The Ends' Lament

A Minecraft adventure map

Made by

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Why write this small book?

I have always really been into game design. Creating something well-crafted is just something I enjoy doing. Then, some time ago, I got to play the 2017 video game "The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild" for Nintendo Switch. It was and still is one of the best games I have ever played. And after some time I discovered that there is a book about the game made by its developers called "Creating a champion". This book has 433 pages full of background information about the game and lots of early concepts, which never made it into the game. I remember fondly how much I enjoyed reading through this book and with "Making of – The Ends' Lament" I want to give other people, who share my love for game design and/or behind the scenes material, the ability to get some enjoyment out of reading through this (really small) book.

Inspiration

Hyrule Warriors: Age of Calamity

At the beginning of making the map, while I was still testing the basic mechanics, I first played the 2020 video game "Hyrule Warriors: Age of Calamity" for Nintendo Switch. I was unsure whether I would like the gameplay of such a "Hack and Slay" game, but got it anyway due to its relationship to "The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild". And I ended up really enjoying it's over the top kind of gameplay, fighting through dozens and hundreds of enemies all at once while barley even taking a scratch. But initially, this had no effect on the development of the map, as I still had the classic sword and bow combat of vanilla Minecraft in mind.

Before implementing any combat related things, I remembered that I made a scrapped datapack back in 2019. It added lots of new structures to the end, but had the unfortunate side effect of causing huge amounts of server lag, which is why it was never published. The datapack contained special items as rewards for beating some of the mini dungeons. Some of these were early versions of the staffs. I tried them out, changed them a bit and they ended up working perfectly. This is also the reason, why the internal datapack version number for the staffs datapack is 4 and not 1, like all the other datapacks I made for this map specifically. See further down for how the versions in between behaved.

Minecraft Dungeons

As of 1.18.1, the end is a rather desolate place in vanilla Minecraft. I did not have a lot to go off when making the map. But that was actually a reason why I wanted to make the map, because the base game leaves so many questions unanswered. Some of which could

potentially be answered in the back then upcoming "Echoing Void" DLC for Minecraft Dungeons … or maybe also not. As it turned out, there was not a lot of lore in the DLC, but there were quite a lot of new blocks and enemies. The only problem was, that I was already done with building most of the map, so not a lot of Minecraft Dungeons content is actually in the map. However, some promotional artworks existed back when I started making the map. But I only stumbled upon them after I finished building chapter 2.
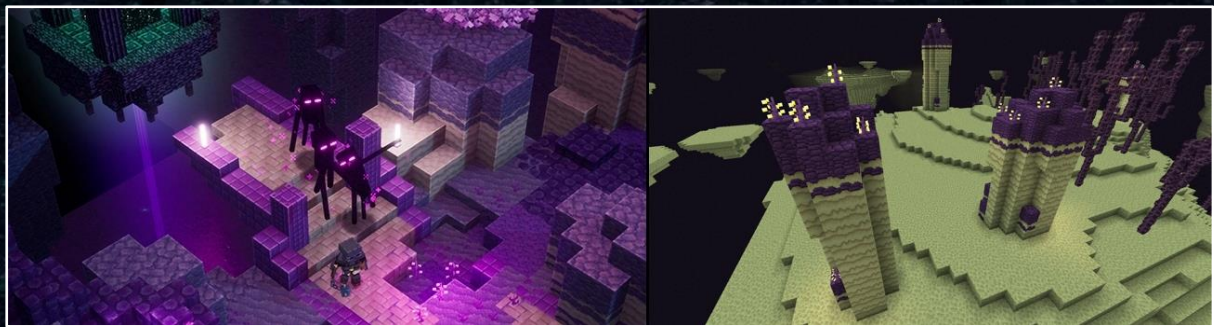

Figure 1: Comparison between the monoliths seen in a piece of promotional artwork for the "Echoing Void" DLC for Minecraft Dungeon and chapter 3 of the map. Even the small, glowing flowers can be seen at the bottom of the promotional art.

The overgrown monoliths at the port/chapter 3 were directly inspired by one of the promotional artworks (Figure 1). A painting depicting the Heart of Ender/Arch Vessel can also be found at the portal island, including Minecraft Dungeons main plot device, the "Orb of Dominance". The skull of an Endersent, mini-boss mobs which were added alongside the DLC, can also be found in chapter 5.

The concept behind the bomb summoner, as well as the unused blocker enemy, were both based on the geomancer from Minecraft Dungeons. More about the blocker later.

The wind pipes, which can be seen in chapter 2 & 5 were inspired by the wind pipes from the "Howling Peaks" DLC from within the gale sanctum. This is also, where the idea to have everything be based on wind power came from.

New chapter sound effect

The idea to have an earie sound effect at the beginning of every new chapter was an idea I got, after replaying the 2005 video game called "The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie" for Game Boy Advance. The game itself is mostly shovelware, but I always really liked the sound effect for a new level. The sound which ultimately ended up in the map was not made by me, but by Katarina Rose from freesound.org. In the beginning I actually made a sound effect myself, which resembled to original inspiration for the sound. It can be found in the "Making of

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- The Ends' Lament - A small book about the map" folder inside the .zip archive you downloaded to get the map and this book.

New creatures

The end is a desolate and empty place in vanilla Minecraft. I knew from the beginning, that I wanted to add new creatures, which could be found throughout the map. The mobs depicted in Figure 2 caught my eye and I decided to add one of them into the game. Can you guess which one?

Figure 2: A piece of concept art made by Jordi Inglada for potential novel end creatures.

My worldview of the end

The most common opinion I have found online of where the end is located relative to the overworld and the nether, is that it is some kind of asteroid belt in outer space. Personally, I never believed this. I think the end is inside planet Minecraft, far below the nether. If you could dig deep enough, you would end up falling into the upper void of the end. In Figure 3 one can see a picture, which I believe I made in 2019, depicting my worldview. Even back then I imagined the sky above the end to filled with auroras, as it would fit really well against the dark background.

The depicted concept of the Aether is also canon for me, as can be seen in my in 2021 published adventure map "The Greenhouse Soul Spawners".

I felt the need to explain, where the bedrock in the end, which all the portals and gateways are made of, came from. My worldview predicted, that there should be a ceiling far above the end islands. This is why I added the

Figure 3: My personal worldview of where the end is located. From top to bottom: Aether, Clouds, Overworld, Nether and End.

bedrock stalactite in chapter 1, which can be found between the "Soron Teleportation Research Institute" (STR Institute) and the old shulker farm, where the staffs are located. It fell from the ceiling and is the reason, why the STR Institute was build there, far away from any other settlements.
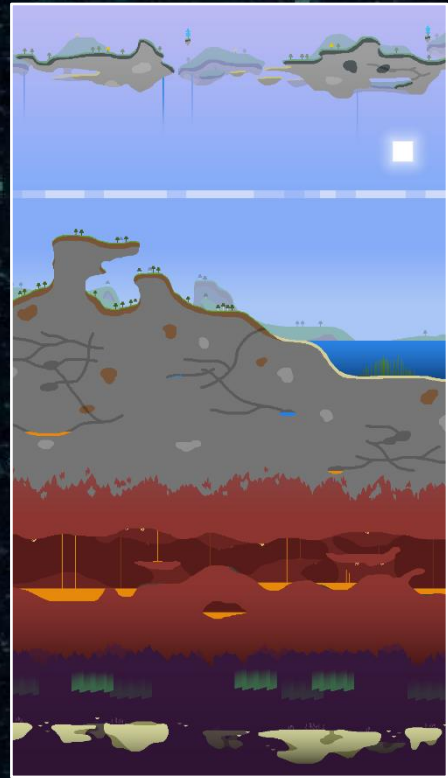
Background information

This chapter is about a bit of background information, which did not fit into the map. Like the fact, that I consider the song "Ether Vox" by Kevin MacLeod (song at the beginning of chapter 5 and after the map is beaten) to be the title theme of this map.

Location of chapter 1

Before I could start building the map, I needed a suitable location where I could build the Soron campus on. I was looking for a large connected area without any holes inside of it. So basically, not something which is verry common in the end. This is why I used an external seed

inspection program called AMIDST. The location I found was roughly 6,000 blocks away from 0,0 and is now the home of the Soron campus.

Terrain of the end highlands

I intended the Girini outpost from chapter 2 to be built on flat terrain, just like in all the other chapters. But then, in the Minecraft snapshot version 21w13a a bug was introduced into the game, which caused the end islands to generate taller than they normally would. This was quite useful to me, because it gave me an easy way to generate unique looking terrain. I recognized my opportunity and looked around for a canyon-like structure, but could not find any, which suited my desires. I then searched for a rather small, isolated island surrounded by a circular formation of cliffs and ended up finding the one, which is now the Girini outpost.

How long is a bob?

Throughout the map the terms "bob" and "kbob" are used to describe time length. I did not want to use units of time like "days", because how should endermen, who have never left the end and subsequently never seen the sun, know how long a day is. This is why I thought about ways, endermen could measure time. I ultimately choose the time it takes an end crystal to bob up and down and gave it the super original name "bob" for the time it took to bob up and then down again once. "kbob" just means 1,000 bobs. One bob is roughly 1.567 seconds long, which means a "kbob" is just over 27 minutes or 1.3 Minecraft days long.

At the beginning Zoil says, that the opening ceremony "will happen in only a couple kbobs", which translates to "will happen in only a few Minecraft days", the rough playtime it takes until the player reaches this part of the story.

I tried adding a "bob-clock", but it didn't really fit in anywhere, which is why I scarped it entirely and explained it in this book instead, as it is not relevant for the story itself.

Vegetation of the end

Given that the end is a realm, which lacks any kind of vegetation (besides chorus plants), that meant, that I had full creative control over what to add. The first thing I knew, was that I did not just want to add purple grass, as that would have been pretty uncreative. There was a weird variant of the chorus plant in the "Minecraft Live: Dungeons" segment, which could briefly be seen at around 10:50. This plant/creature was the inspiration for the chorus symbiote, which can be found in chapters 1 and 3. The plant actually made it into the "End

Wilds" level of the echoing void DLC, although it was retextured to be yellow. The small chorus sprouts first seen in chapter 3, were also inspired by a plant seen in promotional artwork for the Echoing Void DLC.

I also took some inspiration form existing mods like "Better End". The big plants from the Gural biome from chapter 1 are based on plants from this mod. The Scarral biome from chapter 2 on the other hand was made completely from scratch, without any kind of inspiration from something pre-existing.

Bulars

Bulars are the main low-tier enemy mob in the map. I imagine them to behave kind of like insects do IRL. They live in caves in huge numbers in the end. The enderman have figured out, that they can be made submissive and accept an enderman as a new leader, if they are fed a mixture of fermented chorus blossom and scarral shrooms. One can see this process in action in the small bular stables section in the girini outpost in chapter 2. Originally, I also wanted the side rooms in this section to be accessible, but I scrapped this due to not having enough space to build what I had in mind.

Early designs

Here you can find a few things I wanted to add to the map, but ended up removing again. They are in the map, just in a different way then I originally planned.

Concept art for the maps thumbnail

In Figure 4 one can see the original concept art for the thumbnail image, compared to the final form. This design was the first idea I had and I liked it so much, it ended up being the only idea I needed to have.
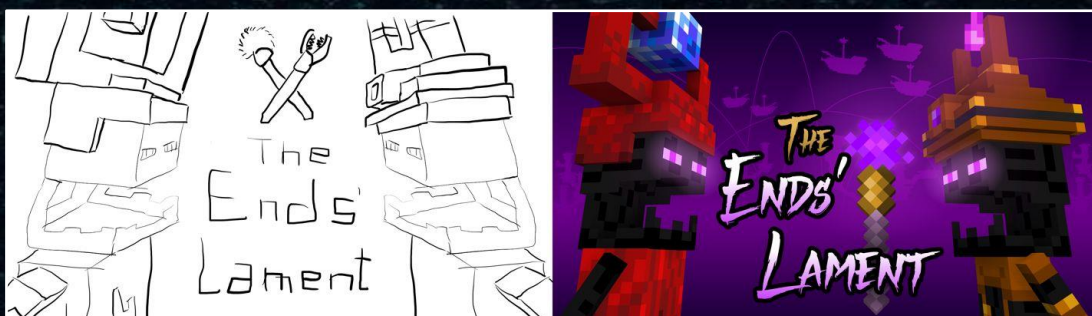

Figure 4: Comparison between the original thumbnail concept and the final version.

Original story of the adventure map

Here is my original script for the adventure map, written in early April 2021, when I started working on the map (right after finishing the map "The Greenhouse Soul Spawners"):

"The map starts in a medium sized settlement in the end. The player is a guard of the "Soron Teleportation Research Institute". The player is called towards a big hole in one of the walls where the player is informed, that an experimental device essential for teleportation experiments has been stolen. The player than makes its way towards another settlement where teleportation-rejecting luddites live. It turns out it is an end crystal they stole. The player is informed that the crystal shall be brought to a ship which will head to the central end island, which, after a long time, has now finally been cleared of the surrounding end islands. The ship heads towards the island, but is intercepted by the luddites. A battle ensues and the luddites are defeated. Some researchers which participate in the teleportation project speak out about possible safety concerns and demand further testing, but they are rejected by their leadership. The ship arrives and the portal is opened. The ender dragon spawns a wreaks havoc."

The general structure (in terms of chapters) is the same as in the final map. As you just read, originally, I wanted the player to retrieve an end crystal, which the luddites stole. But came to realize this would not have made a lot of sense, given that ender crystals can easily be crafted again in the vanilla base game. And why would the luddites try to steal a device they don't actually like in the first place? The following text is a reworked, but still not finalized, version of the original story, written shortly after the first draft:

The map starts in a medium sized settlement in the end. The player is a guard of the "Soron Teleportation Research Institute". The player is called towards a big hole in one of the walls where the player is informed, that a radical splinter group is behind the attack. Given that the opening of the end portal is near, the towns leadership is worried, that an attack could be planned during the opening ceremony. The player is instructed to figure out if this is the case. The first staff is received. The player then uses an ender pearl canon to get close to the hideout of the luddites. But the player is discovered and a battle ensues. The player finds out, that the luddites plan on blowing up the ship which will bring the majority of the people to the central end island, which, after a long time, has now finally been cleared of the surrounding end islands. The player leaves the hideout by the use of an enderpearl stasis chamber and is teleported to the port, from which the ship will leave. The ship heads towards the island, and is intercepted by the luddites. A battle ensues but the luddites are defeated. Some researchers which participate in the teleportation project speak out about possible safety concerns and demand further testing, but they are rejected by their leadership. The ship arrives and the portal is opened. The ender dragon spawns a wreaks havoc.

This second draft is quite similar to the final map. The researchers which demand further testing, were ultimately cut, because in the final map, the cruise liner is empty, when the player, Zoil and his colleagues use it to get to the portal island. I actually wanted to add them, but could not quite find a place where to do so. Also, the Girini are no longer a splinter ground, but a full scale society, just like the endermen which follow Sorons legacy are.

A Concept for how the end looks like

The image seen in Figure 5 is the original concept, for how the environment of the end works. The paintings which can be seen in the chapters 1 and 5 are based on this one.
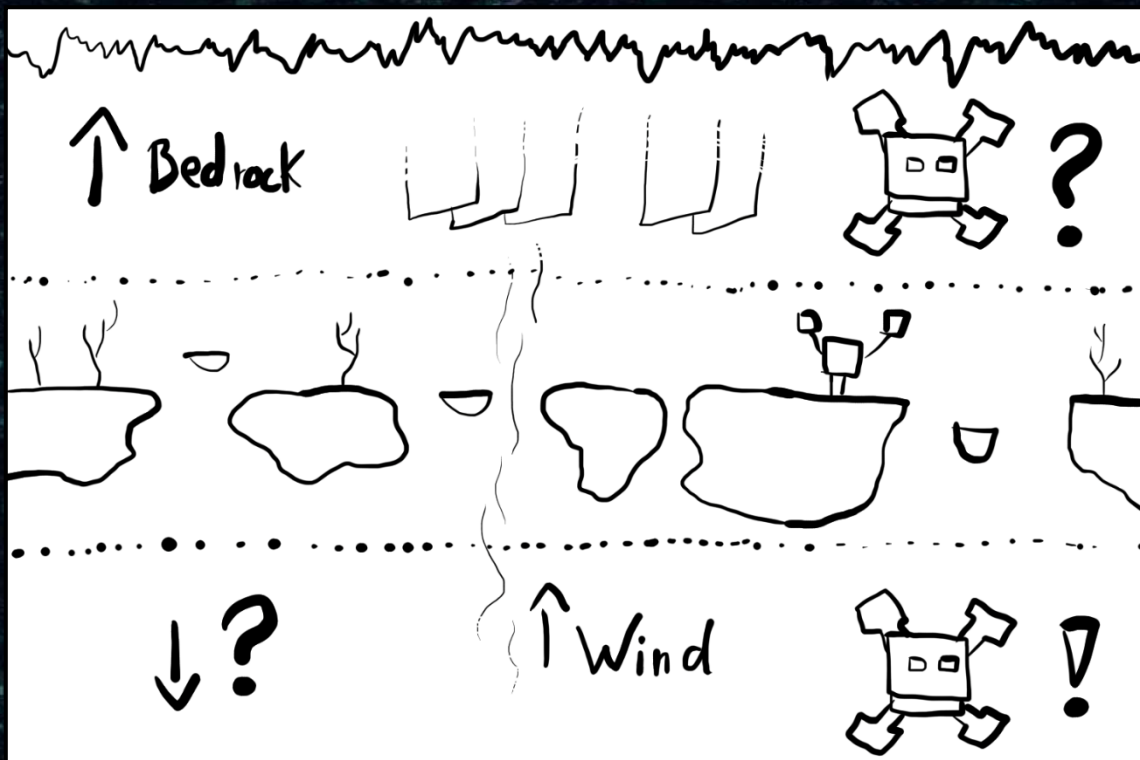

Figure 5: A concept for how I imagine the environment of the end to look like. Skulls indicate, whether the void deals damage there or not.

The beta version of the map

There are two beta versions of the map, which I gave out to play-testers (By the way, thanks again to Classic Cookie Gaming and Mary Melodies :D). The most significant difference to the final version is, that the beta versions, especially v0.1, were a lot harder. Spawners would spawn enemies faster, the total amount around them, before they would stop spawning new ones, was higher, as well as more enemies in general. It was especially difficult on the cruise liner in chapter 4. For the final release, I made the map easier because I did not want the map to be frustrating to play.

More and different staffs

As mentioned earlier, the staff's behaviour went through multiple changes. The most important ones of these, were the "Escape Staff" and the "Thunder Staff". Which can be seen below.
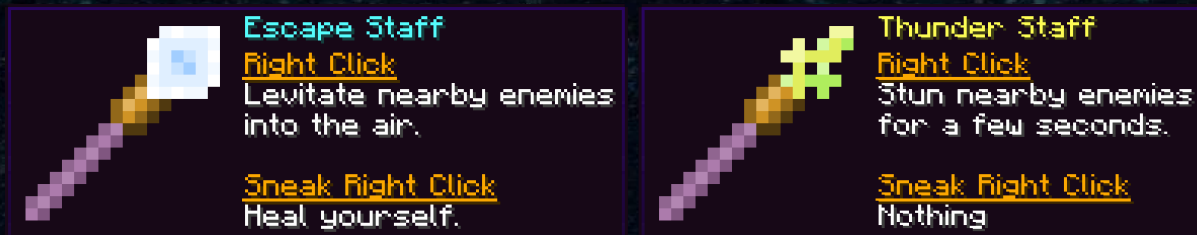
The escape staff combined the escape charge and the healing staff into one. The problem with it was, that it was way to overpowered. Unlike the escape charge, the staff did not have any cooldown and thus could be used permanently. This basically negated the need for any combat, given that all enemies could just be levitated into the air and the player could just walk past them.

The thunder staff was a remnant from the original datapack. Its regular right click functionality was the ability to stun mobs for a few seconds by electrifying them. Just like the escape charge, it had no cooldown and basically negated the need for any combat. The sneak right click functionality was the ability to summon a thunderstorm. Something which was useless in the end. I tried to make it summon lightning on nearby enemies, but this just ended up hurting the player as well, so I scrapped the staff entirely. It is still in the map, although partially broken. The thundergrenade actually has nothing to do with this staff, as I came up with it later in development, after the thunder staff was already scrapped. The colours of the staff were inspired by the colours for electricity in the 2017 video game "The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild" for Nintendo Switch.

Staffs scattered throughout the map

In the final version of the map, all main staffs are obtained at the beginning of the map. But at first, I wanted to reward the player with a new staff after completing chapter 2. I scraped this, thinking it would be better to have them all from the beginning. Also, I kind of implemented it like I originally intended with the bomb-defuse staff and the fireworks staff. Not much else to say here.

Thundergrenade behaviour

I originally intended the thundergrenade to be an item, with which I could reward the players exploration. It could be found in shulker boxes and then be used once, after which a new one had to be found. I scrapped this idea, because it would cause a classical pitfall in game design, where players would hold onto consumable items and never use them, because they fear that a situation could arrive, where they would really need this item. This is why I reworked the behaviour in a way, that there would be grenade dispenser along the players path, where new ones could be obtained (Figure 6). But this didn't solve the problem and would have just caused players to walk back to a dispenser after they used the grenade, instead of waiting for the next dispenser. This is why I scrapped the concept of an exploration reward and turned it form a consumable into a rechargeable, which would regenerate every 30 seconds. This way, players would have an incentive to use the grenade strategically and also not hoard it until the map is over. The exploration reward was replaced with masks and readable books with background lore, multiple of which can be found throughout the map. The block for the thundergrenade dispenser was turned into a storage box for portable thundergrenade generators, which can be found inside one of the containers at the port in chapter 3. The additional slot in the players inventory right below the ender pearl slot, is meant to be one of these portable thundergrenade generators.

Figure 6: An early version of a scrapped thundergrenade dispenser. The block at the top would have had a spinning item of a thundergrenade inside of it.

Early Luddites design

The original design for the luddites resembled the original appearance of the endermen from Minecraft version Beta 1.8-pre1. I copied the green eyes and the thick smoke coming out of their bodies. I scrapped this early on, because I wanted Sorons' followers and the Girini/luddites to be the same species, which would make for a better story, then if they were different ones. All luddites, besides the bulars, are supposed to look like regular endermen, but sadly, something like this is not possible from a technical perspective, which is why I had to go with retextured skeletons instead.

Early enemy healing indicator

When the map is played in hard mode, all enemies heal 3 hearts every few seconds. Originally, I just wanted to give them a regeneration effect, but it turns out undead mobs are immune to the effects of the regeneration status effect. Poison did not work either. This is why I used the mechanism I just described. In the final map, hearts can be seen popping up, whenever the mobs heal, but originally, a small "+3 ♡" indicator would pop up above their heads, using the new *block_marker* particle effect added in 1.18. But the life time of the particles was to long, which made the effect look weird, while the mobs were moving around.

Layout of the cruise liner from chapter 4

In Figure 7 concepts for how the cruise liner from chapter 4 was going to look like can be seen. The final version is verry similar to the concept on the right, with the main difference being, that the original location of the bridge was turned into the restaurant and the watchtower was removed. Both designs featured a watchtower, because the end ships in the vanilla base game also have these kinds of towers on them. The weird shape of the final cruise liner was chosen, because it was optimized with gameplay in mind.
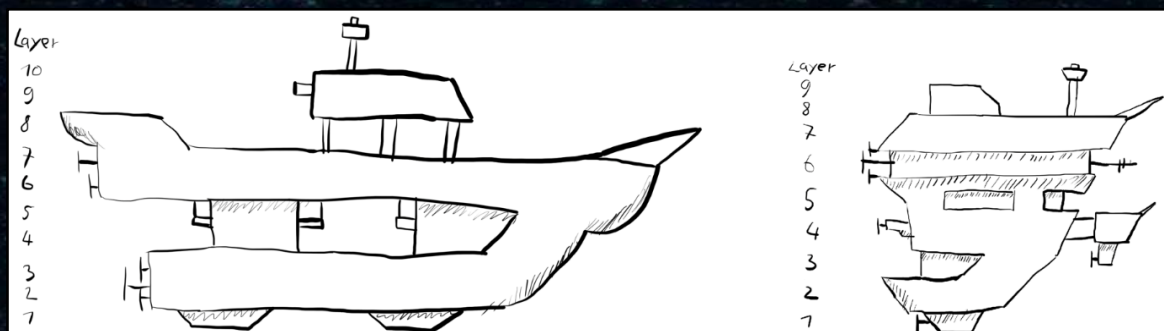

Figure 7: Original concepts for how the cruise liner from chapter 3 & 4 was going to look like. The final version is verry similar to the concept on the right.

Transformation of the ender dragon

Originally, I wanted the red dragon from the overworld to come through the portal completely and then get corrupted by the end crystals, which would have ultimately turned it into the ender dragon. But I did not know how to implement this from a technical side, given that I cannot change the texture of the dragon, without changing the resource pack. And animating a complete dragon made from custom models, armour stand and commands would have taken days to code. So, I just went with a scaled down version of what I had in mind.

The concept of a red dragon from the overworld is actually based on a feature mentioned by Notch, Jeb and Dinnerbone. See the [Minecraft Wiki article](#) about it for more information.

Bular Horn Designs

Bulars used to have random horn designs, but I scrapped that, so players would not be confused if they acted any different. In the final version, regular, strong and spawned bulars all have unique, but fixed horn designs.

Orb of Dominance

At first, I planned to display the "Orb of Dominance" from Minecraft Dungeons on the portal island, where the painting of the "Heart of Ender" can now be found. It was supposed to be a trophy, but I thought it would have been kind of unrealistic to have such a powerful artifact be at display there, which is why I went for the painting instead.

Initial name of the port

The port, called "Garana Port" in the final version, was initially called "Lassaniaia Port". But I thought it sounded too much like lasagne, which is why I changed it. The big letter "G" on the "Tour Plan" posters in chapters 3 and 4 actually stands for "Garana Port". But "Garana" would not fit onto the painting, which is why I just chose the letter G instead.

Falling Tears

After the ender dragon spawned in chapter 5, purple tears would have started falling from the sky. But this would have caused lag on lower end machines, which is why I replaced it with the permanent firefly-like effect. If you are in chapter 5, the effect can still be activated by using the following command: *setblock -13 20 14 minecraft:redstone_block*

Cut content

The things in this section were completely cut from the map and do not exist in any form in the final map.

Position markers for current objectives

At first, I wanted to have position markers for current objectives to clearly show the player, where they had to go. I intended to use yellow coloured beacon beams for this. But I never felt the need to use this, as most of the time it should be verry obvious, where to go.

Initial map layout

The original idea for the map did not include the extensive port area which is now chapter 3. Chapter 1 & 2 would have played out exactly the same way as in the final version, with the only differences being, that the Soron campus would have been located right next to the port (Figure 8). The enderpearl canon would have been half way between the campus and the port. After Chapter 2, the player would have returned to the canon and made his way over to the port. The ship would have been entered shortly after that. No big battles to get to the ship.

I scrapped this design, because the area was just too small to fit in all the buildings, which I wanted to have there. See "Location of chapter 1" for how the final location for chapter 1 was chosen.

Figure 8: Early plans for the layout of the campus and the port.

Bob clock

See the section "How long is a bob?" for more information about this unique time keeping device.

Spawner enemies can spawn other creatures besides regular bulars

When first making the spawner enemy, I thought about it being able to summon other enemies besides just regular bulars. Strong bulars (the ones with the golden chains around them) were what first came to my mind, but I later dropped the idea entirely, because strong bulars are already a tough enough enemy. Having and endless amount of them would be nearly impossible to beat.

Blockers, an unused enemy type

Blockers are an unused enemy type (Figure 9). They are based on the geomancers from Minecraft Dungeons and would have summoned impenetrable pillars around the player to partially restrict the players movement. The datapack is still in the maps code and can be activated with the following command: */datapack enable "file/Blocker v1"* In order to summon a blocker, use this next command, once the datapack has been activated: */function ercerus:blocker/summon_blocker* I actually never intended for the blocker to be part of the map, but one day, I really wanted to try, whether I could code this mob. The biggest challenge were the walls: If I would have used regular, solid blocks for the walls, then these walls would replace a part of the level, which would then have to be replaced again, once the walls would despawn. So instead of placing blocks, I used retextured, coloured shulkers, which are an unused mob variant in the vanilla game. They are similar to stained blocks like glass or terracotta, but are entities instead. Shulkers with no AI behave exactly like blocks, but can occupy the same position as a block, without replacing it. There are 3 types of blockades the blocker can summoned, best described by comparing them to the following symbols: U, :: and I. Only the I shaped ones are actually rotated, but the U shaped one would have also been rotatable, if the mob would have been properly implemented.

The staff and particle effects they have/make resemble barrier blocks, as I thought this would fit the concept of the mob quite well.

Figure 9: A blocker holding a unique staff. The texture and hat are the same ones, as the ones used by the bomber, due to the blocker being an unfinished mob. A summoned blockade can be seen in the background.

Amethyst Slimes

Amethyst Cubes/Slimes were supposed to be an enemy mob for the map. They would have behaved just like regular vanilla slimes. I scrapped them, as I did not feel the need for another enemy mob. The Bulars and Girini already provided enough variation for the player to fight. Actual overworld slimes can be fought during the enderdragon fight at the end of the map.

Sorons' Memorial Lounge

Originally, I wanted the inside of the head of the big Soron statue in chapter 3 to be a viewing lounge, from which parts of the chapter could been observed. But ultimately, I thought that that was a rather pointless thing to do, which is why scrapped the idea. Fun fact: The big statues were only placed there as a placeholder location and I actually wanted to move them. But they fit so nicely, I turned them into the memorial instead.

Mining ships

These were supposed to be visible during chapter 4 on the cruise liner. They would have mined the remaining parts of the end islands, to clear out the perimeter around the portal

island. To be honest here, I just forgot about them until I started writing this book :') But in hindsight, they would have not made much sense story wise, given that the excavation would have been completed by the time the maps' story took place. They could have been a cool ornament for the port though.

"End protectors' potion" and armour

Originally, I intended the player to get an upgrade before entering the ender dragon fight. This was accomplished by equipping some armour and drinking an "End Protectors' Potion", once the dragon

spawned. The effects of which were meant to make the dragon fight fairer. But this proved to be unnecessary, given that the fight was verry well manageable in terms of difficulty and did not require further buffs to help the player. I ended up adding cosmetic armour to the room where all the staffs are located in, right at the beginning of the map. Also, there are a total of two cosmetic masks hidden in the map, which can be found by exploring side rooms. Have you found them? Let me know by writing a comment on the maps download page on Planet Minecraft!

End Crystal Symbol Aura

During the portal island fight, after the red overworld dragon fused with institute president K. Zoil, a ring with six symbols (the ones which can be found on an end crystal) was supposed to appear around the player at all time. But it did not end up looking good, because Minecraft only updates

entities once every 0.05 or 1/20 seconds, which made it look like the aura would follow the player, instead of the player being the source of the symbol aura.

Living End Crystals

These would have been retextured slimes and would have attacked the player during the final fight on the portal island. Not much else to say about them.

And there you have it

A bit of background information about an adventure map I made. I hope you enjoyed your time reading this. Make sure leave a comment that you looked into this book on my Planet Minecraft page. It's always really nice to get feedback from someone who enjoyed the things I made :D There is also a lot more Minecraft-related content there. This is the best place, where you will get all my adventure maps, right when they release, as it generally takes a few weeks to months for minecraftmaps.com to greenlight a new adventure map. See you over there :D

Figure 10: Mistakes were made – The earliest working prototype of the bomber used a "missing texture" for the hat and the offset of the hat was too low, so it would render inside the mob's head. The result: A funny face. When I first saw my accidental creation, I laughed so hard that I knew I had to put this image into this book :D