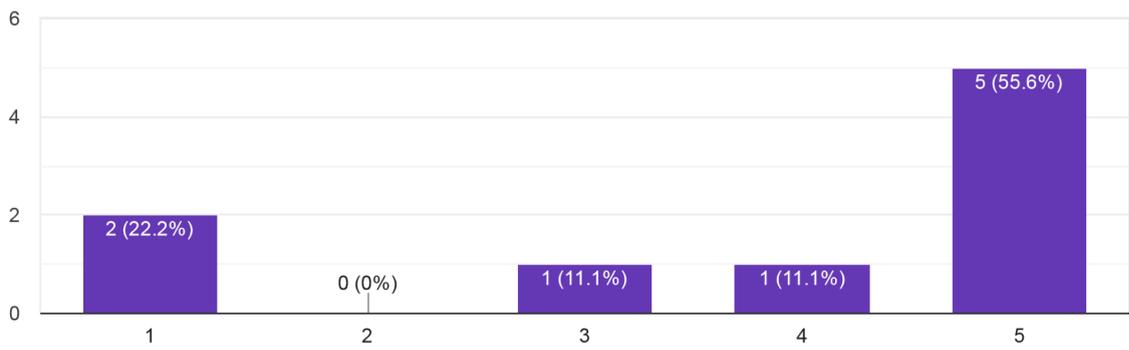
I learned to see the Gruntling as an equal.

9 responses
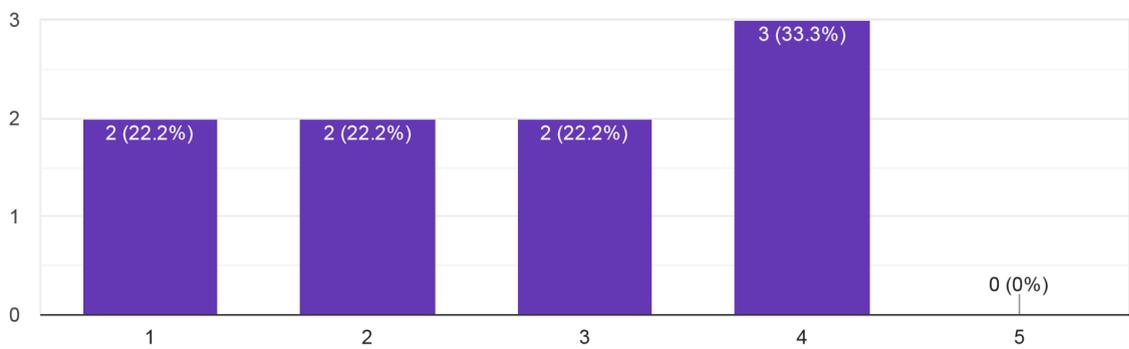
I experienced memorable moments during my encounter with the Gruntling
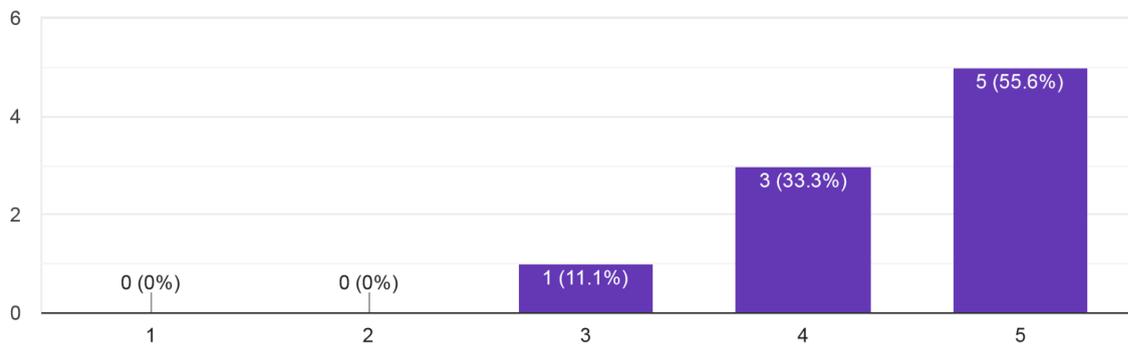
9 responses

What was your favourite, or most memorable moment from your encounter with the Gruntling? Enter "none" if not applicable.

9 responses

Flipping it over and heating rations on their belly got me good

The notion of cooking an egg on the gruntling was very amusing and memorable.

fail-touching its belly but then petting its head and feeling the love

I found its mindless rooting through the dirt to be of interest.

The way it enjoyed my company after seeing its loneliness.

On my third playthrough I chose to dissect the creature, finding it was a nuclear reactor was startling. I don't think I've ever seen an alien creature like that, was a really good "oh shit" moment from what I thought was like a field mouse. Crazy stuff.

I found it very comical that I was able to just flip it on it's back to heat up food, lol

It became happy when it knew it wasn't alone!

looking deep into its eyes but it was just like "buhh"

The layout of the dialogue UI was readable
9 responses
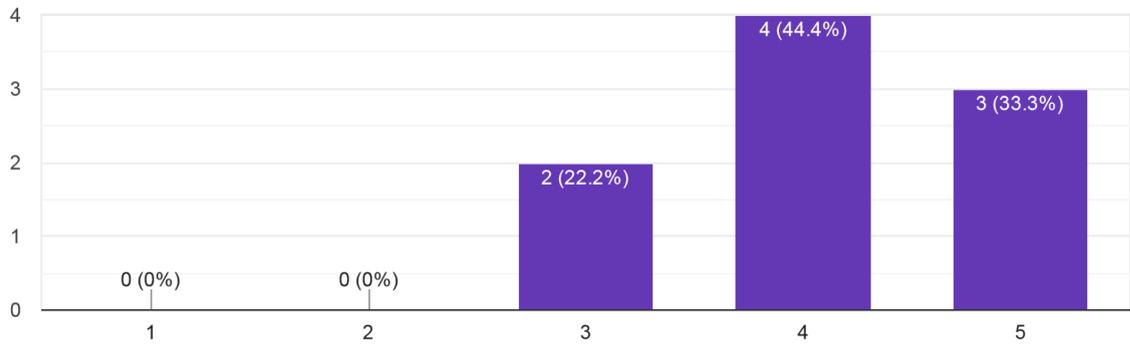
I felt little to no strain from reading the dialogue
9 responses
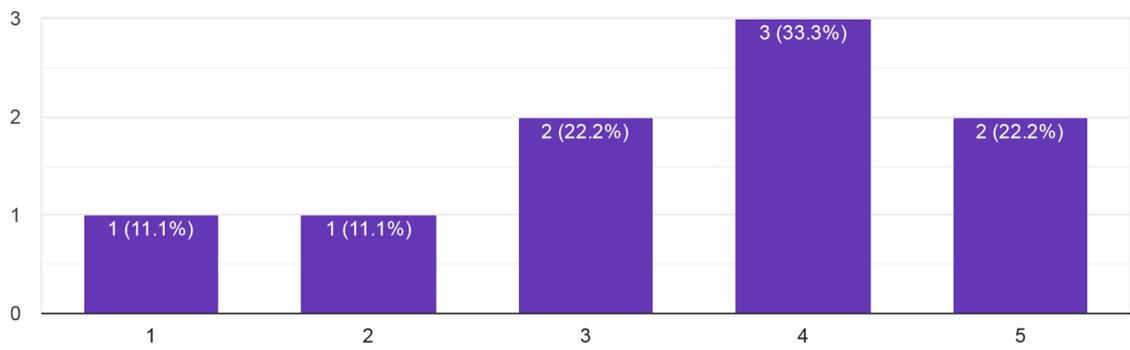
The dialogue was enjoyable to read
9 responses
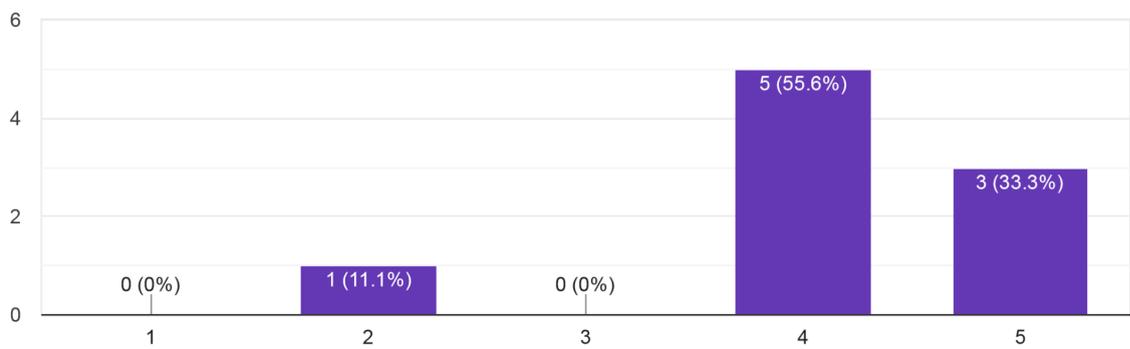
What was or wasn't enjoyable about the written dialogue?

9 responses

Sometimes when reading the dialogue after picking an option, a text box will appear on the other side of the screen letting me know of a succesful roll or a trait activating, but I wasn't able to read it at certain times as it disappeared while I was still focussed on reading the new dialogue on the right side of the screen.

The dialogue as written is fine, but I don't feel as though much is gained by having unique narrators for each trait - they all read very similarly. You may or may not want to place emphasis on this aspect of the dialogue system, but the tone and diction of each narrator were similar to the point that their names were the only thing distinguishing them from being Inner Voice. I don't think it harms the game to use a relatively unified voice for each trait, though I did expect a more dramatic use of the mechanic.

too long on many occasions, overstates things

The written dialogue was nice. I enjoyed reading it, it was neither too wordy nor too long.

The text that pops up on the lower left of the screen was gone so quickly. I was reading on the right and then was not quick enough to read the lower left text quite a lot of times.

It did feel a little weird as to if my emotions were different people or part of me. They felt a little removed from me as they referred to me in third person.

It was a lot. If there is a lot of dialogue I recommend to also use "snappy" short sentences inbetween. Not like a big piece of text, and then another big piece of text. Try to alternate this so the player doesn't get weary.

Also, I found the text in the bottom left hard to follow. Sometimes I missed it, because I was reading the moving text on the right, and then I noticed the textbox on the left disappear without being able to have read it.

That I was a little scholar person doing field researching, felt invested in my role doing scholary things!

written in an interesting way that actually made me want to continue reading instead of getting bored/the text getting lost in minute details

If you have any additional thoughts to share, feel free to leave them here!

7 responses

Love the idea of having a seperate encyclopedia to help you when encountering wildlife in Anders, but I didn't feel like the information in it was valuable to me when investigating the creature. Maybe I wasn't picking the right option, but I honestly forgot the scorching hot belly yet the game warned me when I touched it and I also had no negative effects from smelling the creature

I did not know about the Cyclopaedia entry until after I finished playing and started the survey. I did not read the description before playing, so while it was my foolish mistake, I assume other people may have this happen as well. I would expect the encyclopedia mechanic to exist inside the game for a more fleshed out build, but if you don't want it to be included in the game window itself, a message directing players toward the supplemental materials would be a good idea.

well done!

In the beginning you asked about character creation, I was so immersed I didn't really think about making a character but more of reacting and acting to the circumstances as if i were there. As if i was the one who was stroking the gruntling.

It would be cool to see the creatures in the opaque pixelated style on the screen, a vague hint at their shape before seeing them in the cyclopaedia would add to the sense of "What is this thing?"

I would like to see the more aggressive voice feel more persuasive. When I burned my hand in the first playthrough it said something like "It means us harm? Kill it!" and I think its an odd representation of a fear response. Maybe something like "We angered it, there's no telling what it is capable of. We have to defend ourselves or else." Less like an evil option and more like a concerned mom.

I'd like to see a few more branches or diverse encounters with the senses, it felt a little railroady at points.

I wanna lick the gruntling directly.

Overall solid experience, I loved the nuclear reactor twist and learning from this it has a nest makes me want to go back and find his family so I can put them in a shoebox and be their friend.
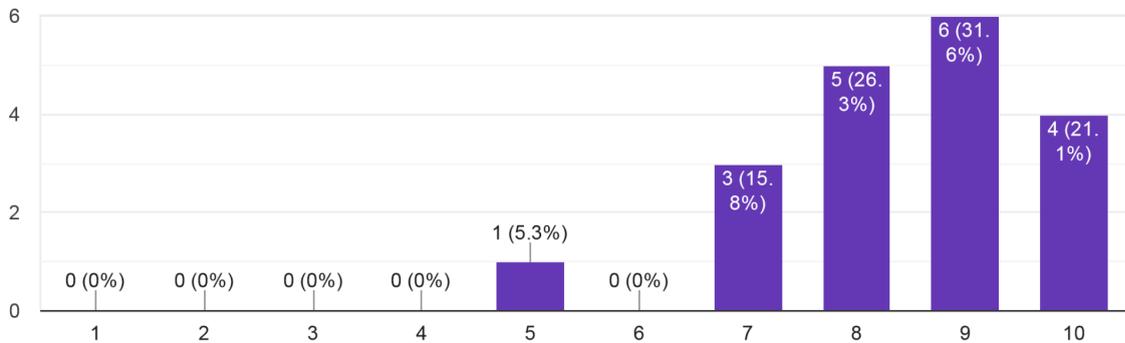
Ur a qtieπ

meow

Play Interruption 1 Answers

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you want to continue the game?
19 responses

If you could, please provide some insight as to why you feel this way.

19 responses

Ik ben excited om die wereld van Anders in te duiken. Wat ga ik tegenkomen? Wat is deze wereld? Ik heb het gevoel dat dingen die ik nu heb gezegd misschien wel invloed gaan hebben op latere momenten.

Ik heb best wel veel vraagtekens over de interviewer, over wat hij precies van mij wil en wat de situatie is. Er is een bepaalde spanning

x

It makes me curious about how anders will look like and it ignites the explore within me. I wanna see I wanna see it.

• I liked the animal crossing esque voice sounds
• I think the visuals of the 'improvements' that show up on the bottom right should be a bit more clear / overt. It doesn't catch my attention always.
• I like the whole tone and vibe of what's going on, it's very interesting and I feel like it's well written where there's subtleness behind all the things that are said by the interviewer. The dialogue also flows very nicely and doesn't feel awkward. Very natural
• I like the inner dialogue things that are happening, it's very Disco Elysium which I really like. At this point after character creation I'm not sure how extensively it will play a role but I'm interested also because of it.
•At the start I'm not sure what an EXP is so I feel wary of giving a name to it. I see you give some context afterward but I think you should maybe give the chance to name it AFTER the context of what an EXP is, is given.

The plot of the game is intriguing and I'm interested in the plant Anders and it's wildlife the characters are discussing, but I'm confused as to what the interviewer is talking about regarding some organization

The interview section and use of the Cylopaedia has made me want to explore Anders and actually discover the wildlife for myself!

It is a very strong setup. I am excited to check out what wildlife is on this planet, and the inclusion of an actual encyclopedia to look through is very tactile and makes me all the more invested. Also love the Disco Elysium style inner voices.

It feels very familiar to Disco Elysium's way of dialogue and conducting things. I am not sure what to expect further in the game, so I definitely want to see what's there. The mood is pretty well done, feels like an uncomfortable interview. The MC is a bit too arrogant for my liking.

The world seems very interesting and I want to explore it. The interview also made me curious about what exactly B.Y FROST is and what it is that they are doing.

The interview was intriguing, made me want to find out whats going on and what the interviewer is hiding from us. I personally also love exploring and learning about about a world/animals.

The premise is intriguing enough and the game has some serious Disco Elysium vibes. Also, the monster entries in the Cyclopedia were charming enough. For some, it felt like reading an SCP report.

the voices in my head are winning

Ik wil graag door omdat het mijn interesse trekt. "Wat is Anders?" "Wat houden de teksten in van de andere 'karakters' in de gesprekken?" De hele mysterieuze vibe gaat goed op me.

I'm intrigued as to who the interviewer is, and what's going on with the research on Anders

The old school feel of the game is enough to draw me in, though the various traits interjecting throughout the dialogue is a fair bit confusing at first.

The interaction between the characters is fun and interestinct, I wont give it a 10 because with not knowing anything from the plot or the situation I'm in I cant yet feel invested in the story, hopefully my opinion will change soon. Also this is a personal opinion, I think the reading is a bit heavy, I had to read 11 pages of a pdf and now this dialogue, I'm not a big fan of reading and games with large amounts of text. I saw there is a shortened interview but I didnt click on it at the start because it was my first playthrough

I noticed the dialogue system and presentation took a lots of notes from Disco Elysium, which I like. I was also curious, as the converstation took a long time, if I would ever get to Anders or whether the game would be one of those ones where the actual gameplay is startlingly different from described. Finally, The interview provided a sense of general unease and unknowns to be explored.

I love how gross the interviewer talksprite is. All the inner voices are fun too. Grammar is a bit messy in places but I can still understand everything perfectly. The emotions shines through

Play Interruption 2 Answers

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you want to continue the game?
19 responses
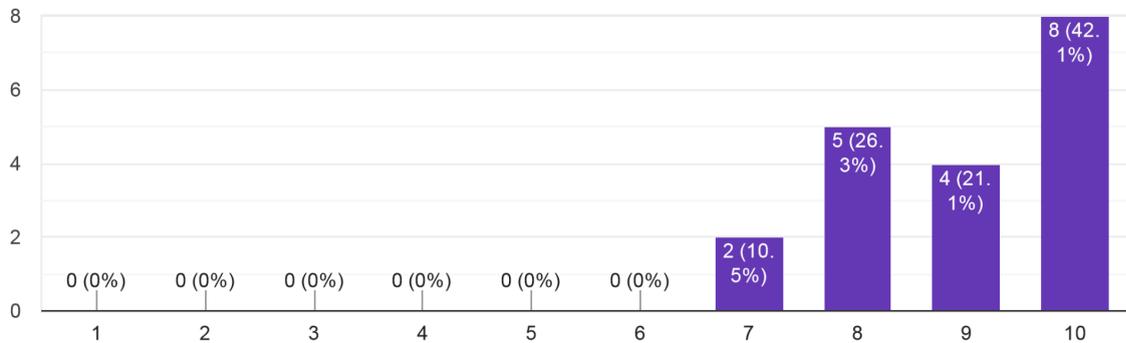
If you could, please provide some insight as to why you feel this way.

19 responses

Eindelijk op de wereld te zijn. Ik heb zin om het te gaan ontdekken. Controle te krijgen over het karakter. Waar gaat dit alles naartoe?

Er is een grote verandering in de omgeving en de gameplay, ik ben benieuwd wat er hierna gaat komen

Nieuwsgierig wat er verder gaat gebeuren

I just got here, must see more. I want to see what this world has to offer.

• I like the dialogue with the EXP during landing, sets a nice tone for what you can expect from the narrative.
• Music is good :) But doesnt loop well hahaha

I just got control of the character in an unknown area, I want to explore!!

Having reached the area im excited to meet the wildlife and explore, especially now i have gained control of my character!

This game has the sauce. Lovely music and great atmosphereeee. Makes my brain and heart go aflutter

Finally got to the exploration bit so I want to check out more of it. The controls feel slightly off as the transition between "walk forward" and "walk to sides" are not instant. I think it's fine but it will take a bit time to get used to.

I want to start exploring the world

the exo-suit is interesting, and am excited to look for phoenix ranked creatures around

I mean, this is the beginning of the part of the game where you can move around, so I'd honestly keep going anyway to see what the actual game is about, aside from the dialogues.

i wanna kick my EXP ass, for science

De artstyle is erg nostalgisch, doet me denken aan eind 2000 games. Ook vind het leuk dat je de EXP een naam kan geven, Joe Biden is een goede vriend.

I want to know more about this environment, and more about my EXP and why they seem to be sentient.

Much like at the start, the overall atmosphere of the game is still appealing enough. A lot of it has to do with presentation and graphics, and I happen to favor the style that this game has.

I really liked the animation entering into the realm, the visuals are great they give me a real feel of traveling to another realm

I'm still curious, but I have a short attention span. I also tend to prefer linear games to non-linear ones, so getting to what I presume will be the non-linear part is less interesting.

Not much about the game has changed since my last answer. My only critique is that I'm not a huge fan of the lighting and normalmapped water... but that's personal preference

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you want to continue the game?
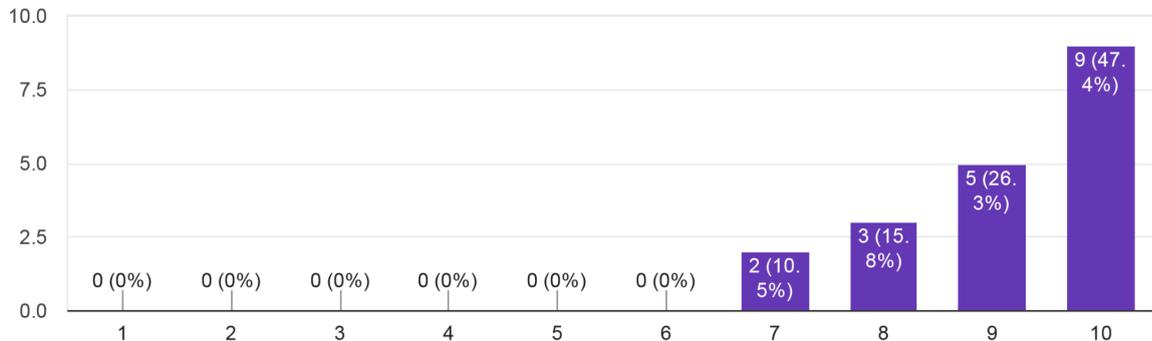
19 responses

If you could, please provide some insight as to why you feel this way.

19 responses

Ik begin nu meer intrigued te raken. en ik heb nu een wat sterker beeld van wat ik misschien wel kan verwachten. Ik heb veel zin om meer te weten te komen over wat er aan de hand is.

Ik heb het idee dat er iets gaat gebeuren nadat ik de lichamen aantref

Nog steeds nieuwsgierig wat er gaat gebeuren - het lijkt door het vinden van een lijk een spannend verhaal te worden

This gives me metroid prime 2 vibes, Specificly the beginning where something happend to the crew and you got to find out why. Me wanting to figure out what is driving me to seek out the truth and explore more.

• I like that I got a successful deduction :) And I like the inner dialogues between inner dialogue 'characters' lmfao
• I love the lighting and fog! Very eerie along with the music, works very well!
• I'm not sure why the spoken dialogue by my character is grey. The grey makes it feel like more thoughts to me in a way just because of color association.
•I'm getting a lot of successes on checks but not a lot of failures. So it doesn't really feel like I have as much agency in what I'm seeing. Maybe for the body inspection part you can give choices that represent different skills and these can fail or succeed depending on how good you are at them. The skills seem very passive so far which doesn't feel very engaging to me.
• Lighting inside is great too along with the noises from the light bulbs. Very immersive.

Just had a spooky encounter with a dead body and no explenation from the game/characters. Makes me excited to want to investigate more and check the encyclopedia if there is any info on it.

Im now curious about the body, and what could be living in the area!

Now we have a proper mystery involving the mechanics of interesting alien life I am all about this.

If player rushed through the first "travel" section (in the water) immediately into the small clearing they would get two "travel" sections in a row, very shortly spaced apart. Maybe there should be something more to do in the first area? I dislike both areas feeling THIS closed, literal giant impassable walls. Then it gets mentioned that this was barely used path which feels weird as it was the only option for the player unless I missed something. Perhaps more subtle approach on blocking off the Player could be used? Before the encounter I could easily see another dead body in the "backyard" and also one of the monsters. My character made no comment about it. Maybe it would be best to hide it with some crops as they get mentioned? I am definitely still interested what I am about to find out the intended way though.

I want to meet some of the funny animals, and know what happened to the dead people.

I'm interested in finding out whats going on, kinda scared tho not gonna lie.

Holy heavens, this is the stuff that makes me want to go forward. That was creepy, unsettling, eerie and a true page-turner moment!

yo this person got their insides teleported to narnia or smth

Guh! Body! Intresse is er nog steeds, levels zijn niet heel groot waardoor je kan vervelen maar ook niet te klein dat het te linnearl lijkt.

The more I learn about Anders, the more I want to find out.
The world building feels very in-depth, but at the same time isn't being dumped on the player all at once. You have a question, and the game answers it, but in answering it, implies there's more to come.

There seems to be weight to the choices I make, like how I answer other characters, or how I chose interact with interactables.

The different parts of the character's personality, based only on this play through, do seem to affect some unseen stats, with the pop-up that says "[name] success." I'm already thinking about what other choices I could make, would lead to.

The game pulls me to find out what will happen next, and in this instance the various traits providing input on the situation is interesting.

It's possible to pick up the audio tape through the wall, i dont think that's intended, other than that I really enjoyed the set up and this short investigation and how you give a background to what has happened here and show that there have been other "expeditions" before the current and how they were planning to starting farming and etc...I'm curious about learning more about the meananas.

While I've found one body, I spotted another body in the crop patch at the back of the hut, so I want to check that one out too. Unrelated, but having to pause the game and explain why I want to keep playing kills the pacing a bit.

Maybe a bit short-sighted/impatient but I want to see little guys... I want to see creatures!!! Also, it's a little odd how small this forest clearing is while the protagonist says "maybe that house over there has some clues!" while there's literally nothing else around and the house is directly in front of them.

Would be nice if the way out of the gate area looked a little clearer/prettier too. Doesn't need yellow spraypaint all around it, but it's just a bit odd how detailed and normalmapped everything else is while the exit is just a little crack in the wall that's super easy to miss. Still very interested though!!! ^_+

Play Interruption 4 Answers

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you want to continue the game?
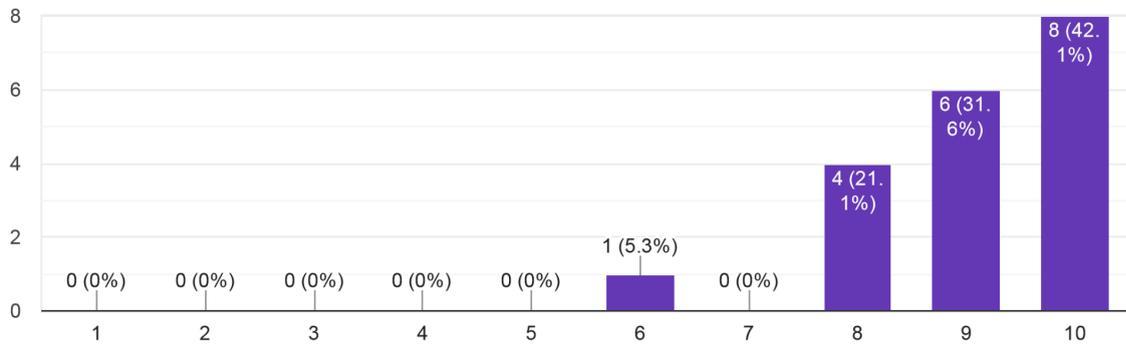
19 responses

If you could, please provide some insight as to why you feel this way.

19 responses

> Het voelde vet dat ik mijn kennis uit het boek kon toepassing in de wereld. Toch heb ik een boel vragen die ik graag beantwoordt wil hebben. Verders is dit ook een spannend moment; turn around slooowly...

> Ik wil weten wat er gaat gebeuren, wat er achter mij staat

> Cliff hanger! Maar ook nog steeds nieuwsgierig waar het naartoe gaat!

> You left me in suspsense! I got to find out what's behind me now.

> •I looove the zoom in on the animal corpse. Very immersive
> • I liked the sudden encounter, and the anxiety around it. It's very cool to just have one show up after they've been setup to be dangerous and things by the tape.
> • Scary red text good.

> Just figured out what might have happened and am now curious what else the investigating might tell me. Also spooked but excited about what the sound behind me might be.

I need to see what came up behind me!! (I also love the use of the Cyclopaedia to name the wildlife)

This is a banger intro to what seems 2 be a banger game I don't know what else to say. I love the slow deliberation of trying to learn about this alien life, and the build up to inspecting its corpse is very solid. I love that you get to learn about the horrible ways people around it died before having a close encounter yourself.

Well you left me at quite the cliffhanger here :D. No comments for this section, think it's good as it is now.

I really want to know what happened but am also slightly concerned about getting jumpscared

Curious about whats going on

I am excited to see what will happen when facing a living Meanana :') Sidenote, but it appeared already in the corner of the screen in the previous sequence, I noticed it while analyzing the remains of the dead one.

tasted like squid i believe

eyeball difficult >;c - Voor de nog steeds interessant, vind vooral de lore via de audio logs van Penny Quinn en de andere dode leuk om te lezen.

I feel like I'm repeating myself, but I guess that's a good sign that the game has a very definite feel to it.

I want to learn more about Anders, and the creatures.

I'm also starting to think that the character's inner monologue aren't entirely part of them, but that they might be somehow separate. They seem to talk to each other more so than someone might talk to themselves.

The mystery keeps pulling me along, and the opportunity to see some alien creatures is certainly enticing. I like the inclusion of the print-out for use in game and hope to see more such implementation.

I couldnt progress anymore after this point, I tried stepping back and approaching and I got the "Please fill out the relevan...." on my screen and couldnt make it away, now I cant progress.

I am very worried that I am about to be jumpscared and do no wish to experience this. Game still interesting though.

CREATURES!!!!!!! YIPPEEE!!!!!!!!!

And I got to use the Cyclopaedia!!!!!!

I feel like there's way too many inner voices and a lot of them overlap with each other. Couldn't the senses all fall under the generic "Inner Voice" character too? It's cumbersome at times and breaks the immersion for me. I do really like the idea though and I think it's almost executed to its potential, just needs a little tightening up for my tastes.

Play Interruption 5 Answers

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you want to continue the game?
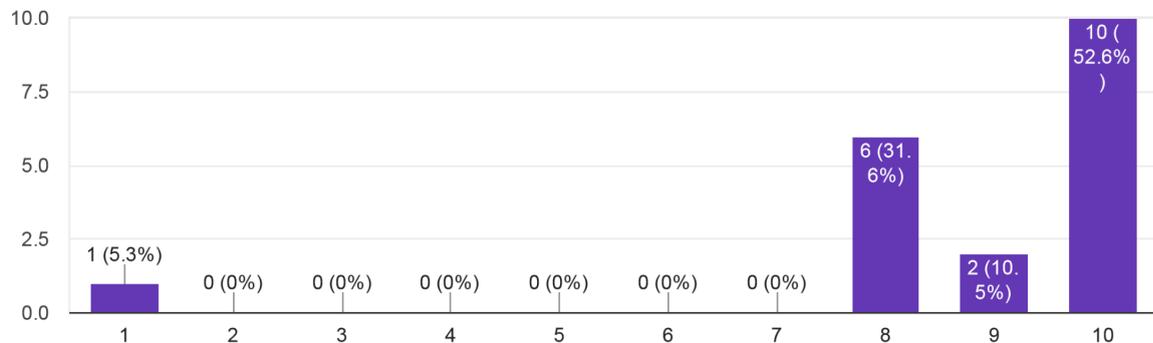
19 responses

If you could, please provide some insight as to why you feel this way.

19 responses

Nu wil ik al helemaal weten wat hierna gebeurd: ben ik dood? Is dit een soort special spirit world? Is het spel over? Of gaan we verder? Ik was al tempted met de vraag waar de meanana naartoe gaan als ze verdwijnen, ik ben dan benieuwd waar dat is, en daar ben ik nu?

Ik ben benieuwd of er nog iets gaat gebeuren, een soort van twist om uit deze situatie te komen

Nog een cliff hanger! jeez! En nu een zwart gat in! Wat gaat er dan nog meer gebeuren!

Ma'am you sure learned very well how to leave a suspense, I got to find out what happens next. so many questions, so little answers.

• Very immersive, I really enjoyed it!
• I'm curious how much my choices in character creation impacted the skills and stuff but maybe keeping the player in the dark is part of the intention?
• I like the use of text colors.
• My biggest 'concern' (for lack of better word) is the skill system and how it's being used aside from being like disco elysium (which at the same time, I dont know how much you want it to be like that). As I mentioned in my previous responses, but at the same time I feel like I haven't had enough time to spend on it either. My biggest gripe with it I would say is clarity around it, when it's being used and when it succeeds etc.

Not sure if I'm still alive but curious as to what the creature just did to me. I want to find out if it killed me like the other two people or made me disappear to someplace else.

I really want to see what happened to me, what will happen after the black hole and more about the wildlife

I am surprised and intrigued by this turn of events.

Well, it was mostly short dialogue this time, the kidnapping scene felt a bit underwhelming, but I have no issues with that. I want to see what happens next.

I would like to know where the character ends up and see maybe more docile wildlife. The world is very interesting in general and I like the concept of also being able to read up on the wildlife in the provided cyclopaedia

Very curious how this will continue, and about the mystery of what happened in the house

That was one hell of a set piece for starting the game.

my sibling in anders, not the cliffhanger

black hole sun, won't you come

Yeah again, the world of the game its intriguing to me, and I'd like to learn more about it.

A living Meanana this time! I'm compelled to find out what happens next, what other interactions could have occured and what the story has waiting for me next.

couldnt get to this point

The jumpscare was just unnerving, rather than shocking. I wonder what would have been different if I had tried to walk towards the creature?

That was pretty cool. I want to see more creatures though... hopefully soon. I will say I was a bit confused by the EXP saying "we need to get out of Anders" even though Meanani are documented to be odd/dangerous creatures. Isn't this danger to be expected?? Hoping I get explanation soon.

5DC: Joyous Exploration Answers

In Anders, I viewed challenging situations as an opportunity to grow and learn.
19 responses
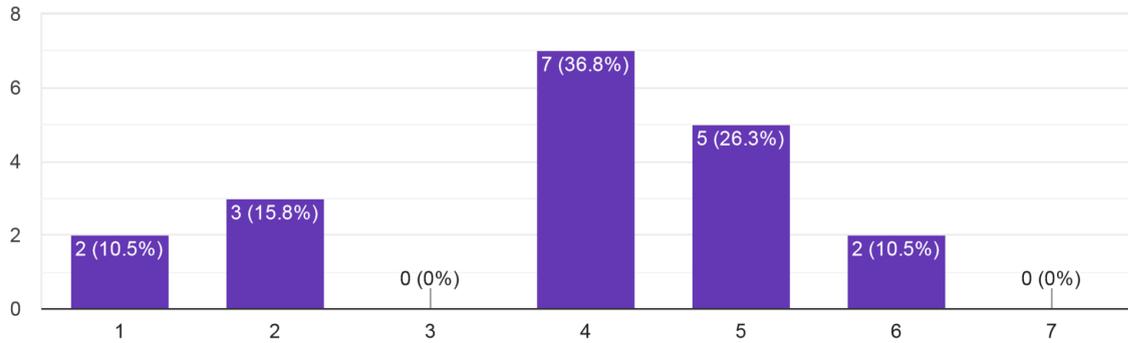
In Anders, I was always looking for experiences that challenged how I thought about myself and the world.
19 responses
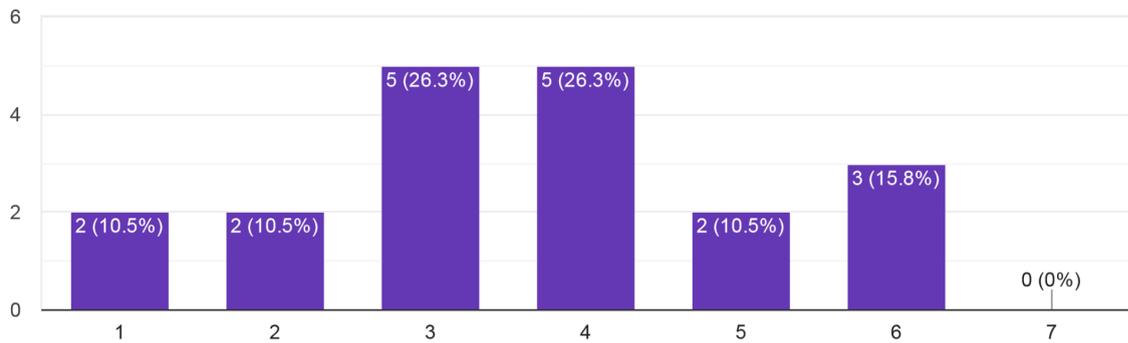
In Anders, I sought out situations where it was likely that I would have to think in depth about something.

19 responses
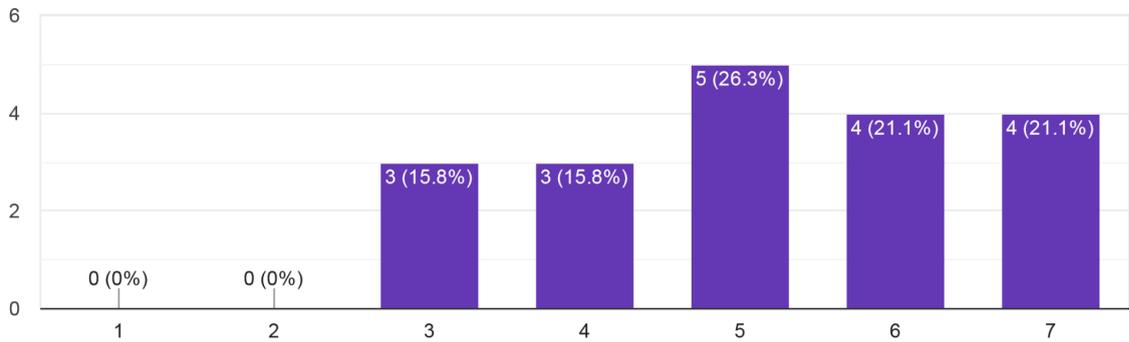
In Anders, I enjoyed learning about subjects that were unfamiliar to me.

19 responses
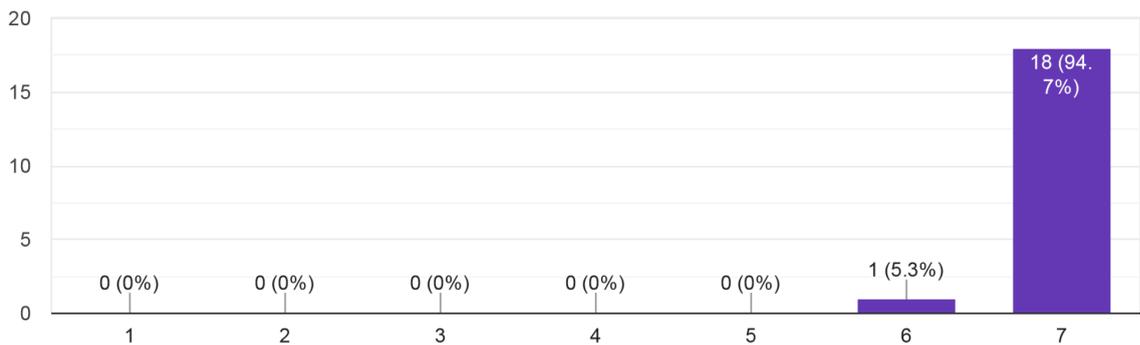
In Anders, I found it fascinating to learn new information.

19 responses
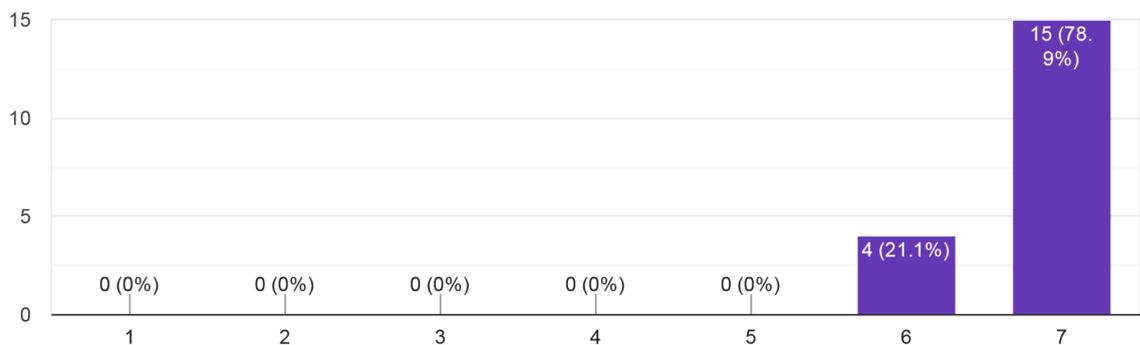
5DC: Deprivation Sensitivity Answers

In Anders, if I thought about solutions to difficult conceptual problems, it could keep me awake at night.

19 responses
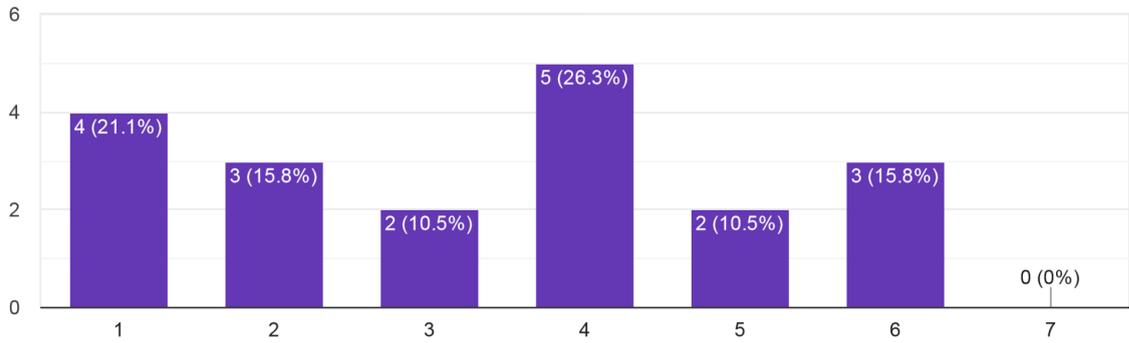
In Anders, I could spend hours on a single problem because I just couldn't rest without knowing the answer.

19 responses
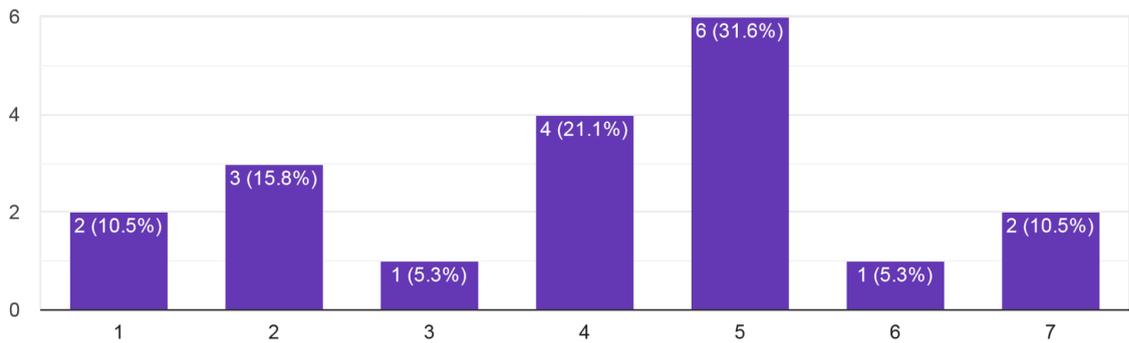
In Anders, I felt frustrated if I couldn't figure out the solution to a problem, so I worked even harder to solve it.

19 responses
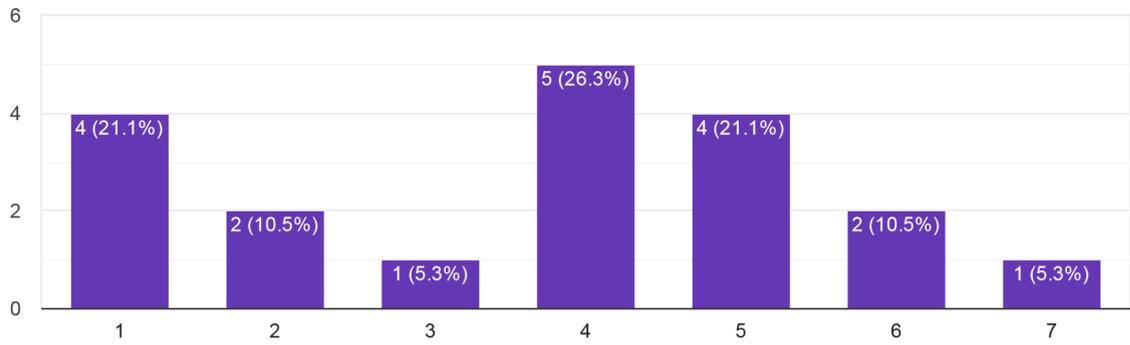
In Anders, I worked relentlessly at problems that I felt must be solved.

19 responses
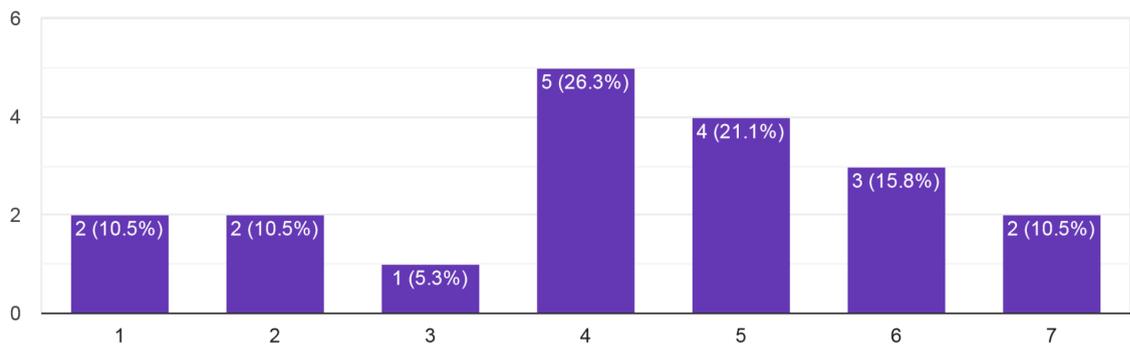
In Anders, It frustrated me not having all the information I needed.

19 responses
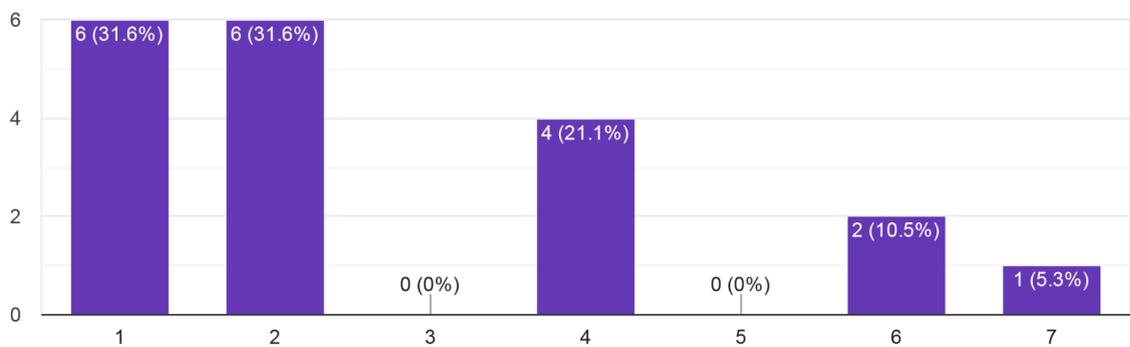
5DC: Stress Tolerance Answers

In Anders, the smallest doubt could stop me from seeking out new experiences.

19 responses
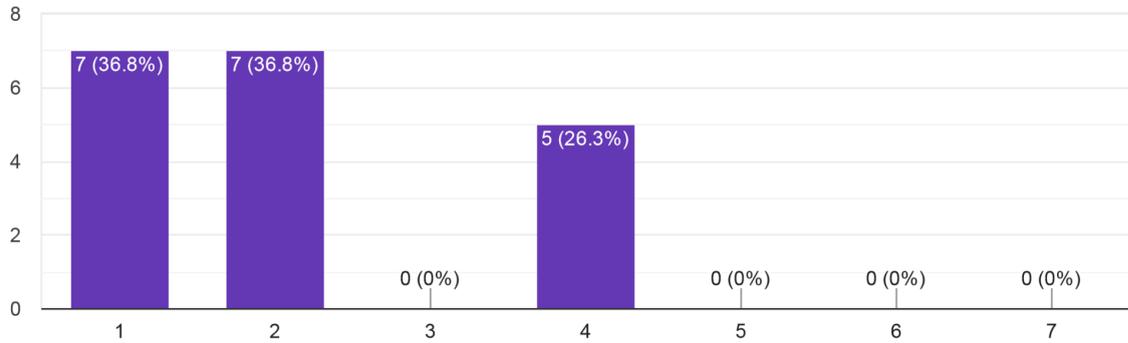
In Anders, I couldn't handle the stress that came from entering uncertain situations.

19 responses
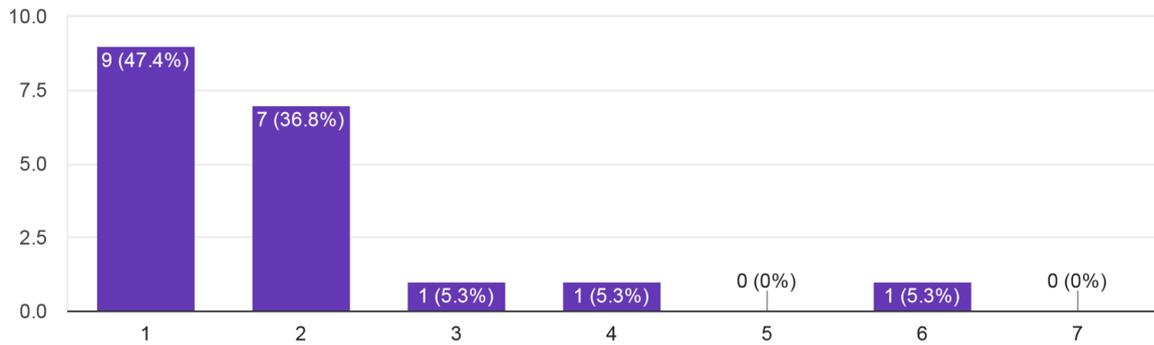
In Anders, I found it hard to explore new places when I lacked confidence in my abilities.

19 responses
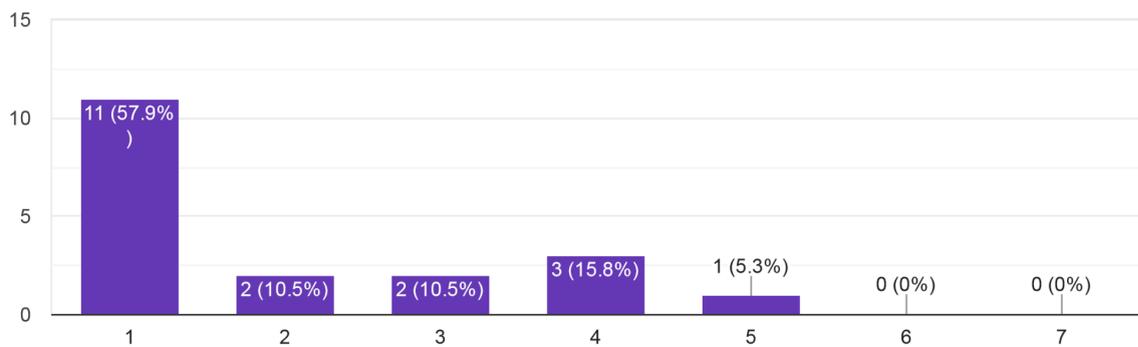
In Anders, I could not function well if I was unsure whether a new experience was safe.

19 responses
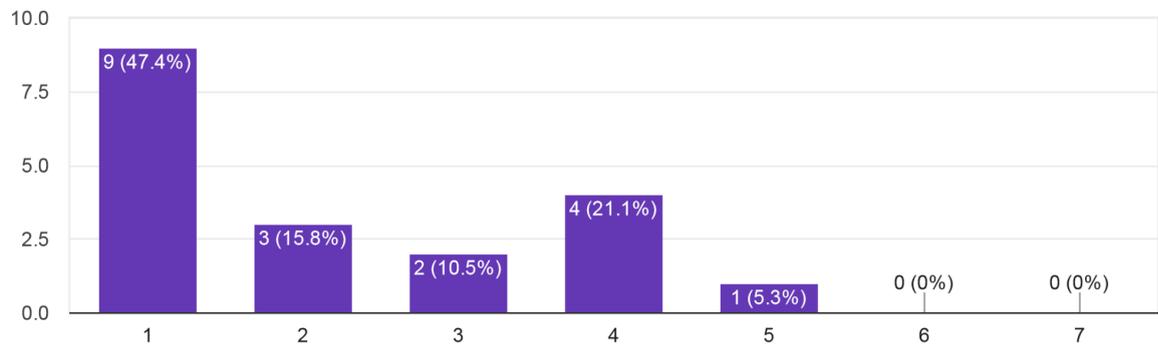
In Anders, it was difficult to concentrate when there was a possibility that I would be taken by surprise.

19 responses
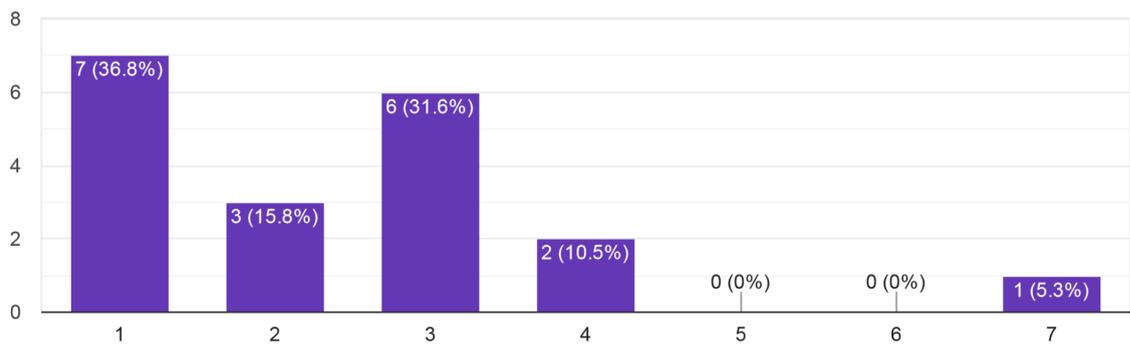
5DC: Social Curiosity Answers

In Anders, I enjoyed learning about the habits of others.

19 responses
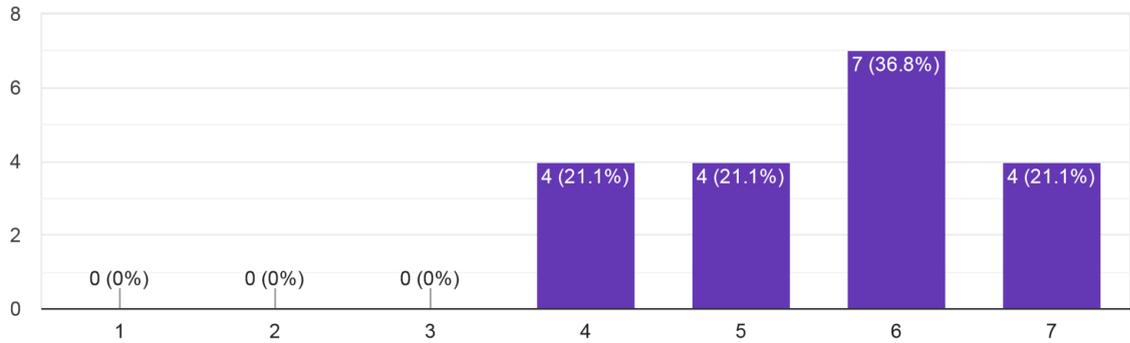
In Anders, I enjoyed finding out why others behaved the way they did.

19 responses
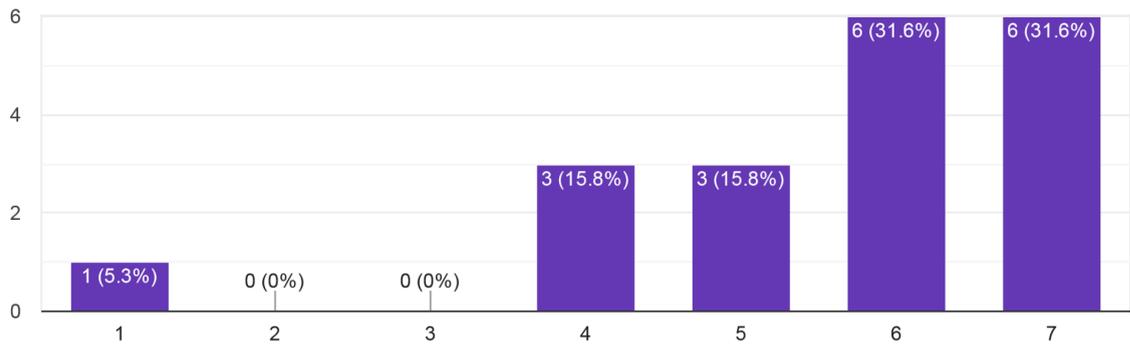
In Anders, when others are being active, I enjoyed to find out what it was about.

19 responses
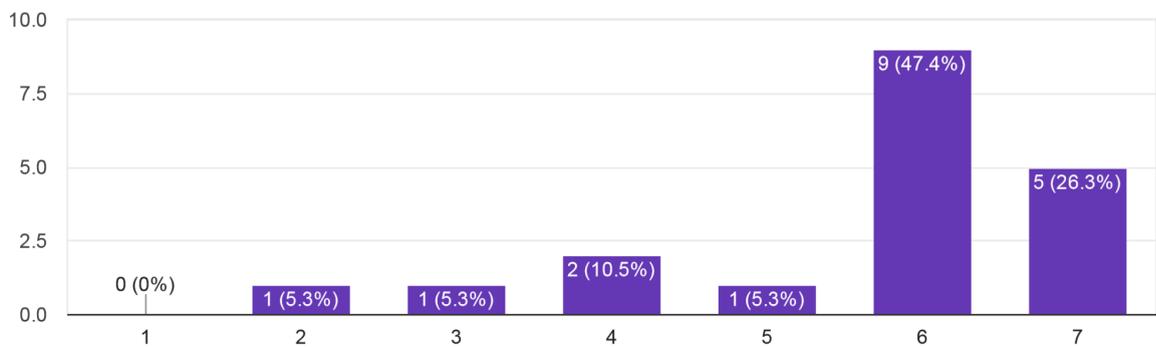
In Anders, when around others, I enjoyed listening to their sounds and observing their actions.

19 responses
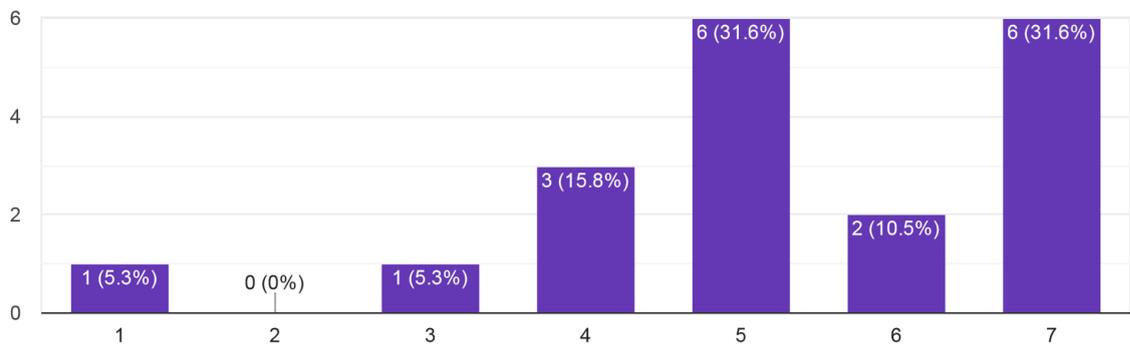
In Anders, when others were behaving in a strange or hostile manner, I wanted to know what was going on.
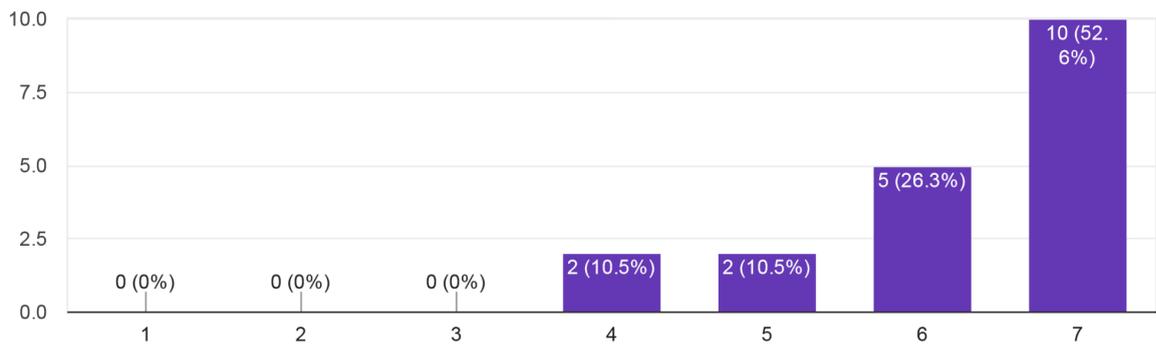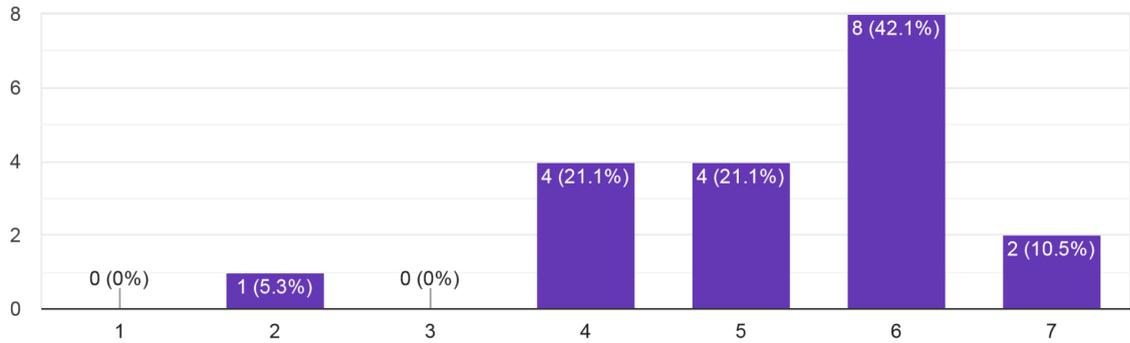
19 responses

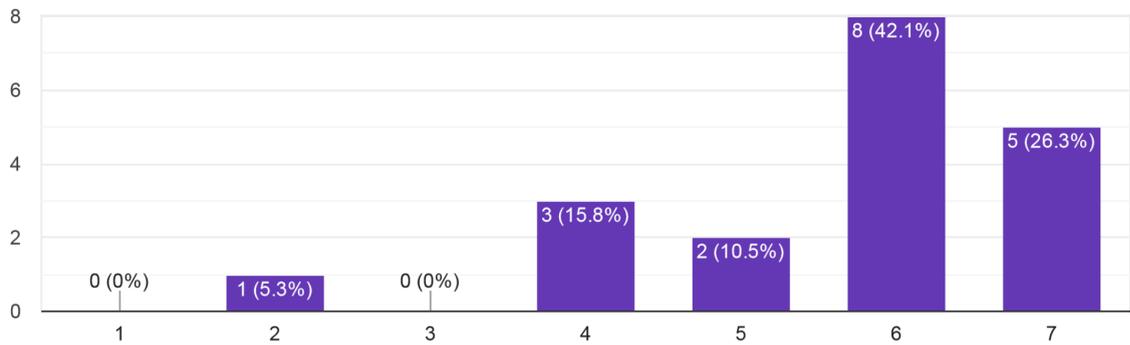## 5DC: Thrill Seeking Answers

In Anders, the anxiety of doing something new made me feel excited and alive.
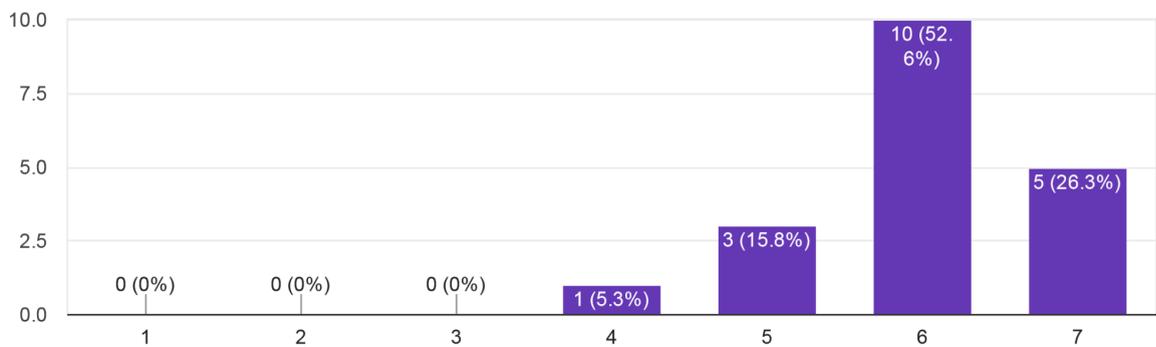19 responses

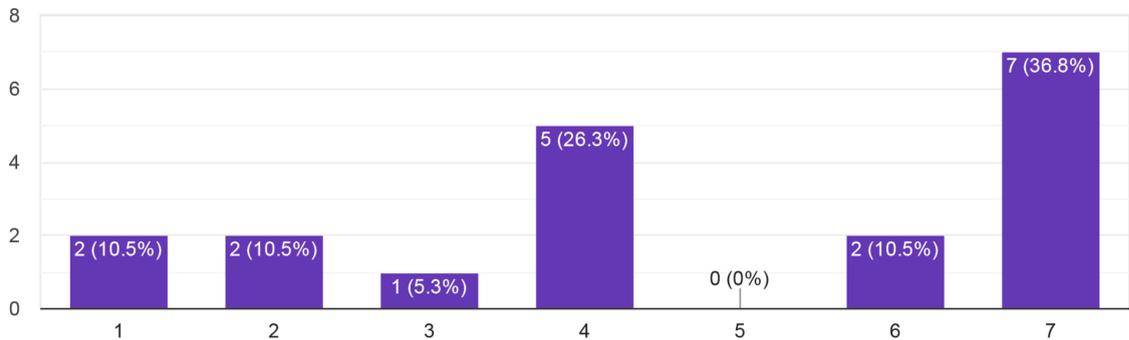In Anders, risk-taking was exciting to me.
19 responses

In Anders, I wanted to do things that were a little scary.
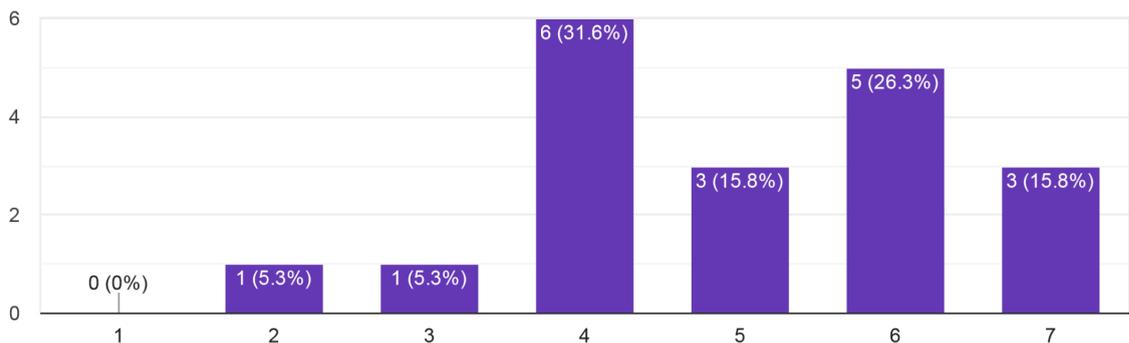19 responses

In Anders, creating an adventure as I went was much more appealing than if the adventure was planned.

19 responses

In Anders, I prefer others who are excitingly unpredictable.

19 responses

Playtest Round 1 Notes

memorial stone additions: Kim Folmer

kim
add an entry on EXPs to the cyclopaedia
positive about the inbetween scenes
opened and read the cyclopaedia off his own volition when he entered the farm scene
gets pulled into reading the cyclopaedia, he mentions that the music helps
likes the crossed through text
make fences taller
make manana look towards the player
curiosity wins out eventually and the player goes to the meanana
animals in the background?
wants a bit of freedom, and expects bigger areas in the future to roam in

2nd 'tester'
not fully pulled in yet but still wanted to continue
didn't sign contract
changing visuals tijdens char creation?

3rd 'tester'
killed some motivation ngl
make sure interactor stays off at the end of the farm scene

4th tester
reading through cyclopaedia early, ask her why after test finishes
players always explore the edges of the farm, maybe hid a lil something?
make the back exit of the farm building more visible
paste cyclopaedia in de hoop dat er hints in zaten om succesvol door het interview te komen
voelde onheilspellend, benieuwd naar wat er gaande was
verwacht dat je aan informatie komt, specifiek het mysterie achter de verdwijningen

5th playtester
when engaging with a corpse, make player character crouch down and face the subject
interrupt the players inspection of the meanana corpse halfway through
didn't see the meanana corpse
also liked writing style
dialogue centric approach reminded her of old text based adventures

it might be unclear that the meanana corpse is a corpse

Playtest Round 2 Notes
- start 16:39 end 17:22
- add Robbert Leenen to the tombstone
- really likes the pipe scenes
- ran away at first, got closer to the meanana on the other side of the gate, made for a silly situation
- voelde alsof hij informatie miste, wat het moeilijker maakte om in te leven als het karakter
- kreeg inleven terug wanneer hij het karakter kon bewegen
- de brug tussen encyclopedie en game wereld wordt als heel fijn beleefd
- cyclopaedia als instructie
- voelde een disconnect wanneer de meanana appearde, alsof ie uit de ervaring werd getrokken om te lezen erover, immersiebrekend