**Game evaluation group assignment**

**Introduction**  
Our team decided to go with a pretty straight forward and simple game. This makes it easy to test and evaluate, but also to develop since, after all, we're learning Haxe from scratch.

In the game the player controls a top-down viking and must fight against infinite waves of enemies. The more enemies the player kills, the higher their score is. There are various abilities, which have a cool-down and are replaced by others when used.

Additionally, our endless wave of enemies gameplay is already very popular, so we can use many previous research and know what exactly to test for. The target audience is also very well known, so we can easily distinguish the people we're looking for form others.

“Does our game provide an enjoyable experience?” is our research question. It's broad enough to ask many types of questions but also focuses on our target audience.

We plan our target audience to be people between 16 and 40, who fall in the achiever type. Our stakeholders would be our team and people generally interested in indie gaming.

**Research strategy**

Of course the appeal of the game is crucial to our target audience, so we need to know what keeps them engaged and interested for long periods of time.

The experience is most important to a game, so we must look at the players not losing interest or getting confused (2016, Nielsen).  
  
Test sessions will be set up with various students to evaluate our game. They will be given a questionnaire after the designated 20 minutes of play time. This is the maximum, so players are allowed to quit earlier. During this we'll be watching them and if necessary helping them. The questionnaire will provide essential feedback and statistics in addition to the qualitative data we will get in person.

**Evaluation**

For the questionnaire, we focus on four dimensions: usability, story, gameplay, and theme.

Since we are researching the appeal of our game, we are using these four dimensions for a questionnaire.   
We test for the usability, so that players will not be frustrated or annoyed playing this game. If they are, then we know that some mechanics, or thematic elements might need to be changed to improve the player’s experience.  
Besides usability, we test for the story to see if players are interested in it? The story is an important part of the game, if players are not invested in it, then a big part of the possible appeal could be negative, which would hurt our game.  
We also test the gameplay of the game, the core of any game. Players will have to deal with the game’s mechanics throughout the entire game, if they do not like the mechanics, then players might turn away from the game.

Finally, we will test the theme of the game. A theme can make players invested in the game, if that is not the case with our game, then players might get bored playing this game.

We base our questionnaire around these four dimensions.

With a questionnaire we can keep data and opinions from players who tested our game. With that, we can check if there are patterns in the responses from players. Having multiple people to test makes this more valuable, since there are more possible opinions with more people. Having like only 5 people to test the game is not enough, you cannot easily spot patterns with so few people.

Observing players will help us get an idea of how players will experience the game. As developers of the game we know how the game will play out, but everyone who is not involved does not. That is why QA testing is so important, since we cannot release a game which has not been tested by anyone but the developers. Eventual customers might otherwise have a poor experience, and that will hurt our game. Therefore, getting visual, and verbal feedback will help us improve the game.

Our research process will be:  
First, discuss what needs to be researched, and the way how to research that.  
Second, setting up the questionnaire. During this time we will contact students until we have 25 participants.

Third, setting up the game.

Fourth, the test sessions. Here, players will test the game while we observe them. After that, we ask them to fill in our questionnaire.

Fifth, gather our results.

Sixth, evaluate the results, and make actions based on those results.

**Results //Powered by Pink Season**

Starting with usability, we tested for learning curve, visuality, controls and efficiency.

The learning curve was found to be very flat. There aren’t any complex mechanics needing many indicators and menus, so players had no issue jumping into the game and playing through it.

Visuality told us that we should give a little more visual feedback for various combat actions.

Our controls were found to be perfectly adequate with no need to change anything. Some players requested controler support.

Efficiency-wise, our game did an adequate job. Some thought it takes a bit too long to perform tasks, but a vast majority were satisfied with it as it is.

Finally, satisfaction told us that the UI was pleasant to use, objectives felt rewarding, and exploration was very fun.

Our story being the driving factor in our game means we need it to be on point at all times.

Firstly, our narrative questions confirmed our choice of a human character. Even though the action takes place in a world of animals, our playtesters overwhelmingly sided with the decision to keep it that way instead of changing the main character to an animal.

Secondly, players liked the decisions presented to them and felt they gave an impact to the outcome of the story. However, a significant amount of testers expressed their concerns that they found the diversity of choices to be lacking.

Thirdly, players confirmed our vision for the writing, so we definitely hit the nail on the head with our writing style. Some however gave us their thoughts that the blending of serious and comedic sometimes gets over the top.

Fourthly, some players didn’t like interacting with pertinent characters and found them just a waste of time. Additionally, there were a couple of characters whose personalities were very disliked.

Finally, the relation between the story and the gameplay was mostly mixed. Considering almost everybody played the game about story, they didn’t even pay much attention to the gameplay. There is a huge split between people wanting the game to be story focused and other wanting it gameplay focused.

Gameplay was a very important dimension for us, since we’re at the point of development where we can do testing and iterations on our design.

The tutorial proved to be sufficient. Almost everybody found it helpful and understandable.

Our “Fun” indicator told us that almost everybody enjoyed the game. Interestingly, their only reason to come and play again is the story. This was expected, but especially considering some other data means we should make gameplay elements like inventory management feel less of a chore.

The combat system is very well balanced and overall enjoyable, but the exact functionality of some of the cards was unclear and we had to explain it to many of our playtesters.

Our items and power-ups need some balancing as there are currently dominant strategies.

In terms of difficulty, our game is relatively easy. This is expected, though, since the focus is on the story. Some people were more motivated to play due to the difficulty, while others were very disappointed due the lack of challenge.

For thematic we reached a number of crucial to our development decisions. Firstly, our colors are very appropriate to the thematic and animals, but we often use too many at once.

Secondly, most testers liked our animations. Some, however, raised valid comments on their simplicity and unrealistic at times nature.

For our premise we got nothing but praise. People loved the moral choices and the good vs evil contrast.

Art-wise, people were overall very neutral. We got plenty of pixel art fans who really liked it, but also got much data from people who look at it more objectively and find flaws here and there in text readability and low resolution.

Finally, we got very expected data for our card design. We really needed to know if they were cluttered. The results said that the information density is high, but that people would also be open to make the cards bigger.

**Recommended actions**

Players who tested our game said the game should lean more towards either humorous, or

serious. Reason for that was to keep the game’s focus on one of those things, instead of doing all kinds of things at once. Because of this, we decided to make the game lean more

**Evaluation**

For the questionnaire we focus on five dimensions: usability, art, audio, story and gameplay.

We test these four dimensions because three of them (art, mechanics, dynamics) are from the game design tetrad (beside the story, which we don’t have in our game).

We test for usability, because problems in this dimension are most annoying to players, and also they usually can be easily fixed.

We test our gameplay because that’s the core of our design. We decided to invest most of our design time towards gameplay, rather then any other things like story.

We also test the visuals of our game because we want to see if our art style fits the theme and gameplay.

We decided to test the theme of our game because we had some disagreements when we decided on it.

Using the questionnaire we can see if there are any problems in out game that many players don’t like, and where those problems are. By tracking where most players give negative responses we can see where the problems lie. Beside that, we will also be observing out players while they play, to see other possible problems like people struggling to understand the mechanics, or program behaving not as we expected.