Written by Amanda Dyar
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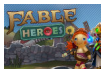
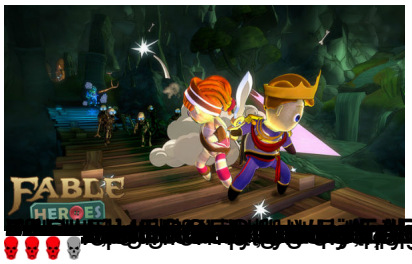


FABLE HEROES is the latest addictive adventure from Lionhead Studios, developer of the highly acclaimed FABLE franchise. HEROES isn't your typical FABLE game, however. The new Xbox LIVE Arcade exclusive that released on May 2, 2012 features a whole new style modeled after your favorite hack-and-slash titles like fellow XBLA exclusive, CASTLE CRASHERS.

In the new game, you head back to the world of Albion in control of your choice of a number of heroes or villains from the entire FABLE franchise in puppet form. You must complete eight unique missions in order to complete the game, and save this cute and cuddly version of Albion. The lack of any real storyline is HEROES' one glaring flaw, but is easily looked over upon realization just how addictive fighting off deadly monsters (such as hobbes and balverines) from series' past really is.

You'll join three other puppets during your quest, and each puppet will come with their own weapon that is controlled with a light attack, flourish and area attack. Defeating the world's dreadful monsters earns gold, and you'll earn more gold and higher multipliers for defeating enemies in a timely manner without taking damage yourself. Gold is then used at the end of stages to level up your characters and unlock new abilities, and new puppets. You'll also find power ups in chests scattered throughout each stage, and the infamous good and evil meter makes its return in chest form by randomly handing out upgrades or downgrades upon opening these rare chests.

FABLE HEROES keeps you playing for many hours, thanks to its absorbing gameplay and high quality design. Most stages have two endings; one is a boss fight against a tough foe, while the other path will lead you to a predetermined mini game similar to what you'd find in other party titles. These can be fun little time wasters, but it also means stages will usually need to be cleared twice to unlock both paths on the world map. Also, leveling up requires you to earn enough coins to unlock dice rolls on the FABLE HEROES' board game played at the end of stages. You'll also unlock Dark Albion after completing the first set of eight stages where new, tougher challenges await. FABLE HEROES is part of Xbox 360's Arcade Next Promotion, so the game comes with 400 gamerscore worth of new achievements to keep you playing for many hours, as well.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