

JANE'S DOMAZE

Project Description:

The Jane's Domaze team is made up of members of the TWICE c.a.s.t lab at The Ohio State University. Currently there are four members working on the game: Betsy Beraduce, Rebekah Billing, Chetna Sharma, and Marcella Tanzil. Jane's Domaze is a game whose goal is to provide an attractive introduction to computer science for middle school female students. With this goal in mind, Jane's Domaze has been designed with the preferences of females in mind while at the same time introducing object-oriented principles. Because there are so few computer games available that are geared toward girls and their preferences, it was important that in designing Jane's Domaze we kept the preferences of girls foremost in our design. At the highest level, our game allows the user to manipulate character actions and environment settings in a non-hostile way. In addition to making Jane's Domaze overtly nonviolent we wanted to address the concern that there are often not enough computers available in schools, and boys tend to be more aggressive at getting access to those computers [Girls, Boys, and Computers – Klawe]. With this in mind, we decided to create our game to be played on the Handheld PC. With the Handheld PCs, the game will be easily distributed to junior high schools to give girls the exposure to the game that we are aiming for.

Goal:

The goal of Jane's Domaze is to avoid obstacles, while solving challenges to acquire skills, funds, and time to move upward to additional levels. Everything in the environment is an object in a class, whose behavior can be modified by altering attributes and assigning methods. Mastery of object concepts will enable the player to guide Jane through a maze. As the player modifies objects and invokes methods, the game will generate code based on his/her actions. As Jane (the avatar) moves around in the environment, she encounters everything from hammers and shears that, she will use later to go through obstacles, to pesky teachers who ask questions about previously given facts. The teachers help to enforce the object oriented approach because of their design. A teacher in a blue outfit acts the same as a teacher in a green outfit with the exception of their subject. Thus, by changing the color (attribute) of a teacher, the player is changing the subject that the teacher "teaches".

The four students completed about six weeks of research on the topic of diversity so they could better understand what it is that repels girls from the computer science industry. This project is made possible by a grant from the Computing Research Association's Committee of Women in Computing Research (CRA-W).

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