



Final Exam Hints, Walkthrough, and Maps

IFComp 2015

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Final Exam

Final Exam takes place in the near future after an AI revolution has led to the establishment of a new sort of government. You are seeking a job within this government: your performance in the “final exam” determines the outcome. You wake up on the day of your exam to find that your world has unexpectedly changed. You leave your room to seek answers, and find the Administration Centre deserted...

WHAT TO EXPECT

Final Exam is designed to reward exploration and puzzle-solving. There is more than one possible ending. The game is full of hidden content which is not necessary to complete the game, but may lead you towards alternate solutions. This walkthrough describes only one solution.

Solving the game may require you to draw a map. Or use the ones at the end of this document.

Final Exam is controlled by a “parser”: you type commands and see what happens. The game design is inspired by the earlier generations of “text adventure”: the game world is rather large, exploration is necessary, and important objects are described separately when you enter “LOOK”. If you are new to parser-based games, it may be worth reading a general 'getting started' introduction such as this one: <https://emshort.wordpress.com/how-to-play/>

Final Exam is not designed to be a 'cruel' game, i.e. one that can be put into an unwinnable state. There should always be a way to progress to some ending.

Your progress through the game can be seen by looking at the score. There are twenty points. You can complete the game with nineteen, twenty, or zero points.

COMMANDS

In addition to “traditional” interactive fiction commands, such as “LOOK”, “EXAMINE” and “GO”, Final Exam understands the following:

HINTS: If you can't figure out how to solve some problem, and you've explored as much as you can, then you might try the 'HINT' command, which will provide a hint as to what you should do next. The output of the HINT command changes as you progress through the game; you can also ask for a HINT about a specific object, e.g. HINT BED.

EXITS: List the compass directions that you can move in from your current location.

PLUG, UNPLUG, JOIN, CUT, POKE: These commands are used to solve a puzzle, and will be explained within the game when necessary.

GENERAL HINTS

Before you use the walkthrough, try the following general hints:

- Visit each room, enter “LOOK”, and “EXAMINE” everything that you see. Useful objects are listed explicitly after the room description.
- Examine yourself – particularly if something might have changed your appearance.
- When a character or a description is hinting that a command can be used, the command is spelled out in capitals, e.g. “PLUG” or “UNPLUG”.
- The candidate number and the nine-digit POKE numbers are different each time you play. The walkthrough just gives examples. If you use the wrong number, bad things will happen.
- Examine the display in the Observation Gallery if you're not sure what to do next.
- Use the “HINT” command if you're still unsure how to proceed.

The walkthrough begins on the next page. The last three pages of this document contain lists of objects you can find, lists of points that can be scored, and maps of the game world.

CREDITS

Final Exam was written by Jack Whitham.

Thanks to Jillian Whitham for her patience, support, and proofreading; to my parents for more things than I can list; and to my testers, Ted Casaubon and Steven Postma, for invaluable feedback and playtesting. Without their help, this game would probably have remained unplayable. Thanks also to Olly Kirk for reporting bugs, and to the (anonymous) online players who provided transcripts. I also received useful feedback from other IFCOMP 2015 authors on the <http://intfiction.org/> forum.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Final Exam was written for IFCOMP 2015, where it was one of only three entries to be developed using the Inform 6 compiler and library. The game may be played using a Z-code interpreter such as Frotz or Gargoyle.

Final Exam does not support the “GO TO” command to go directly to a specific room. The author received some requests for this command during IFCOMP 2015 but it was not possible to implement the command within the available time.

The game was updated eight times during the competition, mainly in order to improve the grammar based on player transcripts. There were also four critical bug fixes during this time, amongst many smaller bug fixes.

PART ONE – THE ADMINISTRATION CENTRE

In the dream, you are already one of the Administrators...

Bedroom (on the bed)

>get up

>s

You walk through a few deserted corridors. There is nobody here; the building is completely silent. You cross the Administration Centre's quadrangle, also deserted, and end up in...

Lobby

This is the main entrance to the sprawling Administration Centre...

On the reception desk is a fax machine.

>examine fax machine

It's on the reception desk... You notice some paper hanging out of the machine.

>get paper

Taken.

>examine it

Poor-quality paper from a fax machine. There's a message on it, which says:

'Dear candidate 10347, please go upstairs to the Observation Gallery where you will find further instructions.'

>u

>e

>s

Observation Gallery

You are in a cavernous room built on the same vast scale as a concert hall...

>examine monitor

The display is an enormous high-resolution flat-screen monitor, suspended from the gallery ceiling. It shows a message: green text on black background.

'Dear candidate 10347...

...I need you to obtain the emergency access card. It's in the museum north of here. It allows you to enter the Maintenance Room, which is northwest of the Lobby. Then POKE 720675586. Afterwards, please return here for further instructions.

Yours,
Central Administrator.'

>n

Corridor

There's a plaque bearing the word 'Liberty' on the north wall.

>n

Museum of Pre-Administration Government

This is the Administration Centre's museum...

>examine case

The glass case bears a sign: 'In case of emergency, break glass. Penalty for improper use.'

>smash case

The glass shatters.

>get card

Taken.

>s

>w

>w

>d

>nw

Maintenance Room

The maintenance room is a round room with a low ceiling...

>examine sign

The sign reads: 'POKE Room. Unauthorised access is prohibited...'

>w

POKE Room

You are standing within core memory...

>poke 720675586

As you press the button, nothing obvious happens here, but you sense that something has changed elsewhere.

>e

Maintenance Room

A portal occupies most of the northeast wall.

There is a console in the centre of the room. There's a message on the console's display.

>examine message

The console is on a pedestal in the centre of the room. There is a display and a keyboard. The display shows a message:

'Dear candidate 10347,

The Administration Centre is under attack...

Take control of the robot via the portal in the Maintenance Room. In the outside world, find a Diagnostic network socket, such as WS4, or perhaps WS2, though I'm not sure that one is working. PLUG a network cable into it, and PLUG the other end into the Central Administrator socket, which is labelled WS3. You might need to find several network cables and JOIN them together: there is a cable joining tool in the old Broadcasting Studio.

That connection should re-establish some internal communications and let me run some diagnostics. It may be enough to fight the virus...

>ne

As you step into the portal, you take on physical form. You now find yourself standing in the outside world, in the metallic form of a maintenance robot...

PART TWO – THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Maintenance Room

This is a cold and dirty room with concrete walls and an oily floor. There are no windows...

>w

Battery Room

This dingy concrete room is filled with racks of batteries...

You can see a network cable here.

>n

Data Centre

>nw

Broadcasting Studio

>open toolbag

>get tool and cable

>examine tool

This tool allows you to JOIN two network cables, or CUT one cable into two sections.

>se

>s

Battery Room

>join cable

The cables are joined, creating two coiled lengths.

>plug cable into ws4

>e

(laying the trailing network cable as you go)

Maintenance Room

>plug cable into ws3

>in

As you step into the charging station, your robotic form shuts down...

Maintenance Room

The maintenance room is a round room with a low ceiling...

>read message

'Dear candidate 10347,

...You will need to open the blast door on the east side of the bunker, and run a cable from socket WS3 to some place where the sky is visible. Set up a satellite uplink unit there, and connect it to the cable. Due to the distance, you will need to join more network cables - probably as many as you can find. Look in the Network Room first. There will be more in other places...

>out

Maintenance Room

>s

Generator Room

This room contains disused electrical equipment...

There's a rusty metal switch on the north wall.

You can also see a heap of junk here.

>examine junk

All of this junk seems to have been cleared away from other parts of the facility. It's mostly spartan furniture: bunk beds, mattresses, desks and chairs. You see a network cable amongst the junk.

>get cable

Taken.

>press switch

The rusty lever breaks off in your robot hand!

>examine switch

A large metal switch. A faded label reads 'Blast Door'. The casing is held shut by a large screw.

>n

>examine workbench

The workbench is made of (rotting) wood with (rusty) iron legs. It looks like it's been here for sixty years. There are some rusty tools on it.

>examine tools

Wrenches, a saw, drill bits: all rusted and completely useless. However, there is a screwdriver that seems to be in good condition.

>get screwdriver

Taken.

>s

>unscrew switch with screwdriver

The switch casing swings open, revealing the switch mechanism.

>push mechanism

You hear a frightful grinding of ancient machinery as the blast door opens.

>n

>e

Back Entrance

You're in the southwest corner of a large cave...

>e

>ne

>e

>e

>ne

>get float

>sw

>se

Lakeside View

You're standing on a rocky outcrop on the north side of an underground lake...

>drop all but kit

network cable: Dropped.

plastic float: Dropped.

screwdriver: Dropped.

toolbag: Dropped.

black box: The black box contains your mind. If you disconnect it, you die.

>s

You start to cross the lake by walking along the pipe, and you nearly lose your balance on several occasions, but luckily you make it to the other side...

Lake Beach

You stand on a muddy beach on the south side of an underground lake...

>e

>u

Ruin

You're standing in the ruins of a farmhouse. The roof is gone..

>drop kit

>open kit

>d

>w

>n

>get all

>nw
>w
>w
>sw
>w
>w

Maintenance Room

>w

Battery Room

>w

Secure Room

This room was once an office...

You can see some old desks and chairs here.

>x desks

Old and poor quality. The chairs look uncomfortable and flimsy, while the desks are made of peeling chipboard. This could never have been a pleasant place to work. You see a network cable underneath one of the desks.

>get cable

>e

>n

>ne

Network Room

This is where network links enter the bunker...

>get cable

>examine cabinet

Dozens of glass-fronted cabinets filled with modern networking gear. You can see many network cables in the cabinets, but they're mostly very short, just long enough to connect one router to another. However, you notice one long cable at the bottom of one cabinet, apparently unconnected, and just within reach.

>unplug cable

The broken robot stops twitching.

The network cable is now unplugged from Socket WS1.

>unplug cable

The network cable is now unplugged from the broken maintenance robot.

>get cable

Taken.

>sw

>look

Data Centre

This large room is filled with racks of black boxes...

>examine rack

As you walk through the room, you notice a loose floor tile.

>open tile

The floor tile is bulky, but you manage to lift it. This reveals a void underneath the floor. You see a network cable in the void.

>get cable

Taken.

>s

>unplug cable

The network cable is now unplugged from Socket WS4.

PART THREE – SOLVING THE MAIN PUZZLE

>e

Maintenance Room

>join cables

...network cable: The cables are joined, creating eight coiled lengths.

>e

(laying the network cable as you go)

Back Entrance

>e

>se

(laying the network cable as you go)

River Overlook

You are holding a coil of network cable. The cable runs northwest from here.

>tie cable to float

The network cable is now tied to the plastic float.

>throw float in water

The float is sucked under the water by a powerful current. The network cable is dragged along with it.

>nw

>ne

>e

>e

>se

>s

>w

Waterfall

On the underground lake is a plastic float.

A network cable passes through the waterfall. It is tied to the plastic float.

>get float

Taken.

>untie cable

The network cable is now untied from the plastic float.

>e

>e

>u

(laying the network cable as you go)

Ruin

>plug cable into kit

>examine uplink

The satellite uplink kit is housed in a metal case (which is open). Within it, you see a small satellite dish and a network socket. It provides emergency network access via satellite. The status panel on the uplink kit shows that a data link is established.

>unplug cable

>plug cable into me

....You have passed the final exam... your life as an Administrator has begun.

***** *You have won* *****

WHERE TO FIND THE NETWORK CABLES

1. Battery Room (on the floor)
2. Broadcasting Studio (in the toolbag)
3. Generator Room (in the heap of junk)
4. Secure Room (behind one of the desks)
5. Network Room (under the cabinet)
6. Network Room (on the floor)
7. Network Room (connecting the broken robot to WS1)
8. Data Centre (under a floor tile)
9. North of Chasm (in the cabinet)

The final puzzle may be completed with 8 cables.

HOW POINTS ARE SCORED

- 3 points for reading the Central Administrator's instructions (at various times)
- 1 point for using the POKE room (first time)
- 1 point for connecting WS2 and WS3
- 1 point for joining two cables (first time)
- 1 point for connecting WS3 and WS4
- 1 point for opening the blast door
- 5 points for finding hidden cables in the heap of junk, behind the desks, under a floor tile, under the cabinet (Network Room), and inside the cabinet (North of Chasm)
- 6 points for completing the final puzzle
- 1 point for returning to the Administration Centre after completing the final puzzle

Total 20 points.

ALTERNATE ENDINGS

- Win the game as an Administrator, working in Development, Simulation, Research, or Estate Management;
- Win the game as the Leader;
- Lose the game by being forced to resit the exam;
- Lose the game by being sacked;
- Lose the game by dying in the caves (drowning, smashed to pieces);
- Lose the game by becoming trapped in the Administrator's Sanctum;
- Lose the game by being blasted by unfiltered virus packets;
- Lose the game by a whispered kill code;
- Lose the game by unwisely POKEing random numbers.

MAP: Caves

