Juror A

Liked most about the game:
Great concept. Love the way things change when different parts are connected and things are rewired in the brain. And with the limited space in the brain, it makes it a challenge to try and make a functional creature.

Liked least about the game:
Not enough detail on how different parts worked. While discovering things was charming at first, it got frustrating trying to figure out exactly how to get it to do as i'd like. The lack of direction added to my frustration.

Suggested improvements:
A little more detail on how each part works. The muscles in general took some serious time to figure out what was going on with them. I frequently got stuck in either the environments or other creatures. It took me a good 15 minutes to figure out I needed to press play to see anything happen. And at one point i clicked on Play and the game crashed. Starting the game off with more than just a head might be good. A simple creature that can kind of show how things work would be great.

Closing thoughts:
Definitely unique and fun. I love any game where i can build something and play with it.

Juror B

Liked most about the game:
Building the creature was the most fun aspect of this game, because it was truly a ground up construction. Piecing together building blocks to create an organism was amazing, and I went crazy with my first build. This is part of why my first creature didn't function well, but it was still a really fun process to construct it and see it in action.
The aesthetics fit the game perfectly. They weren't overly complicated, and didn't detract from the focus of the creature in a small-scale organism filled world.

Liked least about the game:
This is hard for me, because I loved the brain construction but also had the hardest time with it. It felt like the learning curve was pretty steep, and while the text tutorial helped, I found the most helpful aspects were actually seeing the sample constructed creatures loaded into the game. Exploring their layout and construction was a better way for me to get a handle on how the brain worked, since it is substantially more complicated than the actual body construction.

Suggested improvements:
1. It was hard to tell if the muscles were actually connecting or not as I was trying to make the connections. The snapping didn't seem to always work, and I had this problem in the brain too.;
2. Creating a basic tutorial walking a player through a very simple monster would work well here. The text tutorial is a good start, but it doesn't really put the brain mechanics into context.
3. I wasn't sure what the benefit of hatching an egg was, other than propagating my creature's species. Making it clear that there's a reason for this besides just existing, or making it more clear that this is the goal of the game, would be great.

Closing thoughts:
I really got sucked into this game immediately, and played it for a while before feeling more turned off by the complications of the brain. It felt like I'd make something similar to the Qwop monster, but it wasn't functioning well, and I was getting frustrated trying to figure out why. On a large scale, I think it'll take a little more instruction for the majority of players to get some of the more complicated aspects, but I think it's so worth it to give them that help and have them really understand so they can sink into the meat of the game and truly create.

Juror C

Liked most about the game:
I really love the central premise of the game, wiring up sensors, neurons and creating a digital creature. I've been wanting to check out this game for some time. It was a lot of fun to finally get a creature that worked, and watch it swim around chomping the heck out unsuspecting creatures.

Liked least about the game:
I'd have to say the editor for actually mapping the neurons. It was quite hard to actually make valid connections or draw them. There seems to be issues with allowing signals to pass over, and the placement of the muscles and sensors are related to where they are on the creature. This meant I was completely unable to map things how I wanted. I suppose there's some puzzle aspects to routing your nodes, though that's not what I was looking for in this game. The challenge of creating cool creatures and behaviors is what excited me. Not dealing with tedious pathfinding issues and having to deal with node placements that I can't fix without compromising the physical design of the creature. I ended up feeling frustrated more than anything.

Suggested improvements:
The creature editor was hard to use. I often found myself unable to connect body parts with no apparent rhyme or reason. Sometimes I'd move the mouse just so, and finally be able to place something where I wanted. Only to not be able to reproduce it again. Rotation was also quite hard to get right and seemed to be based solely on some impact normal. This made it really hard to orient whiskers or eyes how I wanted to. A separate movement / rotation tool or key would be much appreciated!

As I mentioned the what I like least section. Actually stitching the neurons together was a real problem. Coupled with the limited space on the grid, I never felt I was actually able to achieve what I wanted.

The cave space is pretty claustrophobic, I felt like my creature spent all their time bumping up a ton of

walls. I wanted to be able to see them swim around a bit more freely and interact with the other creatures in the simulation a bit more.

As a final note, the physics seem a bit too flopsy for my tastes. It made it really hard to not have my creature just fold up into a pretzel during the initial stabilization of the physics solver.

Closing thoughts:
I really wanted to love this game, instead the practicalities of trying to use the creature editor and neuron editor took a lot of the fun out of it for me, and made it feel as though I couldn't really design what I wanted.

If you're able to get the editor gameplay to a really solid place, it will be just a matter of adding more content, connectors, sensors and so forth to have an awesome sandbox experience on your hands.

I really want this game and you to be successful, the prospect of a game like this is super exciting to me. I've been following the game's development ever since I first saw it online. Best of luck to you with your development efforts!

Juror D

Liked most about the game:
As a player of games like Flow and Flower and Sims, I love the concept of the game and it has a lot of potential. I could easily see this expanding on itself and becoming a vast map of many different creatures, and I think that I would find their success very satisfying. I think it would also be very easy for the developers to regularly release content that would expand on the kinds of creatures you could create, which has potential to continually build on the game's fan base and play time value. I can also see this expanding out into different kinds of maps with more advanced creatures. From there, there are many ways this game could continue to expand, if the developers chose to go that route.

Liked least about the game:
This absolutely needs a more expanded tutorial. As it is now, I know the absolute, bare bones basic goal of the game, and very little else. The points that are there are clearly made by someone very familiar with the game--they know how all this ties together, but they can't assume the player will just figure it out. I did not. If the whole essence of the game is creating creatures that can develop and survive, you need to be walking the player through the game to show them each component of making a creature, what it does, and how it's used. The Brain area especially. You say what they are, but that doesn't help if I have no idea how that actually factors in. If you can assign keyboard functions, I need examples of what I can do with that. I couldn't even figure out how to get the creature to move.

Suggested improvements:
YOU NEED AUDIO. SOUND EFFECTS. MUSIC. ANYTHING.
A huge tutorial that holds the hand of the player for the first play through showing them what everything is and how to use it.
It's really hard to get much further without that.

Closing thoughts:
This has a lot of potential, if the game play is fleshed out to the player. As it stands though, it feels like it's missing a lot of really core elements, and needs a lot more work before I'd consider it a complete game.

Juror E

Liked most about the game:
Loved making a terrifying Cronenberg baby and attaching mouthes and spines all over it. Then setting it free to.. wiggle about?
The dynamic muscle system is very cool. I don't feel like I've seen something like this before.

Liked least about the game:
Game desperately needs a tutorial or introduction sequence of levels, urgently. Or at the bare minimum a very small environment with a crystal clear goal. At the very least bring up the help window upon starting the game . But realistically this game would benefit from a sequence of stages with small clear goals that begin stacking on each other as the player progresses and gets the hang of the basics.

Suggested improvements:
- I wasn't sure if this had any sound or not, but it couldn't could use some in regards to the creature creation and playback to make that a ton more satisfying.
- Currently without clear goals it mostly serves as a quick "OK I built a thing. Uh, I guess that's it. The end."
- At one point after I fitted out my first Cronenberg baby the game started running incredibly slow when I hit the play button.

Loved making a terrifying Cronenberg baby and attaching mouths and spines all over it. Then setting it free to.. wiggle about?

Closing thoughts:
My very first reaction was WHAT IS EVEN HAPPENING?? Is this a weird simulator? A pet?
I'm a little torn- I think this would be an interesting thing to show for the sake of having people build bizarre creatures and setting them loose but conversely I think beyond that the game doesn't have a ton to offer yet- it feels like a bit of a toy.
I'm going to give this a BARELY yes, only because it hits some of my weird buttons.

Juror F

Liked most about the game:
Wow! This is a very ambitious project, but you've managed to craft something that's both educational and entertaining. As you rightly pointed out, this doesn't fall under the classical definition of a 'game', but boy is it fun to play with. I spent quite a lot of time playing with the Lego Mindstorms kit as a kid and

this scratches a lot of those same itches. The learning curve is somewhat steep, but the toolbox you've provided offers seemingly endless potential.

Liked least about the game:
Given the complexity of the game, it can be a little overwhelming when starting off. The Help panel was useful, but this game would really benefit from a tutorial of some kind, something that walked you through a few simple creatures, perhaps. Explaining how to use sensors, how to place muscles in a way that promotes mobility, how to use the different kinds of neurons, etc.

It wasn't really clear to me what was food and what wasn't. Similarly, the contrast between foreground and background elements isn't always super strong. I really dig the art style, but I think some improvements could be made to the readability of the different objects in the world.

Suggested improvements:
+ Tutorials! Walk the user through building small creatures, or even just small parts of a creature, to help them get accustomed to the way that neurons and muscles and sensors work.
+ More contrast between foreground and background elements, better readability on 'food' vs 'decoration'.
+ A better UI for saving/loading, please! As far as I could tell, there was no way to see what save files already existed. There should be some sort of list of past saves that I can click on without having to remember what I called my creature.

Closing thoughts:
The online aspects sounded cool but I couldn't get them to work at all. In the Local/Online toggle, it always said 'No connection to server' even though I had an internet connection while testing.

This seems like a really great edutainment tool. I hope you're able to find some traction with it in the 'normal' gaming market, but you may want to consider reaching out to academic/educational entertainment circles if you haven't already, because I could totally see this fitting into some kind of high school biology curriculum.