An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge

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Short Game Description: *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* is a game adaptation of the Civil War story of the same name written by Ambrose Bierce. Besides the title and credits, it tells a story without the use of any game dialogue, be it text or audio. As such, the story is conveyed through the use of pixel styled graphics, diegetic sounds, and minimal controls. These allow the player to more freely explore the story, encouraging the use of imagination to interpret the art and build the narrative as they progress. *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* is able to move the player through a deep, historical story within the span of 5 minutes without the use of words.

Educational Goals and Approach to Learning

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge (Figure 1) is a game focused on creating a gateway to literature. Because this game is an intermedia translation, it keeps the original story intact through an interactive medium in such a way that a reader of the short story could have a meaningful conversation about the fiction with a player of the game. This is important as many games based on short stories fail to retain the mood, tone, and themes of the work, making them more akin to a game wearing the narrative skin of the fiction, rather than allow the mechanics and plot to combine.
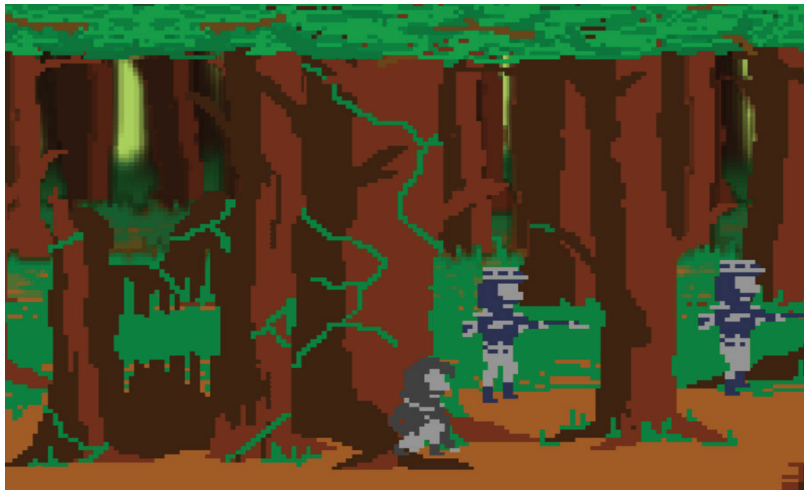

Figure 1: Screenshot of *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*.

Beyond the opening title screen and credits, this game contains no in-game dialogue or text, spoken or written, which allows this experience to be accessible to non-native English speakers as well as those with reading disabilities.

While *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* does teach the player the narrative of the short story, it also demonstrates how interactive media can convey classic literature through a new format, preserving the work and making it accessible for future generations.

Other Relevant Information

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge received Silver at Serious Play Conference 2013 as well as Most Meaningful Game at Meaningful Play Conference 2014. It has been displayed at venues including: The Smithsonian, Gamescape at Artscape, Different Games Conference, and Blank Arcade at DiGRA.

Links to Game and Relevant Media

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge may be downloaded from both GameJolt and Itch.io for play on PC.

GameJolt link: http://gamejolt.com/games/adventure/an-occurrence-at-owl-creek-bridge/12345/

Itch.io link: http://just_delete_it.itch.io/occurrence

In addition, here is a link to the Youtube trailer for the game: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yxbJ0t0Uvg