

The World the Children Made

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Short Game Description: *The World the Children Made* is a critical narrative adaptation of Ray Bradbury's *The Veldt* focused on tying a player's emotions to that of the story. The challenge rested in translating the essence of a short story conveyed through a medium of pure dialogue to an engaging conventional videogame medium of visual interaction. Ultimately, the goal was to transcend cultural boundaries and compellingly move *The Veldt* to pixel from the page.

Educational Goals and Approach to Learning

The game was created by analyzing Ray Bradbury's story *The Veldt* and extrapolating the meaning and conveyed visuals from the piece. The following is an example of this process:

"They walked down the hall of their soundproofed HappyLife Home, which had cost them thirty thousand dollars installed, this house which clothed and fed and rocked them to sleep and played and sang and was good to them. Their approach sensitized a switch somewhere and the nursery light flicked on when they came within ten feet of it. Similarly, behind them, in the halls, lights went on and off as they left them behind, with a soft automaticity." – *The Veldt*

Within this paragraph from the original story, we establish that the home is fully automated. As the story mentions the price of the automated instillation, we can assume that the family has only recently acquired this high-tech house. Further, the story was first published in the 1950s, so that for the game, the player's role as mother will be portrayed as a homemaker. The combination of a diligent housewife usurped by an automated and distracting house results in an unsettling environment that should feel empty and removed.

Through the use of such analysis, the short fiction was translated from writing into an interactive game. This process ensured that the game will carry the mood, tone, theme, and feeling of the original work over into the digital space. Players of the game would be able to have a meaningful conversation with readers of the written fiction, such that this game becomes both a gateway to reading as well as a critical piece allowing for the same analysis that the short story could afford.

Games like *The World the Children Made* could easily be used for compare and contrast exercises, or as alternative means of communicating the story to students who learn more effectively through active hands-on means.



Figure 1: Screenshot of *The World the Children Made*.

Other Relevant Information

The World the Children Made has received both the title of “Best Digital Game 2014” as well as “Game of the Year 2014” by Miami University of Ohio. This game has also received a Silver medal at the 2014 Serious Play Conference and was displayed at the 2014 Meaningful Play Conference.

Links to Game and Relevant Media

The World the Children Made may be downloaded from both GameJolt and Itch.io for play on PC.

GameJolt link: <http://gamejolt.com/games/adventure/the-world-the-children-made/25914/>

Itch.io link: http://just_delete_it.itch.io/the-world-the-children-made

In addition, here is a link to a Youtube video of the beginning of the game: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-DITr4C4d3k>