

# The Wizard's Apprentice

by *Barking Beagle Studios*

Game Design Document



**DISCLAIMER:** Sections highlighted  are sections that are more interesting and worth reading, as they were the sections that I was directly responsible for writing. However there are sections that were either written by my team (either solo or in collaboration) or have less interesting content than the highlighted ones. You are welcomed to read everything however.

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# 1. Game Overview

## 1.1 Concept

Action-Adventure game where you play as an alchemist wizard in a school of gifted apprentices, but you're not one of them.

## 1.2 Genre

Adventure-RPG

## 1.3 Target Audience

13+. Action-Adventure lovers. People who enjoy games like **Moonlighter** and **The Legend of Zelda** games.

## 1.4 Unique Selling Points

- **Customizable combat:** 'The Wizard's Apprentice' offers the possibility for players to discover recipes through combining different ingredients and create different spells from which they can develop their strategy and create a customizable spell-casting experience.
- **3D Pixel art:** This game features a unique artstyle which combines pixel-art in a 3d environment, in such a way that allows the game to feel retro but still fresh.
- **Portuguese Mythology:** Amidst monsters, game bosses, and people, you will be able to learn about and experience the many and unique mythos of Portuguese culture.

## 1.5 Platforms

Personal Computer and Nintendo Switch

## 2. Specification

### 2.1 Player Experience and Game POV

Your goal in the game is to help the Master Wizard prepare for a fight that will change the fate of the people. Your **TRUE** goal is to surpass your Master.

You play as "The Apprentice" whose ambition to be the greatest wizard has clouded their modesty over their own limitations. You fear that your Master might be holding back on you, and you're sick of this. You heard rumours from ancient voices that speak of other ways...

Which **path** will you choose?

### 2.2 Game World Fiction

#### 2.2.1 Story of the World

This is a world of **prosperity**. From wilderness and chaos humans brought forth order and civilization, and a utopia was built.

With the aid of magic, and the guidance of the overseers, homes, gardens, stores, schools and palaces were raised from the ground overnight, and **high palace walls were built** around the safest areas to prevent monsters from trespassing. Thus a kingdom made of dreams came to be.

"By their grace our crops grow tall;  
By their grace our animals live healthy without pestilence or disease;  
By their grace our tables and bellies can be filled every night;  
By their grace our children can play safely on the streets.  
May we be worthy of their blessing for ages to come."

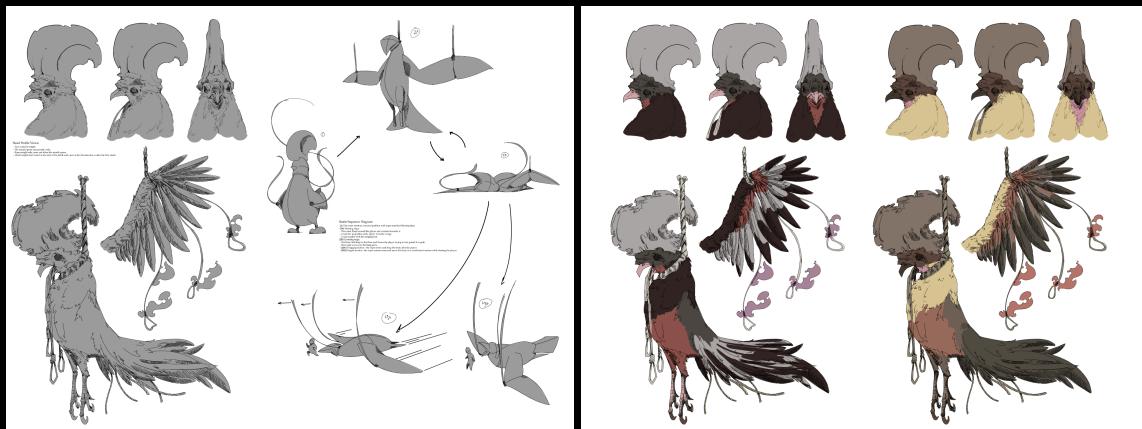


Fig.1, 2 Concept Art - Portuguese Mythos "Galo de Barcelos" Boss

At the edge of the continent lies a prosperous city of scholars that under the watchful eyes from above research magics of all kinds, steadily and ever so dangerously threading the fine lines between virtue and hidden taboos.

For peace, order and a bright future, to repent and prevent the same mistakes from the past, much of the knowledge known before was **destroyed and hidden** from prying eyes. Only those who have proven their valor may get access to the world's **most curious and darkest secrets**.

That is the decree of the ones above, those who outlived countless tragedies, and believe they can steer society into a safe harbor.

Inspired by **Portuguese culture and mythos**, the world of "The Wizard's Apprentice" is populated with long forgotten tales.

### 2.2.2 Story of the Game

In the present days, schools of magic are spread across the kingdom, ensuring the continued worship of magic and the control of scientific development.

However, currently a great concern lingers in the minds of everyone in the world, as a great **Mythical Beast** has suddenly appeared, traveling in the direction of our main character's school and town, destroying everything along its path.

The Master of the school has been pushing his best apprentices harder than ever before, as a great deal of pressure has been set upon his shoulders by the government. Those who are too weak to fight are being ordered to support any wizard in any way they require.

The school is considered to be the **last line of defense** against this Beast and it is the Master's duty to prevent it from causing the destruction of the kingdom. There's not much time left before the Beast arrives at the school, so everyone must work harder than ever before to guarantee victory.

### 2.2.3 Story of the Characters

Besides the aforementioned world lore and the game's main story, our narrative delves into more personal experiences through the unfolding tales of the three main characters: **The Apprentice, The Master and Lilliana**.

Each character embodies a **real-life struggle**, with their individual journeys symbolizing the potential **consequences** that may occur when living that lifestyle. The following chapters explore the personality and story of each character.

#### 2.2.3.1 The Apprentice

*The Apprentice* is the character which the player plays with. Their main trait for this game is that unfortunately, they do not own much skill when it comes to magic.

They joined the wizarding school because they want to achieve a **higher purpose** in their life and be part of a group that they find "powerful" and "influential". Their main

goals are to be a part of the world's government, and have a say on what the world should be like.

At first glance, this might sound futile or malicious, but deep down their heart tells them that they can offer a better life to the people around them if they find themselves in these positions.

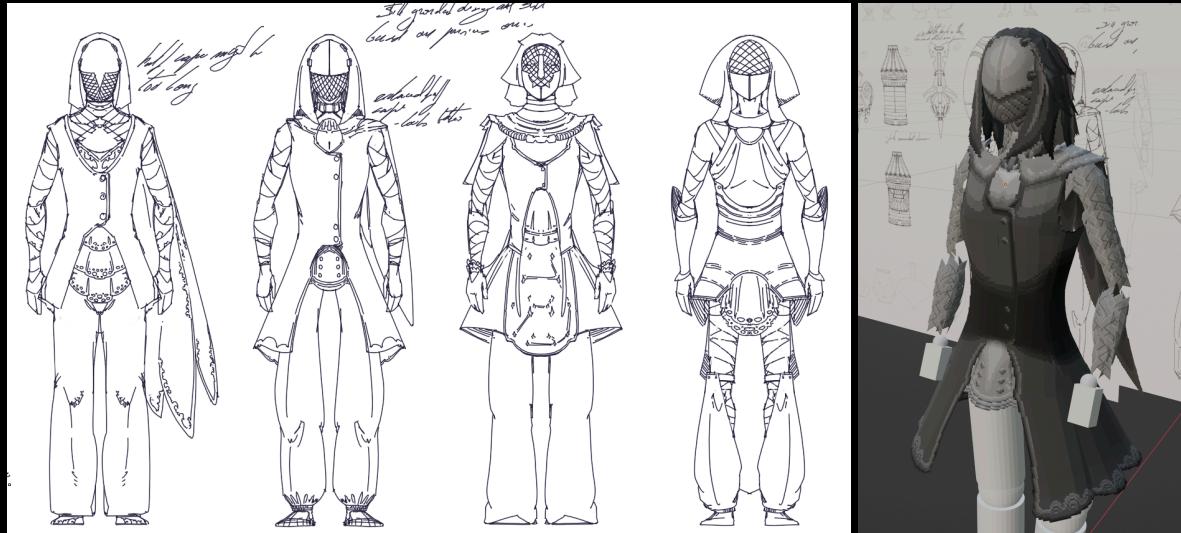


Fig.3, 4 Concept Art (Left), 3D Early Model (Right) - *The Apprentice*

However, this noble nature has been **tainted by ambition**. Currently, their goals are the only thing that they see, and this has led them to believe that everyone around them is an enemy.

*The Master's* attitude towards our character has led them to believe that *The Master* is purposefully halting their lessons in order to maintain sole power over the school and *Lillian's* wizard's manship has led them to believe that the girl is trying to steal their spot in the government. Their humbleness has been thrown down the drain and *The Apprentice* now aims to achieve their goals by **other means...**

As the game progresses, *The Apprentice's* relationship with the other two characters becomes more complex.

Because of *The Master's* and *The Apprentice's* internal struggles, the two characters feel **incompatible** and their relationship becomes more tense throughout the chapters. *The Apprentice* views *The Master* as an **antagonist** of their goal while *The Master* views *The Apprentice* has an **impulsive brat**. The player can try to release some of this tension, but ultimately their egos are too big to surpass this feud. Some things are just **not meant to be...**

On the other hand, the relationship between *Lillian* and *The Apprentice* is one that can flourish if the player so desires. *Lillian's* good nature serves as a pivoting point for *The Apprentice*, turning their envy into admiration and if not careful, **admiration into obsession**.

It's true that our character's internal struggle will always come back to haunt them, especially when it comes to their relationship with other characters. It's up to the player to decide whether to **confront it**, or to **make things worse**.

### 2.2.3.2 The Master

*The Master* is the main professor of the wizarding school. He is a gifted wizard that has dedicated most of his life working for the **government** and teaching his students the art of magic.

He is a **rigid man** in his day-to-day life and this rigidness is transferred to his students during his classes. Failing is not necessarily perceived as a weakness, but *The Master* heavily puts more trust in those that he sees as **capable**.

Together with his student of honor, *Lilliana*, he aims to prepare for the battle with the upcoming beast. For this reason, as of late, he has **become stricter** with the students he regards as "inferior" wizards.

Despite this, he has taken a liking to *The Apprentice*. He sees himself in their **ambitious goals**, even though they do not match their skill capabilities, and has allowed our apprentice to maintain their studies as long as they help gather some remaining resources for the beast coming.

This however, was met with embarrassment from our apprentice who was led to think that this kind behavior was more of a segregation from the other students than an act of perseverance. Why did *The Apprentice* arrive at this conclusion? Well, because ***The Master said so!***

Yeah, *The Master* might be lacking some social skills...



Fig.5, 6 - Visual Inspirations for *The Master*

This is their struggle. The **difficulty in portraying his emotions** has led his students to believe that he does not care about them, even if his life seems to have been dedicated to teaching. This has led to an **antagonistic relationship** towards *The Apprentice*, who

believes that *The Master* is scorning his abilities and holding him back from achieving success.

This attitude is what leads our apprentice to delve into a dangerous territory and what consequently breaks *The Master* when he realizes it's **too late to save his students**.

### 2.2.3.3 Lilliana

*Lilliana* is the **golden student**. She is the pride of the school, its teachers and her parents. She is the person that **everyone relies on** when they need help. The other students regard her as a prodigy and have come to accept that they will never reach her level of skill.

She is **perfect in every way**... at least at first glance.

*Lilliana*'s abilities in magic are to be praised, but this skill is what has led her to **internal misery**. In full honesty, she does **not desire to be a wizard** at all. She finds the whole political aspect of the job incompatible with her personality, but the prospect of achieving higher ranks is too great of an opportunity for her family to pass.



Fig.7, 8 - Visual Inspiration for Lilliana

Her internal struggle is that of **self-worth**. She knows she is not happy where she is, but her family's well-being is more important to her, and she does not have a doubt on where she stands. Maybe someday, when her family is not dependent on her anymore, she can make her own choices...?

Her relationship with *The Apprentice* begins as a strained one, but as the game progresses, *Lilliana* takes on herself the job of helping them complete their tasks and evolve their skills. During the game, *The Apprentice* is selected to be her squire, which initially is a point of resentment for the first, but an **impending alliance** between the two.

She volunteers often to go on quests with *The Apprentice*, despite *The Master*'s discontentment, and she is the first person to protect them.

Throughout the game, *Lilliana* becomes more aware of what being a part of the government means, and for the first time in her life, she is **doubtful** if she should proceed with her career.

## 3. Gameplay

### 3.1 Game Mechanics

#### 3.1.1 Alchemy System

##### 3.1.1.1 Items

As an **alchemist**, the first step in this science is to gather supplies that can be manipulated to create new materials. Resources are an important part of every game, but in "The Wizard's Apprentice" we give a new meaning to the word "**resourceful**". Let's talk about one of the main concepts of this game - items.

###### What are they for?

Items are at the **core of our alchemy system** and feature an important part of the game's gameplay. When **combined correctly**, these powerful resources have the capability of creating cataclysmic reactions that can be used to the benefit of *The Apprentice* as well as the player.

During the process of alchemy, the player can use these items to create **powerful spells and potions** that endorse the adventuring of this world. With the correct items in hand, the player can create a **custom arsenal of weapons** that will surely help them navigate outside the kingdom walls, through the unsafe biomes and defeat the fiercest creatures.

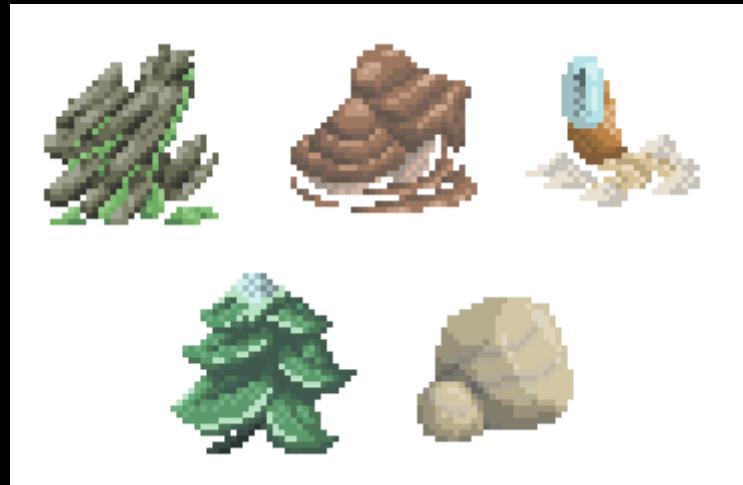


Fig.9 Prototype Items - (Top Left) Acid Bark, flammable and acidic. (Top Middle) Clayshroom, adhesive. (Top Right) Crab eye, enhancer and salty. (Bottom Left) Freezing Hibi, cooling. (Bottom Right) Eterno Limestone, hard and moldable.

###### How to collect them?

Now that we know about these magical resources, it is necessary to discuss how the player can gather them. Through the means of **exploration** and **combat**, the player will find these items scattered throughout the biomes, waiting to be collected. In this world, there are two types of items: flora and fauna.

**Flora items** can be found growing in their natural habitats and can be collected right away by ripping them from the ground while **fauna items** have to be collected from their hosts by killing them and removing their body parts. After collecting an item, it is yours to do whatever you want.

Sounds easy right? The exciting part of *The Apprentice*'s world however is that while some items may be easily accessible, some of them can be blocked by **giant pits of lava, deadly crystal formations**, and **creatures** that just don't seem to want to die. Fun!

#### Item availability and uniqueness

As mentioned, some items can only be found in certain biomes and locations that are blocked by monsters or obstacles in the environment. This difficulty in access corresponds to the **item's availability** in the world. An item that is more valuable is typically harder to find and thus less available in the environment, making it "rarer" than other items. It is understandable that by "value" we refer to items that are considered key components of **strong spell recipes**.

This brings us to the second topic of items in alchemy - **uniqueness**. In this world, each item is unique and can be used in a certain amount of recipes to achieve a desired spell. By unique we refer to their exclusivity as part of recipe components.

Each recipe contains **a list of items** necessary to obtain the expected result, and although these items present various attributes they cannot be replaced by similar items. If, for example, a spell requires a fiery feather in order to create a fireball, this fiery feather cannot be replaced by an item that also produces fire. In terms of alchemy, this can cause a catastrophic result. The item is unique and altering one item in the recipe results in either a failure or in another spell.

	Accessibility	Availability	Usability
Value			

*Table 1 - Simple representation of item value*

#### Item properties

Besides these attributes, items contain **properties**. But what are the properties you say? Well, to be an alchemist we must consider what an item brings to the table in terms of **brewing and mixing**.

Items react differently depending on how they are combined with one another and may cause violent reactions when exposed to a source with a certain capability. For example, we know that when we expose water to electricity, a strong current of electricity is formed, resulting in a puddle of **death**. In this case, the property of the item "water" would be "conductor" while the item of electricity would be "electric".

An item contains at least one property but can contain multiple ones. It's up to the player to puzzle out what items work together and which do not.

### 3.1.1.2 Brewing

By experimenting with some unusual parts you will assemble your first **alchemy station**, the heart of your future experimentations. Through it, magical materials can be **combined and brewed** into potions or charges containing the essence of the very spells you cannot perform by yourself.

In the station you can brew new potions and spells, or even restore ones previously created.

#### Where to brew?

After gathering ingredients and materials, an alchemist must return to his alchemy station and here is where the REAL magic happens!

The alchemy station is essentially a workbench in the player's home with all the necessary tools to **brew new spells, potions**, or even entirely **new materials**. The player unlocks the alchemy station after finding *The Alchemist* book, where the player finds the diagrams and instructions on how to craft the table.



Fig.10 Prototype - Alchemy Station

The player will also be able to **upgrade this station** further so that they can craft bigger, stronger, and better spells. To do this, the player needs only to acquire the necessary ingredients for the upgrade.

## 3.1.2 Spells

Spells are the player's primary **source of damage** and **utility**.

### 3.1.2.1 Spell Types

Spells can be divided into two main categories:

- **Basic Magical Spells:** Despite their current failure in the mystic arts, the player did manage to learn basic magical spells allowing them to defend themselves

when all else fails. These spells are divided into melee and ranged. These spells do very **little damage** but **don't cost materials** to cast, and are **always readily available** to the player:

- Melee basic: Can be either of the type Stab or Slash (explained in more detail below);
- Ranged basic: Can be either of the type Projectile (explained in more detail below) or Raycast, a instantaneous "lazer" that damages the target on hit;
- **Alchemical Spells**: These spells are learnt from *The Alchemist* book and categorized into nine types. To cast these spells the player must first brew them at the cost of some ingredients:
  - Self Spells: These are **buffs** that the player can apply to themselves during combat or when roaming the world. It's in this category that the player will be able to create **potions**.
  - Melee Spells:
    - *Stab Spells*: These spells attack a **single target** in **melee** range of the player;
    - *Slash Spells*: These spells attack **multiple targets** in **melee** range of the player;
  - Ranged Spells:
    - *Projectile Spells*: These spells attack with a **long range projectile** in the direction the player is aiming;
    - *Cone Spells*: These spells attack in a **short to medium range cone** in the direction the player is aiming;
    - *Beam Spells*: These spells attack in **long range line** in front of the player;
    - *Wave Spells*: These spells attack in **long range line** with a projectile that follows the direction of the line;
    - *Circle Point Spells*: These spells attack in **AOE circle** in a location of the player's choosing ;
    - *Circle Self Spells*: These spells attack in **AOE circle** centered around the **player**;

### **3.1.2.2 Types of Spell Damage**

A spell can deal one or more types of elemental damage, each one associated with buffs and debuffs.

### **3.1.2.3 Element types**

As a brief reminder you are in a magical world, and society is still somewhat around the middle ages although with a considerable improvement in quality of life since the usage of magic does, in fact, make up for many **advancements in technology**.

This means that magic should have been a key element in the development of this particular civilization, visible through elements ranging from architecture and arts, to the present day technology.

With this in mind it is important to note that magic comes linked with several aspects or concepts known as **elements** and these refer to the simple and empirical phenomena

all around us. The usage of magic is then the **control over**, and the manipulation of these concepts of the world, bending them to the user's will.

Some examples of the elements found in this world are:

- Fire
- Water
- Earth
- Air
- Lightning
- Poison
- Sound
- Shadow

As a final remark please bear in mind that elements also have the ability to **interact with each other, strengthening or weakening** one another.



Fig.11 Prototype - Fireball Spell

Some great combinations would be:

- Fire - Poison
- Water - Lightning
- Earth - Shadow
- Air - Sound

While some combinations to avoid would be:

- Fire/Poison - Water
- Shadow - Lightning
- Earth - Sound

#### **3.1.2.4 Expendability**

AH! You're a wizard, whoever you may be!

Although, in your case I wouldn't be celebrating already for you see, you barely qualify as a mediocre one. In fact, wizard might be a strong word here... You can perform magic, but only basic spells, and they're not that good.

But don't worry, many great ones also started that way, and if you study really hard, maybe you'll get to cast a fireball within the next century. These things naturally take time and experience and as long as you're patient...

Well, the truth is you probably don't want to wait that long, and since there are faster ways to get things done, lets go over them:

For you, each spell comes in the form of "**Magical Charges**", **artificial spells** crafted through the use of alchemy that **mimic their real counterpart**.

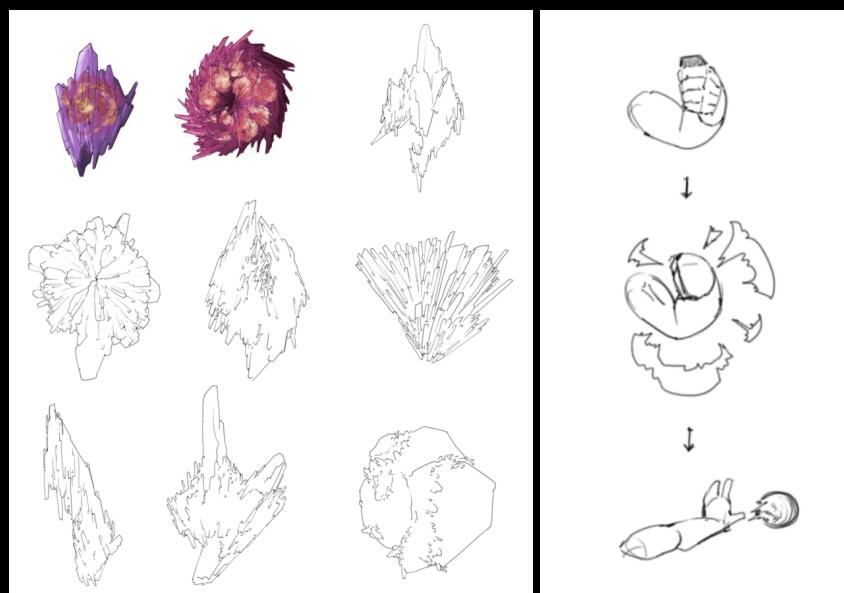


Fig.12 - Storyboard for Magic Usage

This means however that just like how a bullet cannot be fired twice, each artificial charge accounts for a **single use** of the corresponding spell and will be left unusable after the casting.

So combine, experiment and brew to your heart's content, but be sure to leave prepared and fully equipped otherwise you'd best start considering that century long wait for a fireball or you won't be able to defend yourself out there.

### 3.1.2.5 Spell evolution

As the player encounters items throughout the game, they will be able to create new spells, but in order to feel as if they are progressing in their power, we have created some rules regarding them.

At the start of the game, the player will be able to access a range of biomes and villages that can help them start building their weapon arsenal. However, the items found

around these areas, although useful, will only allow our alchemist to create **simple spells** with a small combat value.

Much like in real life, alchemy results will also differ based on the items themselves and their intrinsic magical properties, meaning that spoils from **stronger** and **older magical creatures/plants** should yield better results.

That being said, spells can be classified in 3 major groups:

- Basic spells
- Intermediate Spells
- Advanced Spells

Regarding basic spells:

**Simple**, straightforward spells that can be used in everyday chores. Carry some elemental energy and if not used properly can do some damage to things around you. These are the spells that The Apprentice **has learned** and **can learn** during their time **practicing magic**.

Regarding Intermediate Spells:

Artificial spells that require an **intermediate** understanding of the principles that govern magic in this world. Come at the cost of items of **moderate value**, and as such, deal a **moderate amount of damage**.

Regarding Advanced Spells:

Artificial spells that require **advanced** and **fundamental** understanding of the magic and alchemy of this world. These spells come at the cost of mixing **highly valuable items** and deal a **great amount of damage**. Definitely not something to go around casting carelessly.

### 3.1.3 Combat

Now that we understand how alchemy works in the world of “The Wizard’s Apprentice”, we must understand how the combat in this game works.

The School of Wizards is a fearsome school, as the students train to defeat **monstrous beings** as a means to **train** and **maintain the world safe**. The students must perfect the art of combat in order to succeed in their tasks. In the following paragraphs, we will describe some of the most important aspects of this combat mechanic.

#### 3.1.3.1 Enemies

Overview

While exploring the world you will come across a great variety of lifeforms, or as some of our peers in this field of study like to call them, “**Enemies**”.

These are none other than the fauna that inhabit the rich environments of this world. Some are agile and relentless hunters, while others gentle giants roaming wide and verdant pastures.

Your approach will dictate how these creatures see you and whether you should ready yourself for a fight or simply enjoy a leisurely walk.

#### Hierarchy and Distribution

While several different species might share a particular environment, not all share the same features. Not only do their physical traits differ from one to another but their **distribution** and **numbers** will also vary.

The creatures you will find all around you in great abundance are what you'd call **regular enemies** and they make up most of the wildlife you will see on your travels. Not all of them will be harmless, but not all of them will be hostile towards you either, so choose your battles wisely. Sometimes a peaceful creature could prove a greater foe than a hostile one.



*Fig.13 Prototype - Galo de Barcelos Boss*

Every now and then you might find a creature that catches your eye as rather unique, or rare, from either an exotic appearance, a particularly bland one, or by being in an area teeming with other creatures. This could mean you came across a **Mini-Boss** creature.

Mini-Bosses are foes of extraordinary strength that lie atop the food chain of each particular environment. Should you ever find yourself face to face with one of these, make sure you are well prepared if you intend to fight it.

Not all of them are inherently hostile but most of them are quite **territorial**, so if your intention is simply to pass by, do it with caution.

Occasionally, your journey might take you to some unexpected locations that seem to defy the very essence of the natural order.

Should you find yourself in one of these places beware for you might have stumbled inside the den of **Boss** creature.

Bosses are creatures that meet one of two criteria:

- Extraordinary animals whose lifespans greatly outmatch those of the surrounding fauna and flora turning them into wise and skilled beasts when it comes to hunting and self defense.
- Regular animals that have somehow risen above the ranks of their own kind in every and any way imaginable, almost enough to be called something else entirely.

Both tend to be rather **reclusive**, building **isolated and imposing nests** to keep outsiders at bay.

Although this leads most to be voracious and coldblooded predators, some will not bear any reaction towards you at first, either due to the lack of interest in consuming you or simply due to not perceiving you as a threat.

Should you ever feel like hunting one of these behemoths you might need something to **convince them** you are a worthy foe to engage in battle. You can read more about them in the [Bosses section](#) of this document.

#### Purpose and Utility

Aside from providing an immersive experience and atmosphere, enemies also serve other key roles:

- **Magical resources:** Upon defeat, you might find yourself standing before the spoils of your mighty foes. These can range from broken horns or special organs to magical gems or precious metals, all pivotal to the success of your alchemic exploits. Once used, however, these items will be consumed and gone for good, so hunting will be one of the available ways to replenish your inventory.
- **Progression through scaling difficulty:** The placement of enemies, their nests, variety and abilities will differ from biome to biome and within themselves in particular areas. This means that they will also contribute to your overall sense of progression allowing, in time, for you to overcome certain obstacles posed by the presence of specially vicious elements of the wildlife blocking the path ahead.

#### Weaknesses and elements

Just like any of the best alchemists, every enemy has one or more element types that they are associated with, usually related to the environment that they reside in.

This element types give them:

- **Strengths / healing** to damage of the **same element type** as them. For example, dealing water damage to a water enemy will result in that enemy **healing itself**.
- **Resistances to damage** of the non-opposite element types. This means that they can have some resistance to an element that is not the direct opposite of their element type. For example, dealing water damage to an earth enemy will result in **25% decrease in damage** for that enemy.
- **Weakness** to the opposite element types. For example dealing water damage to an enemy of the element type Fire would result in **100% increased damage**.

### **3.1.3.2 Bosses**

Bosses are a special type of enemy who is stronger and scarcer than the average enemy, as they tend to live alone and far away from other creatures.

These are powerful creatures that usually have **more than one element type** associated with them, and are harder to kill.

If you're able to kill a boss creature, the items they drop will be of **immense value** and will allow you to brew **advanced spells** and upgrade your arsenal even further.

Once killed, bosses will not respawn until **The Respawning** occurs. You can read more about it further into this section.



Fig.14 Concept Art - Slime boss

### Boss Types and Arenas

There are 2 types of bosses, each one associated with their arena type:

- **Sanctuary Bosses:** These bosses can be encountered in a particular area or fortress, that we call Arena and are confined to it. Once you enter a boss arena you are unable to escape it until you defeat it. These arenas can contain powerful ancient artifacts that are protected by its boss.
- **Wandering Bosses:** These bosses can be found wandering their respective and appropriate environment. They will attack you on site but you are able to escape from them if you so chose. You'll probably have to run quite a far distance however.

### Boss Respawn

As previously mentioned, once you kill a boss it will respawn after **The Respawning** event occurs. This is an event that takes place [X] game time, and bosses will naturally respawn after it occurs. Until then, you have to use their drops wisely, as you won't have another chance to obtain them for a while.

However, if you wish to pass through a boss area without having to fight that boss again, there is a way to prevent its resurrection: **The Ritual of Absorption**.

To perform *The Ritual of Absorption* you must first acquire a **petal shard** from a **Mirror Flower**. The Mirror Flower is a very rare plant with very unique properties, one of which is to stop the respawning of powerful creatures.

Using your alchemy station to **combine the shard** with a **boss part** will conjure *The Ritual of Absorption*. However, be careful on how you spend these petal shards, for they take many days to grow back.

## 3.2 Game Progression

Our apprentice might be no ace at practicing magic, but they have created a unique way of fighting and achieving their tasks. With this power in hand, they will be able to alter the world around them.

This means that the player can **explore** the world **freely in any order**, so the progression for this game takes into account this peculiarity.

In this chapter we talk about the game progression of the game. There are 4 main components to “The Wizard’s Apprentice” progression.

### 3.2.1 Quests

Casting spells, fighting enemies and exploring the wilderness are all very fun, but *The Apprentice* must not forget to complete their regular duties... or as some might say, quests.

Some quests might **reward** *The Apprentice* with a **cool new item** that will help the player craft a powerful new ability, and some are just plain and simple **mandatory tasks** to progress in your journey.

#### 3.2.1.1 Quest Types

There are 3 types of Quests:

- Errands - These quests contain **simple and straightforward tasks** like gather an x amount of a particular resource, escort someone to a particular location or even to just exterminate creatures from a particular area. These quests can usually be found in notice boards and are a good way to **train** your spells and **gather common resources** as it's their most common reward for completion.
- Side Quests - These quests can have similar tasks to errands but are more **complex and lore-driven**. They can be found by talking to NPCs (**Not a Person we Care about**) or even when finding new and sometimes secret areas. These quests reward you with **items and lore-bits**.
- Main Quests - This is the main way of progressing in your journey. They are **long and complex tasks** that require a greater amount of steps for its completion (compared to the other quest types) and they can be acquired by talking to the characters involved with the main story (f.e. *The Master* and *Lilliana*). The rewards can vary depending on the quest but they usually focus on giving the player more information about the **main story** and world around them.

### 3.2.2 Exploration

Being surrounded by many marvels of magic, it's only natural you'd feel curious about the world and desire to explore it. However, for how beautiful the world is **outside of the kingdom walls**, it is also quite **dangerous**.

Should you venture too far and you might suddenly find yourself in an area that is **too difficult** for your **current skill level**. Some environments are home to particularly vile creatures, and the harsher it is, the more likely they are to be vicious towards you.

While you are **free to explore** however you want, you should keep **safety** in mind.



Fig.15 Prototype - "Kill Crabs" Side Quest

### 3.2.3 Skill Tree

As a human, we all desire to grow stronger, not only in our skills but as people. We aim to be better than we were and constantly evolve to become the best version of ourselves.

As *The Apprentice*, our growth is not in a philosophical sense, but as a direct consequence of our tinkering with our own body.

In this game, the player will be able to "**upgrade**" *The Apprentice*'s body by interchanging certain components in their physique and adapt the body to the challenges ahead of them. For our main character they are perceived as alchemical/medical upgrades. For us, the player, it comes in the form of a **skill tree**.

The alchemist skill tree is neatly organized in sections that correlate to their **physical and mental stats**. Starting with limited options, the player will be able to unlock new branches from each of these sections that will allow them to customize what their gameplay will look like.

To unlock these sections, the player can use the experience points gained while defeating enemies and making discoveries to directly pick what **slots** they want to

upgrade in their skill tree. Each upgrade will lead to either a branch, or to an ending point that deems completed that section of upgrades.

These upgrades can range from the **strength** of the player's arsenal of **spells**, to the inherent **speed** and **strength** of *The Apprentice*.

Sounds fun! But wait, we're not done...

There are certain branches of the tree that might need more than experience to **unlock**. Unfortunately for the player, these are the ones that yield the best upgrades and abilities of the game.

### 3.2.3.1 Alchemy Station Upgrades and Tinkering Nods

The alchemy station still has some potential to grow and improve. To change their body even further, the player must upgrade their alchemy station. By researching the station's origins you might find that some aspects are still missing, aspects that, when put together, will surely propel your results to greater and more magical heights.

The **tinkering nodes** are slots in the skill tree that are directly correlated to how far into the **“true” path** the player gets, and unlocking them will require *The Apprentice* to descend deeper into their obsession.

This means engaging in **optional boss fights**, delving into **unknown territory**, and **exploring the story of the world** and its inhabitants.

**WARNING:** Barking Beagle Studios cannot be held liable for any “incidents” that may happen from this point on.

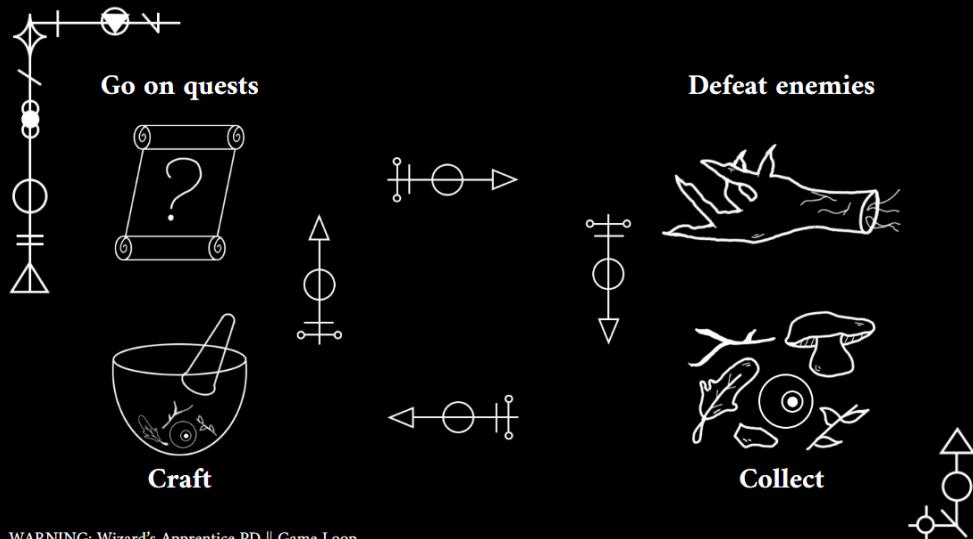
## 3.3 Game Loop

Now that you know all there is to know about the rules of “The Wizard’s Apprentice” world, we can put all we learned into a simple and tiny graph that represents the **core loop** of the game.

All this text to explain something so simple, right? Well, I’m glad you think that! Still, we would like to detail all the points right here:

- Go on Quests: this points mainly details the **main quests** of the game. This is how the game starts, and without completing them, it’s impossible to beat the game.
- Defeat enemies: even if you’re only doing main quests, you’re still going to have to face the creatures of this world. Many main quests require you to **kill a creature** so expect to be doing this regularly during your playthroughs.
- Collect: that’s right, this game revolves around **resources** and **collecting items**, so it’s almost impossible to do a playthrough without gathering a mushroom or slaying a creature. Be it collecting through killing enemies, or just exploring the world, it is a vital part of the game loop.
- Craft: you can’t really be a “wizard” without crafting. You’ll never achieve your goals if you do it the “right” way! This means that, similar to the other points,

**crafting your own spells** is a very important part of the core loop, if you want to progress through the game.



WARNING: Wizard's Apprentice PD || Game Loop

*Fig.16 - Main Game Loop*

All else that is not included in this loop, while important for your enjoyment as a player, is not vital on a day to day basis. These are just the **4 main points** that you will be regularly experiencing if you're planning to play "The Wizard's Apprentice".

## 4. Visuals

"The Wizard's Apprentice" has **several biomes**, populated with dense and magical flora, and mysterious and dangerous beasts. *The Apprentice*, a **dark and mysterious character** stands out within the **colorful ambience**. The overall feelings to be expected from the visuals are both **mysterious** and **inviting**.

The game fuses the nostalgic **3D pixel art** with a relatively naturalistic lighting that is found on more **modern** games, taking inspiration from the Octopath Traveler and Triangle Strategy.

This style of illumination encompasses more complex volumetrics - like local fogs and mist, god rays, accurate lights and shadows. The lighting aspires to be **whimsical**, with many kinds of luminescent plants / animals.

In terms of setting, it combines a **medieval, European rural** set, like the vineyards of Witcher 3. Objects are relatively simple and technology is stagnant due to the authoritarian regime that rules this world. Therefore, a good historical reference could be the late gothic period.

### 4.1 Art References



Fig.17,18 References - Octopath Traveller Lighting



Fig.19,20 References - Triangle Strategy Lighting



Fig.21,22 References - *The Witcher 2* Lighting



Fig.23,24 References - *Breath of the Wild* Lighting



Fig.25,26 References - *Avatar* (franchise) Lighting

The Fusion of Nostalgia and Novelty in Octopath Traveler | Unreal Fest Europe 2019 | ...

## 4.2 Concept Art



Fig.27 Concept Art - The Apprentice

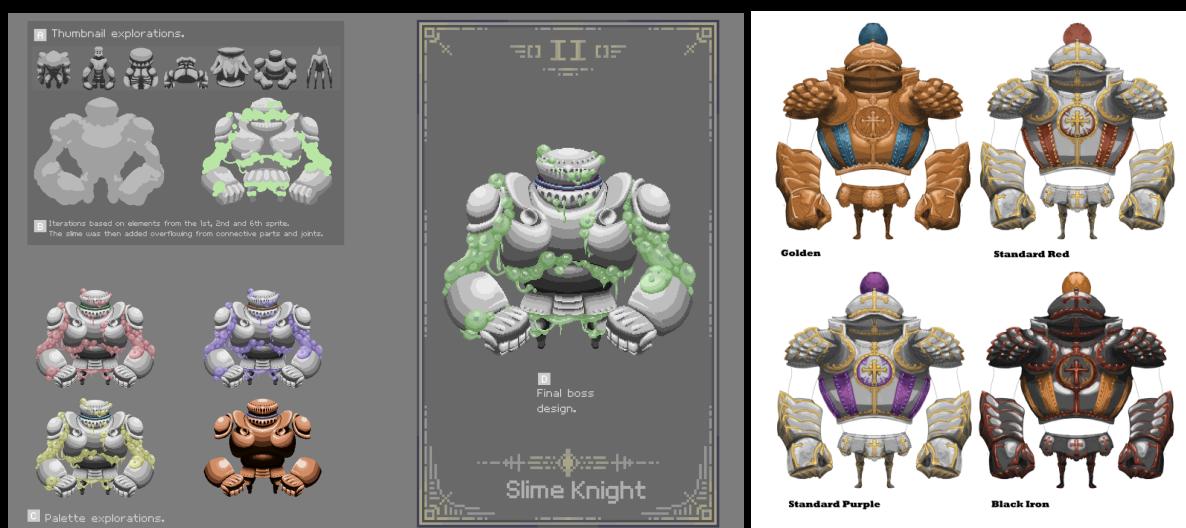


Fig.28,29 Concept Art - (Left) Slime Knight, (Right) Slime Knight Armor Study



Fig.30,31 Concept Art - (Left) Alchemy Station, (Right) The Apprentice running animation

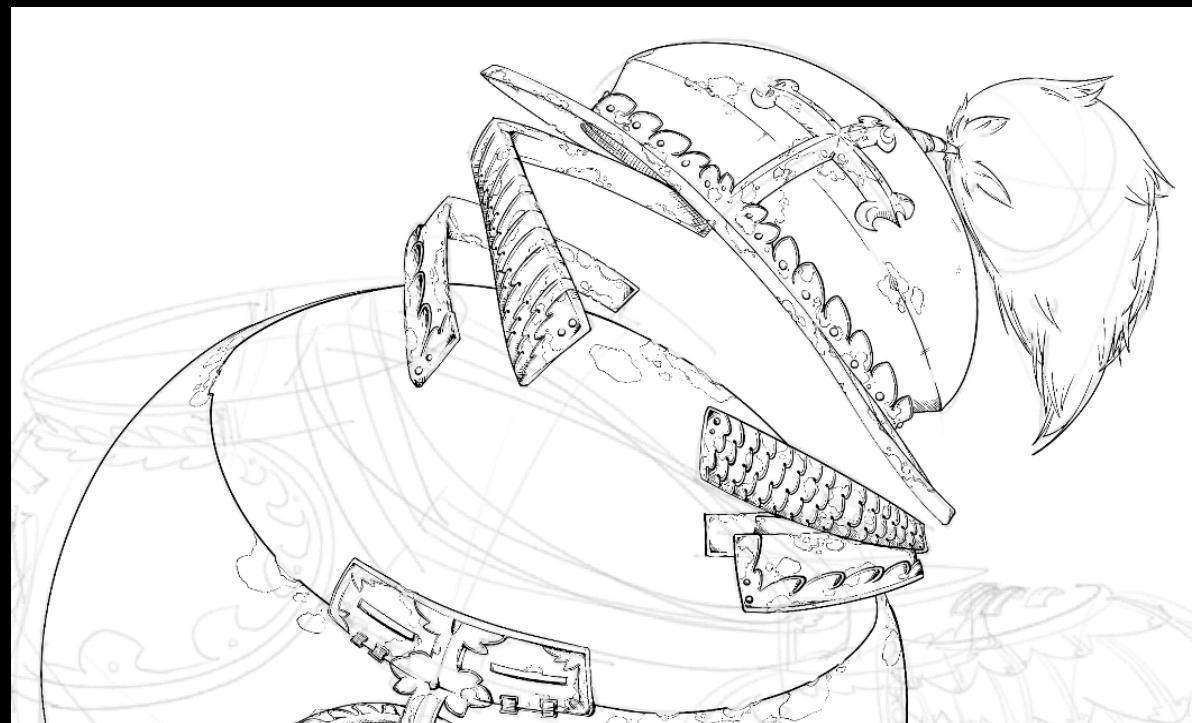


Fig.32 Concept Art - Slime Knight Helmet Mechanism Study



Fig.33,34 Concept Art - (Left) 3D pixel-art study, (Right) UI spell icons study



Fig.35 Concept Art - 3D pixel-art study

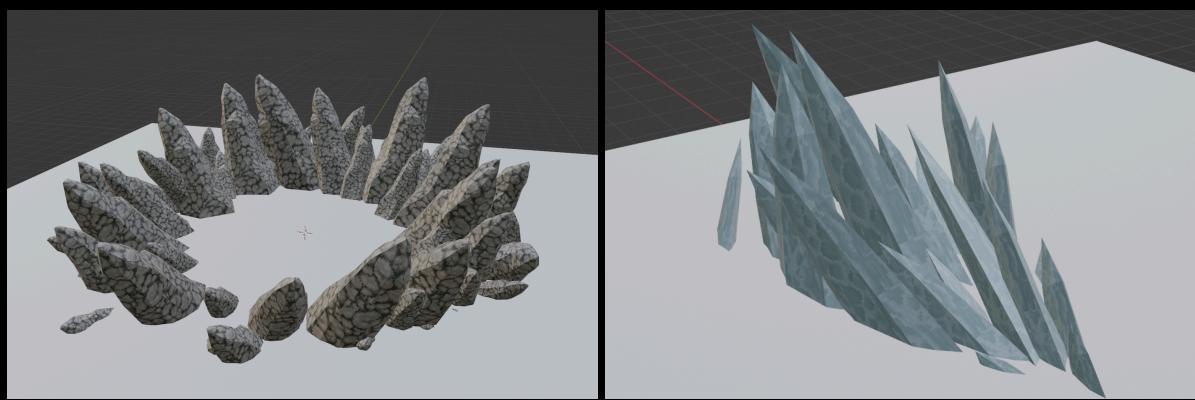


Fig.36,37 Concept Art - (Left) Boulder Explosion spell, (Right) Ice cone spell

## 5. Audio

Immersive atmosphere, built with **noises** and **sounds** from the **wild world** the apprentice explores. Sound effects populate the woods and valleys, and build the feeling of **magic** and **mystery** of the world, while informing the gameplay by announcing the presence of monsters.