

Sandover Village analysis



Sandover Village is the first level in Jak and Daxter The Precursors Legacy. It works as a hub and can send you to four other levels by foot and multiple other places by using a portal located in the Sage's hut. Sandover Village is the homestead to the player and has ten residents in total. Every resident will have a quest for the player but not all are located in the village, and some quest require the player to go to another level.

On the map, every house is marked, with other objects of interest such as The Oracle, a speedboat that can take the player to another level, and the entry points to the other surrounding levels.

The residents are not marked on the map since they are located inside their houses. And the 50 Precursor orbs within the level are also not marked down. The Scout flies collectibles on the other hand are marked down.

Theme:

The Village has a tropical theme over it. It consists of sandy beaches, palms, and stone huts. The village is more primal than modern, with almost everything in the village inspired by old times. The Sage and the Mayor's windmill looks to be the only modern buildings in the village, including some machinery running on Blue eco which is a source of power in the game. The village also includes a speedboat. Having this tropical paradise environment strengthens another theme of calmness. Being one of the only levels with no real danger can make this level seem relaxed and appear to be a paradise.

Pace:

Sandover Village works as a hub for the game and has a slow pace. It is the first level in the game so it works as a tutorial level for the player to learn the basic mechanics as jumping, rolling, and the camera-movement. There are no threats to the player so the pace is decided by how fast the player wants to progress. The only thing considered dangerous in the level is the fish that will instakill the player if he swims too far away from the shore. The slow pace is not a problem that will bore the player since the player can travel whenever he wants to the next levels seamlessly where the pace is faster.



Source: https://jakanddaxter.fandom.com/wiki/Sandover_Village

Beats:

There are mainly 6 main beats in the level. Each beat will be listed as an activity/mission that can be followed in the pause-menu and do not have any deadline. So they can be completed whenever the player wants to.

- Collect 50 Precursor orbs

This is a mission that requires the player to explore the whole level. This mission can also be done right away after starting the game without having to leave the level. The Precursor orbs also guide the player in directions towards the other levels or objects of interest.

- Collect 7 Scout Flies

Just as the Precursor orb mission this can be done right away without having to leave the level. These types of collectibles are much rarer than the Precursor orbs and more hidden.

- Give the Mayor 90 Precursor orbs

This mission requires the player to leave the level due to it being only 50 orbs in the village.

- Give the Explorer 90 Precursor orbs

This mission is just as the Mayor's fetch-quest.

- Herd the five yakow's into their pen

This is the only mission that requires some pace. The player needs to herd the yakows into their pen by running behind them and guiding them. If the player roams too far away from the yakow then he will wander off.

- Reach the orb vent in time with the Blue Eco

One activity that the player have to do to collect the Precursor orbs is that he needs to collect blue eco from one island and jump over to another using a long jump to power on a vent that will release 15 orbs. This is just a minor beat

- Give The Oracle 120 Precursor orbs. (x2)

This mission requires the player to collect orbs from multiple other levels. The oracle has two Power cells that he will trade for 120 orbs each.

Light setting

The original level has close to none when it comes to shadows. It looks like some shadows are baked into the texture since it's slightly darker on one side. Despite this, many of the items and stuff around the level look shadowless. The villagers and the yakows have a clear shadow that works in realtime. In addition to this, the game has a day and night cycle. It changes between day and night pretty quickly, and do not have any effect on the baked textures.

Strengths and weaknesses in the level.

Strengths

This is the first level in the game so when it starts off easy and with a slow pace, it can be a strength. This gives the player time to learn the controls and the rules of the game.

Another strength is not just with this level, but the whole game. Every transition between levels are seamless.

Weaknesses

A weakness here could be that the quest-givers can be hard to find. They do not have any quest-marks or any indication that they are actually trying to give the player a quest. And some are just staying inside their house so you have to go in and find them.

Another weakness is that the village doesn't feel very alive since none of the villagers go out and do anything. They will stay in the same place and loop the same animations and voice lines.



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