

Genres

The Legend of Zelda belongs to the Open World Adventure genre.

Kirby's Adventure belongs to the action platformer genre.

Disney's DuckTales belongs to the action platformer genre.

Ghosts 'n Goblins belongs to the action platformer genre.

Pitches

1. Kirby's Adventure for the NES is a game that follows a pink ball character who can absorb others' powers by consuming them. The game is a colorful action based platformer with many power ups to be used and many enemies to face. The intended audience is kids or anyone trying to have some fun.
2. Disney's DuckTales is a game for the NES where you play as Uncle Scrooge McDuck and attempt to save your nephews Huey, Dewey, and Luis from danger. It is a platformer with many interesting enemies throughout the 5 unique levels.
3. Ghosts 'n Goblins is a game for the NES where you play as Sir Arthur, a knight, who goes out on an adventure to save Princess Prin Prin. It is an action platformer with many unique weapons to unlock and enemies to fight.

Game 1: Kirby's Adventure

One of the most noticeable differences between mechanics in The Legend of Zelda and Kirby's Adventure is the accessibility of power ups. In The Legend of Zelda, power ups are new weapons such as the bow and bombs that you acquire. In Kirby's Adventure, Kirby's power ups are based on the enemies he consumes. The distinction between acquiring a power up in The Legend of Zelda versus acquiring a power up in Kirby's Adventure is that Link's power ups are limited and hard to obtain. While Link's bow is permanent after getting it from the bow room, arrows for the bow require the use of rupees which is a source of currency in the game and is randomly dropped by monsters. Similarly for the bomb, the item is randomly dropped and is limited, requiring the player to think and use it more strategically. On the other hand, Kirby's power ups are obtained after he consumes a monster. The power up is permanent. Kirby is able to use most of these power ups as many times as he wants until he takes damage. When Kirby loses a power up upon taking damage, he can easily get access to another by consuming another enemy or re-consuming the power up that fell out of his body in the form of a star. There is no penalty for excessive use and little penalty for losing it. Thus, power ups promote the gameplay of action with spammable abilities and no need to think strategically.

Another noticeable difference between The Legend of Zelda and Kirby's Adventure is the difference in knowing what to do. The Legend of Zelda is an open world game. At game start, the player is given no information on where to even go. It is up to the player to explore the map and find out what to even do. In Kirby's Adventure, this is different. Kirby's adventure is a platformer. The destination is given to the player on game start. Kirby faces to the right and there is no path to the left. The platformer game shows that the general direction to reach the end is almost always to the right. The effect these two games have are different. With no destination, The Legend of Zelda feels more puzzle-like and strategic while Kirby's Adventure feels more action packed as you are forced to charge into the enemies to reach the goal that you already know is on the right side.

Finally, a last difference in game design is the scoring system that is in Kirby's Adventure and not in The Legend of Zelda. In The Legend of Zelda, the player does not benefit from killing enemies besides a chance for a drop and some enemies are required to be killed in order to proceed. The incentive is little. In Kirby's Adventure, killing an enemy scores you points. Your score is displayed right under your health bar in the UI which is nearly impossible to avoid if you ever look at your health bar. This constantly provides you a reminder to score as many points as possible. This changes the player experience from The Legend of Zelda where the player has to consider if they want to take a fight with an enemy and risk their lives for a drop to Kirby's adventure where there is more incentive to take a fight because you can earn more points doing so.

Overall, these three factors come together to support the game's genre. These mechanics work in ways that support each other. The hard to obtain power ups, the open world (not knowing where the destination is), and the little incentive to kill enemies unless required make The Legend of Zelda a strategic adventure game. Whereas, the unlimited use and easy accessibility of power ups, knowing the destination and the obstacles, and the scoring system makes Kirby's Adventure more of an action platformer.

Game 2: Disney's DuckTales for the NES (Action Platformer)

One of the initial mechanical differences between Legend of Zelda and DuckTales is that there is a constant gravity going straight down, making it a 2D Platformer as opposed to an Action RPG. This is obviously a core mechanic, because without some sort of gravity from somewhere, you can't have a platformer at all. This allows for jumping within this gravity field. Jumping is also then the core mechanic used to move around the stage and dodge enemies. This is very different from Legend of Zelda because the only ways to avoid damage are moving out of the way and letting a projectile hit your shield while not moving. Jumping is never a mechanic used in the NES Legend of Zelda.

Another important mechanic in DuckTales is what I like to call "pogo-ing." Basically, you can stick Scrooge's cane below him while jumping to effectively pogo bounce around the area. This is the primary way of killing enemies in DuckTales. It really helps to push for the platformer feeling, because killing enemies not only involves jumping on them (like Mario), but involves jumping on them and pogo-ing off of them for an extra jump boost to get to higher areas while also killing the enemy, thus making it add to the platformer difficulty and feel. This is very different from Legend of Zelda where you kill enemies by hitting them with an actual weapon (bomb, sword, arrow, boomerang, etc.). That being said, the sword benefits Legend of Zelda as an open world adventure game due to the want for a weapon and permanently killing enemies.

The last "mechanic" is the five levels in DuckTales. In DuckTales, there are five levels to choose from at the beginning menu. Each level has a unique enemy set, music, and aesthetic associated with it. Again, this works well with the game because the point is the platforming, and it gives a sense of difference and uniqueness to each area. This is only slightly different from Legend of Zelda. Zelda creates unique areas within the world map with unique enemies (not music) for the player to explore as well as 8 different dungeons with unique aesthetics. This effectively creates very similar mechanics, but Legend of Zelda does it as an open world game

that you can explore to find different areas, but DuckTales just uses a selection at the opening to choose where you want to go. I would recommend going to the moon just for the banging theme.

Game 3: Ghosts ‘n Goblins

One of the biggest differences between The Legend of Zelda and Ghosts ‘n Goblins is how weapons are used. In The Legend of Zelda, you have a sword as your primary weapon, which can be upgraded, and a plethora of secondary weapons/tools you collect throughout the game, and can swap freely between. In Ghosts ‘n Goblins, you only have one weapon, and any other weapons are dropped completely randomly from enemies. If you pick up a weapon, your current one disappears and it becomes your permanent weapon until you find a new one. This is compounded upon by the fact that some weapons are just better than others, and some enemies are almost impossible to defeat without specific items. In The Legend of Zelda, you find new weapons and use them to unlock different areas, solve puzzles, and defeat enemies more easily, allowing you to feel a sense of progression. In Ghosts ‘n Goblins, getting a better weapon just makes the game slightly easier, and you sometimes may have to hang onto worse weapons to kill specific enemies that would be nearly impossible otherwise. This results in the combat being far more skill based than The Legend of Zelda, as you need to know the intricacies of whatever weapon inside and out to even stand a chance.

Another big difference between the two games is health. In The Legend of Zelda, you start out with three hearts, and you can find healing and health point maximum upgrades as you defeat enemies and progress through the game. As with the previous mechanic, this gives the player a sense of progression, and gives you a safety net later along. In Ghosts ‘n Goblins however, if you are hit once, you die. There are several sets of armor throughout the game that you can find, but they are either in incredibly difficult locations or very well hidden. If you get hit with armor on, your armor breaks, so the armor is effectively one additional hit before you die. As a result, even if you have played for hours, and are far into the game, a single hit can kill you instantly and reset

all of your progress. As a result, any sense of progress comes purely through the player's skill increasing, as they get better and better at the game and can progress further without being hit.

A third big difference between the two games is how their 'New Game +' is implemented. In The Legend of Zelda, after you beat the game and see the ending, you can play through the game again, with dungeons, shops, and heart containers being in different locations and combat being more difficult. It is meant to provide a player who has beaten the game a challenge. In Ghosts 'n Goblins, if you defeat the final boss, it is revealed that everything is an illusion and you are sent back to level one and have to beat the entire game again to see the actual ending, with enemies being faster and tougher. Unlike The Legend of Zelda, you cannot see the ending until you beat the game again, and there are no new or changed locations to make the playthrough more interesting, and you are simply forced to play through the entire game again, risking dying in a single hit and having to start over from the beginning of your first playthrough.

As a result, even though the two games seem similar on the surface, both being Action RPGs, hidden weapons that can be collected, a challenging new game plus mode, The Legend of Zelda is a far more streamlined and pleasant to play game that anybody could pick up, and has additional challenges for those who have mastered the combat. Ghosts 'n Goblins however, is incredibly difficult from the very beginning, and is unforgiving the entire way through, with a single mistake being enough to make you start over. Only someone who has mastered the combat would be able to beat the game, and it's subsequent, necessary second playthrough.