


Puzzles in Games

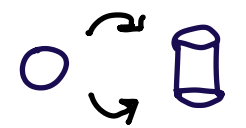
A: What do a Puzzle?

Simple definitions, lots of consequences

Stan Isaacs:
1. 
2. has a RIGHT ANSWER

Suspend life's **TRUST** **RULES**
Novelty

BALANCE
Easy / Hard
↳ finite options
↳ seems easier than reality


Trickiness

Inspires new interpretation methods

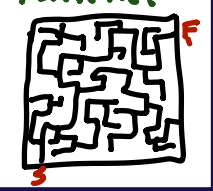
ultimately

Fun is in eye of beholder

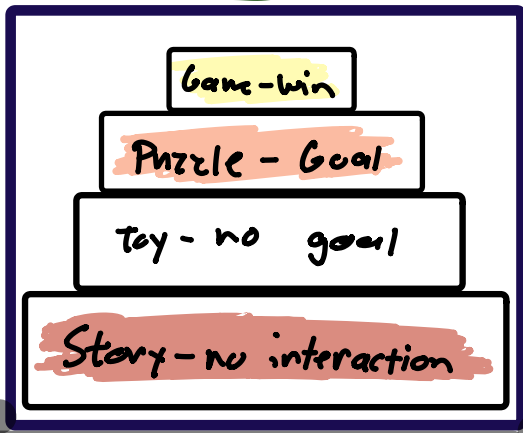
2. Right Answer

Two main skills for solving puzzles:

ingenuity


Patience


Ensure challenge is from puzzle not its controls.




(A)(It) Right Answer distinct from games or other activities








"puzzles, unlike games, have little replay value"

B: Designing Puzzles

BAD PUZZLES





"Restore" → MUST fail once to see soln. - Binary
- Arbitrary → not thematically coherent/introd yes/no
- "Hunt the pixel" → visually small detail for soln.
this paper that blends in & essential  Me playing Myst LOL & (read my Critical Play for more info/upset).

Types of Puzzles:

(un)ordinary use of object , colors 
Building , Information  "I'm thirsty!"
Excluded middle a→b, c→d, a→d?, People
Timing , Sequence  (Dog stole my star!)
logic, classic (east west), Riddles,
Dialog , Trial/ alt. interfaces, error) mazes, etc.

GOOD PUZZLES

Fair → all needed info within game
Natural → narratively relevant, not random
↳ roadblock? No. Woboo? Yes.
Amplify Theme → (Don't shoot a dog as a vet)
"V-8" → "How could I have missed?" VS "WTF"

 Bread Crumbs
 Spatial locality
Multiple/alt solns
 Red herrings
 Steer the player w/ clues
Difficulty

Designing Puzzles

- populate setting
↳ goals/subgoal, obstacles.
- player empathy
↳ make capabilities clear. (puzzles)
↳ explicitly state if one cannot do something.