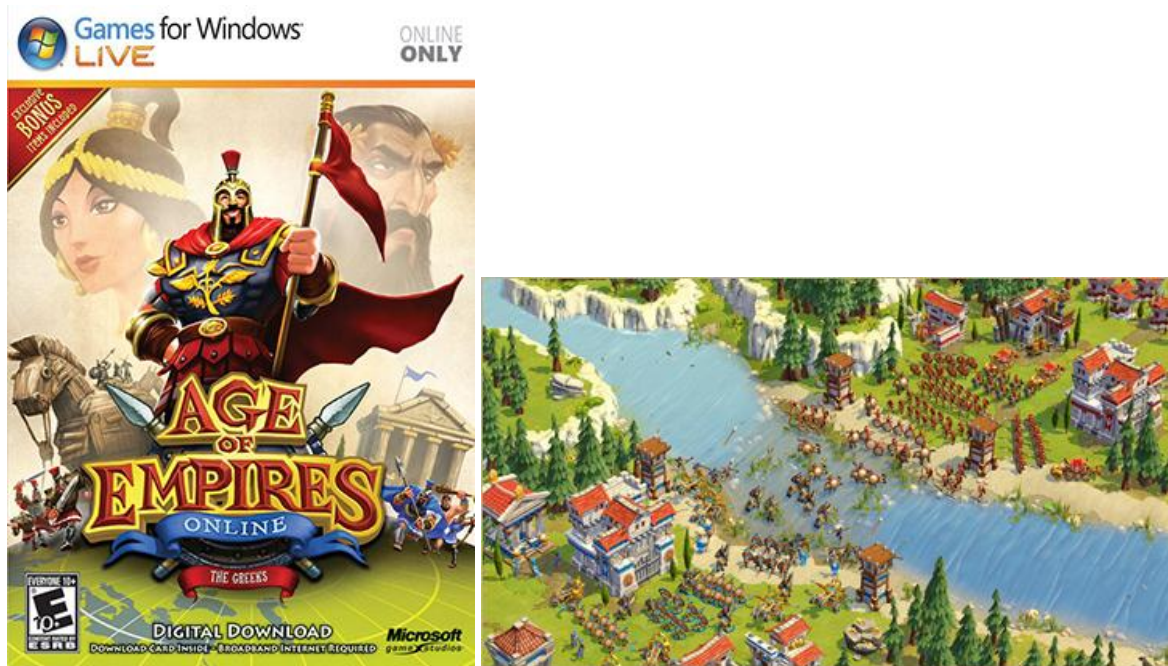


CS3247 – Game Development

Assignment 1

Option 1 - 5 lenses: Story, Head and Hands, Beauty, Competition vs Cooperation, Fairness

# AGE OF EMPIRE ONLINE



Age of Empires Online (abbreviated AoEO), is a history-based real-time strategy (RTS) computer game based upon the gameplay of the Age of Empires series. The game centres around developing the ancient civilizations such as Egyptian, Celtic, Greek and many more.

The main gameplay revolves around the player being able to develop a civilization from its birth to its peak and fall. To assure victory, the player must gather resources to spend on new units, buildings and more advanced technology. Resources must also be preserved, as no new resources become available as the game progresses. A major component of the game is the advancement through four ages with each advancement bringing new technologies, weapons, and units. Quests are the main Player Vs Environment (PvE) aspect of the game, completing objectives and defeating AI player.

## STORY

Age of Empire Online has an interesting theme of ancient civilizations which invades each other and battle for territories. Although there is no concrete storyline, the historical aspects helps to define the scene design and development of the game such as costume and architecture. The non-existence of a storyboard is justifiable as the main objective of the game is to build cities, armies and defeat all enemies. The story is also highly extendable as already done by the developers; more civilizations could be added and there are 6 as of now. The game map is also based on the world map locating these civilizations in the geographical area.

Unlike RPG games, there is little story line and it can get dull when doing quests endlessly on single player mode.

## **HEAD AND HANDS**

This is a strategy game and the player definitely will need to make some intellectual and logical decisions in building up his army. He needs to manage the resources, plan a series of actions to have a stable economy and advance his troops. He will need to be mindful of the objectives of the quests and prioritize.

On the other hand, he will need to have nimble fingers to command all the troops, villagers and maintain all the infrastructures. That will require a fair combination of mouse clicks and keyboard hotkeys/shortcuts. The player needs to be mindful of the gameplay and also physically act on his judgments.

## **BEAUTY**

Unlike the earlier series of Age of Empires PC games, the graphics of AoEO is less realistic and cartoon style. The colors are much brighter and the interesting or even flashy to some. Although some game enthusiasts maybe skeptical about it being less realistic, the graphics are nonetheless high quality in style of animated HD movies. It may be more appealing to larger crowds of casual gamers. Taking note that mobile games are gaining popularity and most mobile games also have cartoon style or cute graphics. It also introduces the game to those who are less accustomed to strategy games.

Lack of realism sometime may lead to beauty such as use of bright and contrasting colors. Design and color of terrains and water are of pastel colors which can give pretty, clean and happy feeling. Being cartoon style, models are made to emphasize the special features and not realism which makes the objects look beautiful.

## **COMPETITION VS COOPERATION**

Being a strategy game where the aim is for player to defeat the opponent, be it the AI or other player(s), there is a lot of game modes to explore. In fact Age of Empire is a fairly successful PC game which leads to the development of this multiplayer online version which aims to increase the interactions between players. Much of the time in the beginning, player completes quests to gain level and soon after, players can opt for Player vs Player (PvP) matches and the game even has system to establish matches for random players. Cooperation comes in form of alliance wars where different groups of players battle against each other as well as cooperating with friends to complete cooperative quests which are generally more challenging.

## **FAIRNESS**

This game is an online game which is free to play for 3 of the civilizations. The concept of online game is to increase the total players and popularity of the game. There is little profit based on the download of the game itself. However, players can purchase premium contents of the game

such as special items and booster packs to customize their PvE (Player vs Environment) gameplay experience.

Player could also buy tech points to upgrade their technology tree, better gears which could give unfair advantage over other players during PvP matches. However, it still depends on the player himself on how he manages and wins the game. PvP arena at times set up matches between 2 players with large level difference which is positively unfair.