



Brandeis

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Human Research Protection Program

Modification Request Form

Modification #
1

Date Updated
10/10/2023 2:35 PM

Review Status
Approved/Determined
Exempt

PI Last Name
Mawhorter

IRB Protocol #
24009R-E "Open-World Exploration Study"

Project Detail

Project Title
Open-World Exploration Study

PI Name
Peter Mawhorter

PI Department
Wellesley College Computer
Science

PI Phone
(909) 255-6164

PI Email
pmawhort@wellesley.edu

Supervised Researcher Name

Supervised Researcher Status

Supervised Researcher Phone

Supervised Researcher Email

Estimated Level of Risk
Minimal

Anticipated Start Date
7/19/2023

Anticipated End Analysis Date
8/31/2024

NIH Clinical Trial
This study is not funded by NIH

Funding Status
Pending

Sponsor

Sponsor ID

Grant PI

Grant Title

Notifications will automatically be sent to the principal investigator and the supervised researcher. Please enter the email addresses of anyone else who should receive notifications regarding this modification here.

Notification Email 1

Notification Email 2

Notification Email 3

Notification Email 4

1. Changes in Risk Level

This modification changes the estimated level of risk.

No

2. Changes in Personnel

New personnel will be added to this protocol.

Yes

New Personnel

Person 1

Name

Kaitlyn Tsien

Email

kt102@wellesley.edu

Institutional Affiliation

Wellesley

CITI Training

Completed

CITI Social & Behavioral Research Training

Expiration Date

9/22/2026

CITI RCR Training Expiration Date

9/22/2026

Attach CITI Training Certificate(s)

citiCompletionCertificate_12654702_58522444.pdf

Role in Research

Conducting interviews and analyzing data.

Describe the responsibilities, qualifications, and relevant experience of all new personnel.

Kaitlyn has worked on research related exploration in Metroidvania games (not involving human subjects) prior to the summer but was not actively involved in the research during the summer, and so was not included on our initial application. She is joining the team again this semester and will be conducting interviews as well as helping to analyze the data. She is familiar with the research as well as the games that we'll be having participants play, and has now contributed to the study design by authoring our landmarks document for A Short Hike.

Personnel will be leaving this protocol.

No

Principal investigator will be changing.

No

3. Changes in Agencies

A new facility/agency will be involved in the research activities.

No

The Initial Protocol for this protocol lists _ as the funder. If this is no longer accurate, please update the funding information here.

A new funding agency will be involved in the research activities.

No

4. Modification to Study Description

Describe and justify proposed modification. Include a discussion of the effects on the risks and benefits to the subjects and the procedures that will be taken to manage the risk(s).

We've changed the consent form and recruiting email to reflect our current research team, but made no other changes (except we now have a link to the sign-up form where before the recruiting email just said "link." As before, that form is not yet complete as we need IRB approval before we can list the correct times for people to sign up.

We've added details to our interview guide about how we will select participants. We've also added landmark documents for 2 new games, bringing the total number of games used to 3. The initial approval covered our use of just a single game, but we want to compare experiences across multiple games. The main risk of including more games might be that new games used include distressing or otherwise uncomfortable content for our participants. The first game we're adding is "The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom" which has an ESRB "Everyone 10+" rating and involves "mild fantasy violence" and mild "suggestive themes" (<https://www.esrb.org/ratings/38987/the-legend-of-zelda-tears-of-the-kingdom/>). The second game we're adding is "A Short Hike" which doesn't have an ESRB rating, but which does not involve any violence, drug use, or sexual content (it's a very kid-friendly game). The addition of Tears of the Kingdom to the games we will use does add an element of fantasy violence to the study, since neither Sable nor A Short Hike has combat mechanics. However, we're confident that this won't be distressing to any of our participants, and if someone did express concern during the sign-up or consent processes, we could have them play one of the other games instead.

New or revised consent forms are attached, with changes highlighted.

Yes

Attach one additional master copy of each for file.

Open-World Exploration Study Consent Form(2).pdf

Open-World Exploration Study Consent Form (clean).pdf

New or revised study instruments are attached, with changes highlighted.

Yes

Attach one additional master copy of each for file.

Open-World Exploration Study Interview Guide(1).pdf

A Short Hike Landmarks.pdf

Tears of the Kingdom Landmarks.pdf

Open-World Exploration Study Interview Guide(clean).pdf

New or revised recruitment materials are attached, with changes highlighted.

Yes

Attach one additional master copy of each for file.

Recruiting Email(1).pdf

Recruiting Email (clean).pdf

5. Signatures

By signing this form I certify that:

- *The information I have provided on this form is true, complete, and accurate*
- *I am familiar with and agree to abide by all relevant Federal guidelines and Brandeis University policies relating to this research*
- *I will only perform research that is approved by the IRB and not deviate in any way from this protocol without prior approval*

Supervised Researcher

Date

My signature below verifies that this Modification Request meets with department approval and is in compliance with procedures and/or regulations designed to protect human subjects. I understand and agree to my duties and responsibilities as Faculty/Staff Sponsor for this research.

Principal Investigator

Date

10/6/2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.

Open-World Exploration Study: Consent Form

Research Overview: This study is being conducted by Nissi Awosanya, Kitty Boakye, and Katilyn Tsien, students at Wellesley College. Dr. Peter Mawhorter, an Instructor of Science Laboratory, is overseeing the research. It involves gameplay and a semi-structured interview. It is designed to help us understand how players explore games. You will play a game for 1½ hours. After that, we will conduct a 30-minute interview. The total duration of your participation will be about 2 hours. We will compensate you for your time with a \$30 gift card if you agree to participate and begin the study. You will be compensated even if you do not finish the study. You must be 18 years old or older to participate. There are no other qualifications to participate.

Study Procedures:

- **Activity:** During the study, you will play a videogame with 3D graphics and navigation.
- **Breaks:** You may take a break at any time during the study: simply inform your interviewer.
- **Withdrawal:** If for some reason you need to stop participating partway through, or if at ANY point you decide to withdraw your consent, we are happy to stop the study. In that case, we will delete the data we have recorded from your session. Simply request to end the study, OR decline to provide a second signature on this form at the end of the study. A decision to stop participation or withdraw consent will not affect your compensation.
- **Assistance:** The interviewer may provide you with help with the game's controls. If you need help with something beyond that, you can ask for help. The interviewer will set a 2-minute timer, and will be allowed to give you advice (but not take over the controls) after 2 minutes. You may ask for help as often as you wish.
- **Talk-aloud:** During gameplay, we will ask you to talk aloud about what you are doing. The interviewer may remind you to keep talking if you forget. You do not need to talk continuously for the entire time you are playing. If for any reason you are unable to continue commentary, you may still continue the study without it.
- **Interruptions:** You will be interrupted a few times during gameplay and asked some questions.
- **Debrief:** At the end of the gameplay session, there will be a 30-minute interview. We will ask you some questions about yourself and about the game you played.

Foreseeable risks:

- **Risks:** We expect participation in this study involves negligible risks. The activity we are asking you to do is not strenuous. The game we have selected **does not** involve bright flashing lights. As a precaution, please do let us know if you are susceptible to seizures.
- **Content:** Depending on which game you play, it may involve depictions of violence. We do not expect these to be disturbing. We do not expect other themes from the game to be distressing. We will use games with a listed ESRB rating of Everyone, Everyone 10+, or Teen.
- **Concerns:** If you are concerned about the content of the game, you may ask the interviewer now for more details about the game's themes and content. As already noted, you may also stop participating in the study at any point.
- **Confidentiality:** Your data will only be available to researchers, but there is a risk that it could be improperly accessed. In that case, the recording of your gameplay might become public. Because it will include your voice, it might be personally identifiable as your gameplay. We will use standard security measures to keep your data confidential. We do not expect your interview responses to be embarrassing or damaging even if they become public.
- **COVID-19:** To mitigate COVID-19 risks, you are welcome to bring a mask and wear it during the study. Our interviewer will wear a mask as well. If you or the interviewer are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms on the day you are scheduled to participate or either of the two days beforehand, we will reschedule. We will also reschedule if either of you test positive for COVID-19 or have a confirmed case.

with symptoms that have not cleared at least 10 days before the scheduled time slot. If we need to reschedule, we will reschedule at least 10 days after the end of symptoms of any confirmed COVID-19 infection, assuming that's still feasible for both parties, otherwise we will cancel

Expected Benefits:

- **Fun:** Besides (hopefully) some entertainment from the game played, we do not expect any direct benefits to you from participating in this study.
- **Design Insights:** Your participation will contribute to our research which may help game designers design more interesting games.

Data & Privacy:

- **Recording:** We will record the video of your gameplay along with audio from the game and from the interview room. (This will include the interviewer's statements and your responses.) We will not record video of you, only audio.
- **Identifiable Data:** Since the audio will include your voice the data may be personally identifiable. However, we do not expect any risk of reputational harm should the data become public. All data will be kept confidential, available only to members of the research team. It is possible that other people may need to see the data from this study. These people are responsible for making sure the research is done safely and properly, and will also keep your information confidential. If audio is recorded which you ultimately do not feel comfortable being used for our research, you may withdraw consent at that time.
- **Discarding Data:** You may withdraw consent during the study, in which case your data will be discarded immediately. If you decide later that you are not comfortable with the use of your data, you may contact Peter Mawhorter (pmawhort@wellesley.edu). We will make our best effort to immediately delete your data. We will definitely delete it within 1 week of receiving your request. We will not use it for further research purposes before we delete it. Publications based on your data may include text transcribed from your audio or screenshots from your gameplay. They **will not** include recordings of your voice. Unless you withdraw your consent, your data may be used for future research projects.

Contact: If you have any questions about this study, you can contact the principal investigator Peter Mawhorter (909-255-6164 or pmawhort@wellesley.edu). If you have a question that you do not feel comfortable asking Peter about, contact the Wellesley College Ombudsperson Kathryn Bender (ombuds@wellesley.edu).

This research was approved by the Brandeis IRB office which is the Institutional Review Board of record for Wellesley College. If you have any questions about your rights – or if you have concerns about the study – you may contact them at 781-736-8133 or hrpp@brandeis.edu.

Consent: Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decline to participate at this point, you will not be compensated for participation, but there will be no other consequences. If you agree to participate and begin the study, even if you later stop, you will receive full compensation. Please sign once below to indicate consent to begin the study. Sign again at the end to indicate final consent to use the data we recorded during the study.

Print Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

☐

Check here to confirm that you are at least 18 years old.

Consent to begin study (sign here): _____

Consent to use data (sign again at end): _____

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Print Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

☐

Check here to confirm that you are at least 18 years old.

Consent to begin study (sign here): _____

Consent to use data (sign again at end): _____

Recruiting Email

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Study on Exploring Open-World Games

Body:

Hello everyone!

How would you like to get paid to play videogames?

We want to introduce you to our open-world exploration study, a part of our research project with Professor Peter Mawhorter. We are looking for participants to dedicate two hours of their time to play a videogame and then respond to our post-gameplay interview questions.

This study does include recording participants' gameplay footage and the audio for interview responses. If you want to participate, read through the [Research Overview](#) for more details and [sign up for a time slot in this Google Form](#) by [DATE]. We will respond to those who have filled out the google form within the next couple of weeks with a final schedule. Depending on the level of interest and available funds, not everyone who wants to may be able to participate. Those who do participate will be compensated for their time.

Thank you for your time and help with our research. Feel free to contact Kitty Boakye at cb116@wellesley.edu, Kaitlyn Tsien at kt102@wellesley.edu, or Professor Mawhorter at pmawhort@wellesley.edu with any questions or concerns.

Best,

Members of the Mapping Metroidvanias lab

Open-World Exploration Study: Interview Guide

Recruiting

When someone shows interest we'll know from the sign-up form which times they can make and which games they've played. We will try to schedule a mix of 2-3 people playing Tears of the Kingdom who *have* played it before along with 2-3 people who haven't (and who ideally haven't played Breath of the Wild either). We also want a mix of at least 2-3 participants for each of the other games. We will schedule people to play specific games in advance. If we need to cancel a session because one of us can't make it, be sure to let the participant know, and in that case we should try to reschedule with that person. If a participant needs to cancel, it's up to you whether to select a different participant or try to reschedule with the first participant.

Orientation

Before starting the interview, and even before the participant arrives, make sure that everything is set up for recording and the game is running ready to start a new game, but don't start the recording until after the participant agrees to start the study and signs the first signature line on the consent form. Make sure that the microphone is picking up sound by checking the levels in OBS and recording & watching a short test video. Keep these instructions open on your own computer so you can consult them throughout.

When the participant shows up, introduce yourself; make sure not to talk too in-depth about our research specifics, but feel free to let the participant know our broad aims (understand how players explore games). Confirm whether they'd like to wear a mask or not, and that they're not experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms (nor have recently). Let them choose headphones or speakers for the audio setup, and hand them the paper consent form. Walk them through it point-by-point, making sure to mention and confirm they understand each part with a **bold** heading. Let them simply read it themselves if they prefer, and let them know that there's no rush.

When they're ready to begin, have them print their name, enter the date, check the box for being over 18, and sign the form on the first line, but save the second line for the end of the study. Then go ahead and start the recording (informing the participant as you do so) and show them how to start the game; let them press the button to start a new game. While things are loading and/or during the intro cinematic, remind them that we'd like them to talk aloud during gameplay and that they can ask you for help with controls and if they get stuck. Then let them play until the 1 hour mark when you'll interrupt for the first goal probe (counting the time it took to orient them and to sign the consent form). During gameplay, follow the instructions below...

Talk-Aloud Reminders

During the orientation, make sure to explain that we want the participant to provide commentary as they play about their motivations, interests, and reactions to the game. During gameplay, if they fall silent for a brief period, that's fine, but if they fall silent for an extended period (especially if they complete multiple important exploration actions without any commentary) you should gently remind them that we'd like them to provide commentary as we play. This can take the form of a specific prompt to comment on something that just happened, e.g., "Can you say something about why you went that way?" or "Oh nice, you got it. Any comments at this point?"

If the player's voice is wearing out or they find providing commentary too distracting, you can let them continue without commentary and stop giving reminders, but only if they explicitly request this.

Help During Gameplay

If the participant requests help, you should determine whether they are requesting help with the controls of the game or something about the tech setup, or with something else in the game. If they are requesting help with controls or the tech setup, you can help them freely. If they request help with something in the game, like figuring out a puzzle, navigating or orienting themselves, or even wondering "what do I do next?" you should set a 2-minute timer, and encourage them to spend more time trying to figure out their issue (you may at this point suggest they consult the map if that's appropriate, but you may not yet offer any other kind of advice). Once the 2-minute timer is up, you can help them resolve their question with advice, but you may not touch the game controls. Once their immediate question is resolved, let them continue play, and if they ask for help again, set another 2-minute timer.

If they are frustrated or upset, you can suggest they take a break from the game, which is allowed as part of the protocol. For short breaks keep the play timer running; if a break runs longer than 5 minutes, you can ask whether they'd like to extend the study period or not, and you can pause the play timer if they agree to extend the study period. They can of course withdraw from the study at any point. If you have time limitations, you can explain that it's not possible for them to complete the study over a longer period, and ask whether they'd like to stop the study or continue play with whatever time you can afford.

If the player just gets stuck to the point where they cannot make progress in the game even with your advice, if applicable you can suggest they pursue a different goal within the game. If they are stuck and don't see any other relevant goals to pursue, they may need to stop the study, but that should be their decision, not yours. As long as they've already made some progress in the game, the interview can still happen; you could in this case cut the play session short (skipping any goal probes you haven't gotten to yet but performing one final probe at the point where they're stuck).

Performing "Goal Probes"

At the roughly 1-hour, 1:15, and 1:30 marks, you should interrupt their gameplay to perform a "goal probe." You can wait a few minutes beyond these times if the player is in the middle of a challenge and it's not a good time to interrupt their play. For each goal probe, start by asking "How would you describe what you are doing right now?" Next, follow up with "Why are you doing that?" After they answer, keep asking "And why are you doing that?" until the answer goes beyond the scope of the game (e.g., "because you asked me to play this game" or "because I want to"). If for some reason they have two different answers that circle back to each other, you can also stop the probe. The result of a goal probe should be a discrete series of increasingly abstract answers about the player's goals/motivations.

Follow-up Interview Questions

Once the 1:30 mark is reached, ask the participant to stop playing. They may continue for just a few minutes if there's something they're in the middle of, but you need to leave enough time to conduct the interview before they have to go. Explain that you'll be asking a few questions about them and then some questions about their gameplay. Ask each of the questions listed here, and if there's time, ask whatever additional questions seem most relevant, and/or ask for more details about something interesting they said in response to one of the questions you already asked.

- Demographic questions:
 - a. **What age group do you fit into (grouping by 5 years): 18-20, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35, etc.?**
 - b. **How often do you play video games in a typical week: less than one play session per week, a few sessions per week, at least one session on most days of the week, or at least one session every day?** (They can answer "in between" two of those categories if they want, but try to get them to pick a category.)
 - c. If they answer "less than one session per week" follow up with **"Do you typically play video games at least once per month, once per year, or even less frequently? Do you not typically play video games at all?"**
 - d. **Have you played <insert name of game used here> before?**
 - i. If so, ask them **"Have you finished that game?"**, and **"Approximately how many hours have you spent playing it?"** (it's fine if they have trouble approximating hours, try to get them to at least estimate whether they've played 5 or more hours, or less than 5 hours, and do the same for the hours questions below).
 - ii. If not, ask them **"Have you ever watched anyone play that game?"** If so, ask them to approximate how many hours they watched.
 - e. **Have you played any games that are similar to the game you played in this study?** (ask this even if they've played the specific game)
 - i. If so, ask **"What game have you played that you'd consider most similar to the game you played in this study?"**, then using the phrasing

above, ask whether they finished that game, and approximately how many hours they spent playing it.

- ii. If not, ask **"Have you played other games that include exploration?"**
 - 1. If yes, ask about their favorite exploration game, whether they've finished it, and approximately how many hours they spent playing it, using the phrasing above.
 - 2. If no, that's the end of this line of questioning.
- f. **Have you watched at least an hour of gameplay of exploration-focused games?**
 - i. If so, ask **"What's the most similar game you've watched, and approximately how many hours of it have you watched?"**
- g. **Are there any communities (online or offline) centered around games or gaming where you consider yourself an insider?**
 - i. If they say "yes," ask them to give an example of such a community.
- h. **Do you feel that people like you are underrepresented in gaming, or face discrimination in videogame communities?**
- i. **Race, gender, sexuality, and other aspects of people's identities are often the subject of bigoted remarks and/or bullying in videogame communities. Without getting into specifics, have you been the target of derogatory speech or other bigoted behavior in videogame communities or while playing videogames?**
- j. **Whether or not you yourself have been targeted, have you seen other people subject to bigoted bullying in a way that's made you feel uncomfortable?**
- Path questions (use pre-prepared screenshots and agreed-upon place names to help identify places). You will be asking 9 questions, based on three paths within the game. These vary based on the game played, but the same 3 questions are used for each path. Instructions to read to the participant: **"Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the game you just explored."**
 - a. You will ask the following three questions about each of three paths. See the Landmarks section below for details of the three paths in each game. For each path, using "A" to refer to the start and "B" to the end, ask the following questions:
 - i. Instructions for the participant, using the landmark identification packets from the Landmarks section below: **"You passed through A and B while you were playing just now. Here are some screenshots of A and of B. Do you recognize these places?"**
 - 1. If they answer "no" or "maybe" to one or both places, offer additional descriptions to try to jog their memory. If they cannot seem to remember one or both places even with additional help skip the questions about this path.
 - ii. First question about the path: **"What features or landmarks did you use to navigate from A to the B?"**

- iii. Second path question: **"Did you find that process easy or hard, and can you say a little bit about why?"**
 - iv. Third path question: **"If you were giving explicit step-by-step directions to another player to get from A to B, what would you say?"**
- b. Now move on to asking these questions about the second path, and then the third.
- Once you're done with path questions, if time allows, ask this transition question: **"Are there any regions in the world that you find particularly immersive or captivating? How do they make you feel?"**
- If there's any remaining interview time, use it however you feel is best. If they said something particularly interesting in their previous answers, feel free to ask followup questions about that. If you can't think of what to ask next, pick a question from this list:
 - a. **Which times during your gameplay where you focused more on exploring your space around you or achieving quests?**
 - b. **Were there specific design features in the game that stuck out to you emotionally or caused some kind of reaction out of you e.g. excitement, frustration, feeling of ease, etc. ?**
 - c. **When exploring games, do you tend to stick to the suggested path or explore as much as possible?**
 - d. **When exploring in games, do you try to explore every corner of the world, or just explore as much as necessary to beat the game?**
 - e. **Do you usually find exploration in games more exciting or more frustrating?**
 - f. **In your opinion, what aspects of playing a video game do you believe are most crucial to your enjoyment/experience (e.g. story, graphics, social interactions, freedom to explore, etc.)**

Wrap-up

Once the 2-hour time limit is reached, let the participant know that you're out of time and thank them for their participation. There are two critical things to do at this point:

1. Give them their compensation for the study.
2. Have them sign the consent form a second time to indicate that they're okay with us using the specific data we recorded.

Make sure to give them the compensation first, as their final consent does not affect their compensation and we need to take pains not to make it seem like it does.

Landmarks

The landmarks we ask about (and thus the paths we focus on) are different for each game. However, for each game we will identify points "A" and "B" that specify a first path to ask about (from A to B), along with a point C and a set of possible points D that specify a second path

(based on which (if any) points D the player reached during their playthrough). The third path is identified by asking the player:

What's another landmark that you visited during your playthrough? Which landmark did you come from when you first visited it?

Separate from this interview guide, we will compile documents for each game we study giving names to the relevant landmarks and including screenshots to help identify them to players.

Games that we are considering for the current round of participants are [Sable](#), [A Short Hike](#), and [The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom](#).

A Short Hike Landmarks

- Point A: Ranger's Cabin/Claire's House
- Point B: Shell Quest (the quest giver is right down the path from Aunt May)
- Point C: Visitor Center (or could be the feather guy, as both sell feathers which the player would likely return to)
- Point D:
 - The Tower
 - Outlook Point
 - Feather guy
 - Lighthouse and Overlook
 - Meteor Lake
 - GraveYard
 - Fireplace
 - If the player does not reach these areas, these also work
 - Sandcastle Frog (get the shovel)
 - Rock Climbing

There is a walkthrough online, which has documented all the short little tasks that you can complete during your playthrough, but the main objective of the game is simply to reach the top of the mountain. Throughout the game there are objects and skills which you can collect such as the golden feathers. Though you do not have to collect all the golden feathers, you need at least a few to reach the top. Link to guide on all the feathers is here:

<https://www.thegamer.com/a-short-hike-golden-feather-locations-guide/>

Players are suggested to have at least 7 golden feathers to reach the top of the mountain.

Ranger's Cabin/Claire's House

This is where you start in the game in the Ranger's Cabin. Here is a small area where the user should interact with Aunt May at the fireplace to gain the objective of the game. Players cannot leave this area without speaking to Aunt May first.



Shell Quest

Players will encounter a NPC running along the beach and are requested to find 15 shells. These shells can be found all over the island, and there are quite a few more than 15 scattered around.



Visitor Center

This is one of the main hubs that the player will return multiple times to as they need to get golden feathers, though at this point the player may not be aware of the necessity of golden feathers yet. Players can up to 2 feathers for 40 g each. Signs lead to this center and also some NPC interactions.as



The Tower

Players will be able to see this Tower if they travel along one of the many paths to get to the top of the mountain. It's quite recognizable and stands out against the greenery. There is no way to get in, but if players look closely there is a chest at the top of this tower containing one golden feather. It is accessible by either gliding down from a taller point or by flapping to the top.



Outlook Point

Outlook point is also quite noticeable due to the signs that will lead the player there if they so wish and also the outlook post that is stationed right next to it. Players can use the binoculars to get a better sense of the surrounding area and also figure out where they are!



Feather Guy

Similar to the Visitor Center, the feather guy is also a place where players will likely return multiple times as he can sell them golden feathers which allow the user to reach Hawk Peak.



Lighthouse and overlook

Similar to the tower, the lighthouse sticks out against the greenery. Players can reach this also by following one of the many paths. Players can see the starting point from this spot, which may help them get a bearing of their surroundings.



Meteor Lake

There is a small lake near the beginning of the game which the player can stumble upon through signs with a small beach. Players here can learn how to fish.



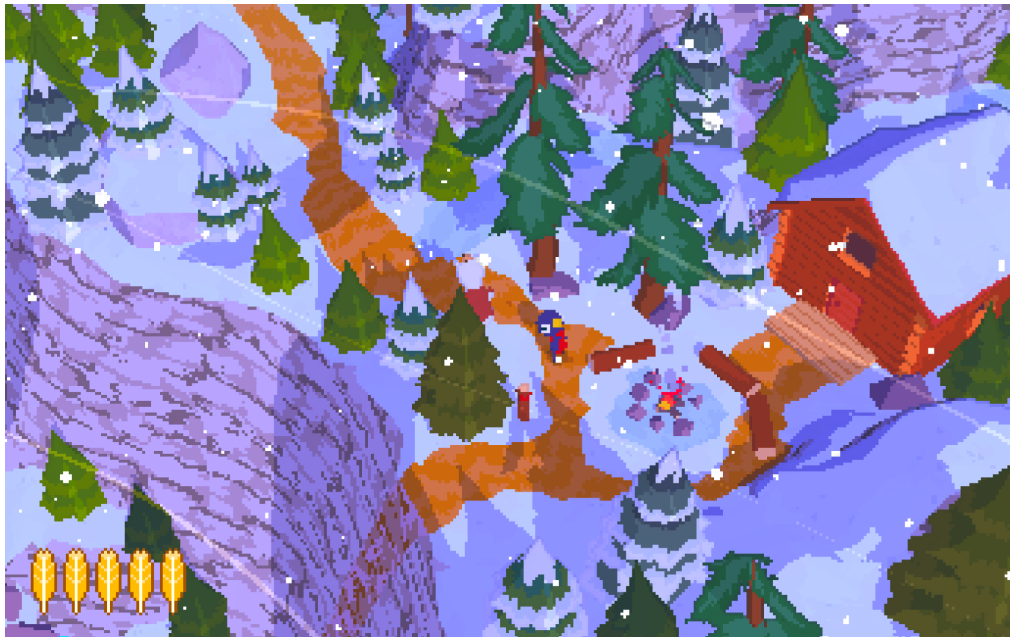
Graveyard

There is a small graveyard closer to the coast of the island with multiple gravestones. Players can fly down from a higher point to reach here or follow one of the many paths



Fireplace

This is right at the beginning of the wintery section of a Short Hike. Players are introduced to the idea of warmth here. It is right up the mountain from the Feather Guy.



SandCastle Frog (Mission: Get small shovel to trade with his big shovel)

This is a mission that the player will find along the path near the very beginning of the game.



Rock Climbing Wall

This is where the player can learn how to climb up walls, a rather important skill required for players to reach the top of the mountain.



Tears of the Kingdom Landmarks

- Point A is the starting room of the game, labeled the "The Room of Awakening"
- Point B is the "Temple of Time"
- Point C is also the "Temple of Time."
- Point D within the time confines of the study would be subareas in the "Great Sky Island," which would be: (all notable places of exploration)
 - Hyrule Castle Caves (pre-cutscene; not in Great Sky Island but linear exploration taking place at an unknown time setting)
 - Ukouh Shrine - gain Ultrahand
 - In-isa Shrine - gain Fuse
 - Gutanbac Shrine - gain Ascend
 - Nachoya Shrine - gain Recall
 - Pit Cave
 - Pondside Cave
 - Mining Cave
 - Bottomless Cave
 - Temple of Time
 - Steward Constructs
- Things to do while on the Great Sky Island:
 - Cooking station(s)
 - Talk to Steward constructs to obtain Purah Pad
 - Kill Zonai Soldier Constructs
 - Talk to Maker Constructs
 - Talk to Rauru about gaining powers to access the Temple of Time

There is a walkthrough online of all the mini tasks that you can do while on the Great Sky Island, but the main goal of the Great Sky Island tutorial zone is to gain enough powers to open up the Temple of Time. Link to the guide is here:

https://www.ign.com/wikis/the-legend-of-zelda-tears-of-the-kingdom/Great_Sky_Island_-_Find_Princess_Zelda_and_The_Closed_Door.

Players are not expected to be able to visit all four shrines and finish the mini-games to be able to open the Temple of Time within the time constraint of the study, but we hope that many are at least able to hit one major landmark in the Great Sky Island and explore this zone, such as visiting the Temple of Time the first time right before talking to Rauru.

Screenshots and Explanations of All Landmarks

Hyrule Castle Caves

This is the beginning zone of the game where the player is exploring the caves under the Hyrule Castle with Princess Zelda at an unknown time in relation to the timeline of the game.



Room of Awakening

After the cutscene establishing the setting and conflict of the game, Link is transported to a healing chamber with a lot of roots where Rauru restores his damaged arm. First zone with non-linear exploration.



Great Sky Island

Players jump off a cliff at the end of the Room of Awakening zone and dive into the Great Sky Island. This is the main tutorial zone with the most landmarks and places to explore.



Temple of Time

The Temple of Time is the major quest and landmark of the Great Sky Island. Many intermediary small tasks and discoveries in between reaching this landmark.



Ukrouh Shrine

The first shrine that players must visit in order to start the quest in gaining power in order to open the door of the Temple of Time. We expect that this is the maximum point of discovery that players will be able to within the 1.5 hours of the study. Payers experience a puzzle game inside the shrine and gain a light of blessing and the Ultrahand power.



In-isa Shrine

The second Shrine to visit where players experience a puzzle game in the shrine and gain a light of blessing and the Fuse power.



Pondside Cave

One of the 4 caves in the Great Sky Island zone east of the Ini-Isa shrine where players can explore and gain new items and defeat enemies. Tasks are:

- Defeat the Keese in the cave and learn to attach Keese Eyeballs to arrows to add a homing effect.
- Defeat the Bubbulfrog to get a Bubbul Gem.



Mining Cave

After players go through Pondsides Cave and explore Great Sky Island, they might stumble upon the Mining Cave. Need to use the Ultrahand power to operate the mining carts and use the mining rails; therefore must come after the Ukuoh Shrine.



Pit Cave

In the Cave, players can find spicy peppers and talk to the Construct inside to learn how to cook the spicy peppers for health and cold-resistance.



Bottomless Cave

Further away from the Pit Cave lies the Bottomless Cave in the cold, snowy region of the Great Sky Island. Once you emerge from this cave, players can access the Gutanbac Shrine.



Gutanbac Shrine

Located in the cold, snowy region of the island. Players gain a light of blessing and the ascend power after completing the mini puzzle.



Nachoya Shrine

Found above in the Room of Awakening. Players can gain the recall power and a light of blessing after playing the mini-game.



Steward Construct

Gain the Purah Pad from talking to the Steward Construct in order to transport through and make marks on the map.



(One of many) Cooking Stations

There are many cooking stations and pots located on the Great Sky Island. Players might visit these locations to cook food, restore health, and sleep.



Windy River

Not a zone that players can exist in for too long without drowning but with a power such as Ultrahand, players can make rafts to go through the river and travel across it.

