



CREATE GAME MAKER AND FLASH GAMES NOW!

gamedeveloper PRESENTS

GAME CAREER GUIDE

FALL 2010

GREAT SUCCESS!

STUDENT GAME DEVELOPERS WHO MADE IT BIG

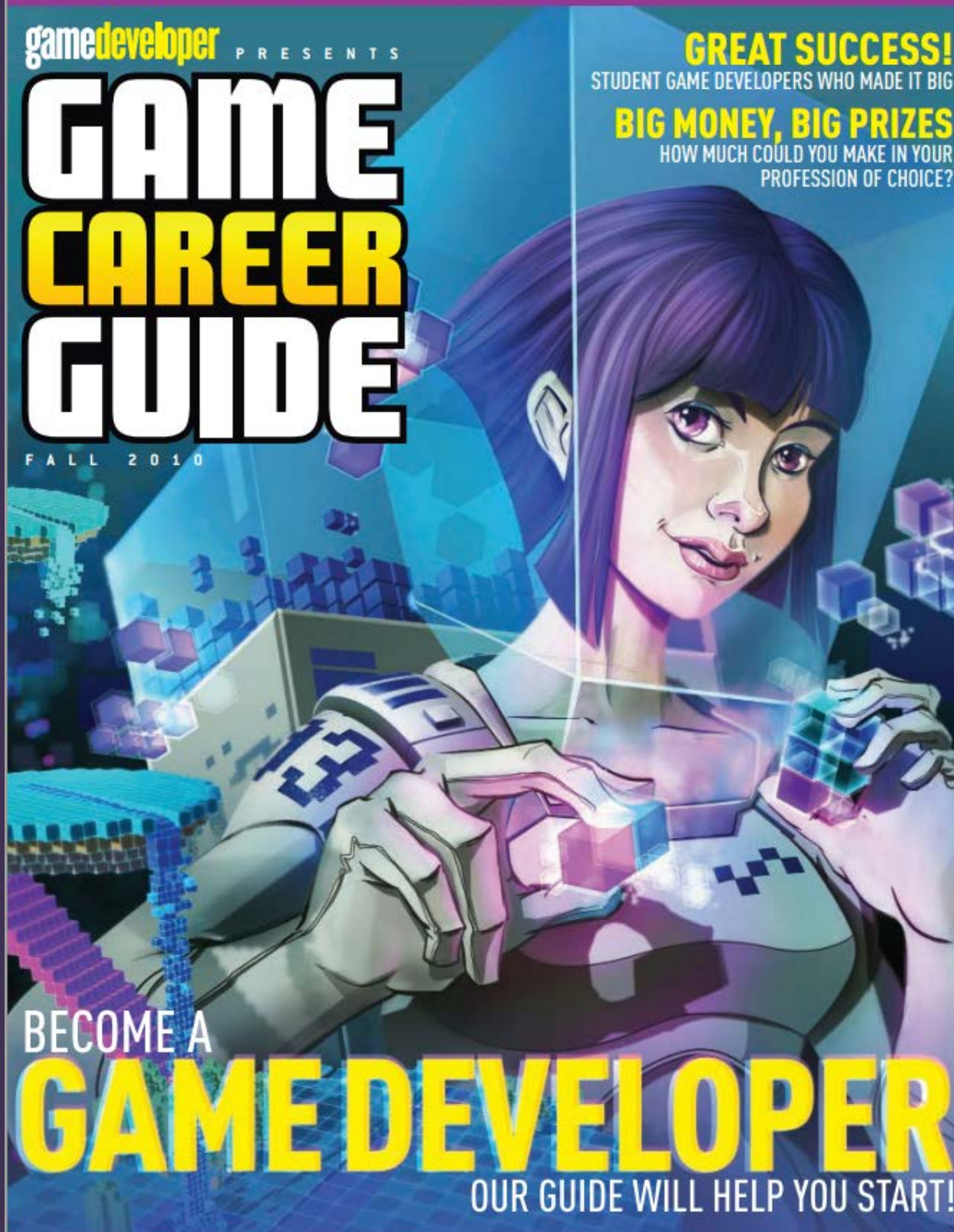
BIG MONEY, BIG PRIZES

HOW MUCH COULD YOU MAKE IN YOUR
PROFESSION OF CHOICE?

BECOME A

GAME DEVELOPER

OUR GUIDE WILL HELP YOU START!



Think Different!

Summary Writing Exercise – Directions

1. Read the article on Page 4 of this document – find out how gaming designers think out-of-the-box.
2. Summarize the article in a new page in the Orientation section of your OneNote binder.
 - a. Your summary should be a minimum of 250 words.
 - b. A minimum does not earn an A.
3. Check your work in the Summary Writing Rubric on Page 3 of this document to ensure that you understand the requirements for full credit.

Summary Writing Rubric

4. Excellent summary that includes the following:

- Clear main idea in the first sentence
- All important details are included
- Details are in a logical order
- Ideas are connected to make the writing flow
- Author restates the main idea again as a conclusion without writing it the same as in the first sentence

3. Good summary includes the following:

- Clear main idea in the first sentence
- Important details are included but some might be missing
- Ideas are in logical order
- Restated main idea doesn't differ from the first sentence

2. Below average summary includes:

- Main idea is unclear — not specifically stated in the writing
- Some critical information is missing
- Ideas are in a random order and not logical
- Restated main idea is not in this piece of writing

1. Ineffective summary includes:

- The main idea is not present in the 1st sentence of the writing
- Contains only some details
- Ideas are not in logical order
- Missing a concluding sentence with the restated main idea



THINK DIFFERENT!

USE YOUR TIME AT SCHOOL TO MAKE SOMETHING UNIQUELY YOURS

IF YOU'RE READING THIS, IT'S LIKELY THAT YOU'VE AT least entertained the idea of attending a school with a game development program, or using your time at school to work toward a career in the game industry.

Assuming you do go to school, more questions emerge. For instance, how should you best use your time? Obviously, you want to make something that will either land you a job or become a viable commercial (or indie, or freeware) product in its field.

If your passion is to work on the next HALO or CALL OF DUTY, you have a straightforward yet incredibly difficult path ahead of you. It's straightforward because it's the most traditional, and thus the simplest to quantify. During your time at school you may want to focus on working in teams, specializing in one area, but diversifying with knowledge of other areas (such as learning a scripting language as a designer, or some programming as an artist).

By the same token, it's difficult because this is the area that everyone will be competing in, from all levels of experience and all other disciplines. It can be hard to differentiate yourself when everyone has a couple UE3 mods under their belt, or a decent portfolio of Maya-based school projects. Make sure you go the extra mile, and inject some passion into your work. As THE MISADVENTURES OF P.B. WINTERBOTTOM creator Matt Korba says in our panel interview (pg. 54), "School is a great time to be in a safety net to create something. So, that's what you should do. You should make something. If you want to be an artist, you should make art. If you want to be a designer, you should design things. Nobody is going to give you a job for something you haven't already done. So, you should really use school as a time to do something and show it off."

EXPRESS YOURSELF

>> If you've ever thought of making something a little different, this is when you should do it. School is safe place to try new things, and that extends to game development. In school you can develop games without worrying about your budget (unless you count loans), or turnover, or the whims of a publisher. More importantly perhaps, you can develop games without worrying that they'll sell.

What this means is that you can truly develop whatever you want. If you're really excited about traditional FPS or third-person action games, you can do that, provided you have the skills to match. But if you've any interest in experimental games, or reaching players on an emotional or metaphorical level, or even creating a new genre, school is a great place to do it.

If you look at the Independent Game Festival you'll see that a large percentage of the games in the student showcase are non-traditional, making the

best of what resources they have, and striving for something innovative. Developers appreciate new ideas, even if they can't always implement them into their own games.

How should you do this? Korba has more to say on the matter: "I think you just have to do something personal," he says. "Whatever makes you unique and your own personal experience, use that. A lot of times, in student films, people reference other films, and it's becoming the same way in games. It's like people are referencing a lot of other games. But if you take something that's outside of games in your life or your experience and put that in, it's always going to be unique because nobody else has that experience besides you."

Some might argue that more experimental games might not put you in the good graces of a more traditional game developer who's just looking to hire someone to tidy up textures. I submit that these experimental games demonstrate creativity and forward thinking that all developers will appreciate. Not only that, your demo reel or the games you submit to prospective employers may stick out more in their minds simply by virtue of being different.

ITERATE, ITERATE!

>> If you just put in your hours and coast through your classes you're not going to get a very exciting job when you emerge. You've got to go above and beyond. Kellee Santiago of thatgamecompany (FLOWER) says that polish is a good way to rise above. "Certainly, if you look at IndieCade and at the Independent Gaming Festival now, every year, the bar is getting raised on the level of polish in both festival games and also what's coming out of schools," she says. "I think that's a new standard that we're seeing ... as a way of standing out, just having a polished project."

Kim Swift, designer of PORTAL, agrees, saying "... for you to get that polish, do not bite off more than you can chew. It's incredibly tempting to go, 'Oh, I'm going to make this and this and this and this.' No. One idea. Focus. The more time and energy you can put into that one thing and polish the hell out of it will make for a better experience. You'll get that grab in the first five minutes."

Here's the bottom line: When you're at school you have a golden opportunity. You're learning, sure, but you have the right environment and opportunity to really try to differentiate yourself. To do that, you've got to treat your schoolwork like you're already doing what you want to do for a living. A lot of us are used to doing the bare minimum when it comes to school, but if you want to succeed in the game industry, you'll have to prove yourself to the maximum. Get started now!

—Brandon Sheffield

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