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Onboarding Game Design Principles

- Inspired by George Fan (Through the lens of an Ocean Adventure Game)



1 Blend Tutorial into Game

- avoid separate tutorial sections
- No section labeled "tutorial"

★ Similar level after learning mechanics

1a Conclusions & Takeaways: Effective Tutorials are integrated & seamless

- Tutorials must be natural and enjoyable for players. Fan's main point is to teach through doing, w/ clear instructions and visual cues experientially.

2 Better to "Do" than "Read"

- Players learn by performing actions
- PvZ lvl 1 teaches via gameplay

3 Spread Our Teaching

- gradual intro of mechanics
- this level builds on prev levels mechanic, and lightly introduces new ones



11 Final Challenge

- Now with all the skills you've learned, you can take on a final challenge incorporating all past skills.

9 Repetition/Variety

- this city level balances repetition variety

10 Use Visuals to Teach

- Convey info through visuals
- Symbolism can be powerful

4 Highlight Key Actions?

- you can use visual arrows for example to guide player



8 Don't Create Noise

- Avoid cluttering the screen w/ unnecessary text or achievements that distract from important early learning

5 Use Fewer Words

6 Use Non-Obtrusive Messaging

- Display messages passively w/out breaking flow of the game
- As we enter land portion, mechanics should mesh

7 Use Adaptive Messaging

- display messaging based on player behavior
- Only message if players do a non-ideal action and require correction

