

Playtesting Report

This report summarises the playtesting process that took my design from the initial prototype to the final game.

1. Structure Stage

Main questions

In the initial structure design, I aimed to combine the concepts of **"Hole"** and **"Monopoly"**, allowing players to gradually consume the game board, shrinking the map over time. This creates an increasing sense of tension and encourages players to attack each other, resulting in an engaging gameplay experience. Additionally, I wanted the game to be playable without requiring my guidance.

At first, I created a table to represent the game board, which included different types of **tiles** and other gameplay elements. The board design is shown below:

4	+1d	1	1	4	1	3	2	1	1	+1d	2	4	3
1		2		4		2							3
2		-2p	3	+1p		-2p							1
3						1							1
3						4							3
1						+1d	-2p	1	3	+3p	3	-2p	1
2	2	-2p	+3p										1
3			-2p										4
1			1d										4
3	2	4	4	2	2	+1d	3	3	1	1	1	3	Start

Key feedback

- During the initial playtest, players provided the following feedback:
1. The board only offers two actions: rolling dice and choosing paths, which lack strategic depth.
 2. The mechanic allowing players to attack each other only every three turns resulted in minimal interaction throughout the game.
 3. The game took a considerable amount of time to play but still did not reach a outcome.

4. Players who started at a disadvantage found it very difficult to catch up or stage a comeback, resulting in a lack of opportunities for dramatic turnarounds in the game.

13/11/24	Guyu Chen	Hole on the board	2-4	Yupeng Mao	Ming Zhang	Yichen Wang	Jinning Zhang
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Major changes

After this, I began considering a new board design to provide players with more options for actions. I abandoned the fixed-direction movement board and instead opted for a hexagonal tile-based board, allowing players to move in multiple directions, thereby adding more strategic depth.

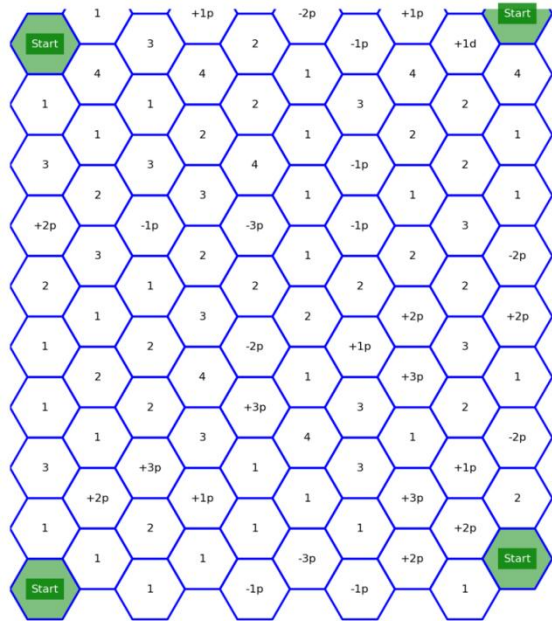
I increased the proportion of tiles with unconditional points to make scoring and catching up easier for players.

2. Detail Stage

Main questions

In the Detail phase, my main goal was to achieve the completeness of the game, finalize all its elements, and ensure better game balance. Additionally, I aimed to refine certain rules to enhance functionality.

The board design is shown below:



Key feedback

Players provided the following feedback:

1. The -2p tile deducts 2 points from the player's score, so players tend to avoid stepping on it, making it appear useless.
2. Due to the uneven distribution of resources on the map, starting from the four fixed spawn points creates an unfair advantage for certain players.
3. The correspondence between players' scores and levels is not intuitive enough.
4. There is no scoreboard or clear visual display of players' earned points.

20/11/24	Guyu Chen	Hole on the board	2-4	Jeremy	Laurissa	Yupeng Mao
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Major changes

1. Revised -2p Tile Effect
instead of reducing the player's own score, it now reduces the score of the nearest opponent. This change increases player interaction and enriches their strategic choices.
2. Dynamic Spawn Points
Remove fixed spawn points and allow players to choose their starting positions, avoiding the imbalance caused by uneven resource distribution on the map.
3. Intuitive Level Progression
Adjust the player level progression rules to make the relationship between scores and levels more intuitive, aligning player levels directly with the total amount of points earned.
4. Token-Based Scoring System
Players are awarded tokens corresponding to their score, with each token representing one point. This allows players to intuitively track their level. When players lose points, tokens can also be taken away to reflect the change.

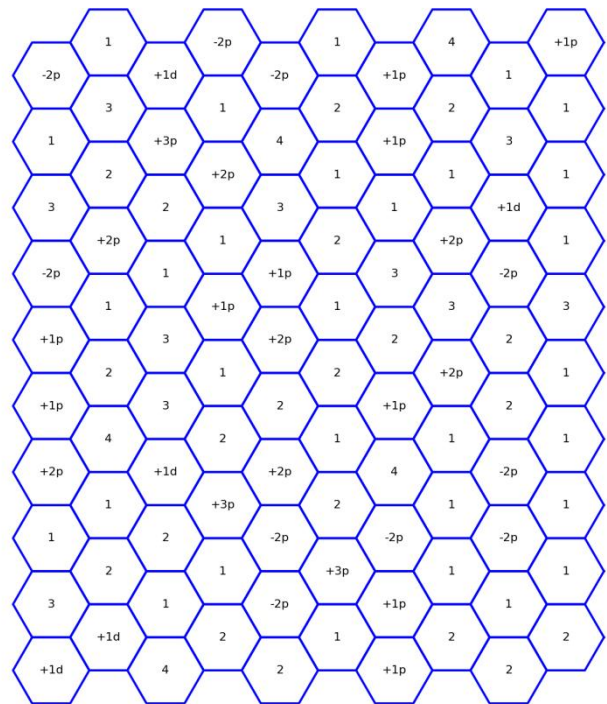
3. Refinement Stage

Main questions

At this stage, I need to refocus on the core fun of the game, using story and

objectives to spark players' interest and engage them emotionally

The board design is shown below:



Key feedback

27/11/24	Guyu Chen	Hole on the board	2-4	Jinning Zhang	Jeremy	Laurissa	Guyu Chen
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1. Relatively interesting, with tension created by player-versus-player competition. Competitions of skill or luck allow trash talking.
2. Players pointed out that the game lacks clear endgame rules, such as handling situations where a player is trapped in an isolated area — should they be eliminated or have their score calculated?
3. Some game pieces look too similar, making it difficult for players to distinguish between them.

Major changes

1. Enhanced dramatic elements
Players explore the fantasy of being a Primordial black hole, devouring objects to grow and evolve into the universe's most powerful force. The game's elements and rules emphasize this theme to enhance immersion.

2. Refined Endgame Rules:

- (1) If a player is trapped in an isolated area, their final score will be the sum of their current score and the total value of all resources within that area.
- (2) At the end of the game, the player with the highest total score is declared the winner.

3. Improved Tile Design

Themed images and effects were added. For example, Cosmic Dust tiles grant immediate points, while Dark Matter tiles require players to be of a higher level to consume, reflecting real-world physics principles.

The final game design is shown below:

