# Co-operative Play

The first thing we should do is get two Lara’s dropped into the 1 player game without any modifications and allow a 2 player Wi-Fi link, simply to test how much fun it would be. This is the very basic form of cooperative play and wouldn’t take too long to implement.

Next we add extra new cooperative elements such as a different looking secondary character (Melissa Croft, Lara’s younger, sexier, but slightly dodgy cousin), separate inventories for each player would promote them to fight for the treasure, ammo, puzzle and health pickups. Trading between the two inventories would also allow the two players to swap different items depending on their circumstances i.e. player 1 has loads of medi-packs and no ammo, player 2 has loads of ammo and no medi-packs, so they trade. Everybody’s happy.

Now we change existing puzzles without changing the geometry or puzzle setup, push-able blocks require both characters to push them, pressure pads now require both characters to stand on them, large levers require two people to shift them, etc.

The next phase of co-op mechanics would be actual map changing specifically for the co-op adventure, this could be localised to rooms within the room system and could act as a co-op only flip map. For example:

Person A and Person B are standing before a high wall with a pressure pad directly in front of them; Person A stands on the pressure pad, which opens a door around the corner.

Person B goes through the door and up a flight of stairs.

Person A steps off the pressure pad and tries to run through the door, it closes again. He returns to the pressure pad area.

Person B is waiting above the pressure pad on top of the wall, when Person A gets close to the pressure pad Person B gets a prompt on his screen that says ‘Press X to pull player 2 up’

If he presses X we are presented with a small cutscene of Person B helping Person A up onto the wall. It is possible that ‘cutscene’ will actually be a linked anim with a simple camera cut to mask any ‘snapping’ of position or rotation.

*Note: The one player version of this example simply required the player to push a block onto the pressure pad, allowing the door to stay open; all we’ve done is remove the block.*

This allows us to add extra puzzle bits to the levels without breaking the original 1 player game. It should be noted that it doesn’t matter if the 2 player game is somewhat different to single player – for instance, allowing one player to give the other a leg-up and then being pulled up may allow the player to reach higher than the 7-click maximum they can get to on their own. As long as this doesn’t create bugs, it’s okay if it allows the players to bypass one or two puzzles that they would otherwise have to face in the single player game.

There are also other types of multi-player interaction which are fun without being directly co-operative – e.g. if a boulder comes rolling down a slope and there’s only one alcove to hide in, and that isn’t being enough for both players, then one player is going to have to find some other way of escaping (and fast!).

There will also be occasions where one player will provide covering fire taking out enemies while the other player opens a puzzle lock or pulls levers to get a door open.

In treasure rooms the players will be actively competitive trying to get to the treasure first. Although we don’t want the players actively trying to kill each other, the levels could be designed in such a way that they can slow each other down.

Although it’s a completely different sort of game, the most recent 2D Zelda on GameCube uses this co-operative/competitive style very effectively (with up to 4 players). They use many of the mechanisms that we have already proposed (such as needing more than one person to push a block, and needing people to be standing on pressure pads in different rooms to open a door) but it would be worth going through the game in detail to look at their co-operative puzzles, even though the 3D environment of Tomb Raider provides us with many more possibilities.