

# The Influence of Nintendo Video Games on Creativity

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## **Abstract**

In this project, I will be looking into the connection between videogames and creativity, more specifically video games from Nintendo and how their games can have an impact on players' creativity. Multiple Nintendo franchises such as the Legend of Zelda and Animal Crossing bring their own unique ideas to the table that can encourage players to expand their own creative scope. An important part of my thesis will be making my own creative art projects that will take inspiration from Nintendo games I have played. This will allow me to prove the idea that Nintendo can be influential on creativity. This project will include examination of three different Nintendo Switch games as well as articles that are linked to the idea that video games and creativity are connected. My goal is to show how Nintendo videogames are a great source of inspiration and do my own creative projects inspired by Nintendo games to further prove that. I believe this project will aid in my life goal to be a creative individual and perhaps inspire others to take inspiration from one of their favorite pastimes.



## Literature Review

### Introduction to Nintendo

Nintendo is a Japanese company that specializes in entertainment in the videogame industry and is known for their original videogame characters that cannot be found on any other console. Nintendo are major players in the video game industry especially with their success with the Nintendo Switch released back in 2017 and as of writing they have just recently released the Nintendo Switch 2 which has a chance to be a success as well. Looking at Nintendo themselves will shed some light on the impact their games can have on players' creativity.

### Nintendo's Origins

Why Nintendo games in particular can have influence in creativity is due to what Nintendo as a company is, which was not always the video game giant they are today and how they got to where they are now can be traced back to the origins of their most iconic video game character, Super Mario. Nintendo did not start out as a gaming company that produces games for multiple countries; they actually started with cards. According to a *History* article titled “How Super Mario Helped Nintendo Conquer the Video Game World,” “in 1889 ... Fusajiro Yamauchi founded ... Nintendo ... to manufacture hanafuda, a popular type of Japanese playing cards used widely for gambling...when Yamauchi’s grandson, Hiroshi, took over in 1949, he began looking for ways to diversify the company’s revenue streams” (Stezano 2017).

Nintendo was a company that evolved over time and a lot of that was done by taking chances or gambling like people would with hanafuda. If it was not for this idea to branch out and eventually sell video games, they would likely not be nearly as successful as they have now. This ability to evolve is very important to create new ideas which of course takes creativity.

With Nintendo's creativity, the company would eventually create their own original IPs that are exclusive on their console and tend to be different from other games on the market. However, when they first got their footing into the gaming industry, this was not the case when none of those IPs were created yet, they instead looked to others for inspiration. Again according to the *History* Article, Nintendo got their start in Video games in the 70's thanks to inspiration from Atari and after some success in Japan with the game "Radar Scope," they produced Radar Scope cabinets for the US which was unsuccessful due the game being too similar to Space Invaders. After the failure, Yamauchi tasked Shigeru Miyamoto, a product developer and artist at Nintendo, to make a new game Americans will like which took the form as Donkey Kong, released in 1981, which was a huge success and led to the creation of their most successful IP, Super Mario. (Stezano 2017). Nintendo as a company is innovative, rather than letting failures get to them they instead learn from their mistakes and evolve their ideas rather than just copying ideas like they did with Radar Scope. They learned to be original and not be doing what everyone else is doing in the market and try something a bit different which they still strive for to this day. This

lesson they learned seems to have led to the creation of their own IP's that gave them great success.

After the success with Super Mario, Nintendo would go on to make more games, many of which are more on the experimental side. According to the *NintendoLife* article “A Look Back At Nintendo’s Long History Of Art, Music And Game Making Software,” “Nintendo experimented with a few more creative-focused games like the awesome Photo Dojo, a fighting game on the Nintendo DSi that let players make a simple 2D fighting game using real-life photos to create stages and characters. Flipnote Studio was an impressive animation creation tool...” (Goldie 2021). Nintendo is a company that likes to get creative with their games in ways that no one else does which is why they stand out. Most game console developers have the same games as each other but Nintendo not only has some of those games on their own systems as well but also their own original games with some of those games taking risks that many other games outside Nintendo do not do.

### **Nintendo's Marketing Strategy**

Nintendo's marketing and business practices are important to look into because it will give context on why they are so influential. As time went on, Mario became the face of Nintendo and has left his mark on many people's minds for generations. How did Mario become such an iconic character in gaming? The *History* article from before gives the answer to this question saying “... it was because Nintendo essentially forced him into stardom...Simply put, Nintendo made Mario

their quality control symbol. If Mario was putting his stamp of approval on the game, you knew it was going to be good” (Stezano 2017). Nintendo learned to make a character recognizable and that recognition can increase interest in games. Having an iconic mascot gave Nintendo more wiggle room to try all kinds of different games genres such as a racing game in the form of *Super Mario Kart* on the Super Nintendo which was a success and led to many successful games in the series as time went on. It is likely these racing games would not have been as successful if Mario was not there to grab people's attention to try the game genre out.

It is not just Nintendo's brand recognition that leads them to stand out but also the way they provide a unique gameplay experience on their own consoles. The *LinkedIn* article “Nintendo's Unique Marketing Strategy: How It Beats Microsoft and Sony” discussed the original trailers for the Nintendo Switch Console, the article explains how “...the user plays at home, at the airport, on the plane, in the car, and more. An emotional resonance is created from presenting consumption scenarios that are a combination between product and real-life scenes” (Dilmen 2021). Nintendo grabs people's attention with unique ideas that just scream creativity which is what they did with the Nintendo Switch which has gone on to be one of the most successful consoles of all time. Nintendo was the first to create a console that is both a hand held and a home conceal and the original trailers for the conceal, like Dilmen described, showed this in great effect.

This strategy of having a unique experience with their video games consoles is actually nothing new, they have done something similar with this with the Wii as well

with their motion controls which was also a big success. An interesting quote from former Nintendo of America President, Reggie Fils-Aimé, gives a bit of insight on why Nintendo does things a bit differently from their competitors. The quote is from ES 2006 and was preserved in a wiki page titled “Reggie Fils-Aimé/Quotes” on *Nintendo Fandom*. Fils-Aimé said that “The graveyard of any industry is filled with the headstones of companies who decided to keep doing things the same old way. Playing only on the margin, making things just a little bit better. That strategy works....for a while, but ultimately it's fatal. Over the years our industry has come to accept progress simply by what's on the screen” (qtd. in Nintendo Fandom 2006). Fils-Aimé is saying that their competition has a tendency to focus too much on graphics at times and not so much on the actual gaming experience which leads to less success because that can make the gaming experience uninteresting after a while. Nintendo prefers to not put a lot of their focus on graphics but rather the actual experience of the games and try to change and evolve that over time instead of just keeping the gameplay the same for every gaming generation.

This focus on gameplay rather than the graphics is why Nintendo's game consoles tend to be underpowered compared to their competition. Even so, they are still very successful meaning fancy graphics are not everything. According to the *LinkedIn* article from before, “Because of Nintendo’s creative marketing approach, the Switch accounted for 60% of global unit sales of current generation video games in 2020 (against new product diversifications like the Sony PlayStation 5 and Xbox S)” (Dilmen 2021). Nintendo is a company that finds ways to stand out while Sony and

Microsoft more or less do the same thing as each other, which is trying to compete to give the best visuals or tech prowess. But it is clear, based on Nintendo's sales compared to the competition, graphics are not everything, the gameplay tends to be more important.

### **The Downsides of Nintendo**

While Nintendo can be a great example of how to run a successful business, which arguably requires a lot of creativity, Nintendo is not perfect and has gotten its fair share of criticism. According to the *Medium* article “Pikmin Is a Spreadsheet for Those Who Prefer Art to Math,” “Nintendo, for all their flights of imagination, can be a frustratingly slow-to-adapt and conservative company” (L. 2023). Basically Nintendo does sometimes release games that are considered stagnant or safe and can be a bit behind improving the performance of their games. Nintendo can sometimes spend too much time on a single idea and be slow in evolving. For example, it was not until very recently with the Nintendo Switch 2 that voice chat became an actual feature which is nothing really new and people already have ways to voice chat already.

While Reggie Fils-Aimé gave some insight that puts Nintendo in a good light, Kensuke Tanabe, a producer at Nintendo, said something different that puts Nintendo in a not so good light. In an interview about the development of 2020’s *Paper Mario: The Origami King* with *VGC*, a entertainment website that covers games, Tanabe stated that, ‘Since Paper Mario: Sticker Start, it’s no longer possible to modify

Mario characters or to create original characters that touch on the Mario universe” (qtd. in Robinson 2020). This gives the impression that the game was made with the idea that the Mario cast cannot evolve at all and that they will just stick with already established characters and not establish new ones to give more life. With this kind of approach, the games would end up starting to feel stale after a while, the exact thing Reggie was saying they were trying to avoid with the gameplay. Nintendo sometimes focuses too little on the story/characters in their games, opting to go for simple stories with no real complexity which would give players more motivation to continue partaking in the gameplay of their games.

### **In Defense Of Nintendo**

While Nintendo does appear to only want to stick with what they already have at times, that is not always the case. Every now and then Nintendo will take a long running series and shake things up to make the gameplay feel new and fresh again. This was actually done recently to one of their longest-going game franchises, Mario Kart, with the game *Mario Kart World* which was released on the Nintendo Switch 2. In an interview article titled “ASK THE DEVELOPER Vol. 18: Mario Kart World - Part 1,” developers discussed the development of *Mario Kart World*, one of the developers of the game, Kosuke Yabuki, said that ‘...in *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe*, we were able to perfect the formula that we'd been following in the series up to that point, where players race on individual courses. That's why, this time, we wanted the gameplay to involve players driving around a large world...being able to seamlessly

transition between courses and realize a single, vast world wasn't beyond the realm of possibility. So, with this in mind, we set out to create a new kind of *Mario Kart*...” (qtd. in Nintendo, 2025). Nintendo can be slow to evolve at times but when they do, it is very significant. Nintendo will dedicate time to get creative and change things up when things really start to fall apart or feel like they cannot go any further. They clearly value creativity in making their games which is in part why Nintendo is very successful.

Even when Nintendo tends to have less than ideal games come out that do not address what fans want, players are sometimes given the opportunity to make what they want in some of their games themselves. Looking back on the *NintendoLife* article, the author stated that "Nintendo has given us over 35 years of opportunities to get creative on their platforms, whether that's making music, art, animation, movies and even games..." (Goldie 2021). Nintendo actually gives people the opportunity to be creative in their games and have been doing so for a long time. Take *Super Mario Maker 2*, released in 2019, for example, that game lets players create their own Mario Levels with all kinds of tools. Nintendo has and still continues to encourage creativity in players that play their games even if they do not always incorporate it themselves.

### **Benefits of Gaming**

Some might think that videogames have no value at all outside of killing time but that is not the case since video games can impact creativity. It is not just Nintendo video games that can impact creativity, video games in general from other



game developers can impact people's creativity as well. One benefit video games can have on the brain is that it can improve mood. The article “Can Gaming Benefit Your Brain?” discussed this improvement with people's mood when using virtual reality video games saying that “As you discover and explore the world of virtual reality, you’ll raise your dopamine levels, which are connected to feelings of happiness and reward. Gamers often experience heightened pleasure and confidence when playing because of this natural rush” (AdventHealth 2022). This enjoyment of exploring new places to improve dopamine levels can be done in non virtual reality games as well and having more dopamine would mean more motivation for creativity. If people are more depressed, then they have less dopamine resulting in less motivation to do much of anything which can make doing creative things much more difficult.

Video games have been shown to be great at motivating people in workplaces as well. A *ScienceDirect* article published under the name “Video Games and Creativity: The Mediating Role of Psychological Capital,” explored the idea that playing video games can have a positive impact on creativity in adults in the workforce and “...results show a full mediation of the link between the frequency of playing video games and creativity, through optimism: playing video games is positively associated with higher optimism, which in turn is associated with more creativity in the workplace” (Mercier and Lubart 2023). Video games can be a fun and effective way to improve creativity in many ways not just in art but also in work productivity which of course takes some creative thinking.

Video games helping with mood is likely a short term improvement, but video games can have positive long term effects on people as well. Another benefit of gaming is improvement in memory. According to the article “Can Gaming Benefit Your Brain?,” research has found that “...those experiencing memory loss may benefit from playing video games by delaying the brain’s aging process. Engaging in new activities, such as gaming, can keep the parts of the brain that are susceptible to memory problems sharp. One study revealed that memory improved in people from 60 to 80 years old who played video games each day over the course of four weeks.” (AdventHealth 2022). When it comes to any skill of the human body, if it is not used, especially in old age, the skill is lost which of course includes memory. However, keeping things like your brain more active when you're older will help with the prevention of the deterioration of memory or at least slow it down. Video games more or less help keep the brain stay active by engaging players.

This memory being left intact has a major effect on people's creativity because creativity ideas do not just come out of nowhere. According to the *Smithsonian Magazine* article “Where Do New Ideas Come From?,” “...creative ideas evolve from existing memories and impressions. Instead of new ideas being lit aflame by lightning bolts, they arise from the interweaving billions of microscopic sparks in the vast darkness of the brain” (Brandt and Eagleman 2017). This means that creativity comes from experiences and video games in particular can give a lot of unique experiences to people that will be stored deep in the brain for later use which is why video games improving memory is important.

While videogames have all these great benefits to creativity, it is worth noting that players can have too much of a good thing. Again, according to the article “Can Gaming Benefit Your Brain?,” “...you’ll need to strike a healthy balance. There are potential drawbacks to gaming, especially if they include violence or other unsuitable content for kids and adults alike. Negative side effects of too much screen time range from strained eyes to reduced physical activity and trouble sleeping” (AdventHealth 2022). All of these negative side effects can impact productivity which is why it is important to dedicate only a small portion of the day playing video games and not the whole day to get the benefits of video games. Also Nintendo has players covered on the content in gaming issues because they tend to focus on games that are meant to be enjoyed by everyone of all ages.

## Game One:

### *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*

#### Why This Game

This game is one of the latest *Legend of Zelda* games that was released on the Nintendo Switch. The reason I picked this game is because I enjoyed my time playing it. The release for this game was one of the most anticipated for me because it is a direct sequel to *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*, a game I considered to be one of my favorite games of all time. It took a very long time for this game to come out too since they originally revealed a teaser for it all back in 2019; the game released in 2023.

I really liked the art style of the game, it almost has this inbetween of being cartoony and realistic. The proportions of characters look realistic but the cel shading gives a cartoony look to them which gave me enough interest to consider making a drawing based on the game. There are also dragons in the game's setting that I really liked the design of, so much so that I decided to make my art piece based on the game feature some of the dragons; more details will be given in the art section down below. I choose this game not only because the game is visually appealing for me but it can also easily influence the creativity of the players with its puzzles and game mechanics. The game gets people to think of solutions to problems in ways no other *Legend of Zelda* game has allowed players to do before, which is something I would like to discuss.

## Overview Of Game Series

For context, The Legend of Zelda series is one of Nintendo's longest lasting game series with multiple games spanning decades of time. The games typically feature Link as the player character, a silent protagonist who is tasked with defeating the evil that threatens the land of Hyrule. Princess Zelda, the princess of Hyrule, is either saved by Link or helps Link against evil; it depends on the game being discussed. The land that Hyrule inhabits was created by three Goddesses, once they were done, they left behind the Triforce which can grant any wish. This has led to many conflicts due to many wanting to use the Triforce for evil including the Gerudo King, Ganondorf.

Rather than focusing on the same characters in every game like the Super Mario series does, this series follows different iterations of Link and Zelda across a timeline that spans hundreds to thousands of years. This is because Link and Zelda are basically reborn time and time again to oppose evil. Ganondorf is one of these evil beings as well and has come back as the villain in many Zelda games including the game that takes place at the very end of the timeline so far, the game in question is of course *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*.

## Story Summary

The game is a direct sequel to *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*, which takes place in the distant future of the timeline where Hyrule has fallen into ruin by

Calamity Ganon, an iteration of Ganondorf. In the game, Link defeats Calamity Ganon and saves Zelda who was keeping Calamity Ganon at bay with her sealing powers while Link gathers strength to attack. A few years after these events, the story of *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* begins.

The game starts with Link and Zelda traveling below the ruins of Hyrule Castle to look for the source of this strange substance Zelda calls gloom, which is making people fall ill. While down there, they discover ruins from the Zoni, a race that existed long ago. They also find wall art that depicts a story that Zelda states is the imprisoning war. The reason this iteration of Zelda is able to figure this out is because she loves to do research into the history of Hyrule including the Zoni themselves. The interaction of Link that accompanies Zelda is there with her because he is her appointed knight by the late King in the previous games story, Zelda's father. Link is a skilled swordsman and is the wielder of the Master Sword, a legendary blade that was wielded that has the ability to destroy evil.

After examining the wall art, they continue to go further down until they stumble on a corpse with a mysterious glowing hand holding onto its chest. As they approach, the hand loses its grasp and the corpse comes to life and a mass of gloom comes out of the corpse chest and attacks Link who goes on defense but the gloom actually is so strong that it destroys the Master Sword and greatly injures Link's arms stripping away much of his strength. The corpse releases a bunch of gloom into the air causing the ground to collapse and Zelda and Link fall. Zelda disappears in a glowing light and Link is saved by the mysterious hand which takes him high up to

the sky islands. Link was brought up there to be saved from his injuries done to his arm which is done by the mysterious arm replacing Link's injured one.

After Link explores the sky islands a bit, the spirit of a Zoni, named Rauru, appears to Link and claims he was the previous owner of the arm that Link now owns and offers guidance on how to move forward. With Rauru's help, Link gets new abilities thanks to the new arm which will help Link on his travels when he goes back down to Hyrule. Before Rauru leaves Link, it is made clear that Rauru somehow knew Zelda but it is not clear how that is the case and it is not made clear where she disappeared to. Link is then left alone to figure out what happened to Zelda and the Master Sword which also disappears.

Not long after Link returns to the surface, he sees a great disaster in Hyrule has taken place known as the Upheaval which was triggered by the corpse. Hyrule Castle is now floating in the sky and debris from the sky islands have fallen onto the surface. Other disasters are also affecting different regions of Hyrule as well putting many in danger. Link goes to help fix these disasters while gathering new allies on the way to help him stop the evil that threatens to destroy Hyrule.

### **Gameplay Summary**

For this game, the gameplay is all about exploration with players traveling the lands of Hyrule, the mysterious sky islands and in the depths under Hyrule. Fortunately for Link, he has the proper tools needed to take on just about any challenge in his path. As mentioned before, the hand given to Link by Rauru gives

Link special abilities and they are the core of the gameplay. One of the first abilities Link gets is Ultrahand, this ability allows players to grab objects and stick them together in order to make things such as bridges to get across large gaps or make a boat to cross large bodies of water. Later on in the game, players can get an extension to this ability known as Autobuild which will allow players to get access to builds players made in the past as well as schematics that players can discover on their travels. Another ability Link receives is Fuse which will allow players to create new weapons by combining their weapons with something else like a rock, another weapon, or pretty much anything players can collect to make their weapons stronger and more durable. Throughout the game players will find themselves exploring caves. If players get lost in a cave, they can jump up and go through the cave ceiling to the surface outside using Ascend, another ability Link gets with his arm. Ascend can also be used to get access to high places that Link would not have access to otherwise by going through a ceiling of some sort. Lastly of the main abilities is Recall which lets players rewind an object's movement which is great for when a rock comes rolling down towards Link.

Players get all of these abilities, with the exception of Autobuild, at the beginning of the game from puzzle rooms known as shrines. Players will find many more of these shrines on their journey which will test players abilities and problem solving skills. Once Link gets the main arm abilities and returns to the surface of Hyrule, players are free to pretty much do whatever they want when they want. For example, at one point players will be tasked with looking into the four regions that are



being greatly affected by the Upheaval. Rather than having to take them in a specific order, players can choose the order they wish to do them. The world is there for players to explore which will almost always award them for doing so.

### **Impact On Creativity**

What can greatly impact creativity is getting players to question what is going on, which is exactly what *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* does. Right at the beginning of the game, there was that mysterious opening with the corpse; it is not made clear why it is there during the opening moments of the game. Another strange thing that is not explained is what happens when the corpse comes to life, it seems to know the names of Link and Zelda. How does it know their names? Answers are given over time to those questions, however there are other questions players might have that are not never quite answered. According to the *New York Times* article, “How The Legend of Zelda Changed the Game,” “The immersive gameplay of the Zelda franchise is bolstered by its deep mythology, convincing players they are unearthing ancient secrets.” (Small and Taylor 2023). *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* has secrets to be found all over the world map. The underground being a good example when players find treasures that hold clothing that past Links have worn. Why would these outfits be down there? No clear answer is given to this question and many other details in the game map players explore.

These questions left unanswered can lead to some players trying to figure out the answers to said questions with the little information given. Going back to the *New*

*York Times* article, there is insight on what the lore means to the Zelda community from a fellow member of said community. ‘Someone might write an entire university dissertation on a specific part of the worlds created by Tolkien,’ said Ed King (qtd. in Small and Taylor 2023). Ed King is a YouTuber, known as Zeltic online, who discusses the Zelda series and explains its mysteries and lore. He and many others have made their own content on the Zelda series discussing theories and finding answers to questions left unanswered by the games. Many of these people have basically made a career on discussing the Zelda series since Youtubers can get money from videos they make. Getting successful on Youtube with content creation takes a lot of creativity and getting over 800,000 subscribers like Ed King has done is no small feat.

Throughout the game, there are many areas to explore that give players puzzles to solve in order to progress with many of said puzzles being in the form of mini dungeons known as shrines. Each shrine has a set of puzzles players need to solve to get to the end where players are awarded with a Light of Blessing which are needed to recover Link's strength after the attack at the beginning of the game. To get through these shrines players must find a solution to a puzzle and the solution a player finds might be different from another player's solution. Looking back at the *New York Times* article again, “Multiplicative gameplay encourages players to combine actions and objects in ways that allow for a vast set of solutions.” (Small and Taylor 2023). The game essentially gets players to use their own creativity to figure out a solution to a problem that can be solved in many different ways. This is not that

much different from computer programming where a programmer is tasked with finding a way to get the computer to do what they want which can be achieved in multiple ways but rather than using coding skills, players use the hand abilities Link was given at the beginning of the game. Using these abilities, players can find a complex solution to solve a puzzle or players can just cheese the puzzle with Ultrahand and Recall. If a player were to lift an object in the air for a bit, set it down and then switch to the recall ability, the object would go back to where it was a few seconds earlier, which was in air, meaning a player could use the object as a platform to get over a wall or a large gap. That is just one solution, players can find many more solutions if they are willing to get creative with their problem solving skills.

As stated before, players can attach things to other objects with Ultrahand which allows players to build things such as build bridges but players can build a lot more things including actual vehicles. The article “The Benefits of Playing with Building and Construction Toys,” discussed the importance of children building through play saying that “Children who engage in activities where the toys can be built or constructed in some way will change the way they think... Building and construction projects certainly stimulate creativity and sharpen crucial skills. Construction toys and play environments encourage children to ‘think outside the square’.” (Good To Play 2025). While this article is about children, the idea of changing the way people think when building things can be applied to anyone who plays *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* because the game gives players of all ages the chance to play around with all kinds of building materials to make whatever they

can think of. Players can use their creations to fight enemies making the combat a lot more engaging than just swinging a weapon around. The Fuse ability also allows players to make use of weapons in different ways as well. Take arrows for example, if a player were to combine it with an item with fire properties, the arrow can be used to attack an enemy directly to burn them or the player could shoot the arrow at an explosive to damage multiple enemies. The way players can play the game is kind of like engineering, players are able to create things that help solve problems which can take a lot of forethought to do.

## Game Two: *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*

### Why This Game

Similar to *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*, this game is on the Nintendo Switch. I picked *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* because it is another game that I really enjoyed and is probably the game I spend the most amount of hours in out of the three games I picked. Having played the previous game, *Animal Crossing: New Leaf*, I was excited to play *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* when it was first revealed. The game also came out at the perfect time since it gave many people including myself something to do during the pandemic when it was released in 2020.

The game features these really cute animal characters that are fairly simple in design with the body proportions being mostly round shapes which was the main reason why I wanted to use this game for inspiration for another piece of art, which can be found in the Art section. I figured it would be easy and fun to draw some of these characters, which it was. The game is also excellent at engaging players in creativity as well. The game is pretty much all about customization options players can play around with to work on their creativity skills. How creativity can be impacted when playing this game was easiest to explain because that is basically the main point of the game.

### Overview Of Game Series

For a quick refresher, the Animal Crossing series is a bit different from the typical action packed adventures found in the The Legend of Zelda series. Rather

than fighting, players are simply living a life in a small community. The Animal Crossing series has always been about doing simple daily chores such as watering flowers, talking to neighbors, decorating a house and a few other things. The thing that really makes this game series interesting is the villagers themselves, while the player plays as a human, everyone else around them is a walking talking animal, hence the name of the series. The games have all kinds of animals players interact with such as cats, dogs, chickens, horses, bears and much more. They have different personality types, and unique appearances.

There are also recurring characters that run different buildings such as Tom Nook, who runs the furniture store and is the one who gives players a house. He is big on the game's currency, so players will need to pay a lot of their earnings to Tom in order to get their house looking nice. The Able sisters, Mabel and Sable, run the tailors, Mabel is the extraverted one who will sell the outfits while Sable, the inverted one, will be in the back making patterns; she does not have much to say but she will open up to players if they try to talk to her daily for a bit. There is also Blathers, he runs the museum and loves to take the opportunity to talk about things players donate to the museum; although he is not the biggest fan of insects. There are a few more characters that players will find during gameplay as well that will offer something of their own so players should be on the lookout for them. Animal Crossing is great for those interested in a more casual experience who just want to chill with their fellow animal friends surrounded by nature. The most recent release *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* takes the series to a whole new level.

## Story Summary

The games normally start with moving into a town that already exists but in *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*, the game starts with the player getting a get away package to live on an island that is not established yet. Run by Tom Nook, he hopes the island to be a great place for many to live on but it starts off with only the player and two other villagers moving in. After the player helps with gathering supplies for the welcome celebration, helping other villagers decide on where they want their homes to be and coming up with a name for the island that everyone loves, the player is deemed the town designer. As the town designer, the player is tasked with making the island look nice and help bring more villagers to the island with the end goal of trying to get K.K Slider, a famous dog musician, to come to the island and play his music. After accomplishing these goals, players are free to do whatever they want with the island.

## Gameplay Summary

The Animal Crossing series has always been a more chill experience compared to other games and *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* is no different. In the game, players spend their days on an island living a simple life. The game runs on a real life clock meaning there are different things players can do depending on the time of day. Certain stores will only be open for a certain amount of time of the day where players can go to buy things with the game's currency, bells, which they can get by selling fish, insects and more. The game also runs on the real life calendar allowing for

different seasons that each bring additional things to do such as building snow persons during the winter and collecting blue seashells during the summer. Players can also talk to their neighbors everyday who will sometimes ask the player to do something for them in exchange for an award.

One newer addition to the Animal Crossing series is an in-game phone called the Nook phone. Players are given the phone early on by Tom Nook which lets players do a few things using the apps on it. There is a camera that allows players to take pictures with some different filters and a few other options. Another app is DIY Recipes which keeps track of items players can create and what materials are needed to make them. There is the Critterpedia app that allows players to keep track of all the critters caught, the Custom Designs app allows players to make their own patterns for clothing plus a few other things and the Island Designer app allows players to make or remove cliffs, rivers and trails. There are a few other apps but the last notable one is the Nook Miles app. Players will likely use this app the most because this is where players can complete objectives which can be anything from planting trees to talking to villagers. When players complete these objectives, they are awarded with Nook miles, a currency separate from bells which allows players to buy items they cannot with bells. In summary, the game gives players a lot of things to do.

### **Impact On Creativity**

One of the main things players will find themselves doing in Animal Crossing games is customizing things to their liking. In the first game, players are able to



customize outfits and plant flowers however they like in their town. The customizing options have only gotten greater over time as the series progressed with *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* being the one offering the largest number of things to customize yet. According to an *CBR* article titled, “Animal Crossing: New Horizons Is A Haven For Artists,” “*New Horizons* is a game that encourages its players to be more creative than they are used to. It has helped build a community for new and seasoned artists and has also continuously added new features to an already wholesome environment. Now, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* has become a haven for artists of all interests.” (Brooks 2021). The game is a perfect place to really practice creative thinking when trying to make an island look truly unique. Artists into drawing will be able to make use of their custom designs for the island's flag, clothing and some future patterns. Players more into decorating will find no shortage of options using the DIY app mentioned before which lets players create furniture out of materials they can collect while playing. They can set the furniture up not only in their homes but outside as well which was not a possibility in the previous games. The game gives a lot of options on what players can do with their islands.

Players are encouraged to make their island look as nice as possible with the island rating mechanic. In the plaza building, players can talk to Isabelle, who will inform players on the town's star rating. The star rating ranges from one to five with a five star score being the best of the best. Players are encouraged to get at least three stars to unlock more custom features and to have KK Slider perform on their island. If the player is not at five stars yet, Izabell will give players tips on how to improve

their island. She might tell players to build more fences, plant more flowers or just decorate the island more which is a very welcoming addition for players who may not be sure how to make their island look better. The game really wants players to try to flex those creativity muscles and make something that was not possible in any other Animal Crossing game before it.

When players start out in the game, rather than having all the items available in the game, players only have a limited amount of stuff they can do. However, players find more stuff to use over time to create the island of their dreams. This restriction at the beginning of the game is a great way to expand on one's creativity. Restriction being beneficial is discussed in the *FastCompany* article “Proof That Constraints Can Actually Make You More Creative.” The article states that, “What restrictions do is take away some of the choices available to us, and with them, the paralysis of choice that stops us from getting started.” (Cooper 2014). Players can possibly get overwhelmed if they are giving everything at once which is likely why *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* is designed the way that it is. The game will only start players off with a few things they can do but slowly over time, players gain the ability to do more things such as building fences, the ability to craft more things by getting more DIY recipes and more. Restrictions are applied to the shops as well. Take the Able Sisters for example, rather than offering everything players can possibly buy from them, they only have a set amount of things in the shop with the inventory changing daily. Having this restriction can get players to get creative with the few clothes they have towards the beginning of the game and come up with more ideas as more clothing is

bought over time. Having everything available at once can be overwhelming to some players which is likely why the game gives players bits and pieces as time goes on to give players a smaller set of things to focus on at a time.

Not only is *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* a great game to use as a tool to work on creativity but it is also a great game to get some inspiration from others as well. The game features multiplayer which allows players to either visit friends' islands or have friends come visit theirs. Not only does this give more options of how to play the game but it also gives players a chance to share ideas with each other. Looking back on the *CBR* article, there is a mention of the multiplayer where the author stated that “*New Horizons* offers players an opportunity to visit one another's island and see their creations. Some may look more urban, while others are more woodsy or reminiscent of a popular property. But the goal is to foster a positive and creative environment among like-minded players and give them the option to encourage one another to try other artistic projects in the game.” (Brooks 2021). Essentially, players can help each other figure out what to do with their islands. If a player is struggling with getting ideas, a friend could show that they have worked on to help them get some ideas. That same friend could also visit the player's island and give them some tips based on what they have.

If a player does not want to own an island by themselves and would rather do collaborative work, then that is an option as well. An island can have multiple people living there which can possibly make getting things done faster. The university article “The Importance Of Collaboration And Teamwork In The Creative Industry,”

discussed why collaboration on projects is important saying that “A team member with...previous experience with a specific task, another perspective on a situation requiring problem solving...can teach you new information in practice, while you and others are applying it together in real time.” (University of Silicon Valley 2017). It is safe to say that collaboration can increase creativity by having more than one perspective. Interaction with others in *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* is a great way to get new ideas for better looking islands. The game really pushes the idea of playing with other players. The game will award players some nook miles if they complete tasks that involve playing with others, in order to collect all the fruit trees in the game players would have to visit a friend's island to get their native fruits. The game even encourages players to play with friends at the beginning of the game when players get a dream sequence about K.K slider who tells players about hanging out with friends sounding like a “groovy” time.

Even if a player does not have friends to play this game with, there are still some options for them in terms of getting inspiration from others. At one point in the game, when players lay in their bed, they will have the option to fall asleep and when they do, they will meet a character named Luna in their dreams who will be able to send them to a random dream version of an island by another person. Once there, players are free to explore and see what ideas the island has to offer; all players can share their dream island as well if they want to share ideas of their own with others. For those wanting to get creative with decoration skills, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* is the game to play.

## Game Three: *Pikmin 4*

### Why This Game

Like the other two Nintendo games, *Pikmin 4* is a more recent release on the Nintendo Switch. Out of the three Nintendo video game series discussed, Pikmin is the newest one for me since I did not really give the series a shot until fairly recently. I actually got into the games not too long before I had to start planning out what this thesis was going to be about. When I saw the review trailers for *Pikmin 4*, I decided to give the series a shot. Not long before the *Pikmin 4* came out, Nintendo re-released *Pikmin*, the first Pikmin game, and *Pikmin 2* on the Nintendo Switch; they also re-released *Pikmin 3* on the Nintendo Switch a few years prior. This was perfect for me because I was able to get caught up right before playing *Pikmin 4*. I really enjoyed my time with the games so I figured talking about *Pikmin 4* would be a good choice.

The simple art style of the Pikmin characters themselves looked easy enough for me to include in some kind of drawing which can be found in the Art section down below. As for how the creativity of others can be influenced, the game really tests the player's brain. Players have to try to do as much as possible in a certain amount of time in order to progress. The game asks players to play really well to 100 percent the game which takes some creative thinking to do.

### Overview Of Game Series

For a quick refresher, Pikmin is a series of games that all have one thing in common and that is the so-called Pikmin. Pikmin are tiny plant-like creatures that live

on the planet known as PNF-404, where they deal with some difficulty to survive due to other creatures that roam the land who are much larger than the Pikmin themselves. On their own, they are weak and can easily be eaten alive but can be dangerous to enemies in large numbers, the only problem is that they have a hard time using this advantage without guidance from a leader. This is where the player comes in.

In the first game, players play as captain Olimar, a small humanoid alien from the planet Hocotate, crash lands his ship on PNF-404 which results in his ship parts scattering all over the game map. After walking around a bit, Olimar discovers his first Pikmin. The Pikmin immediately starts to follow Olimar who realizes he can use these Pikmin to help him find the ship parts to help him leave the planet before he runs out of oxygen in thirty days. Thanks to the guidance of Olimar, the Pikmin grew in numbers which allowed them to take on the dangerous enemies that posed a threat to their existence. In return, the Pikmin helped Olimar successfully get the ship parts he needed to leave the planet and return home. The games after this one follow a similar story but with some changes in gameplay and characters. As the series progresses, we see many different types of Pikmin with different abilities. It starts with only three types in the first game but that number expands in the games that preceded it. The latest game in the series, *Pikmin 4*, has the most Pikmin types to utilize thus far.

## Story Summary

The story of *Pikmin 4* starts with Olimar once again crash landing onto PNF-404 and gets help from the Pikmin, like in the first game, but this time he also gets help from a dog-like creature that Olimar found and saved from starvation. He is eventually able to send a distress signal which reaches the Rescue Corps, a group of rescuers who are small humanoid beings like Olimar. The group goes to PNF-404 to get Olimar but they end up crash landing as well. Because of this, the player character is sent to the planet to go look for the rescuers and Olimar.

Not long after landing, the player will find the pet of the Rescue Corps, Oatchi, who is similar to the creature Olimar found and immediately takes a liking to the player. They both set off and find two of the six rescuers and the ship they used to get to the planet, the others are missing and the ship they have lacks fuel. Not long after learning this, the player discovers the Pikmin who help find treasures that the player can convert into a substance known as Sparklium using the ship they came in. This Sparklium is the fuel the Rescue Corps need for their ship but they still need a lot more to get the ship to fly again. After getting the Sparklium, the player, Oatchi and the Pikmin are sent out to look for the other rescuers, Captain Olimar and more treasures while the others stay at the base occasionally giving the player guidance.

## Gameplay Summary

On the service, the gameplay is pretty simple. The game has a day cycle mechanic where for each day players start at the base to prepare before heading out

to a certain location in the game world for a day. For a certain amount of time, players are free to explore the map to find treasures, any stranded explorers and take them back to the player's ship. However, all of this has to be done in that small window of time and the maps have all kinds of things that slow players down such as areas being blocked off and enemies. The core of the gameplay has players interacting with Pikmin to help deal with these issues. Players typically do this by throwing Pikmin at things and what Pikmin do depends on what it is. If it is a treasure, Pikmin will attempt to carry it, when players throw enough Pikmin, the Pikmin will be able to carry it to the ship. If it is an enemy, Pikmin will grab onto the part of the enemy they were thrown at and start attacking but players need to be careful because the enemies can kill them.

While exploring, players will discover a wide variety of Pikmin that have their own pros and cons. At the start of the game, players get Red Pikmin who are fire resistant and do a bit more damage than others. Later on, players will get more Pikmin such as the Yellow Pikmin which are resistant to electricity and can be thrown a bit higher than other Pikmin types. One of the new Pikmin types in this game players get are Ice Pikmin which have the ability to freeze bodies of water and enemies. Blue Pikmin are resistant to water and can walk around and interact with things underwater unlike other Pikmin types including the Ice Pikmin who just float if there is not enough of them to freeze the water. Rock Pikmin are able to break crystal walls but cannot grab onto enemies like the other Pikmin can and will instead bounce off enemies players throw them at. Purple Pikmin are larger and can do more



damage and have the strength of ten Pikmin. White Pikmin are smaller than the other Pikmin types but they are poisonous which will cause damage to enemies that eat them and are resistant to any poison hazards. The Winged Pikmin are weaker but with their flying abilities, they can carry things in the air which are useful in some situations. Lastly, another new Pikmin type in this game is the glow Pikmin who are used exclusively in caves and night time missions; more on that later. All of these Pikmin types are the player's main tools to explore the world.

### **Impact On Creativity**

*Pikmin 4* really pushes players to get creative when tackling the challenges each in game day brings by introducing the art of dandori. When starting out in the game, the remaining rescuers will inform players of the importance of dandori which basically means being able to do multiple things at once rather than just one thing at a time. This concept, while not pushed onto the player like it is in *Pikmin 4*, has always been an important part of the Pikmin series. According to the *Medium* article, “Pikmin Is a Spreadsheet for Those Who Prefer Art to Math,” the strategy on getting through the first Pikmin game is “...splitting your forces allows for idle tasks, like making bridges, carrying objects and breaking down walls to happen passively, as your active group of Pikmin solve another problem that requires more specific engagement. This is effective time and resource management...” (L. 2023). The Pikmin games have always allowed players to be able to do multiple things at once by splitting Pikmin, but what makes *Pikmin 4* better for multitasking is that it greatly expands the options

available to players to increase how much can get done in a day. For one, there is the dog-like partner Oatchi who is not only rideable and makes attacking enemies easier, but can also be sent out to do things on their own which allows players to do something else while Oatchi does another task. Players can also choose to control Oatchi who is also able to interact with Pikmin, meaning a player can be active in two different spots on the map. There are also tools in the game such as a drone that lets players see ahead to help plan out a travel route, a signal gadget that lets players call all stranded Pikmin saving time on having to get them and much more. Ultimately, the player has a lot of options for creative planning to get through the game.

*Pikmin 4* puts players' dandori skills to the test with all different types of challenges and those challenges increase in difficulty over time. What makes an increase in difficulty a good inclusion in the game is that challenges can elevate the way players think, that way the gameplay is not just mindless tasks after a while. In the article "Crucibles of Leadership," Warren G. Bennis and Robert J. Thomas explained that what makes a good leader is "...an individual's ability to find meaning in negative events and to learn from even the most trying circumstances." (9). Failing a challenge can result in negative feelings and in most cases, in order to overcome that, one must find a way to get through by learning from mistakes and improving oneself on the next attempt. *Pikmin 4* challenges players consistently and does not stop until the end of the game. The will challenge players in multiple different ways, not only are there the day time expeditions but there are also, night missions, a newer addition to the Pikmin series. Enemies will be attacking from all over the map trying to get to the

nests of the Glow Pikmin and it is up to the player and Oatchi to defend the nests with the help of the Glow Pikmin who are the only Pikmin available at night. Sometimes players will need to defend multiple nests which gets harder to do as players progress in the game. For those looking for a more classic Pikmin experience, the game has you covered with the ability to play through Olimar's story after you rescue him, this mood includes the three original Pikmin only and brings back the time limit. While the player does get some help from the dog-like creature Olimar saved named Moss, there is the catch that rather than a thirty day limit like the first game, players only have fifteen days. Both new and old players to the Pikmin games will find many challenging moments that will require players to learn new strategies to get through.

While some games are enjoyable in one playthrough, the Pikmin games can be enjoyable on multiple playthroughs because players might feel like setting a new goal when playing again. Since the beginning of the series, the Pikmin games will show players how well they did after completing the game which includes how many in-game days they took to complete the game, how many Pikmin were gained and lost and a few other things. Some players might look at that and think to themselves, how they could do better next time. Looking into the article “Neuroscience Insights For Personal Growth And Decision-Making”, The author discussed the benefits of self reflection stating that “...by regularly taking time to reflect, we’re not just gaining insights; we’re rewriting our brains to be more adaptable, resilient, and effective. It’s a tool that keeps us growing, learning, and evolving.” (Ross 2025). Creativity being tied

to the brain means self reflection gets the brain to think of new ideas and *Pikmin 4* has players do self reflection on how well they do in the game which encourages growth. The Pikmin games have always encouraged improvement and that is even more so in *Pikmin 4* with the addition of giving ranks on how well a player does in some challenges where players can get a platinum ribbon as the highest score. If a player fails to get the score they wanted the first time around in a challenge, then they have the option to tackle the challenge again without having to start a new save file. This would allow the player to think through what they did and what they could do better the second time around to get that platinum ribbon. The game encourages players to improve on themselves which on its own will take some knowledge and some creativity with that knowledge to improve.

## Original Art Section

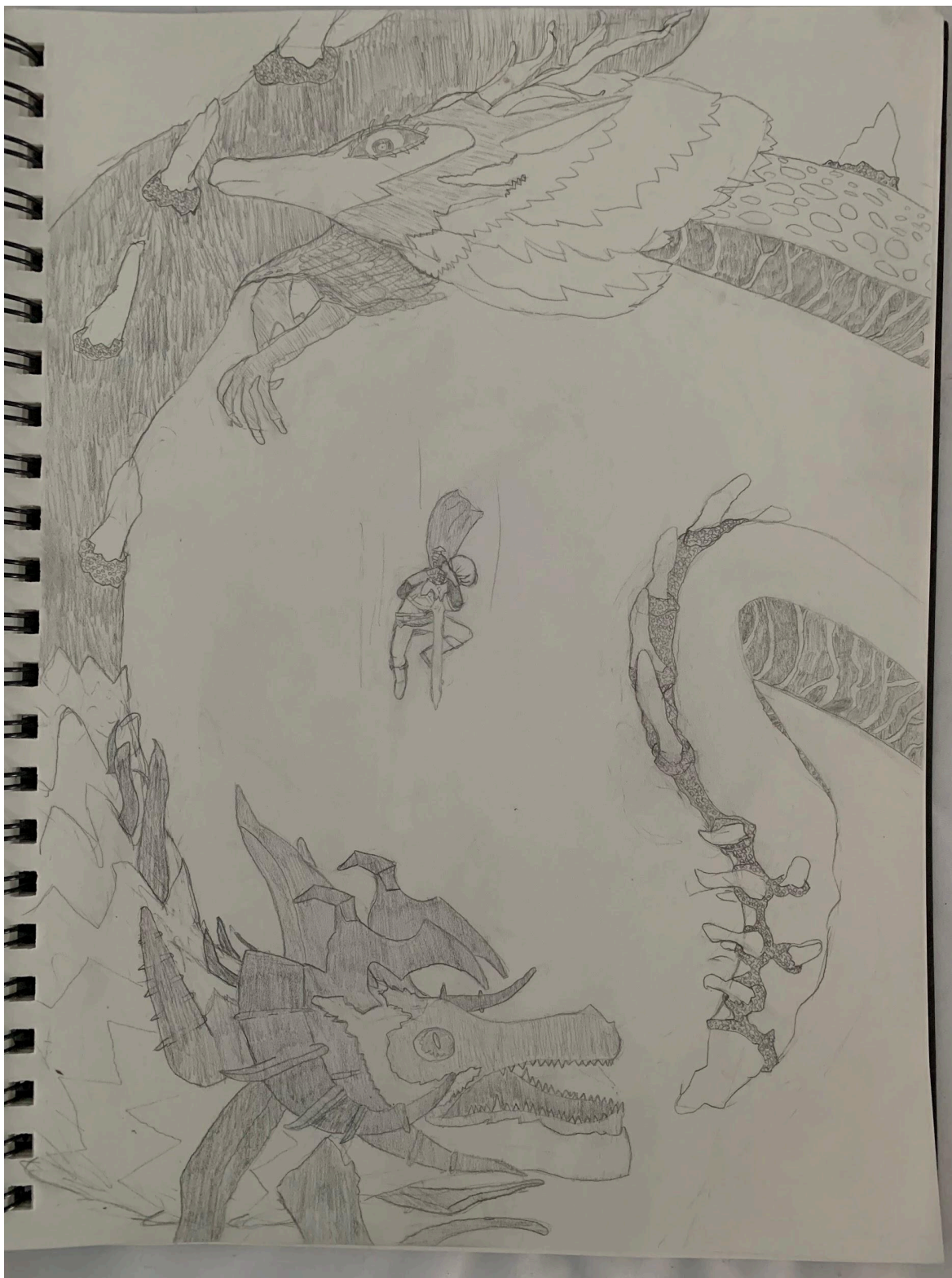
### Reasoning For Art

In order to further prove that Nintendo games do impact creativity, I decided to make three different drawings that are inspired by the three Nintendo games discussed to demonstrate the impact Nintendo games have had on my own creativity. For each of the three drawings, the first thing I did was some brainstorming of what I would want to draw for each art piece. Then I came up with some basic quick concept sketches to get a rough idea of what I wanted each of the final products to look like. The reason I did this was because I have a hard time trying to get what I envision on paper due to the vision in my head not staying consistent. Also with how slow I can be at times when trying to make a nice drawing, it is nice to make a rough sketch so I can get all of my ideas down quickly without worrying about it looking perfect and possibly play around with more ideas in the rough sketch before adding it to the final drawing. It is not fun to spend 20 minutes drawing something before realizing the idea does not work and having to undo it.

Once I had a concept down, I looked through each of the three games and got some in-game screenshots for references. I wanted to look at in-game visuals exclusively rather than any art made outside of the game since playing the video games themselves is what inspired my creativity. Most references are screenshots I took myself on my Nintendo Switch; for one of the art pieces, I incorporated some screenshots from other people online. After that, I got to work on the final products with the references and rough sketches to help with the process.

I decided to just do everything by hand using pencils on a notebook because it is what I am most comfortable with in terms of drawing. I also decided not to include any colors in the three drawings and just use regular pencils because I typically do not incorporate colors in my drawings and unfortunately I did not have forever to get these done to experiment with color. For each art piece showcased, there will be some explanation for how the art came to be as well as the references and concept sketches. Down below are my final art pieces as well as some rough sketches made during the planning phase.

## Artwork 1



## Explanation Of Artwork

For this first artwork, I decided I wanted the art piece to be based on *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*. What I was specifically going to draw was the easiest for me to come up with, so much so that I pretty much stuck with the first concept sketch I made without many adjustments. However this was the art piece that took the longest for me to make, mainly due to having the most amount of time to finish when I started working on it.

What inspired me to create this piece was the impact the final fight had on me. Towards the end of the game, Link and by extension, the player learns through these memories left behind that Zelda was sent back to the ancient past where she helped the two remaining Zoni, and the other sages in the Imprisoning war which lead to the Demon King being locked in place by the Zoni Roru who was the king of Hyrule at the time. After the fight was over, Zelda needed to find a way to return to the present and give Link back the Master Sword which was also sent back in time and still damaged. She does this by going through the process known as Dracoification, where she transforms into the immortal Light Dragon that flies over the skies for thousands of years in order to get back to the present. During that time, she is also able to use her powers to slowly heal the Master Sword and make it more powerful than last time. After Link is able to retrieve the Master Sword from Zelda, he goes after the Demain King who is now revived, Link nearly beats him in battle but the Demain King goes through a Dracoification of his own turing into the Demon Dragon who then takes Link high in the sky and Zelda, the Light Dragon, comes to Links aid to

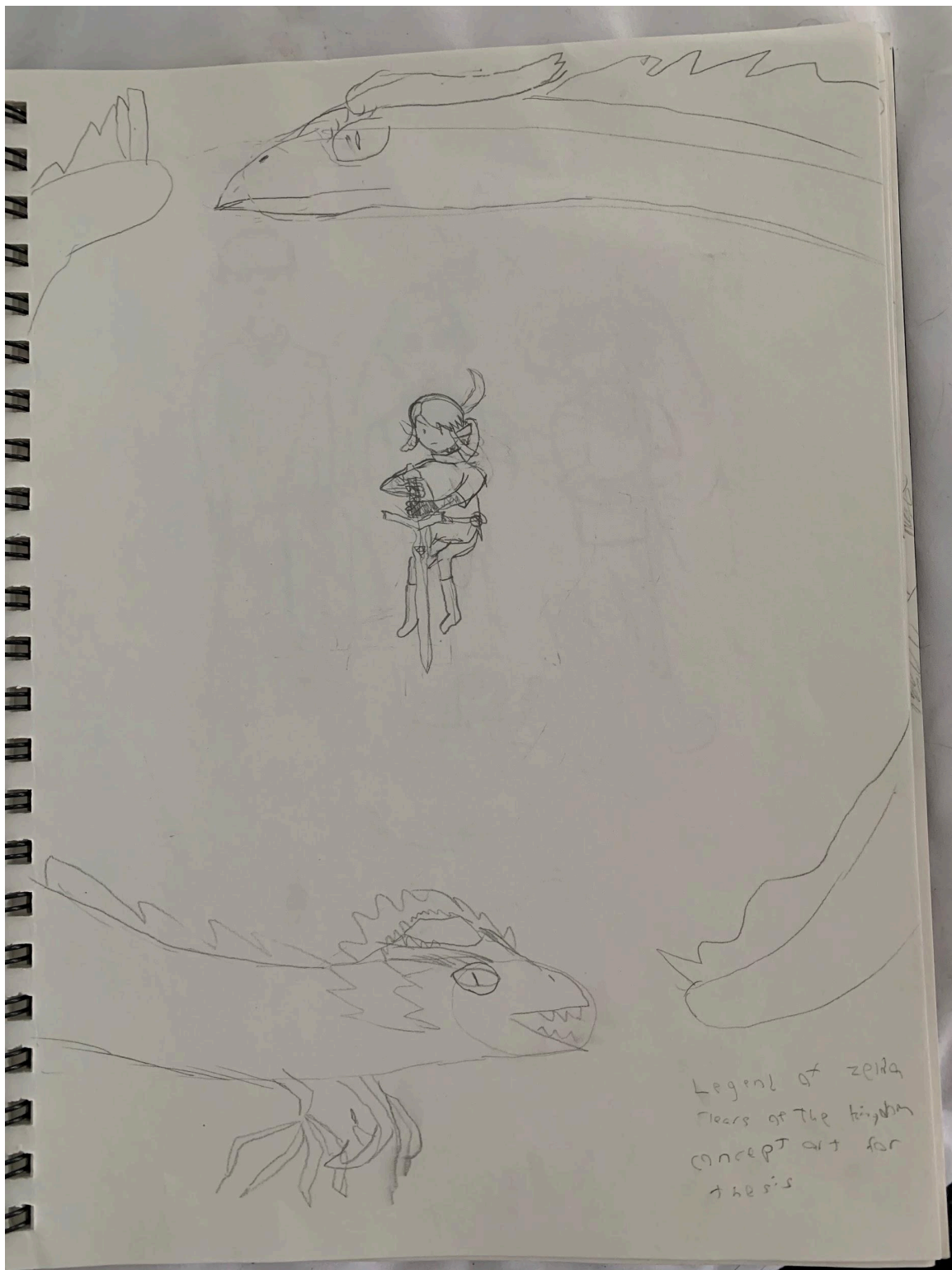


help defend the Demon Dragon. This battle was really impactful for me and I wanted to capture that battle in a single image for Artwork 1 which is what I did.

While I was able to get screenshots of Link on my own switch with ease since players look at him for pretty much the entire game, the Demon Dragon in particular is a bit different because the Demon Dragon does not appear until the final boss.

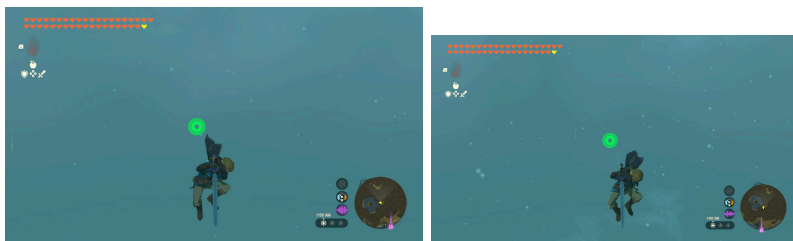
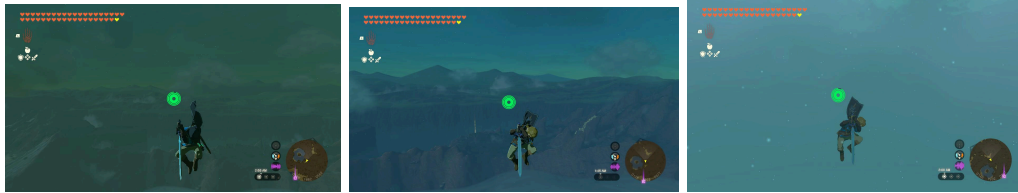
Also there are good shots of the two dragons together during the final boss cutscenes and I wanted to use screenshots of those. Unfortunately, as far as I know, cutscenes cannot be paused or rewind like a YouTube video, so to save time, I looked up a video of it as well as some other images of the final boss section online. Overall I am really happy with how this one turned out.

## Initial Drafting

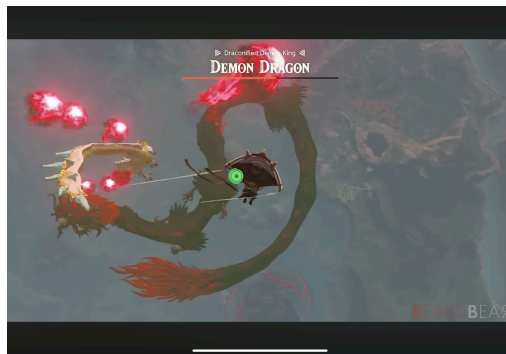


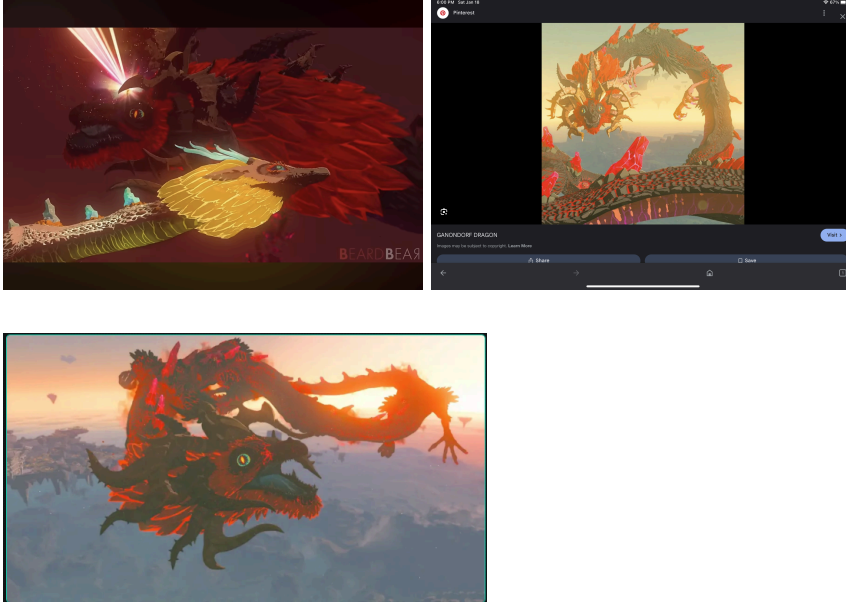
## Inspirational Screengrabs

### Link Screengrabs



## Dragon Screen Grabs





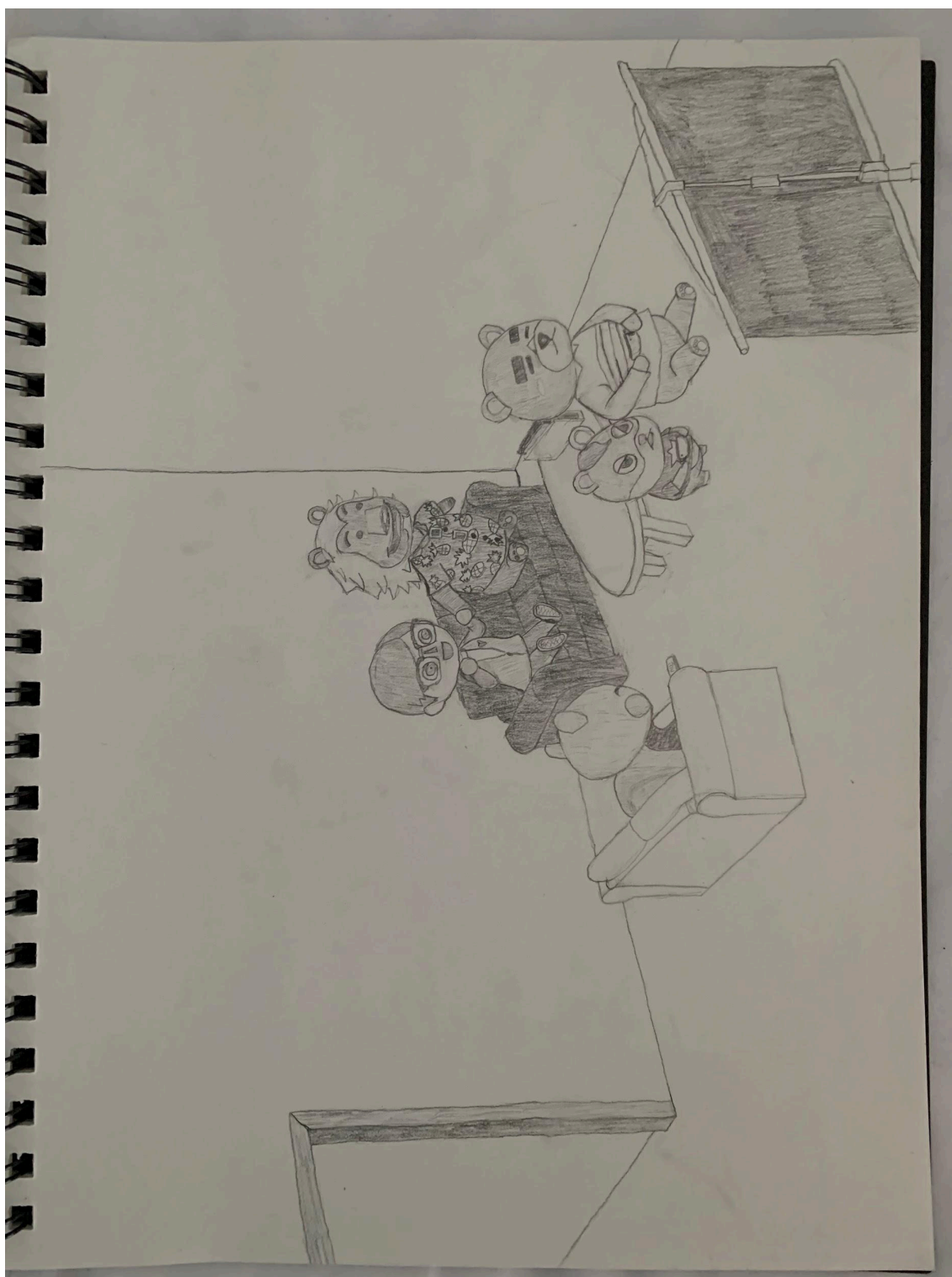
sources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A-s3uvux8E>

<https://it.pinterest.com/pin/ganondorf-dragon--793266921886676008/>

<https://frontiernav.net/wiki/the-legend-of-zelda-tears-of-the-kingdom/entities/demon-dragon>

## Artwork 2





## Explanation Of Artwork

This next art piece is based on *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* which was a bit more difficult to come up with. For the initial concept sketch I did, I wanted to experiment with perspective where the viewer gets the illusion of looking down rather than straight forward like in the first art piece. When I got to the point of needing to get references to use, I was starting to feel unsure of my initial idea; I did not even decide on what characters from the game I wanted to include. Then I remembered that in the game there is the photo mode that I could use to take some pictures. I also remembered that there is a photo studio players have access to on an island known as Harv's Island which is where Harv, a hippie dog, lets players come visit and use his studio where players can play around with different items and characters and take pictures. I decided to scrap my initial concept and instead set up a scene with my player character and some of my villagers hanging out and use that as my reference for the drawing. I decided to do this because I did not have as much time as I did with the first drawing and I figured it would be best to make things a little easier for me by positioning the characters exactly as I wanted them and just draw that with a few alterations.

For Artwork 2, I wanted to capture a moment of being together with my fellow animal villagers. I decided to include my favorite villagers on my island currently, which are Teddy the bear, Bud the lion, Hamlet the hamster and Marshal the squirrel. Since this thesis is on videogames, the activity that felt the most natural for me to do was a get together playing video games. Once I got it set up, I took

multiple screenshots from different angles for references and then I just drew the scene with little alterations. In the drawing, my player character and Bud cheer on Hamlet and Teddy as they play while Marshal is just on his phone on the side. I wanted to find a way to ensure that their personalities show through in this piece or at least the personalities I assigned them. Teddy always looks like he is calm with no care in the world while Hamlet looks like someone who would let the competition get to his head more easily and so I drew Teddy looking like he usually does just enjoying the game while Hamlet is in super competitive mode. For Bud, he has been my favorite villager for a while so I had him sit next to my player character while we cheered them on. He also seems like someone who can really get into watching competitive gaming. Marshall on the other hand is just there on his phone because I feel like he would be the kind of person who likes the company of others but still tends to keep to himself for the most part so him doing his own thing on his phone felt like a good inclusion. I would say that maybe I could have spent more time on putting in some more detail like adding some things on the wall. I also could have deviated from the scenes I set up a little bit more rather than mainly copying the scene but other than that, I think it turned out pretty good.



Initial Drafting



## Inspirational Screengrabs





## Artwork 3



## Explanation Of Artwork

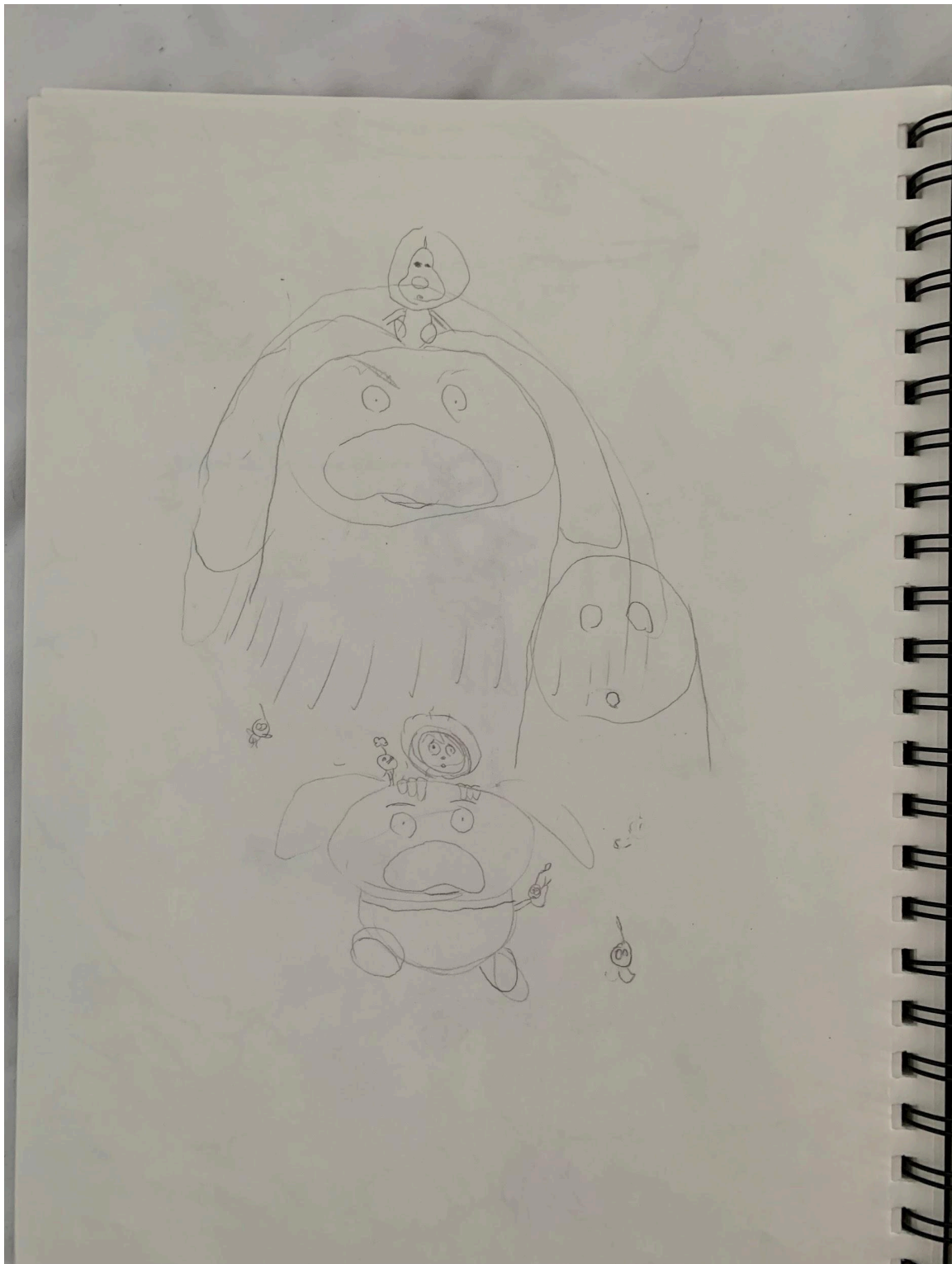
For the third and final art piece, I did a drawing based on *Pikmin 4*. Out of the three, this was the one I had the most trouble with. In fact, I was originally going to work on this one after Artwork 1 but the original concept I was going for was not really working out for me so I switched to work on Artwork 2 since I was able to come up with an idea for that project sooner. My original idea was to have the player character and Oatchi running away from a horde of enemies. I never settled on all the enemies to include and the final boss I also wanted to include was difficult for me to draw. Then I remembered the treasures gallery that showcases all the treasures players collect in the game so I figured that it would be good to have a showcase of one of my favorite treasures, the GameBoy SP.

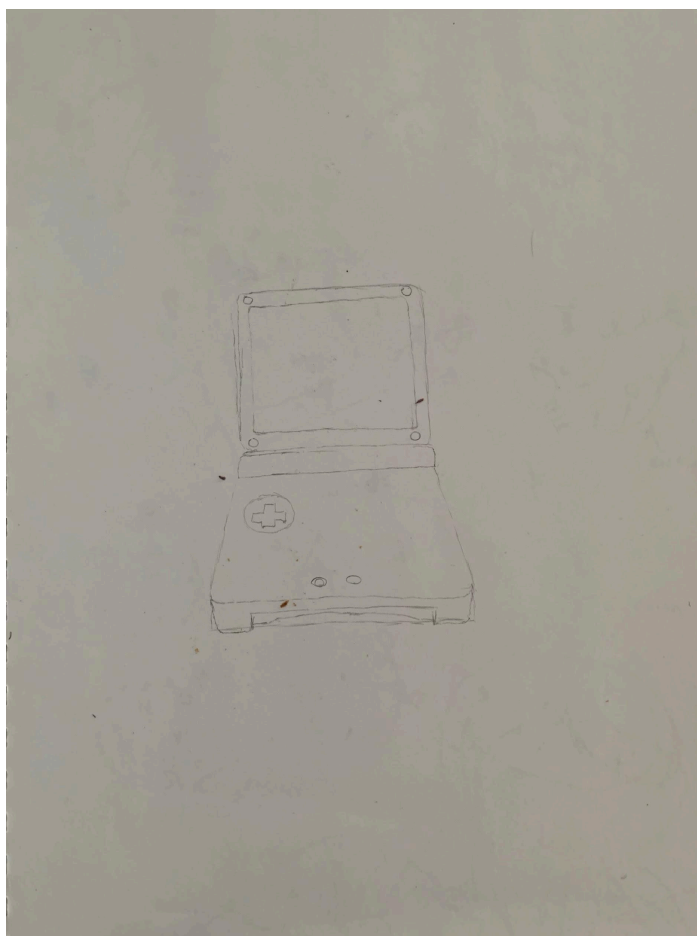
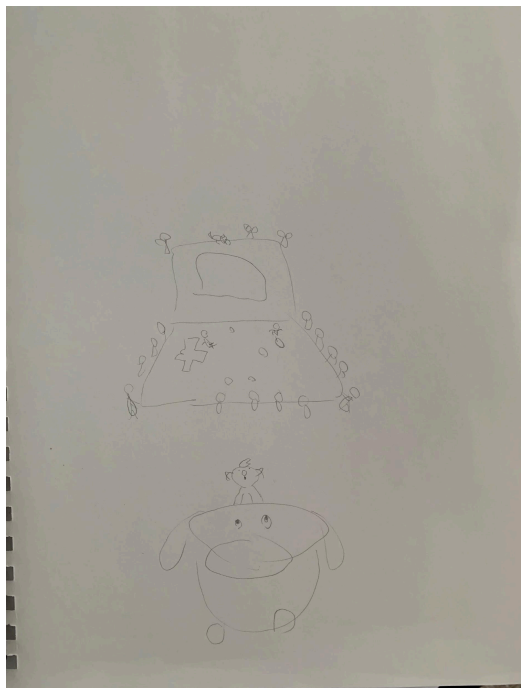
I thought about having the Pikmin gathering around this GameBoy SP during the night time just hanging out at first. I actually started a final drawing of the GameBoy SP facing the viewer without an initial rough sketch of it. After completing the GameBoy Sp, I got an idea of having the SP be lifted in the air by the Winged Pikmin. I decided to make a new rough sketch to get an idea of what that would look like with how I currently have the GameBoy Sp drawn with the addition of my player character and Oatchi looking up at it from below but I ended up not liking that idea after drawing the rough sketch. Then I got an image in my head of multiple random objects in the air lifted by Winged Pikmin. I thought it would make for a cool visual so I decided to scrap the idea I initially had and go with many treasures in the game being in the air instead of just focusing on one. I then realized I could play with the

perspective of looking down on a scene like I was going to do with Artwork 2 so I made another rough sketch to get an idea of what I wanted it to look like.

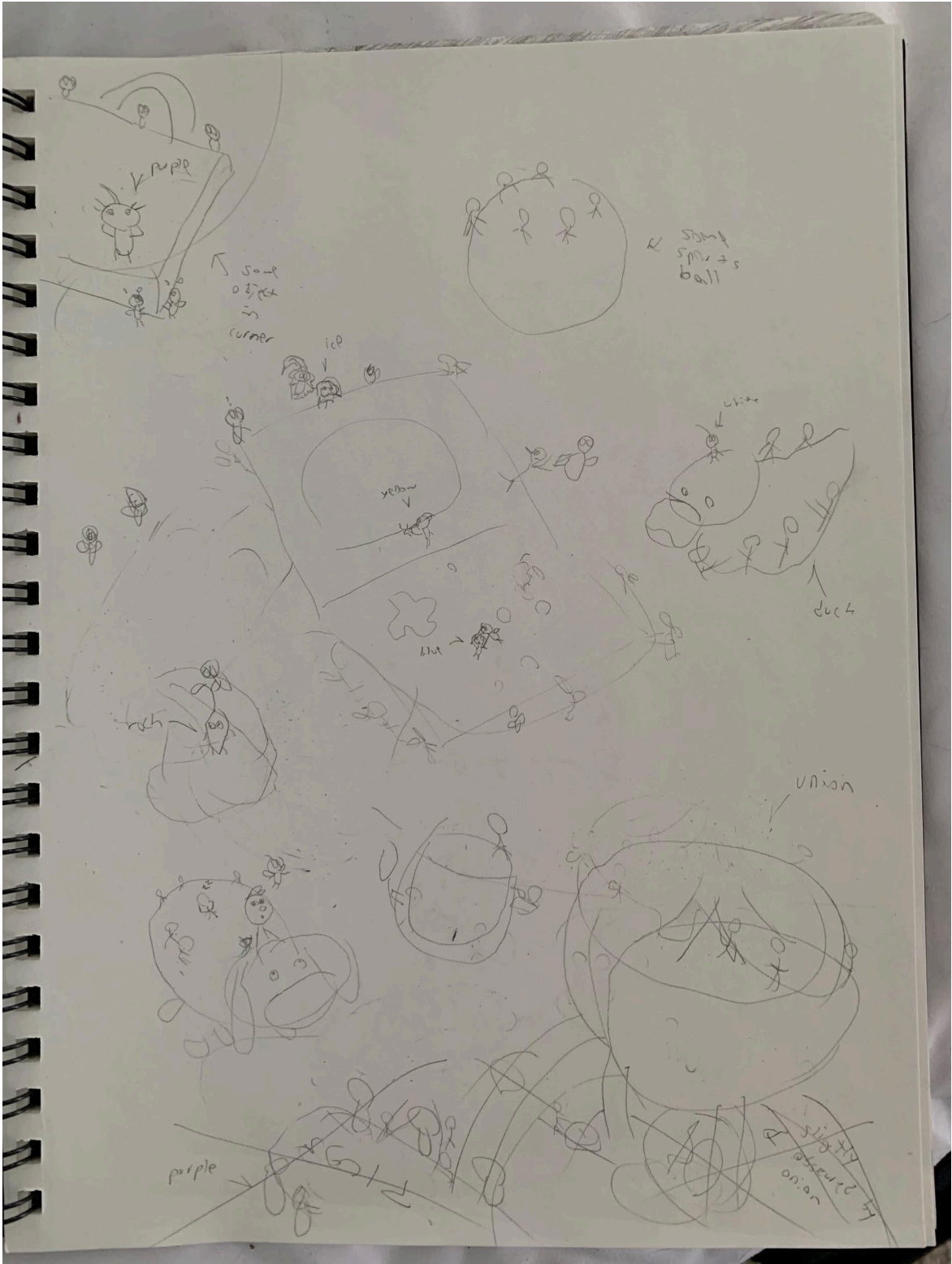
I took a ton of screen shots to get different angles of treasures, Oatchi, my player character and of course the Pikmin themselves to make what is probably the most complex drawing out of the three I have made for this project. Having less time made me have to be a lot more strict on how much I worked on, so I made sure to work on it as often as possible without experiencing burnout. It was a challenge to figure out how I wanted to do with Pikmin, I wanted to make sure to include at least one of every Pikmin type with the expectation of the Glow Pikmin since they are typically separate from the other Pikmin. Having to do multiple flying Pikmin was a repetitive process as well but in the end, I would say it was worth the work. My goal with Artwork 3 was to showcase the collecting of treasure with the Pikmin and to play around with a perspective I am not that familiar with and I would say that I was able to accomplish this. Other than some background elements being a little rushed, I would say this turned out great.

## Initial Drafting







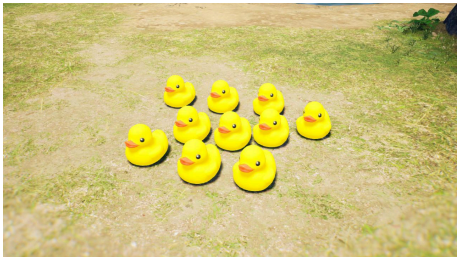
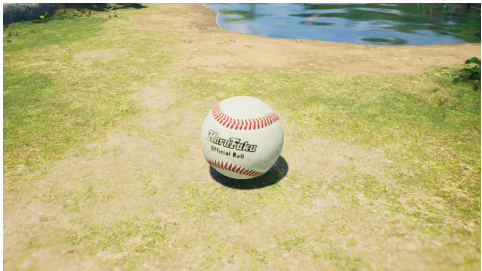




Inspirational Screengrabs











### Call/Return Pikmin

You can select up to three Pikmin types.

248	218	276	139	122	65	104	44
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Total 0 / 100

Choose Type Select Select 10 Cancel Confirm



Display Off

Change Viewpoint

Notes

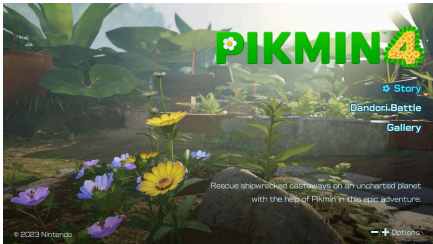
Reset

Day/Night

Look Closer

Back

Look Around



## Conclusion

While things have gone the way I have planned for the most part, there were some things that did not work out as planned and some plans have changed over the course of this project. Originally, I had plans to include a Mario game in the list of three games discussed in detail, specifically *Super Mario Galaxy*, my favorite videogame of all time. I always knew that I wanted to include a game from the Zelda and Animal Crossing series but I was not sure on which one to do for a bit. Over time, I started to realize that it would make more sense to talk about Switch games in detail exclusively since they are a better representation of how Nintendo is now. Because all the games needed to be Switch games, I had to scrap the idea of discussing *Super Mario Galaxy* because it is a Wii game. Also, I could not think of much on how Mario games impact creativity so I picked a game from the Pikmin series instead since I had ideas on how those games can impact creativity. I also originally planned to give much more background on how the games came to be and possibly give a bit of a history lesson of each of the games series. Not long after I started writing my draft on the games, I realized that these details on the games are not necessary information to prove video games impact creativity and the project would be too long.

This thesis is the biggest project I have done so far and it has taken a long time to get through but it has also given me experience with good time management for writing. When I started drafting, I would work on one page a day, five days a week. After completing a rough draft, I switched to work on the thesis for a full hour a day, five days a week. With this strategy, I did not get too overwhelmed, only taking

one small step at a time to get this massive project done rather than worrying about the project as a whole everyday. If I have to do something like this in the future, I hope to use these time management skills again.

If I had to start over on this project, I probably would have not been lazy with some of the drafting at the beginning. I ended up having to spend extra time going over my material to make it better. I also probably would have looked more into actual Nintendo sources a lot sooner than I did. At the beginning, I mainly focused on articles written by people outside of Nintendo rather than material from Nintendo. I wish I found a lot more sources like that during my research in the early stages to get into the heads of the people behind these games because I think getting into such research sooner would have made this project a much smoother process.

While I do believe that all three of the games discussed have a great amount of influence on players creativity, the creativity boost is not equal among the three games. The games also tend to affect creativity a bit differently than each other. For example, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* has this focus on creation where players are free to create what they want with the only real limit being the tools available and their imagination while *Pikmin 4* tends to focus on engaging players problem solving abilities. With that in mind, out of the three games, I would argue that *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* has the biggest impact on players' creativity. The reason for this is because this game has the best of both worlds, the game gives you tools to build all kinds of things with Links hand abilities and the game gives players many puzzles to solve using the tools at their disposal. I would also say that for me

personally, the game has had the most impact on my creativity because of the art style which I touched on in the Artwork section. I feel like if I were to create something of my own like a visual novel, I would probably use the art style of *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* as inspiration. I really grew to appreciate Nintendo's games and what they can do for players and this thesis reflects that.

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