

Research and Reference

The first assignment, due the second week of the course, is to choose a theme for the environment, and collect as much inspirational and reference imagery as possible for that theme. The images can come from any source, and should address such concerns as style, authenticity, atmosphere, color, lighting, and so on. Drawings or paintings may be included. The chosen theme should allow the design of an environment containing many individual models, in addition to the environment or space itself.

The students will thus inform and inspire themselves in preparation for working with this theme. They will use their reference materials to communicate their intentions to the instructors and others. They may create models and textures based on objects in the reference imagery. Examples and descriptions in the book will inform the students in selecting the appropriate model, from the reference imagery or from the students' own designs, for each modeling method shown.

Nearly any theme is possible. The book itself is an example of the progression from research to model and texture creation to complete game environment. The theme is a Buddhist garden. The Research and Reference document on the book CD-ROM contains the reference imagery for this theme. It also contains the imagery supplying ideas for textures and models created in the

book tutorials. It culminates in the scene on the book cover. In many cases, the reference images are converted quite directly into useful game textures or models. The students should select an appropriate model for their environment for each modeling assignment, and build toward the final project.