Study Break: Ridiculous Fishing

David Toccafondi, University of Pennsylvania
Now that Fling has flung, it's time to get down to business and start studying. Of course, you learn best when you take a short break every hour, so you're going to need something to do during those breaks. My latest time waster way to pass the time during a few down moments here and there during the day is the game Ridiculous Fishing. It's a simple but strangely addicting game, and a fun way to spend your time while you take a short break from studying. It's challenging but not difficult, and you'll find yourself playing again and again. The controls and mechanics of the game are simple to master, and there's lots of replay value as you go fishing again and again to catch every species of fish, purchase every upgrade, and try to beat your old high score.

There are three stages to playing the game:

1. **Drop your line:** You drop your line into the sea by tapping on the screen. As your hook sinks, tilt your phone left and right to steer AROUND the fish (seems counter intuitive, but it'll make sense in the next step) being sure not to touch them and trying to go as deep as you can.

2. **Reel 'em in:** When your hook eventually does touch a fish, or if you run out of fishing line, or if you get all the way to the bottom of the sea, you'll automatically start reeling your line in. On the way up, tilt left and right to catch as many fish as possible—the same fish you avoided on the way down. One nice little touch is the music that was playing on the way down plays in reverse on the way back up.

3. **Shoot 'em up:** this stage seems the least traditional from a fishing purist's point of view (and is possibly the main reason for the word 'ridiculous' in the name of the game). When your line finally reaches the surface of the water, you fling the fish into the air (that part happens automatically), and you start shooting them by tapping on the fish. You get money for each fish you shoot. The ones that fall back into the water escape and you get no money from them. Some fish (particularly those of the jellyfish variety) you'll want to avoid, as they will actually subtract money from your wallet.

There are several different fishing locations on the map. You'll start
in “Home Waters”—the shallowest area. It’s filled with a variety of very cool fish, and many species are only located at particular depths, so you've got to get your line down pretty far to catch them all. When you've finally caught all the species of fish in Home Waters, you’ll unlock the next location on the map where you’ll encounter all new types of fish and plummet to deeper spots in the ocean as you listen to a different track of music.

As you play more games, you’ll end up with quite a bit of money from all those fish you’ve caught. The Shack Shoppe lets you purchase upgrades with that money to improve your fishing experience: Longer fishing lines to let you get to those fish even farther beneath the waves, better guns to let you shoot the fish faster before they fall back into the sea, items to fling the fish farther into the air so that you have more time to shoot them, a Fish-o-pedia which help you identify all those different fish you’ll encounter along with how much each is worth and whether it has any special abilities, and of course different outfits for your fisherman, most of which have no effect on game play as far as I can tell other than to turn your character into a snappy dresser.

The pixel art is colorful and beautiful (as you can tell from these screenshots), and the 8-bit music (by composer Eirik Suhrke) is whimsical and quite catchy (I’ve caught myself humming one of the tunes as I walk through Van Pelt Library on more than one occasion)

It’s $2.99 in the iTunes App store for iPhone and iPad, and $2.99 in the Google Play store for Android, but I’m glad to report there are no in-app purchases. Once you’ve got the game, it’s just fun from here on out.

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