Chordata

Genre
Platformer

High Concept
Player must kill enemies to gain "notes", which can then be used in combination to create "chords", each chord with a different effect.

Premise

Story
The Player is walking around one day when a group of mollusks headed by King Sea Cucumber take the Player's spine somehow. The Player must adventure outside his bubble and go to the "outside world" to retrieve his spine. Weak storyline, but the gameplay is where it's at.

Basic Gameplay
When the Player kills an enemy, the Player receives the enemy's corresponding note, which then goes to the **Holding Area**, when the Player has a combination of chords that he liked, he can Preview the chord (to see how it sounds) or Store it for later use. To use a chord, one must press the Use button and select which chord to use from the **Storage Area**.

   Levels are circles. The Player walks about the circumference of the levels, destroying enemies that come their way. Enemies can either be destroyed by a regular Kick Attack, which is extremely weak and ineffective, or they can be destroyed by different chords. Enemies respawn.

   The circular levels are concentric, with earlier levels being near the center of the overworld and later levels being near the outside. This makes earlier levels smaller and later levels larger.

   One enemy in every level holds a key. Once picked up, one must perform the **SUPERCHORD**, which transports the Player to the next circle.

   Every level, a new type of enemy appears; at the first level, only the C monster and the G monster are present. Since there are 12 notes in the chromatic scale, there are 11 levels. The notes appear in the following order (Just so you know, in this game there are no flat notes. Only sharp notes): **C, G, D, A, A#, E, D#, F, F#, C#, G#, B**.

Boss
Since the boss is just a sea cucumber, all you need to do is touch him to win (he's past level 11). This will be changed if this game is chosen as my final round design.

Goal
The Player must retrieve his spine from the evil King Sea Cucumber.

Chordata Date – 3/23/08

How It Works

Notes
There are 12 basic enemies: one for every note in the chromatic scale. They are colored differently according to which note they correspond to (C monsters are red, C# monsters are red-orange, F# monsters are green, B monsters are violet, etc.). In addition, enemies get stronger as you go up the chromatic scale.

Chords
Chords are the main point of *Chordata*. Chords have varied effects, depending on how they sound and their function in music theory. They can damage nearby enemies, stun enemies, heal the player, crumble the stage a little, or transport the player along a chord of the circle (geddit?).

There are several types of chords for each effect, with a hierarchy for which are more powerful. Generally, "fuller" chords are more powerful than their empty counterparts. For example, a **C diminished 7th** chord (ex. C D# F# A) is more powerful than a **C diminished** chord of the (ex. C D# F#).

Chords also get more powerful as their roots progress up the chromatic scale. For example, a **D major** chord is more powerful than a **C major** chord. Chords with a **B** as their root are the most powerful. "Empty" chords of a higher root are more powerful than "full" chords of a lower root.

Here's a table showing all the chords. They get more powerful as they get lower in the table.

Hurt	Heal	Transport	Destroy	Stun
5th Chord	6th chord	7th chord	Diminished chord	Suspended 2nd
Minor Chord	Major chord	Maj. 7th chord	Dim. 7th	Sus. 4th
Min. 7th Chord	Maj. 6th	**SUPERCHORD***		Sus. 2-4

It's easy to see how Hurt, Heal, and Stun chords can vary in power, but for transport and destroy it requires some explanation:

Transport: The lowest level of transport chord moves the player to somewhere on the visible screen (short length chord of the circle). Higher levels of the transport chord draw longer lengths of chords through the circle. Sorry that's a little confusing. **B Maj. 7th** chords create a diameter through which the player travels along.

Destroy: Lowest level makes some stones crumble from the top of the screen. If they hit an enemy, the enemy is damaged. Higher levels take chunks out of the next level (remember, concentric circles) which kills any enemy it touches. However, you have to jump over the gaps created in the next level once you reach it.

*The **SUPERCHORD** is the chord using all notes found in the current level. It sounds like a freakin' symphony!

Note (No pun intended): Although experience in music theory is helpful in this game, it is not needed, and you might just even learn some!

Success & Failure Conditions
To win the game, the Player must retrieve his spine from the outer world by defeating the evil sea cucumber. To lose, the Player must die a lot by getting harmed by the enemies.

<u>Chordata</u>

Carrot Says:

Title: Chordata

Written by: burningtoad

Week 1

High Concept: The High Concept doesn't really tell the reader what the game is about; it mentions "chords" and that each chord has a different effect (on what?) but it doesn't say what chords are used for or how they affect gameplay. Remember; the High Concept is supposed to get the gist of the game across to the reader so that they have a good idea what the game is about without having to read the rest.

Critique: I really like this idea in general, it has a few really interesting concepts going for it and it sounds like it could be a really fun and neat game. What brings down this treatment is the presentation; in addition to being un-organized and with general poor grammar, the Treatment makes a grave mistake by making negative comments about the game.

"*Weak storyline, but the gameplay is where it's at.*"

If it is 'weak' and not integral to the game, don't talk about it in the Treatment! In this document, the goal is to sell the idea to people and to get them excited about your game idea, why should someone else be excited about your game if it doesn't appear that you are? Let's make sure this is understood; NEVER SAY ANYTHING BAD ABOUT YOUR OWN IDEA!!

The detail was more or less put where it was needed, so that was good. You discussed in great detail what the different chords do, but what you didn't do is really explain *how* the player uses them. You mentioned pressing a Use button and then selecting the chord from a menu, which makes it sound like the game is a turn-based affair while the rest of the Treatment makes it sound like a real-time action game a lot like *Odin Sphere.* I personally think that this game would benefit from staying more like an action game where the chords can be executed with little to no pause in the action.

I would love to see this idea fleshed out more, but as it stands, it doesn't sound like it would be a terribly long game. I love the detail in the Chords mechanic and would really like to see the rest of the game talked about a bit more, the way I currently envision the game is Odin Sphere but with this Chord mechanic in place of the items used in that game. If that is what you are shooting for; then talk up the similarities a bit and discuss what your game will do differently and better. For future Game Treatments, try to lay off of the casual speak, things like "*(geddit?)*" and "*Note (No pun intended):*" it doesn't add much and only detracts from the goal of the Treatment.

Fun: A

Presentation: C
Originality: C+

Kaiser Says:

Title: Chordata

Written by: Burningtoad

Week # 1

High Concept: I'm interested right away. What you mentioned sounds like it might be pretty unique.

Critique: This started off with a pretty big negative, and that was pointing out that the story would be weak. Even if it is (and honestly, what you outlined sounds better than a lot of crap out there today), it's probably not a good idea to bring it up in a treatment like this.

After that, though, I get really excited *really* fast. It's very clear that you know your stuff about music, and it shows so well in this treatment. Everything from using chords to attack, to having circular levels that are separated by fifths (with exceptions like A to A#), and the correct music theory behind chords all appeal to me.

Outside of that, though, it sounds like there's a pretty good game here. The different types of chords are used well to create an excellent arsenal of abilities for the player to use, and it most certainly is a game that's very heavily involved with this week's twist. I wouldn't mind knowing a bit more about what challenges levels would hold other than killing enemies, but there's enough information here that that doesn't bother me.

Overall, I'm definitely a fan of this idea. The design takes a unique perspective on the platforming genre, and involves the player heavily in the game's music. It also sounds like this game would have some "edutainment" value, which is always nice. I wouldn't be so quick to dismiss the story, and the actual concepts of the level would be interesting to hear about, but the game's mechanics sound great. I'd be interested to hear more about this.

Fun: A
Presentation: B+
Originality: A-