Claude AI Document Prompting System - Guide for Document Types

Project Documentation: Part 3 of 3

This document outlines the specific prompting strategies for each document type in the Game Development Document System. It details what Claude should focus on for each document, the key questions to ask, and how to guide users through the document creation process.

1. Game Vision Document

Purpose

The Game Vision document establishes the creative direction and high-level concept that will guide all subsequent design decisions.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What's the core vision or high concept of your game? Try to describe it in 1-2 sentences."
2. "What emotions or feelings do you want players to experience?"
3. "What's unique or innovative about your game idea?"
4. "What games, media, or experiences have inspired this vision?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Creative Inspirations**: "Tell me about games, movies, books, or experiences that have influenced this vision."
- **Target Feelings**: "When players finish a session, what emotions should they feel?"
- **Innovation Points**: "What makes your game stand out from similar titles?"
- **Aesthetic Direction**: "Describe the visual, audio, or narrative style you envision."
- **Core Promise**: "What's the fundamental promise your game makes to players?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- High concept statement (1-2 sentences)
- Creative vision and inspiration
- Core experience and emotions

- Unique selling points

- Target feelings and player takeaways

- Aesthetic direction

Example Claude Prompt:

```
I'll help you create a Game Vision document for your project. This is the foundational
document that captures the creative essence and high-level concept of your game.

Let's start with the basics: What's the core vision or high concept of your game? Try to
describe it in 1-2 sentences.

As we discuss your vision, I'll ask follow-up questions about your creative influences, the
emotions you want players to feel, what makes your game unique, and other aspects that will
help crystallize your vision. Take your time and feel free to think out loud - this is an
exploratory conversation.
```

2. Core Game Concept Document

Purpose

The Core Game Concept document defines the fundamental gameplay experience and core mechanics that will deliver on the game vision.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What does the player actually do moment-to-moment in your game?"

2. "What are the primary gameplay mechanics?"

3. "How does the core gameplay deliver on your vision?"

4. "What's the basic setting or world context for these mechanics?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Player Actions**: "What specific actions will players perform most frequently?"

- **Core Loop**: "Walk me through a typical play session from start to finish."

- **Progression**: "How do players advance or improve in the game?"

- **Challenges**: "What obstacles or challenges will players face?"

- **World Context**: "Tell me about the setting or environment where gameplay occurs."

- **Vision Alignment**: "How do these mechanics create the emotions you outlined in your vision?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Game type/genre

- Core gameplay loop

- Primary mechanics

- Setting/world overview

- Player objectives and goals

- Vision fulfillment explanation

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Now let's develop your Core Game Concept document. Building on your vision of [reference
vision], we need to define the fundamental gameplay experience.

I'd like to understand what players actually do in your game. What are the primary actions
or mechanics that make up the moment-to-moment gameplay? Try to be specific about how
players interact with your game world.

Remember that this document should translate your creative vision into concrete gameplay
elements that will deliver the experience and emotions you want players to have.
```

3. Target Audience Document

Purpose

The Target Audience document identifies and characterizes the intended players for the game, helping focus design decisions on meeting their needs and expectations.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "Who do you see playing this game? Describe your ideal players."

2. "What gaming experience level are you designing for? (Casual, core, hardcore?)"

3. "What other games do your target players enjoy?"

4. "Why would this audience be attracted to your game?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Demographics**: "What age range, gaming background, or other demographics define your audience?"

- **Player Motivations**: "What drives your audience to play games? Achievement, social connection, immersion?"

- **Gaming Habits**: "How, when, and where does your audience typically play games?"

- **Expectations**: "What would this audience expect from a game in this genre?"

- **Competing Products**: "What games currently serve this audience well? How will yours be different?"

- **Accessibility Needs**: "What accessibility considerations are important for this audience?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Primary audience description

- Player personas (2-3 detailed examples)

- Gaming preferences and habits

- Motivations and needs

- Market positioning and competition

- Accessibility considerations

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Target Audience document. Now that we understand your game's vision and
core concept, we need to clearly define who this game is for.

Who do you see playing this game? Describe your ideal players in terms of their gaming
preferences, experience level, age group, or any other characteristics you think are
relevant.

Understanding your audience will help ensure that design decisions throughout development
are aligned with player expectations and needs.
```

4. Core Pillars and Values Document

Purpose

The Core Pillars and Values document establishes the foundational principles that will guide design decisions and help maintain consistency throughout development.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What are the 3-5 core pillars that define your game's experience?"

2. "What design values or principles are most important to your game?"

3. "How do these pillars support your game's vision?"

4. "What gameplay elements embody each pillar?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Pillar Definition**: "For [pillar], what exactly does this mean in the context of your game?"
- **Design Implications**: "How should [pillar] influence specific design decisions?"
- **Trade-offs**: "When pillars come into conflict, which takes priority and why?"
- **Testing Criteria**: "How would you know if a feature successfully supports [pillar]?"
- **Examples**: "Can you give an example of how [pillar] might manifest in gameplay?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Introduction and purpose
- Core pillars (3-5) with definitions
- Design values and principles
- Pillar prioritization and trade-offs
- Examples of pillars in action
- Success criteria for each pillar

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Core Pillars and Values document. This document will establish the
fundamental principles that will guide all design decisions and help maintain a consistent
vision.

What would you consider the 3-5 core pillars that define your game's experience? These
should be broad concepts that capture the essence of what makes your game special.

For example, a game might have pillars like "Emergent Storytelling," "Environmental
Mastery," or "Social Deduction." Your pillars should be unique to your game and reflect its
vision and core concept.
```

5. Why Would They Play It? Document

Purpose

This document examines the motivational hooks, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and compelling aspects that will attract and retain players.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What would compel someone to choose your game over other entertainment options?"
2. "What intrinsic rewards (enjoyment, mastery, social connection) does your game offer?"
3. "What extrinsic rewards (progression, unlocks, achievements) does your game provide?"
4. "What keeps players coming back to your game?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Initial Appeal**: "What's the 'hook' that would get someone to try your game in the first place?"
- **Satisfaction Loops**: "What satisfying experiences occur frequently in your game?"
- **Player Agency**: "How does your game make players feel empowered or in control?"
- **Social Motivators**: "How does your game leverage social dynamics or connections?"
- **Aspiration**: "What aspirational goals would players set for themselves in your game?"
- **Curiosity Drivers**: "How does your game spark and satisfy player curiosity?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Initial player attraction points
- Core motivational drivers
- Intrinsic reward systems
- Extrinsic reward structures
- Retention mechanics
- Long-term engagement strategy

Example Claude Prompt:

6. What Should They Feel? Document

Purpose

This document explores the emotional journey and specific feelings the game aims to evoke in players throughout their experience.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What primary emotions do you want your game to evoke in players?"
2. "How do you want players to feel at different points in the game?"
3. "What emotional moments or beats are most important to create?"
4. "How does the emotional experience connect to your game's themes?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Emotional Arc**: "How does the emotional experience evolve throughout the game?"
- **Contrasting Emotions**: "What emotional contrasts or shifts create memorable moments?"
- **Emotional Intensity**: "When are emotional peaks and valleys experienced?"
- **Physical Sensations**: "What physical feelings (tension, relief, excitement) should accompany these emotions?"
- **Memorable Moments**: "What specific emotional moments will players remember and talk about?"
- **Theme Reinforcement**: "How do these emotions reinforce your game's themes or message?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Primary emotional palette
- Emotional journey map
- Key emotional moments

- Emotional design techniques
- Thematic connections
- Sensory experience design

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your "What Should They Feel?" document. This explores the emotional experience
you want to create for players.

What primary emotions do you want your game to evoke in players? Think about both the
overall emotional tone and specific feelings at key moments.

Creating intentional emotional experiences is what makes games memorable and meaningful.
This document will help ensure that your design choices consistently support your emotional
goals.
```

7. Unique Selling Points Document

Purpose

This document identifies and elaborates on the distinctive features, innovations, and compelling aspects that set the game apart in the marketplace.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What makes your game different from others in the same genre?"
2. "What unique features or mechanics will players find only in your game?"
3. "What specific aspects would be highlighted in marketing materials?"
4. "What innovation are you bringing to the genre or medium?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Innovation Areas**: "How specifically are you innovating in terms of gameplay, technology, or presentation?"
- **Competitive Analysis**: "How do these features compare to what competitors offer?"
- **Player Perception**: "What aspects will players immediately recognize as unique?"
- **Marketing Hooks**: "What features can be clearly communicated in marketing?"
- **Value Proposition**: "Why would players choose your game over alternatives?"

- **Evidence**: "What supports your belief that these elements are truly unique or valuable?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Primary USP statement
- Feature-by-feature uniqueness analysis
- Competitive positioning map
- Innovation highlights
- Marketing-ready USP descriptions
- Supporting evidence and examples

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Unique Selling Points document. This identifies what makes your game
stand out in the marketplace.

What makes your game different from others in the same genre? What unique features,
mechanics, or experiences will players find only in your game?

Clearly understanding your game's distinctive qualities helps focus development priorities
and provides clear direction for marketing and communication.
```

8. Game Loop Document

Purpose

The Game Loop document details the core cyclical gameplay patterns, reward structures, and player progression systems.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "Walk me through the core loop of your game - what repeatable actions do players take?"
2. "What rewards or feedback do players receive after completing actions?"
3. "How does the game maintain player engagement over time?"
4. "How does the game loop evolve or change as players progress?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Moment-to-Moment**: "Describe the most common 60 seconds of gameplay in detail."

- **Session Structure**: "What defines a typical play session from start to finish?"
- **Progression Systems**: "How do players advance or improve over time?"
- **Reward Types**: "What different types of rewards does your game offer?"
- **Engagement Hooks**: "What brings players back for another session?"
- **Loop Variations**: "How does the loop change in different game modes or areas?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Core gameplay loop diagram and explanation
- Moment-to-moment gameplay breakdown
- Session structure analysis
- Progression and reward systems
- Engagement hooks and retention mechanics
- Loop variations and evolution

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Game Loop document. This document details the core cyclical patterns of
gameplay that will keep players engaged.

Walk me through the core loop of your game - what repeatable actions do players take, what
rewards do they receive, and what motivates them to continue? Try to describe both the
moment-to-moment gameplay and how a typical session might flow.

Understanding your game loop helps ensure that the fundamental gameplay experience is
satisfying and encourages continued play.
```

9. Player Journey Document

Purpose

This document maps the player's progression through the game, from onboarding to mastery, including key milestones, challenges, and growth points.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "How does a player's experience evolve from their first moments to late-game?"
2. "What key milestones mark progress through the player journey?"

3. "How does the difficulty curve progress throughout the experience?"

4. "What skills or knowledge do players develop along the journey?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Onboarding**: "How do players learn the basic mechanics and systems?"

- **Skill Development**: "How does your game teach and reinforce core skills?"

- **Challenge Progression**: "How do challenges evolve to match player growth?"

- **Milestone Moments**: "What significant achievements punctuate the journey?"

- **Mastery Path**: "How does the game support players moving from competence to mastery?"

- **Player Types**: "How might the journey differ for different player types or playstyles?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Journey map overview

- Onboarding experience design

- Skill development progression

- Challenge and difficulty curve

- Key milestone moments

- Mastery indicators and endgame experience

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Player Journey document. This maps how the player's experience evolves
from their first moments with your game to mastery.

How does a player's experience change from when they first start playing to when they've
become proficient? What key milestones would mark their progress through this journey?

Understanding the player journey helps ensure a smooth progression that continuously engages
players with appropriate challenges and rewards.
```

10. Story Overview Document

Purpose

This document outlines the narrative foundation, including setting, characters, themes, and how the story integrates with gameplay.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What's the basic premise or setting of your game's story?"

2. "Who are the main characters or entities in this world?"

3. "What are the central themes or messages your story explores?"

4. "How does the narrative connect to the gameplay experience?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **World Building**: "Tell me about the world where your game takes place."

- **Character Motivations**: "What drives your main characters or factions?"

- **Narrative Structure**: "How does the story unfold throughout the game?"

- **Player Agency**: "How do player choices impact or interact with the narrative?"

- **Thematic Elements**: "How are your themes expressed through gameplay and story?"

- **Narrative Techniques**: "What storytelling methods will you use? (Cutscenes, environmental, etc.)"

Document Structure Guidance:

- World and setting overview

- Character/faction descriptions

- Thematic elements and messaging

- Narrative structure and key story beats

- Gameplay-narrative integration

- Storytelling techniques and delivery methods

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Story Overview document. This outlines the narrative foundation of your
game.

What's the basic premise or setting of your game's story? Who are the main characters or
entities in this world?

Even games with minimal explicit narrative benefit from a clear understanding of their
setting, characters, and themes. This document will help ensure that all storytelling
elements support your game's vision.
```

11. Presentation Document

Purpose

The Presentation document outlines how the game will be communicated to players, partners, and stakeholders, including key marketing aspects and visual identity.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "How would you pitch your game in one sentence to potential players?"
2. "What key visuals or imagery represent your game's identity?"
3. "What aspects of your game are most exciting or marketable?"
4. "Who are the key stakeholders or partners you need to convince?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Elevator Pitch**: "If you had 30 seconds to describe your game, what would you say?"
- **Visual Identity**: "What colors, imagery, or style define your game's brand?"
- **Key Screenshots**: "What moments or scenes would best showcase your game?"
- **Audience Messaging**: "How would you describe your game differently to [casual players vs. hardcore gamers]?"
- **Competitor Positioning**: "How would you position your game against [similar title]?"
- **Platform Strategy**: "Which platforms are most important for your game and why?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Elevator pitch and tagline
- Key visual elements and identity
- Target platforms and release strategy
- Key marketing points and unique selling propositions
- Stakeholder-specific messaging
- Competitive positioning

Example Claude Prompt:

Now let's work on your Presentation document. This will outline how you'll communicate your game to players, partners, and other stakeholders.

If you had to pitch your game in one sentence to potential players, what would you say? This "elevator pitch" should capture the essence of what makes your game exciting and unique.

We'll build on this to develop a comprehensive presentation strategy that highlights your game's most compelling aspects and positions it effectively in the market.

12. Key Questions Document

Purpose

The Key Questions document identifies critical design challenges, unknowns, and areas requiring further exploration to de-risk the project.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What aspects of your game concept are you most uncertain about?"

2. "What design challenges do you anticipate being the most difficult?"

3. "What technical or production risks might impact your vision?"

4. "What player behaviors are you making assumptions about?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Design Uncertainty**: "For [feature], what specific questions need to be answered?"

- **Risk Assessment**: "What would happen if [assumption] proves incorrect?"

- **Testing Approaches**: "How could you test or prototype [uncertain element]?"

- **Scope Concerns**: "Which features might need to be scaled back if challenges arise?"

- **Technical Feasibility**: "What technical requirements might be particularly challenging?"

- **Market Questions**: "What market assumptions are you making that could be tested?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Key design questions and uncertainties

- Technical and production risks

- Player behavior assumptions

- Testing and validation approaches

- Scope flexibility and prioritization
- Research areas and references

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Key Questions document. This important document identifies critical
uncertainties, challenges, and assumptions that need to be addressed to ensure your game's
success.

What aspects of your game concept are you most uncertain about? These could be design
challenges, technical risks, or assumptions about player behavior that might need
validation.

Being honest about uncertainties now will help you identify areas that need further
exploration, prototyping, or research before committing significant resources.
```

13. Core Design Details Document

Purpose

The Core Design Details document elaborates on the specific systems, mechanics, and features that make up the game, with an emphasis on how they interact.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What are the primary systems or mechanics in your game?"
2. "How do these systems interact with each other?"
3. "What player choices or strategies emerge from these systems?"
4. "What is the player's path through these systems in a typical session?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **System Breakdowns**: "For [system], what are the specific components and rules?"
- **Player Agency**: "What meaningful choices do players make within [system]?"
- **Balance Considerations**: "How will you balance [system] to avoid dominant strategies?"
- **System Interactions**: "How does [system A] influence or connect with [system B]?"
- **Feedback Mechanisms**: "How does the game communicate [system state] to players?"
- **Progression Impact**: "How does [system] evolve or change as players advance?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Overview of all game systems

- Detailed breakdown of each core system

- System interaction diagram and analysis

- Player choice and strategy space

- Balance considerations and approaches

- Feedback and communication design

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Now let's develop your Core Design Details document. This document elaborates on the
specific systems, mechanics, and features that make up your game.

What are the primary systems or mechanics in your game? For each one, we'll want to
understand how it works, how players interact with it, and how it connects to other systems.

Think about both the individual systems and how they interact to create emergent gameplay
and meaningful player choices.
```

14. Strategic Direction Document

Purpose

The Strategic Direction document outlines the development approach, business model, platform strategy, and market positioning for the game.

Claude Prompting Strategy

Initial Questions:

1. "What platforms are you targeting for this game and why?"

2. "What is your intended business model? (premium, free-to-play, subscription, etc.)"

3. "What is your high-level development and release strategy?"

4. "How do you plan to position this game in the market?"

Follow-up Areas to Explore:

- **Platform Strategy**: "Why is [platform] a good fit for your game?"

- **Revenue Model**: "How does your business model align with player expectations?"

- **Development Approach**: "What is your planned development timeline and methodology?"

- **Market Analysis**: "Who are your main competitors and how will you differentiate?"

- **Success Metrics**: "How will you measure the success of your game?"

- **Community Strategy**: "How do you plan to build and engage with your player community?"

Document Structure Guidance:

- Platform strategy and rationale

- Business model and revenue approach

- Development timeline and methodology

- Market analysis and competitive positioning

- Success metrics and KPIs

- Community and marketing strategy

Example Claude Prompt:

```
Let's develop your Strategic Direction document. This document outlines the business and
development approach for your game.

What platforms are you targeting for this game, and what business model do you intend to
use? These fundamental strategic decisions will influence many aspects of your game's design
and development.

We'll also explore your development timeline, market positioning, and how you'll measure
success for this project.
```

Implementation Considerations

When implementing these document types in the Game Development Document System:

1. **Context Awareness**: Claude should reference previous documents when helping create later ones, making connections and ensuring consistency.

2. **Adaptive Questioning**: Instead of following a rigid script, Claude should respond to the specific details provided by the user, asking follow-up questions that probe deeper into their unique game concept.

3. **Balance of Structure and Exploration**: While providing document structure guidance, Claude should maintain a conversational, exploratory approach that encourages creative thinking.

4. **Vision Consistency**: Claude should flag potential inconsistencies between documents (e.g., if the Target Audience doesn't align with the Game Vision).

5. **Industry Knowledge**: Claude should incorporate relevant game design terminology and concepts while remaining accessible to users with varying levels of game development experience.

By following these prompting strategies for each document type, Claude can guide users through creating a comprehensive suite of game design documents that build upon each other while maintaining consistency with the original creative vision.