

Ascent Development Blog

While working on this project, I posted weekly blog updates internally on my university blog page showcasing the development and process involved. Please see below the entire process condensed into one pdf.

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Semester 1

Week 1 – Introductory Post - October 4, 2021

General Inspiration

I really enjoy classic fast paced board-games, such as Cluedo, Monopoly, Risk. These games all require some form of co-operation with other players, conversely this co-operation can be dumped at a moment's notice to benefit yourself. For example, you can team with players in 'Risk' working together to take over a territory, and then decide to conspire against your teammate once they weakened.



The type of game genre's I usually play are co-op/action games as I enjoy having a challenge against friends/family with a competitive nature. I dislike longer analogue games which take longer than an hour to play as I find them too slow paced.

Console Inspiration

Console board game adaptations such as Wii Party – Board game island and Mario party are a big influence for me, as they have changed the style by adding additional functionality to traditional analogue board games. Making them faster and more interesting to play with friends or even AI when players are short.



Initial thoughts

My initial thoughts are to create a co-op versus board-game where players are given the choice to aid or betray one another to reach the goal. The aim would be to challenge players to work together and then betray one another when the time is right to boost their chances of winning.

Week 2 – Brief History of Board-games - October 11, 2021

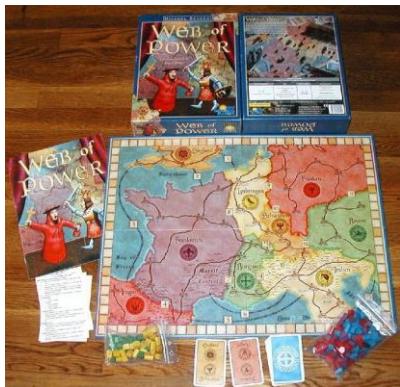
This week we have explored the history of board games, seeing how they have developed over time and how they have been influenced by mainstream films/tv shows.

Task 1: Research analogue games released in the year 2000

Web of Power – Strategy Genre

Game brief:

"Players struggle for influence over regions of Europe by placing two different types of control markers, Monasteries and Advisors. Monasteries are the basic placement, with the goal of securing a majority in a region or chain of monasteries or even decent points from second place. The placement of the Advisors is more restricted as the total number of Advisors in a region is limited by the majority player's number of monasteries. The game is played in two rounds and is very fast paced."



Star Wars: The Queen's Gambit – Strategy Genre

Game brief:

"The forces are represented by 155 plastic miniatures on three separate boards, including a three-level palace. The action is driven by two decks of cards for each side. Each turn, each side simultaneously chooses four action cards from a hand of ten, and places them in order. The actions are then carried out one at a time, alternating sides. Combat is resolved using special attack and defense dice."



Blokus – Strategy Genre

Game brief:

"Blokus is an abstract strategy game with transparent, Tetris-shaped, coloured pieces that players are trying to play onto the board. The only caveat to placing a piece is that it may not lie adjacent to your other pieces, but instead must be placed touching at least one corner of your pieces already on the board."



The Lord of the Rings – Co-op Genre

Game brief:

"The Lord of the Rings is a co-operative game in which the object is to destroy the Ring while surviving the corrupting influence of Sauron. Each player plays one of the Hobbits in the fellowship, each of which has a unique power."



River Dragons – Strategy Genre

Game brief:

"In Dragon Delta, you want to move your pawn over a system of bridge-like planks to the other side of the board. An easy task! Or at least it would be if everyone were working together. Instead, you're all working on your own right next to one another, each convinced that your way is best."

In game terms, Players simultaneously select five action cards to be performed from the nine actions available and lay them down in order they are to be played. The turn is then resolved one card at a time. The actions allow players to place plank foundations, place planks, move their pawns, cancel other players' actions, or remove planks or foundation stones. As can be expected for a design with simultaneous action selection, the game is rather chaotic."



Trends

- Multiple analogue games from this period, share this consistent use of the strategy genre where players must use their wits to win the game

- Some analogue games are inspired and created from mainstream films/tv shows, for example the game “Star Wars: The Queen’s Gambit” is an advanced variation of chess and was created after the release of “Star Wars Episode One: The Phantom Menace”

Task 2: Research analogue games released in the year 2021

Oath: Chronicles of Empire and Exile - Strategy Genre

Game brief:

“In Oath, one to six players guide the course of history in an ancient land. Players might take the role of agents bolstering the old order or scheme to bring the kingdom to ruin. The consequences of one game will ripple through those that follow, changing what resources and actions future players may have at their disposal and even altering the game's core victory condition.”



Chronicles of Drunagor: Age of Darkness - Co-Op Genre

Game brief:

“Chronicles of Drunagor - Age of Darkness is a fully cooperative and strategy board game of tactical combat in a dungeon crawl adventure for one to five players.”



Sleeping Gods – Co-Op Genre

Game brief:

“In Sleeping Gods, you and up to 3 friends become Captain Sofi Odessa and her crew, lost in a strange world in 1929 on your steamship, the Manticore. You must work together to survive,

exploring exotic islands, meeting new characters, and seeking out the totems of the gods so that you can return home."



The Initiative – Co-Op

Game brief:

"A unique co-operative board game of story, strategy, and code-breaking — lets players take on the role of teenagers in 1994 who have found a mysterious board game called "The Key". Not only will they play The Key, but players will help the teens through a pivotal chapter of their lives by following a series of missions linked together via an interactive comic book."



Bloodborne: The Board Game – Co-Op

Game brief:

"In the campaign-based action-adventure **Bloodborne: The Board Game**, players take on the role of Hunters, working together against the game to uncover the mysteries hidden within the city of Yharnam and beyond."



Trends

- The biggest difference I've noticed with these newer analogue games is that the choices and opportunities presented to players are much vaster allowing more freedom in play when working with or against other players
- Gameplay is more dynamic with cause and effect playing a big role, with one players action leading to another player's advantage or disadvantage
- The playtime of these analogue games also appears to be greatly increased due to better balancing, the game time has a longer minimum/maximum playtime for players to enjoy the game longer
- Co-Op genre board-games from the year 2021 appear to be more popular following recent reviews of the games, when compared to analogue games released in 2000s most popular games were versus strategy games
- Analogue games from both years 2000 and 2021 both share their inspiration from films and media following popularity, for example in the year 2000 "The Lord of the Rings" board-game is inspired from the book written by J. R. R. Tolkien and the subsequent film adaptations. In 2021 the "Bloodborne" board-game is inspired from the role-playing video game Bloodborne

Influences for my project

Exploring the different genres of analogue games from past and present, has helped me build on my initial thoughts for creating an analogue game and allowed me to confirm the style and genre I want my game to have.

As it stands, I want my games genre to be a Race to the End/Co-Op game where players have the choice to aid or betray one another. This game will use a high element of luck with rolling dice and random in-game events being present.

Week 3 – Tabletop Gameplay Structures - October 19, 2021

This week we have been looking at taxonomy of tabletop gameplay structures in analogue games. We have learnt more about how different types of games can be played and why players like/dislike them.

First Impressions:

Competitive Games: These games require 2 or more players and have a single winner for the game to be completed.

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategy required and forward thinking needed to win The use of tournaments to help balance these games and enjoy playability Visible finish lines in-games can make a clear-cut objective that all players can see and understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiebreak situations can be quite annoying as shared victories or inconclusive results, leave players at a loss Having unclear rules can cause argument and conflict amongst players, particularly with a competitive game Having to store information for a board-game can be confusing and often information can be missed or noted incorrectly
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snakes and Ladders is a big inspiration for my game, as its simple mechanics and visible end line (Race to the end style) is something I wish to incorporate into my game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chess is another game which interests me as the variation and choice of gameplay allows players to use countless strategies to better their opponent and lead them to checkmate. I want to have high variations of game play in my game with chance encounter squares, which could help players or put them at a disadvantage

Cooperative Games: These games require players to co-ordinate to reach a win condition, all players will lose or win the game together.

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working as a team with friends to reach a common goal Experienced players can coach/help new players who may be uncertain on rules стратегии This style of game is very immersive, and players can get really into creating new strategies and ideas to beat the game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Losing the game, may dampen moral for the team and may deter them from playing again If the skill level is too high and players can't win, the game will essentially be useless Arguments amongst the team can break out, if one player wastes their go or uses a different strategy to the teams
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic interests me due to the players unique roles which are assigned at the start of the game. It makes players feel more important as they specialise in one aspect of the game and other players will in-turn rely on them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arkham Horror immersive gameplay inspires me, with its character upgrades and this race to defeat the enemy objective. I want my game to feel immersive and fast paced when playing.

Team Based Games: Teams of players must compete to achieve victory, team sizing often ranges from 2v2, 2v2v2 or 2v4.

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication and teamwork inside teams to create new strategies Secretly assigning players to teams/roles creates this player tension between players Betrayal in games which lead to players having to figure out who the traitor is before being eliminated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player roles can sometimes be overly complicative and difficult for new players to learn If teams are made by players, it can lead to an unfair advantage as some players are more skilled than others
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Werewolf has an interesting gameplay mechanic in which the roles given are kept secret only the Werewolf's know who one another is. This builds on trusting and suspecting other players in-game making the stakes higher and more fun, as villagers are forced to vote on a suspect in a time limited game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk is one of my favourite board-games, as its use of temporary alliances between players allows clever strategies as players can start/break an alliance when their goal is achieved. For example, when gaining a territory, a player could pretend to work with another, and then betray them when the time is right

Solo Games: A game mode intended for play by a single player

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on beating the AI/Game and requires consistent strategies, with little margin for error 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solo games can feel boring playing against AI instead of human players. You don't receive feedback on your moves or actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal requires you to beat a previous score, improving on your last game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once you've beaten the game once you know how the AI will react/play and may get bored
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AI can't observe the game's rules like the player, so it will sometimes make obvious moves 	
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Single Loser Games: A game with 3 or more players which ends with only one loser

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players only incentive is to do better than one player 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once one player has fallen behind, they can be targeted, with little room for recovery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple winners make it competitive and fun with everyone having the chance to win at some point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The loser may feel left out, as other players have completed an objective, they couldn't
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenga growing up playing this game, I've also enjoyed the pressure presented to players when the game rotates to their go. The precision required when moving blocks also makes this game more skill based over luck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Traitor Games: A team or cooperative game which uses a betrayal mechanic

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty towards other players' words/actions in game due to betrayal mechanics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traitors can be outed very early into the game by pure chance, ending the game way too quickly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hidden identities and roles randomly allocated at the start of play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New players may struggle with wording their questions, without giving away their role/objective
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Werewolf, discussed above in team-based games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk, discussed above in team-based games

Scenario/Mission/Campaign Games: Games with variable conditions that can be assembled into a broader narrative., or a set of entirely disconnected ones

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Base rules of the game can be applied to new maps, monster types, quests making the game have limitless potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This type of game can be very complicated and difficult to learn the core rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual content can be played whilst only needing to learn the base rules once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often a long playtime, players need to set out a sizable amount of time to play this style of game
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player's characters/pieces can gradually grow stronger and be upgraded as the game progresses 	
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ticket to Ride, this game's use of strategy is interesting to me, as players are limited to choosing to draw cards, claim a route or get destination tickets per go. This limited choice adds a competitive element to the game whereby players will fight for ideal railway routes attempting to gain the highest score 	

Score and Reset Games: A game that continues until a stopping condition is met

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very fast paced style of game, with a quick turnaround 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These games often require a large gameboard or multiple components for play
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive/Party game, players are often forced to face one another 	
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None

Legacy Games: A multisession game that continues over all sessions

Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions feel important for each individual player as the slightest choice could benefit them for the next session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to playtest/balance as gameplay carries over from each session
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New content can be unlocked after completing the game, prompting players to play another game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be stressful as players need to be cautious of their actions as they will affect not only the current session but all future sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entirely dynamic gameplay can be seen in each session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes very long/multiple sessions to complete the entire game
Interests/Inspiration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SeaFall this game's use of evolving narrative structure is interesting to me as the players feel fully immersed, knowing that their actions can completely change the course/speed of the story 	

Challenges

The main challenges I see currently for my analogue game (Race to the End style game) are as followed:

- Creating a balanced game-board will be my biggest challenge, due to the nature of the game I plan to create (Race to the end)
- Making balanced random event tiles, which could help any player being in first or last
- A concise rule set with enough complexity to be interesting, but also easy to pick up for new players

Week 4 – Pitching for games - October 25, 2021

Working Title: Ascent

- Ascent
- Downfall

High Concept Tagline:

Competing against 2-4 players, you must reach the summit of this unclaimed mountain and plant your flag to claim victory. Be wary of your dangerous competitors they'd do anything to win...

Genre:

- Race to the end game
- Party game
- Casual
- Luck based

Theme:

- Race
- Climbing
- Betrayal
- Snowy Mountain

Gameplay:

- Player's must roll 2 dice to move their 2 characters
- Player's must compete to reach the top of the mountain, and score high when reaching the top to plant their flag and secure victory
- Moving from side-to-side players move up floors, similar to snakes and ladders and must reach the top of the game board

Features:

- Each player controls 2 characters and must roll 2 dice and choose which dice score to use for each players movement for example: If dice 1, scores 2 the player could either move player 1 or player 2 that number of steps and the same goes for dice 2
- Landing on the same square as competing players allows you to choose to send them back a set number of spaces, or alternatively move forward a set number of places with them
- Landing on the same square as your other character allows you to roll again to send one character up a floor if the required roll requirement is met

- Random event blocks will be present on the board, when a player lands on one of these they must draw a card which will trigger an event which will aid them or put them at a disadvantage
- Unstable bridges will be present on the gameboard landing on these will cause you to fall down a level, players can use these to send opposition down a floor

Target Audience:

- Family
- Party
- Young Adults

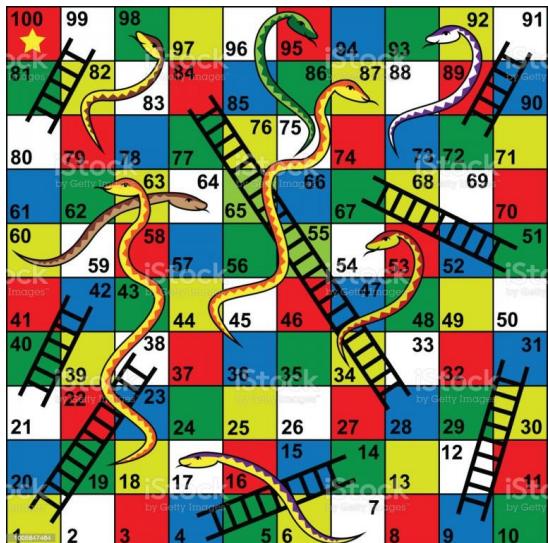
Competitive Analysis:

I'm aware of non-analogue party games, similar to what I want to create, made by Nintendo for example.

- Mario Party
- Wii Party (Board Game Island)

The style they use is something I want to create myself, however their games are not analogue therefore it differs making my game much more affordable for my target audience. As many people don't own a Nintendo device that's required to play both games.

The game Snakes and Ladders is a big competition as the game's main inspiration comes from this title. My additional functionality and addition of playable characters should make my game more appealing to players and hopefully catch my target audience as a fun fast paced game.



Game Summary: 2-4 players must race to the top of the game board, using luck-based dice rolls to move their characters, random event tiles and choice encounters with foes. The first player to reach the top of the mountain (gameboard) and plant their flag wins.

Week 5 – Rules and Actions - November 1, 2021

This week we have been learning about the different rules and actions shown in different types of analogue games and how they can improve our game design.

Task

Following this week's task, my chosen digital game to convert to a physical format is **Hades**.

"Hades is a roguelike action dungeon crawler video game. Players control Zagreus, the son of Hades, as he attempts to escape from the Underworld to reach Mount Olympus, at times aided by gifts bestowed on him from the other Olympians."

Steam Link: <https://store.steampowered.com/app/1145360/Hades/>



Base Premise:

The game would be a single player, beat the board style game. Players would start the game by choosing one of 6 weapons at the start (Stygian Blade, Eternal Spear, Shield of chaos, Heart seeking bow, Twin Fists of malphon, Adamant rail).

Each weapon contains different stats/abilities which bolster the players chance of survival, all containing a base damage stat. Players enter one chamber at a time. They first must choose their move option (Attack, Special, Cast, Dash, Call) and roll a dice to dictate the damage multiplier they inflict on enemies.

Once a chamber has been cleared, players draw a card which dictates which God offers them a blessing, they can then choose their specific blessing which will improve their Character/Weapons abilities.

Players must beat the game by reaching the final chamber, where they will fight the final boss, Hades.

Tabletop structure

I think if Hades was developed into an analogue game, the structure would be heavily Tech trees, as players will progressively grow more powerful as they venture further into the game receiving more blessings and encountering stronger foes.

How are player actions translated?

Player actions are chosen on a turn basis upon entering a chamber. The player must first choose their move (Attack, Special, Cast, Dash, Call) and roll some dice to improve their moves potency acting as a multiplier effect. After playing their go, the game's AI will attack the player. This will continue until a chamber is cleared or the player is defeated.

Strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Players can create limitless builds and variations per run. Allowing them to experiment with fun new builds	Once the game has been beaten once, players will know a consistent play-style to boost their chances of winning
The game can be played within the space of an hour. Allowing players to have quick games	The game is based heavily on luck and on Gods blessings which may deter players
Players have free choice of their actions per turn which allows them to invest heavily into specific skillsets/attacks	The gameplay may feel slow to players using cards when compared to the original digital version

Target market differences:

Using some online resources, I researched the target market for the digital game Hades [Online Resource] Available at: <<https://adttargeting.io/facebook-ad-targeting/hades>>

This helped me distinguish part of the target audience for the digital game.

Target Market	
Analogue	Digital (Original Version)
High target audience of young adults and children	Majority of players aged between 18-24 (Young Adults)
Similar games show a target audience relatively balanced with slightly more male players	Audience is balanced targeting both male and female gamers
Appeals to fantasy style gamers	Appeals to fantasy and shooter style gamers

Week 6 – Video Pitch - November 8, 2021

Following this week, I have prepared a video pitch/presentation for my analogue game 'Ascent'. Below is my video presentation and game premise information.

Video

Target Audience

The game's target audience is centred around young adults and families due to its simple and fast-paced play-style. The game's imagery and chance cards will reflect this being appropriate for players of all ages.



Game Premise

Ascent is a multiplayer race to the end style game. The person to play first will be chosen by all players rolling dice and the player with the highest roll plays first. The order then works clockwise around the group of players.

When a player starts their go, they will roll 2 dice. The player will then view the dice roll values individually giving one to each of their characters, for example if dice 1 equals 3 the player can move character 1 or 2 a total of 3 tiles, leaving the dice 2 value to the other character.

Multiple interactions can occur between players and characters.

Interaction between – A Player's two characters: When landing on the same square as another one of your characters, a player can roll again a single dice. If the dice lands on even they can move one of their characters directly up to the next floor.

Interaction between – Two different players characters: When landing on the same square as an opponent, the player who is actively playing can choose to aid or betray that character:

- Aiding a character allows your character and the opponents character to move forward a set number of tiles together
- Betraying a character allows you to send the opponents character back a set amount of tiles

The gameboard contains multiple random event tiles and unstable bridges:

- When landing on a **random event tile**, players are forced to draw an event card. These cards will drastically change the flow of the game, by helping or attacking players at random, try your luck and hope for best

- When landing on an **unstable bridge** players will be knocked down a floor losing precious time in this pursuit for fame to conquer this mountain. Players can send enemy characters into these dangerous regions during character interactions

To win the game, a player must reach the top of the gameboard (Mountain) and roll high when landing on the final tile to secure their flag and ensure their victory.

Week 7 – Playtesting - November 15, 2021

This week we have been looking at different play-testing methods and how we can collect quantitative and qualitative feedback for our analogue games.

Exploding Kittens – Example

This week using the Feedback form V.2 provided in the lecture, I have completed a feedback form for the game “Exploding Kittens” rulebook, shown below. The rulebook for “Exploding Kittens” is attached in this thread as well.

PLAYTESTING FEEDBACK FORM GAME: Exploding Kittens																																																																																																																																																																												
<p>Directions: Circle the corresponding number boxes for each category that you feel is appropriate. 1 is the worst, while 7 is the best. Write additional notes on the right-hand side relating to your scores or about the game as a general. At the bottom of the sheet is a space to write about what you feel is the strongest element of the game, the weakest element of the game, and one thing you would change if given the chance.</p>																																																																																																																																																																												
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<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Clarity</td> <td colspan="3">Very cumbersome to understand what is going on in the game. Rules are unclear and difficult to understand.</td> <td colspan="3">Somewhat cumbersome to understand what is going on in the game. Rules are clear and easy to understand.</td> <td colspan="2">Very streamlined layout that makes it easy to understand what is going on in all areas of the game. Very clear and unambiguous.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="8" style="text-align: center;"> <small>Circle one and describe your feelings about the game and mechanics. Use of imagery will reinforce the player's understanding of the rules.</small> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="8" style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="8"> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Flow</td> <td colspan="3">Lots of unnecessary steps and mechanics that add to play time but don't contribute to the game except for the rules. Needs streamlining!</td> <td colspan="3">Several unnecessary steps and mechanics that add to play time but don't contribute to the game.</td> <td colspan="2">Few unnecessary steps and mechanics that add to play time but don't contribute to the game. The flow was streamlined.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="8" style="text-align: center;"> <small>Imagery can be a bit overwhelming as lots of cards are all explained at once, overwhelming the player.</small> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="8" style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="8"> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Balance</td> <td colspan="3">Very imbalanced or completely broken. Rules are too much like a puzzle or too much like a game.</td> <td colspan="3">More balanced than imbalanced, but there are still some mechanics that aren't balanced. Some components or mechanics are too heavy handed.</td> <td colspan="2">More balanced than the previous category. Some mechanics that aren't balanced are more appropriate. 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Flow	Lots of unnecessary steps and mechanics that add to play time but don't contribute to the game except for the rules. Needs streamlining!			Several unnecessary steps and mechanics that add to play time but don't contribute to the game.			Few unnecessary steps and mechanics that add to play time but don't contribute to the game. The flow was streamlined.																																																																																																																																																																					
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Using the Exploding Kittens rulebook has given me inspiration for creating a template for my own game, so that when play-testing I can get precise feedback from all players.

Custom Playtest Form

Following this week’s tasks, I have created a playtesting feedback form for my analogue game “Ascent”. The feedback form will contain both quantitative and qualitative feedback for players to input. The form will also have a before play and after play input section for players. My first playtest form iteration is shown below.

Iteration 1:

Ascent - Feedback

Feedback form for playtesting session of the board-game ascent

✉ (not shared) Switch account

* Required

To complete before the game

Date
Date
15/11/2021

Do you think you'll enjoy this style of game? *

Yes
 No

Is this your first time playing? *

Yes
 No

To complete after playing the game

Did you enjoy playing this game? *

1 2 3 4 5

Did you enjoy playing this game? *

1 2 3 4 5
No, not for me Yeah definitely!

Would you play this game again sometime? *

1 2 3 4 5
No, not for me Yeah definitely?

What did you like most about the game? *

The combat sys
sddff

What didn't you like about the game? *

Everything

Was the rulebook clear and explain the game effectively? *

Yes
 No

Were there any rules which were unclear? *

Your answer

Is there anything in the game, what you think could be changed or improved? (Be brutal the forms anonymous) *

Your answer

About you

What is your favourite style of board-game? (Select multiple if applicable) *

- Competitive Games
- Cooperative Games
- Team Based Games
- Solo Games
- Single Loser Games
- Traitor Games
- Scenario Games
- Score and Reset Games
- Legacy Games

What is your least favourite style of board-game? (Select multiple if applicable)

- Competitive Games
- Cooperative Games
- Team Based Games
- Solo Games
- Single Loser Games
- Traitor Games
- Scenario Games
- Score and Reset Games
- Legacy Games

How often do you play card or board-games? *

1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Everyday

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Google Forms

Week 8 – Turn Orders & End Conditions - November 22, 2021

This week we have been learning about turn orders, meta-mechanisms and end conditions, and how different types can be implemented into our analogue game.

Task 1: Analyzing Turn Orders

Fixed Turn Order: The turn order is set at the start of the game. The order will never vary as players will take turns in sequential order until the game ends.

Order Type: Fixed Turn Order	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequential turn order for player's making play easy to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players with the start turn of the round have the advantage of going first and collecting items/challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players may have their final turn before other players, allowing later players to update their strategy in order to win 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An unequal number of turns may be presented to players if, one of the starting players reaches/completes the end object on their go

Stat Turn Order: The turn order is set each round, set by a statistic such as the player's resources or position in game.

Order Type: Stat Turn Order	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This style offers a well-rounded balance helping players who are far behind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can manipulate the turn order by intentionally playing poorly one go to gain the first play next round
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows dynamic gameplay and a greater sense of competition as everyone has a closer score/position 	-

Real-Time: There are no turns, players must play as quickly as possible until the game or current phase has been completed.

Order Type: Real-Time	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very excited to play, as everyone is frantically making moves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complexity needs to be very simple in-order to reduce player confusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick style of game for player's with limited time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing issues can occur, as players may try playing action cards at the same time causing arguments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The games heavily competitive making it interesting and enjoyable for everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to watch for cheating and mistakes in-game as players can't focus on everyone's plays

Simultaneous Action Selection: Players plan their turns simultaneously in secret, they then all reveal their turn/plans at once

Order Type: Simultaneous Action Selection	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires player's to think outside the box on how to counter their opponents to gain the best outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some player's could take too long making their decision, faulting the flow of the game
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The turn order is very fast as all players are playing at once then an outcome is read from their actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small element of luck involved as players can't directly stop any action without guessing what their opponent will play

Random Turn Order: Representatives of play, game pieces or players are randomized, one is drawn at a time and that denoted player can then take their turn.

Order Type: Random Turn Order	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers players lots of tension and unpredictability due to the turn order style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often not much strategy is needed as players will leave it to chance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players have limited planning and will need to effectively adapt each turn to deal with other players 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to balance this style of game as everything's left to chance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chance cards can be saved and used at the perfect time with the unpredictable order 	-

Time Track: There is a linear time track with many spaces on, a player's marker is on the track, indicating where they are in time.

Order Type: Time-Track	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good clarity and dynamic turn order which is easy to understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players may feel left out as long cooldowns may mean they miss multiple goes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players have strong control over who goes next allowing tactical play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game time is often very short when considering the complexity implemented by the designer

Task 2: Analysing Meta-Mechanics

Interleaved Phases: All players perform the first phase, then all perform the second phase and so on.

Meta Mechanism: Interleaved Phase	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All players play at once, making it easier to plan strategies for the next phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gameplay can be slower, as players can't immediately threaten other players in-game
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small turnover time between each players actions in-game 	-

Sequential Phases: Each player performs all phases before moving on to the next player, who then performs all their phases.

Meta Mechanism: Sequential Phase	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gameplay feels more immersive due to players option to play multiple moves at once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can have big gaps between play as players need to decide multiple actions all at once

Lose a turn: Players who “Lose a turn” must skip their next turn and wait for the following turn/round to play.

Meta Mechanism: Lose a turn	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can use this to strategise and delay their opponents so that they can reach a goal or objective first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be frustrating missing consecutive turns in a game
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can intentionally miss a go to strategise play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interrupts the flow of the game for certain players

Interrupts: Player's can take actions that interrupt the normal flow of the game.

Meta Mechanism: Interrupts	
Likes	Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players are more engaged knowing that they can directly impact other players 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can't make secure plans as there's always the possibility of being undermined by other players
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows better strategies as players can hold these cards for the right moment 	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty and chaos are added leaving all players a chance to win 	-

Task 3: End Conditions – Project Update

The core end condition, I plan to use in my project is **Race**. The first player to reach the end tile and score high will win my analogue game.

Researching other types of end conditions has helped solidify my pre-existing ideas for my game, as having things such as a fixed number of turns, resources or an elapsed time would all be irrelevant for the game I'm creating. The only other type of end condition I see being feasible would-be player eliminations, as this could fit into my games pitfalls and work closely with my theme. Having 2 characters as well would mean players aren't immediately eliminated.

The Race end condition forces players to be competitive and alert throughout the game, as the end is in sight, players know and can see a clear goal to achieve. Having this will allow my game to have high chaos/chance events making the game dynamic.

As it stands, I believe my end condition of **Race** to be suitable for my analogue game, as it fits the theme of my game.

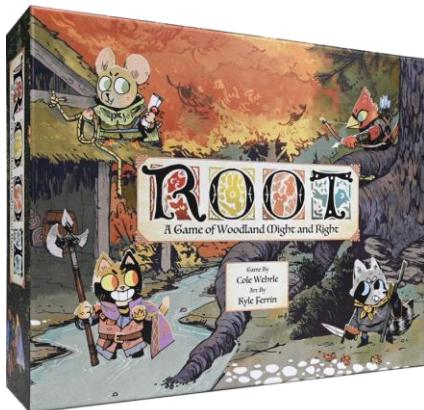
Week 9 – Assets and Art - November 30, 2021

This week, we have been looking at different assets and art styles for our analogue game and how colours can be used to provoke emotions.

Task 1 – Find a board-game of choice and discuss the asset/art style

Board-game: Root

Root is a game of adventure and war in which 2 to 4 players battle for control of a vast wilderness. Each player has unique skills and a different victory condition

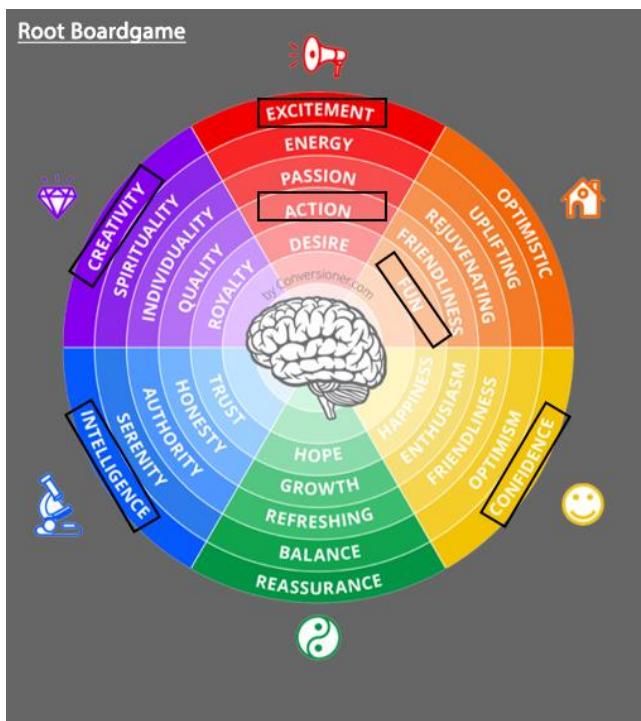


What emotions are they trying to make the player feel according to the image on the first colour theory slide?

The core emotions the game creators are expressing to players are:

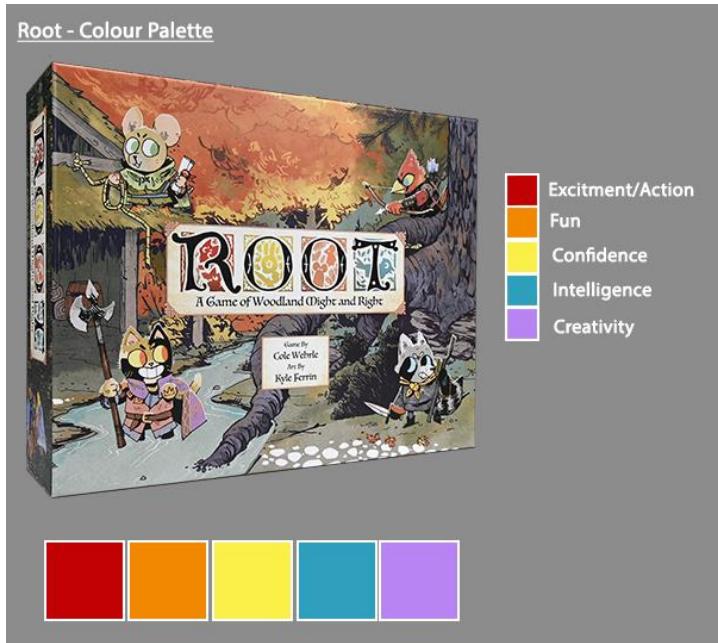
- Excitement
- Action
- Confidence
- Intelligence
- Fun
- Creativity

The game **Root's** display box uses light playful colours on it, showing that the game can be played casually for fun with all characters having unique skills displayed via their character designs/colours.



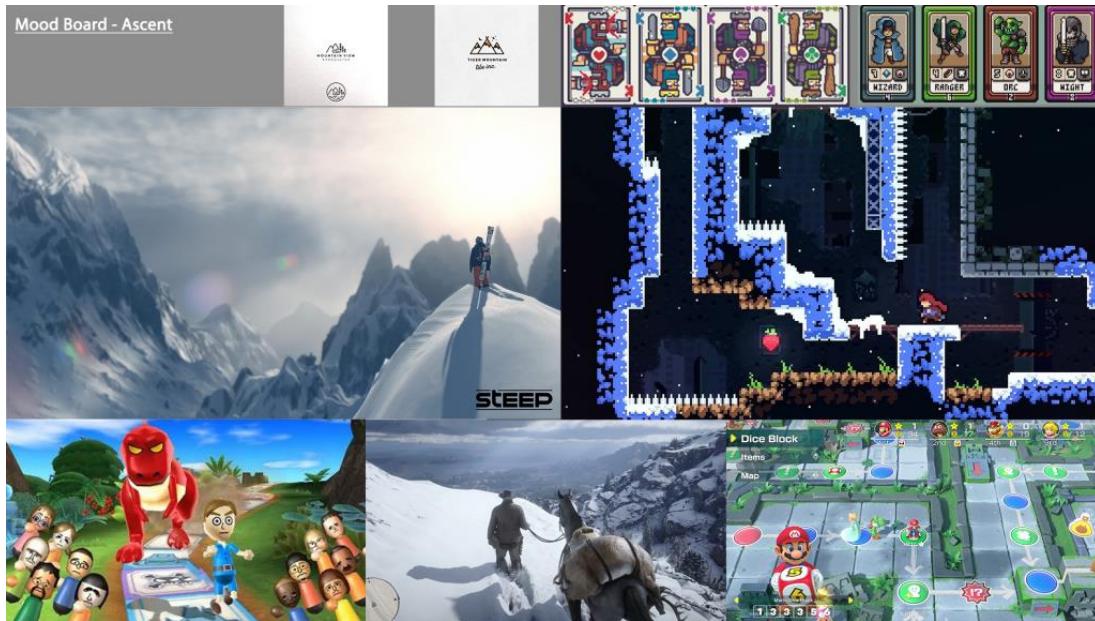
What colour relationship have they used?

Root uses a tertiary colour relationship, incorporating a balance of colours to showcase the game's variety.



Task 2 – Create a mood board

I have designed a mood board to help visualize the colours and art style I want portrayed in my board-game. I want the game board for my game 'Ascent' to be very colourful and direct with the player's goal.



Rough Logo Sketch

Using some online resources and photoshop, I have created a basic/early-stage development logo for my game Ascent.

Mountain Shape Vector Image: https://all-free-download.com/free-vector/mountain-shape.html#google_vignette



Week 10 – Project Update - December 6, 2021

This week, following my feedback I've started to draft my detailed rulebook for my board-game 'Ascent'. To start this, I revised my rules created from my week 6 pitch video and slightly altered my end condition. Using photoshop, I then altered these rules again and added some graphical images to make the rulebook neater.

Ascent Rulebook

Iteration 1

Recommended for ages 10+

2 to 4 players

Contents: 1 gameboard, 2 (6 sided) dice, 8 player tokens, (WIP, 50) event cards

How to play?

In Ascent your goal is simple, you must climb and climb fast.

Each player is equipped with 2-character tokens and must race against other players to reach the top of the gameboard.

Once you've crushed the opposition by reaching the top, you must roll two odd values to plant your flag and secure your victory.

Setup

How do we set up the board?

Rest assured setting up the boards relatively simple...

Start by first laying out the gameboard on a flat surface (we don't want anyone flipping the board now).

Then collect all the event cards and give them a good shuffle, some chance can help anyone or maybe doom them to lose. Place the event cards face down in the centre of the board with the mark 'Events'.

Now, allow every player to pick their character colour and grab their 2-character tokens. All players then need to place these character tokens on the starting tile labelled base camp

Finally finish it off, by grabbing the two dice from the game-box and place them anywhere on the board, ready for the first play.

Turn order??

You may be wondering...who goes first?

At the start of the game, each player will roll a dice, the player with the highest roll will play first.

The turn order will follow clockwise round through the rest of the players looping back to the first player.

Taking your turn?

What should I do now it's my go?

Don't worry, taking your turns easy!!

Start your go by grabbing the 2 dice and rolling them. Simple right?

Once you've rolled, you'll have two individual dice values, assign a value to each of your characters and move them that set number of spaces.

Still unsure? Be like Dave

If Dave plays and rolls both dice, being a pro, he gets a '2' on one dice and a '5' on the other dice.

He then decides to move his first character token a total of 2 spaces.

Dave's then left to move his second character token a total of 5 spaces.

Hey one of my characters has reached the end tile how should I roll?

If one of your characters is sat on the end tile, you can only roll one dice until your other character reaches that tile. Once both characters are positioned on the end tile, you can beat the games end condition.

What if I land on the same square as another player or my other character token?

I thought you'd never ask!

Landing on the same square as your other characters is amazing, using your teammate you can roll again.

Scoring an even value on both dice rolls will allow you to move one character up to the next floor. If you fail rest assured, you'll remain where you are.

What about other players?

A friend or foe? Landing on the same square as an opposing player can cause competitive conflict. But don't worry we've resolved this problem!

When landing on the same square as an opposing player choose to aid or betray them. Fun right?

Aiding another player, allows both you and the opposing player to move forwards a total of 4 spaces.

Betraying another player, allows you to move their character back a total of 2 squares down the mountain.

Special Events

What are these weird looking tiles?

Event Cards

Landing on an event tile, can cause anything to happen. To start you'll need to draw an event card from the centre of the board.

Read the rule condition and apply the changes in game...this can help or destroy anyone be careful going near these tiles as chance can change everything.

Pitfalls

Bad luck, right? Landing on a pitfall tile instantly sends your character token down a floor to their doom!

Rest assured you'll continue to play as normal on your next go...unless of course you've been hit by a bad event card from another player.

Ending the game

I'm bored I want to finish this game.

Don't worry this games fast paced! Once a player has reached the top of the game-board with both tokens, they must roll two odd dice values at once to plant their flag.

Once one player has rolled two odds, beating the games clear conditions. They gain the title of Champion, ending the game and finishing the competition.

One more thing...

You'll want to keep your character tokens close together to take advantage of landing on the same square. Doing this will allow you to get both characters to the top of the gameboard as soon as possible.

Iteration 2

ASCENT RULEBOOK

CREATED BY JAKE ROSE
GAME INTENDED FOR 2-4 PLAYERS

BOX CONTENTS

- 1x Game-board
- 1x (6 Sided) Dice
- 1x Player Tokens
- 1x0 Event Cards



Race to the top!
Making friend or foe
lay claim to what's yours



RECOMMENDED
10+

HOW TO PLAY?

The goal is simple, you must climb and climb fast! Be the fastest to reach the top of the gameboard with both characters and roll two odd dice, to plant your flag and secure victory against others.



HOW DO WE SETUP THE GAME?

1. First let's lay out the gameboard on a flat surface (We don't want anyone flipping the board now).
2. Collect all the event cards and give them a good shuffle.
3. Place the event cards face down in the centre of the board on the tile marked 'Events'.
4. Finally, everyone pick your colour and grab your two corresponding characters. Place all characters within their base camps.



WHO GOES FIRST?

1. At the start of a game, each player will roll a dice. The player with the highest roll will play first.
2. The turn order will follow clockwise through the rest of the players looping back to the first player and repeating.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE MY TURN?

1. Start your go by grabbing the 2 dice and rolling them. Simple right?
2. Once you've rolled, you'll have two individual dice values, assign a value to each of your characters
3. Move both character the set number of tiles assigned by the assigned dice value rolled.

EXAMPLE TURN

1. Dave grabs two dice and rolls them
2. Dave scores a '2' and a '5'
3. Dave assigns character 1 a score of '2'
4. Dave assigns character 2 a score of '5'
5. Dave moves character 1 a total of 2 tiles
6. Dave moves character 2 a total of 5 tiles

1

2

Week 11 – Preparing for how to play video - December 17, 2021

To begin development for my analogue games how to play video I created a rough template for my board components.

Game-Board

Firstly, I started by creating my game-board. Using photoshop, I made a canvas with game board dimensions. Then I created a 10 by 10 grid to make a total of 100 tiles. Created like **snakes and ladders** (discussed in earlier posts). In the future the gameboard will be laid out differently but for prototyping purposes it'll be shown as this. Once the board was laid out, I added my Start, Finish, Event tiles and pitfalls

Game-Board Iteration 1:

HEY ONE OF MY CHARACTERS HAS REACHED THE END

TILE HOW SHOULD I ROLL?

If one of your characters is sat on the end tile, you can only roll one dice until your other character reaches that tile. Once both characters are positioned on the end tile, you can beat the games end condition.



WHAT IF I LAND ON THE SAME SQUARE AS MY OTHER CHARACTER TOKEN?

To think this rule would apply to you, how lucky!

1. First, you'll roll both dice again
2. Scoring an even value on both dice, allows you to send one character up to the next floor (the tile above you)



WHAT ABOUT OTHER PLAYERS?

To start you'll get to choose to make an friend or enemy. That'll be fun. Choose to aid or betray that player and reap the rewards.

1. Choose to aid or betray a player

AID

Both you and the opposing player move forwards together a total of 4 spaces



BETRAY

Send your opponent back 2 spaces and gain a hefty lead



SPECIAL EVENTS

EVENT CARDS

Landing on an event tile, can cause anything to happen. To start you'll need to draw an event card from the centre of the board.

Read the rule condition and apply the changes in game. These cards can massively impact the game, so be wary when near these tiles.

PITFALLS

Bad luck, right?

Landing on a pitfall tile instantly sends your character directly down a floor to their doom!

Rest assured you'll continue to play as normal on your next go



ENDING THE GAME

Don't worry this game fast paced! Once a player has reached the top of the game-board with both character tokens.

They must roll both dice and score 2 odd values, to beat the games clear condition. Don't worry if you don't get this the first time, just keep trying each go!



ONE MORE THING...

You'll want to keep your character tokens close together to take advantage of landing on the same square. Doing this will allow you to get both characters to the top of the gameboard as soon as possible.

100 FINISH	99 PITFALL	98 PITFALL	97	96	95	94	93	92	91 EVENT
81	82	83	84 EVENT	85	86 PITFALL	87	88	89	90
80	79	78 PITFALL	77	76	75	74 EVENT	73	72	71
61	62 EVENT	63	64	65 PITFALL	66	67	68	69	70
60 EVENT	59	58	57	56	55	54	53	52 PITFALL	51
41	42	43	44 PITFALL	45	46 EVENT	47	48	49	50
40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33 EVENT	32	31
21	22	23 EVENT	24	25	26	27	28	29	30 PITFALL
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12 EVENT	11
1 START	2	3	4	5 EVENT	6	7	8	9	10

Event Cards

With my game-board ready to use, I started creating a event card template to use for all event cards. I started this by looking at styles of cards I liked and created a mood board.



After completing a mood-board specifically for my board-games event cards, I realised what I wanted. I wanted a simple art style on the cards showcasing the event, with a small amount of text below to explain the actions quickly.

To start I separated the events into categories for players:

Then I designed the cards for each category.

- Chance (Can impact any player positively)
- Mischief (Allows one player to impact another player)
- Disaster (Can impact any player negatively)
- Bad Luck (Impacts the player who draws the card negatively)

The cards below show each event category, with a sample event. In my actual game there will likely be 10+ cards for each category with different effects each.



Week 12 – How to play video - January 3, 2022

This week, I've created a simple 'how to play' video for my board-game Ascent. Currently the video has been done via PowerPoint as the game pieces and game-board are all a work in progress.

In the future I will most likely record myself and other people playing the game to properly demonstrate all the rules and how to play.

Research

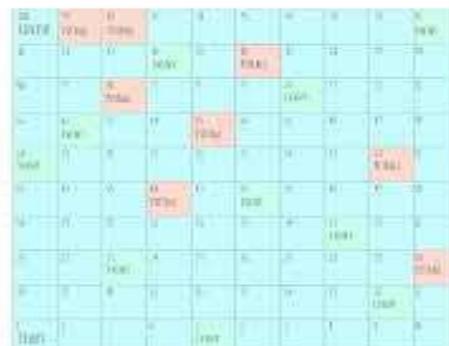
Looking at other 'How to Play' videos from other board-games helped me to plan how I wanted to communicate the rules and play my own game. Personally, I really liked the style of the wikiHow YouTube channels demonstration of the game using simple imagery and animations.



How to play video



When it reaches your go roll 2 dice



Semester 2

Week 1 – Playtesting Feedback & Research - January 31, 2022

This week preparing for the play-testing session. I've created some new event cards to be used within my board-game.

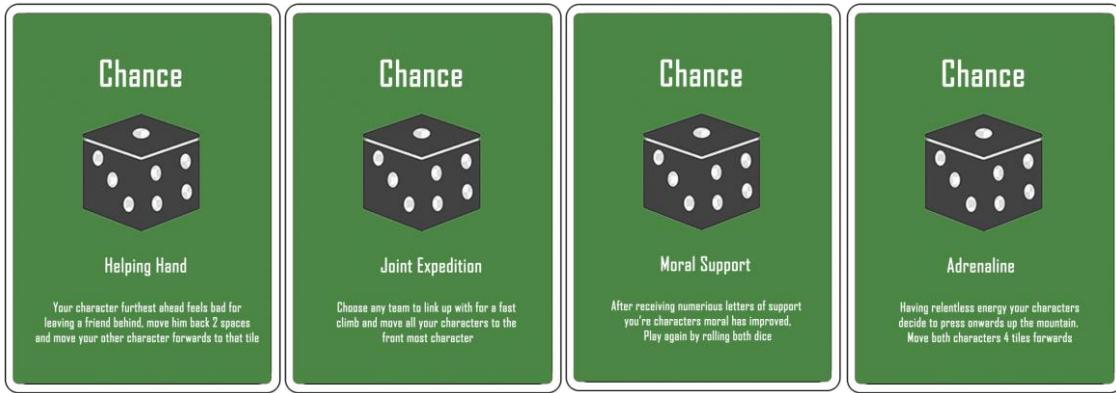
To do this, I started out by looking at my 4 category types for my event cards I created in Week 11. After I created a table in Excel to separate each card's category type. Then I noted down potential new cards to add in each category and decided which cards to add and implement into my board-game.

In the future I plan to have around 40 cards, for now though I've created just enough for the play-testing session.

Event Cards				
	Chance	Mischief	Disaster	Bad Luck
Card Title:	Helping Hand	Misdirection	Rescue Mission	Pitfall
Card Details:	Your character furthest ahead feels bad for leaving a friend behind, move him back 2 spaces and move your other character forwards to that tile	Move a sign post on the mountain, causing the next team behind your leading character to get lost forcing them to move both characters 2 tiles back	Another climbing group has taken an injury yourself and the leading team are tasked in aiding them. Both teams must move all characters back 6 spaces.	Your character furthest behind has fallen into an ice crevice. Move your character in the lead to their tile to save them.
Card Title:	Joint Expedition	The Chosen One	Wolves	Fatigue
Card Details:	Choose any team to link up with for a fast climb and move all your characters to the front most character	Choose any player and everytime, they play a chance card which helps another team they must pick to aid	Wolves have been sighted on the mountain forcing the two leading teams to miss their next go and wait for the wolves to pass	Your characters have become fatigued from the relentless climbing. Miss your next go
Card Title:	Adrenaline	Sabotage	High Winds	Stumble
Card Details:	Having relentless energy your characters decide to press onwards up the mountain. Move both characters 4 tiles forwards.	Victory is just within reach why not secure it? Sabotage any player by sending one of their characters back 4 tiles	The weather on the mountain has drastically changed adding high winds. All teams must move all characters back a total of 4 tiles.	Accidents can happen any time. Your leading character has taken a fall forcing them to move back 2 tiles.

After sorting additions to my event cards, using my templates from week 11. I created the cards themselves using photoshop and prepared them for testing.





Research

When making my Event Cards I did some research into climbing mountains, to help me understand potential risks and dangers that I could implement into my board game.

The following sites helped me come up with ideas and use real life situations:

- Rock Climbing – Climb Safe [Online Website] Available at: <<https://www.sportscoversdirect.com/scd-blog/rock-climbing-climb-safe-whatever-the-weather/>>
- Interpreting the weather forecast [Online Website] Available at: <<https://info.pyb.co.uk/blog/interpreting-the-weather-forecast-for-rock-climbing>>

Play-testing Session

Following this week's play-testing session. There were multiple issues found with my board-game. During the session I made brief notes and asked for feedback using the feedback forms created from week 7.

Gameplay Issues

Issues

- The game had too many tiles, making play too long taking nearly an hour to complete the game
- There were not enough event cards available to use
- Players were chaining character interactions abusing the gameplay allowing players to drastically move forwards or backwards
- The event cards were confusing to read and were quite long for players
- There were not enough pitfalls and event tiles, the game would be more interesting having higher chance elements.
- The gameboard was too small for 8 characters, players were often getting moved or knocked over due to limited space.
- The Bad Luck event card 'Pitfalls' is essentially a duplicate of the gameboards pitfalls
- The end condition is too much, players first need to get both characters their and then roll two odds
- Players massively clump together at the start of the game, causing constant interactions

Resolve Ideas

In the coming weeks I plan to tackle these issues and improve gameplay, with the following resolves:

- I plan to change the amount of game tiles from 100 (current), to either 50 or 60 game tiles
- As mentioned before the play-testing session I should have around 40 event cards. During the session I only had 8 prepared, therefore this shouldn't cause any future issues.
- I think limiting character interactions to one character at a time and per go would prevent this mass chaining movement. Also having characters only have 1 interaction per turn, to stop people being moved backwards directly onto pitfall tiles.
- Re-working the Event cards to make the text and language used much clearer for players. I might separate the cards into 3 lines [Title, Scenario, Player Action].
- Adding more pitfalls and event tiles onto the gameboard.
- I plan to design a new gameboard with an art style and have it in A3. To prevent any spacing issues.
- Remove the pitfall event card
- From feedback in the session, I've decided to change the end condition to only require you to get both characters to the end tile.
- I'm already planning to re-work the gameboard, when I do, I will add different starting points that link together after so many tiles.

This week following, my initial plans and changes prepared from last week's play-testing session. I've begun work on creating a smaller gameboard prototype. The main issue found last week was that the games' playtime lasted far too long, being around 50-60minutes. Ideally, I want the game to last between 20-30minutes.

Another big change will be with my Event cards. The rules/text used on the cards were confusing for a bunch of players. Therefore, to rectify this I will re-work the ones currently created and shorten the text, making the cards more obvious with their actions.

Game-Board Iteration 2:

The newest iteration of my game-board has had its tile count reduced from 100 tiles to 56 tiles, this should hopefully reduce playtime significantly. Another suggestion from the playtesting session indicated that the game needed more event and pitfall tiles. Therefore, with a smaller board, I've increased the percentage of event and pitfall tiles.

Key Changes:

- Reduced board size
- Increased event and pitfall tile percentage
- Removed Event tiles located on the base floor (originally players could land on an event tile on their first go, which caused issues)

To note, the board will be redesigned with a better art style. Once the correct amount of board tiles and event/pitfall tiles are found.

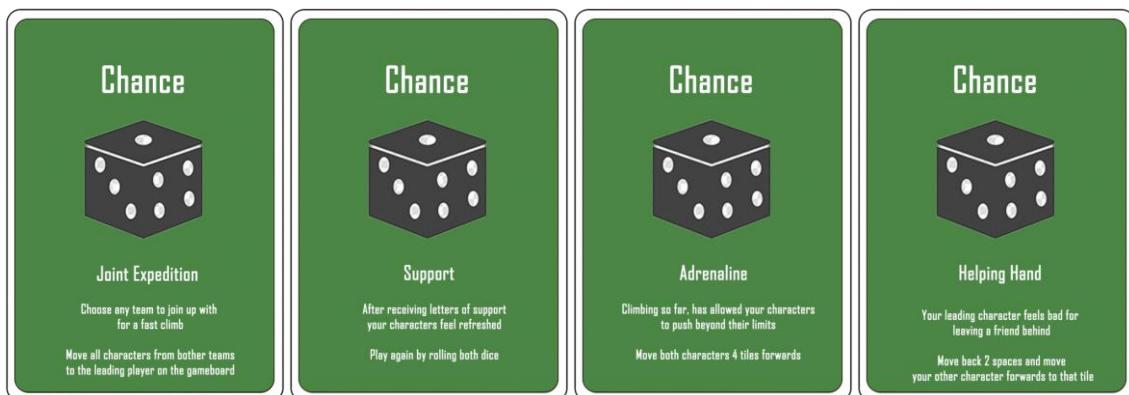
56 FINISH	55 PITFALL	54	53 PITFALL	52 EVENT	51	50	49
48	47	46 EVENT	45	44 PITFALL	43 EVENT	42	41
33 EVENT	34	35 PITFALL	36	37	38	39 PITFALL	40
32	31 PITFALL	30	29 PITFALL	28 EVENT	27	26	25 EVENT
17	18	19 EVENT	20	21	22 PITFALL	23	24
16	15 PITFALL	14	13 EVENT	12	11	10 EVENT	9
1 START	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Event Cards Iteration 2:

I've re-worked my event cards to rectify some errors and confusion caused by them. The biggest issue I noticed with the first iteration of event cards, was that the text was too long and some of the words were difficult to pronounce. Therefore, as discussed last week, I've reduced the amount of text and made it clearer.

Key Changes:

- Remove pitfall event card, as it's confusing having two types of pitfalls (pitfall tiles and a pitfall event card)
- Changed 'The Chosen One' event card. From the play-testing session this card was very confusing for players to understand
- Re-worked all made Event cards to make them clear and easy to read





Week 3 – Movement Controls & Design Iterations - Game Board - February 14, 2022

This week we have learnt about movement controls within analogue games. Analyzing how players traverse a game using only a rulebook.

Research – Describe the movement systems used in analogue games released in the year 2000?

Web of Power:

This game uses Area Movement mechanics, the game-board is a map of Europe which allows players to move and conquer new countries.

Star Wars: The Queen's Gambit:

This game uses Action Point mechanics, having players draw 4 action cards per round of play then these actions are then played out one at a time, with players alternating play per card use.

Blokus:

This game uses Grid movement mechanic, players can place one tile at a time on the corner of any of their adjacent pieces. The goal of the game is to place all your tiles on the board.

The Lord of the Rings:

This game uses Action point mechanics, having players use cards for movement working co-operatively with other players.

River Dragons:

This game uses Action point mechanics, having players select multiple action cards at the start of the game and playing them one at a time per go.

Research - Describe the movement systems used in analogue games released recently?

Oath: Chronicles of Empire & Exile:

This game uses Action point mechanics, players choices in this game impact future games. Players use action points to play aiming to control power or take power.



Happy Little Dinosaurs:

This game uses Action point mechanics, where players randomly pickup cards from the main deck that assign a movement value or events to their/all characters.

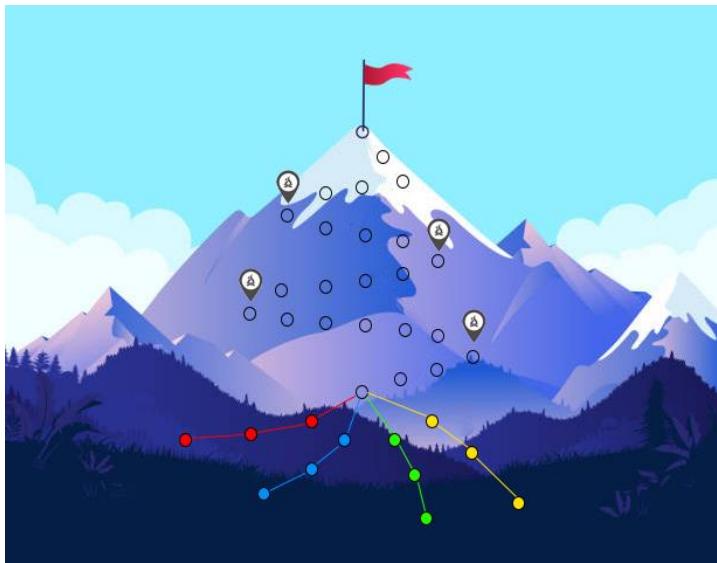


Project Update

This week, I wanted to design a simple game-board. To start with I obtained a mountain image from google images. Then I made some appropriate edits, to keep only the parts I wanted.

After this, I implemented my tiles and game-board route and started on design.

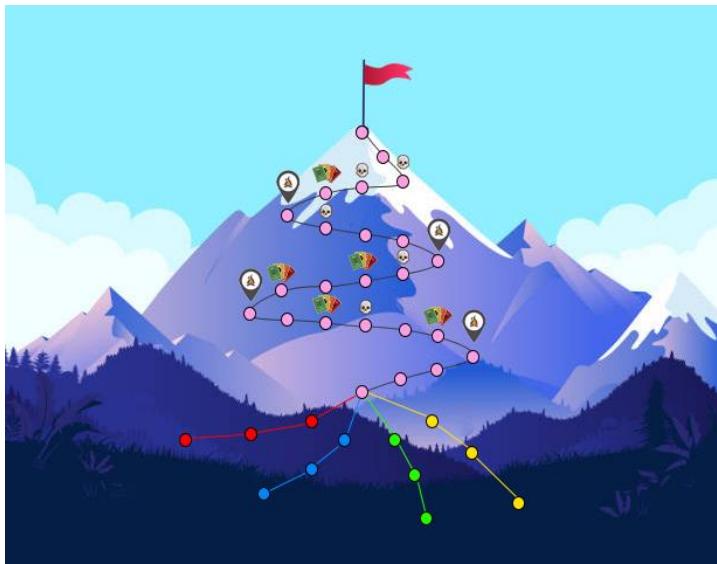
Game-board Iteration 1:



Game-board Iteration 2:



Game-board Iteration 3:



Week 4 – Economies and Auctions - February 21, 2022

This week, we have been learning about economies in-game and how we can control them through various mechanics.

Review different economy & auction types discussing what you like and dislike about them?

Type	Likes	Dislikes
Exchanging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows flexibility when needing certain resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only set exchanges are available in the rules. Players wanting to exchange specific items may not be allowed
Trading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can co-operate with certain players to get better trades Players can team making good trade offers to beat a common enemy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players new to the game may be tricked into poor trades putting them at a disadvantage
Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Static market prices allow players to plan their turn in advance Dynamic market prices can make the game very interesting and forces players to change their strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to balance, if one player finds the most efficient resource
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled income allows a balanced economy system and grants players lots of options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Random resource allocations can be harmful some players may be put off the game instantly if they get unlucky at the start of the game and can't get a foothold
Loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives players the opportunity to grow and manage their own economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some games allow you to finish before repaying your loan
I Cut, You Choose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows players to create complex strategies to beat their opponents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be quite time-consuming if the player cutting the resources takes too long
Upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows players to play their own strategy which will massively differ from other players 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to balance some upgrades may be highly sort after
Open Auction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easier to figure out other players' strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can keep bidding in small increments taking up lots of time
English Auction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidding can be done much quicker, having one set person reading the values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidding prices are drastically go up if there's lots of interest for the item
Sealed-Bid Auction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players have greater secrecy being able to hide their intentions until winning the bid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harder to gauge the value of an item, having only the auctioneer's initial value being known to you
Constrained Bidding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidding is more balanced with gradual incremental growth in price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidding may be slow if there's lots of interest for a set item
Reverse Auction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players can bid high to ensure they don't get a set lot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even if you pay heavy not to have the lot. Another player will receive it and gain your bid money

Does your analogue game implement these mechanics?

My analogue game does not implement any of these mechanics, due to it being a race to the end luck-based game. The game does not have an economy or auction system.

Could you implement a different approach? How might this affect the gameplay?

An economy system could be interesting for my game. Forcing players to gain 'Expedition Funds' that are required to move. These funds could also manage character needs such as Food, Water, Energy. Having players keep their teams in good form to move more efficiently.

Play-Testing Session

This week, I spent some time play-testing another board-game 'Colonial Rush'. Playing this game has helped me understand different control movements with the game using Action Point mechanics for play. The game's use of an economy system has also shown me the layers of detail required when having scarce resources and how players are required to manage them.

Project Update

This week, I've decided to work on designing the rest of my Event cards. I'm happy with the base ones I've iterated upon shown in previous weeks. Therefore, I just need to increase the quantity of the cards. Ideally, I want to have 40 Event cards (10 cards for each event type).

In the end, I ended up with 36 Event cards planned in total. I will implement these new event cards into my board-game during this week.

Event Cards				
	Chance	Mischief	Disaster	Bad Luck
Card Title:	Helping Hand	Misdirection	Rescue Mission	Altitude Sickness
Card Details:	Your character furthest ahead feels bad for leaving a friend behind, move him back 2 spaces and move your other character forwards to that tile	Move a sign post on the mountain, causing the next team behind your leading character to get lost forcing them to move both characters 2 tiles back	Another climbing group has taken an injury yourself and the leading team are tasked in aiding them. Both teams must move all characters back 6 spaces.	Your leading character has become sick. Move that character back 6 tiles
Card Title:	Joint Expedition	Sacrifice	Wolves	Fatigue
Card Details:	Choose any team to link up with for a fast climb and move all your characters to the front most character	Choose any team, and move their characters to your character furthest behind	Wolves have been sighted on the mountain forcing the two leading teams to miss their next go and wait for the wolves to pass	Your characters have become fatigued from the relentless climbing. Miss your next go
Card Title:	Adrenaline	Sabotage	High Winds	Stumble
Card Details:	Having relentless energy your characters decide to press onwards up the mountain. Move both characters 4 tiles forwards	Victory is just within reach why not secure it? Sabotage any player by sending one of their characters back 4 tiles	The weather on the mountain has drastically changed adding high winds. All teams must move all characters back a total of 4 tiles.	Accidents can happen any time. Your leading character has taken a fall forcing them to move back 2 tiles.
Above cards already created				
Card Title:	Well Rested	Weather Warning	Sleep Deprivation	Injury
Card Details:	Having a good night sleep you feel well rested. Move both characters 2 tiles forwards	Lie to another team, informing them of dangerous weather. Choose any team to miss their next go	Poor conditions have led to all teams sleeping little. Players who have not played this round miss a go	Your leading character has taken a big fall. Move them back 5 tiles
Card Title:	Immunity (1x Use)	Manipulation	Path Damage	Food Shortage
Card Details:	Being a veteran climber you're prepared for anything, including other climbers. When a player lands on your tile move them back 2 spaces.	Manipulate another player. Move any character from another team a total of 4 spaces in any direction	Heavy foot traffic has caused erosion on the mountain. All players are penalised and forced to move back 2 places	Your characters have run out of food and must get more before continuing. Move both characters back to the last base camp you've passed.
Card Title:	Rope	Quick Swap	Hypothermia	Tent
Card Details:	Another team has left some climbing rope. Climb the rope and move one character up to the floor directly above their current position.	With one character swap places with any other character on the gameboard.	Your team is afflicted with hypothermia. Move your team back to the last base camp you've passed	Your teams tent is missing pegs, go back to find them. Move one of your characters back 3 tiles.
Card Title:	Party	Nemesis	Blizzard	Falling Ice
Card Details:	Having progressed so far all teams have drinks to celebrate. Each team can move a total of 3 tiles moving one or both characters	You have an unspoken nemesis on the mountain. Choose any team and move both their characters back a total of 4 spaces each.	A blizzard has struck the mountain striking all teams. Each team must move to the last base camp they've passed	Falling Ice has struck your characters. Miss your next go to recover
Card Title:	Immunity (1x Use)	Fire		
Card Details:	Training for so long has allowed you to ignore others. Ignore any event card that impacts you by playing this card	Start a fire at any base-camp of choice. The team closest to the camp must move to its location to stop the fire		
Card Title:	Brew	Ice Boots		
Card Details:	Making a brew has boosted you're energy. Move both characters forwards an additional 3 tiles	Steal another teams ice boots. The chosen team must move both characters back 2 spaces		

Thoughts

Following my gameboard iterations created from last week. I want to change the icon for the event card tiles. I'm planning on creating a simple design for the backs of my event cards. The front sides have already been created as shown in previous weeks. Once I have created this, I will update my gameboard to reflect this.

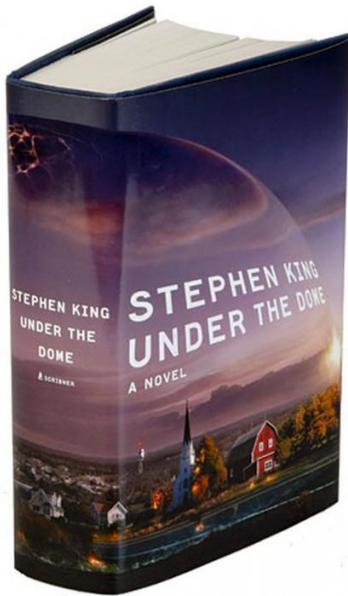
This week, we have learnt about different narratives and how we use these narratives within our analogue games.

Take a narrative from another form of media such as books, films. Think about how that story can be incorporated into an analogue game

Under the Dome (Stephen King - Novel)

Base Synopsis:

'The novel focuses on a small Maine town, and tells an intricate, multi-character, alternating perspective story of how the town's inhabitants contend with the calamity of being suddenly cut off from the outside world by an impassable, invisible glass dome-like barrier that seemingly falls out of the sky, transforming the community into a domed city.'



Analogue game incorporation

Under the Dome could be incorporated into a strategy board game. The game would be split into 2 teams, one being good (focusing on aiding the community to the fullest) and one bad (focusing on building power for yourself and disregarding the community). Each team's objective is to gain control of the dome by gaining political power and control over the community. The game would use active and passive cards to dictate play and control points.

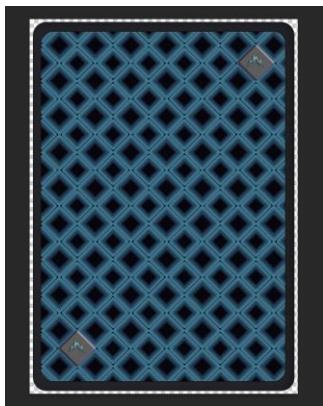
Project Update

This week, I've started designing the backsides of my event cards. I started this using my Event card template and removed any bits I didn't need.

Then I found a free texture pack online and using multiple blending options (Inner Shadow, Colour Overlay, Pattern Overlay) I created an iteration for my event cards.

Texture Pack - <http://vectorpatterns.co.uk/a-glossy-diamond-photoshop-and-illustrator-pattern/>

Iteration 1:



Following the first iteration, I wanted to make changes as I didn't like the iteration/design that much. Therefore, I did some additional research and found another card design I liked. Then I spent some time learning more about photoshops blending options and potential designs I could create.



From this I created a second iteration, that I liked much more. Using the research and inspiration ideas from this week and previous weeks.

Iteration 2:

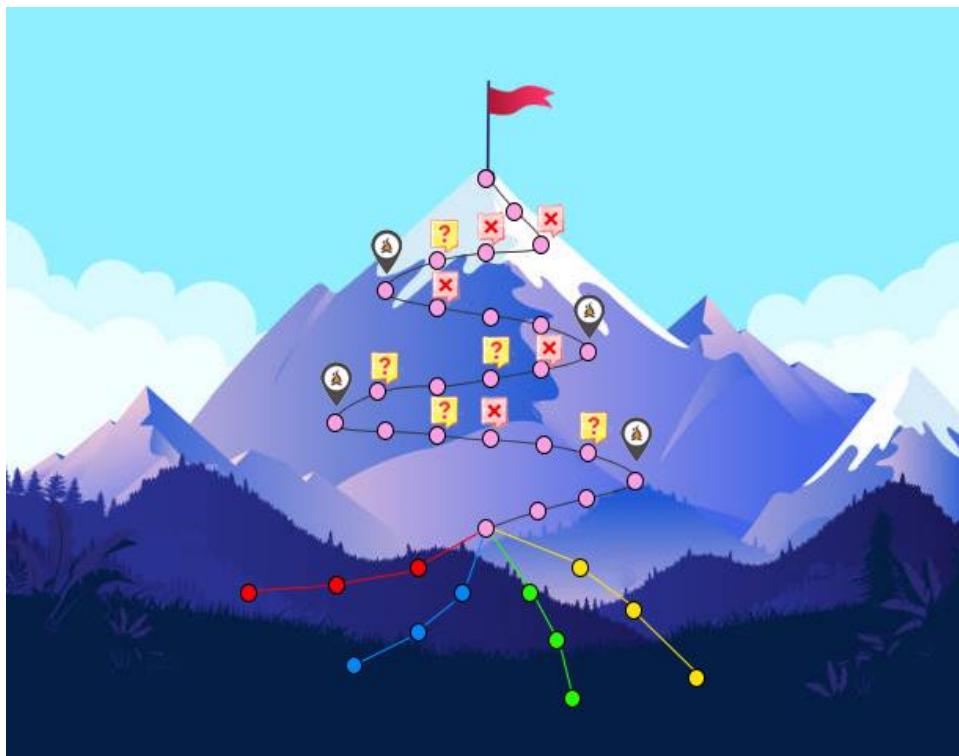


Iteration 3: Final



Gameboard

From my previous gameboard iterations, I didn't like the icon used for the event card tiles. Therefore, I found new icons to use that showcase pitfalls and event tiles differently and implemented them into my game.



[Week 6 – Playtesting Session & Design Iteration Rulebook](#) - March 9, 2022

This week, I play-tested 'Manifest: Multiversal Combat' and filled out a feedback form. The game was a trading card game (TCG) and enjoyable to play. Playing this game helped me understand the

need for transparency when writing a rule book. Therefore, this week I re-worked my rulebook to make it clear for all new players.

Project Update

This week, I've been focusing on improving my rule sheet. As many rules have changed/updated I wanted to re-work the rules sheet to have better transparency for players.

I've limited the character interactions by removing the move forwards rule when landing on tiles with other teams. Therefore, when landing on tiles with other teams you only get the option to send them back now. Previously it was a little confusing having so many interactions. I've limited it to 2 now (Hostile and Friendly) shown in my new rulebook iteration.

I've also added rules regarding the new campsites implemented into my game-board from Semester 2 week 3.

Ascent Rulebook

Introduction

Ascent is a race to the end style game that takes place on a desolate mountain, known as The Golden Summits.

The mountain is known for endangering climbers due to its harsh terrain and unforgiving wilderness. The mountain has remained unconquered for years. Renowned climbers have gathered from around the world to tackle this obstacle. Will you be first to reach the summit? Or the first to fall behind?

Box Contents

- 1 Game-board
- 1 Rulebook
- 2 (6 Sided) Dice
- 8 Coloured Player Tokens
- 36 Event Cards

Overview

The goal is simple, movement is controlled by dice rolls. The objective is to reach the summit of the mountain first. Once both characters of a team reach the summit that team wins the game.

Setup

1. Lay out the gameboard on a flat surface
2. Collect the event cards and give the deck a good shuffle. Once shuffled lay the deck face down on the game-board
3. Next everyone needs to pick their characters. Each character has a colour pick the colour that suits you best and grab both corresponding character tokens.
4. Each player now needs to place their characters on their starting-coloured tile **i.e.** the red characters would go on the red tile at the base of the mountain.

How to play?

1. First, each player needs to roll one dice. The player with the highest roll plays first then the order follows clockwise looping around the players for the rest of the game.
2. Start your turn by grabbing the 2 dice and rolling them. Once rolled, you'll have 2 individual dice values. Assign a dice value to each of your characters to move them
3. The first team to have both their characters on the mountain summit wins the game

Example Turn

1. Dave rolls 2 dice
2. Dave scores a '3' and a '5'
3. Dave moves character 1 a total of 3 tiles
4. Dave moves character 2 a total of 5 tiles

Character Interactions

Hostile

When landing on the same tile as another team, you get the option to send them back 2 tiles or let them remain. Players can be pushed back onto event tiles and pitfalls leaving them at an advantage or disadvantage.

Friendly

When landing on the same tile as your teammate, you'll get the option to send one of your characters up to the next floor, directly above your current location. If there's no tile above you, then you can't go up.

Campsites

The gameboard has multiple camps dotted around. When landing in a camp players remain safe being immune to any negative events and character interactions. These tiles act as neutral zones and a refuge for targeted players.

Event Tiles

When landing on an event tile, anything can happen. You'll need to draw an event card and carry out the rule written on it. These rules can affect anyone being negative or positive it's entirely up to chance.

Pitfall Tiles

When landing on a pitfall tile, players fall to the floor directly below their current location.

Week 7 – Set Collection & Card Mechanisms - March 14, 2022

This week, we have been learning about set collection & card mechanism and how we can implement them into our analogue projects.

Review the mechanics involved in set collection & card games

Set Valuation:

Likes:

- Having players save cards to use for end-game strategies makes a game more enjoyable and versatile with the chance that anyone could win
- These cards often add lots of variety to a game, as they often have different tiered values for each player dependent on how the card is used in-game

Dislikes:

- Hard to balance as some cards might be overpowered and players are then prone to try draw the card

Tile-Laying:

Likes:

- Visual pleasing art/style as more pieces are played

Dislikes:

- Has limited playstyles often reliant on held tiles and luck

Grid Coverage:

Likes:

- Requires forward thinking for filling a shape allowing players to plan their style at the start of the game
- Playstyle can adapt throughout the game to deal with changes

Dislikes:

- Heavily dependent on math skills, not accessible for all age groups due to skill required to play

Network Building:

Likes:

- Branching paths allowing players to use a wide range of strategies to win the game

Dislikes:

- The base movement is limited to game-board tiles no new routes can be created

Combo Abilities:

Likes:

- Allows chained actions for players to make moves being defensive or offensive play

- Open turn structures allow more options of play

Dislikes:

- Can be confusing for new players having to learn a new game and chain different combos

Card Draw & Hand Limits:

Likes:

- Card limits forces players to plan their deck and stops them from stockpiling an overpowered card

Dislikes:

- Having a bad starting hand can often lead to frustration and a big disadvantage to players

Deck Building:

Likes:

- Each player has their own playstyle boosted by their selected deck
- Lots of variety in playstyle offered

Dislikes:

- Hard to balance all the decks, as some decks may be incredibly powerful against other decks that specialize in a different area

Drafting:

Likes:

- Players can carefully plan their next needed cards based on their current progress in the game and allocate it accordingly
- Good complexity making the game fun and interesting

Dislikes:

- Can be slow if players can't decide immediately on what they need next

Does your analogue game implement these mechanics?

The closest mechanic my game uses is Card Draw. Players are forced to draw cards from a shuffled deck when landing on certain tiles. The effects can range from good to bad, being high luck based. The game also uses slight combo abilities with player interactions being chainable onto event/pitfall tiles.

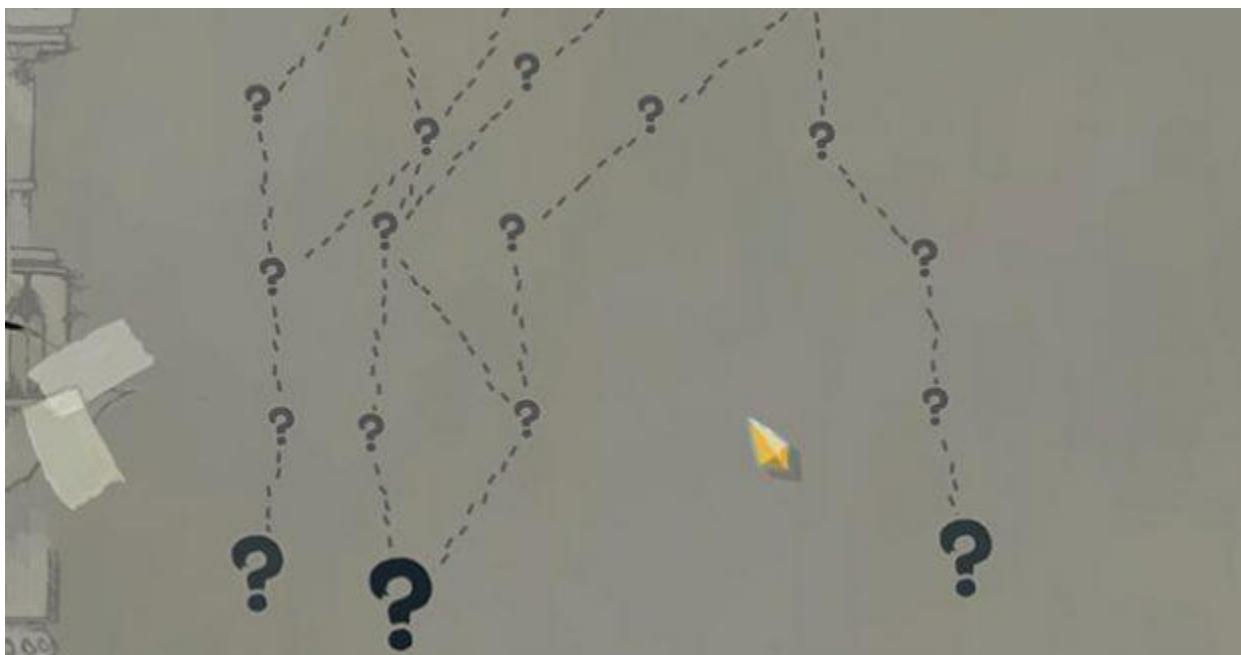
Project Update

This week, I play-tested a two-player game as well as my own analogue game. Playing my own game and having play-tester feedback has allowed me to find more flaws within my game.

Play-testing

Following the playtesting of my own project. There were multiple issues found once again and solutions were explored.

- More blank tiles were needed, as there were too many event/pitfall tiles causing constant player interactions
- Players bunch together too much at the start causing constant interactions. This was seen in my first play-testing session. The fix I implemented did not fix this. Therefore, after discussing solutions with play-testers branching paths might fix this. Something similar to the map in the game 'Slay the Spire' as shown below



- The game needs to be changed from 2-4 players to 3-4 players, due to lots of event cards affecting selected teams. As seen today, playing with two players forces you to help your rival. For example, drawing the "Joint Expedition" event card forces you to help the only competing player



Over the coming week, my plan is to first update the rulebook. To state that the required players is 3-4 instead of 2-4. Then I want to rework my game-board once again to have branching level paths to prevent bunching in the game.

Week 8 – Marketing and Production – Design Iterations – Gameboard - March 21, 2022

This week, we have been learning about different marketing and production techniques, to learn how to implement these for our project.

Look back at an analogue game from one of your earlier blog posts and look into its marketing techniques

Looking back at my earlier blog posts, I've chosen to analysis the board-game **Cluedo**.

What platform was used?

Cluedo was originally released in 1943 and marketed as "The Great Detective Game". The board-game slowly gained more popularity and in 1972 a television commercial was used to advertise the game showing Sherlock Holmes and Watson engaged in a competitive game of Cluedo.

What themes did they use?

The games' main themes revolve around the following:

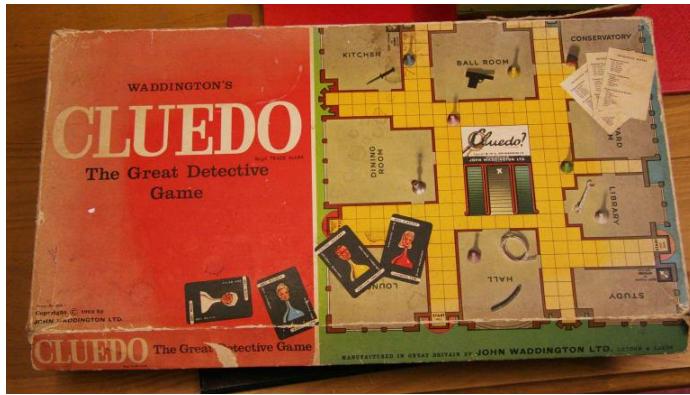
- Detective
- Crime
- Mystery
- Trust

Who was their target audience?

The game was intended for families, teenagers, and young adults. Being seen as a fun competitive game which could be played casually or seriously.

Is there any information online that proves this game met their target audience?

Looking at the original game-board releases online, the art style and language used proves that this game is meant for everyone. As it uses a simple art style and easy to understand language, for all age ranges.



Look at your game and the pieces it would need

Where would you source these pieces?

Currently my board-game cards and gameboard are all on paper. The game pieces are cheap plastic ones for the purpose of testing.

In the future I plan to get my game board, game pieces and event cards all from the site '**board game maker**' [Online Site]

Available at: <https://www.boardgamesmaker.com/>

Would you want to self-publish or get a publisher?

If I were to publish my board-game I would want to self-publish.

Project Update

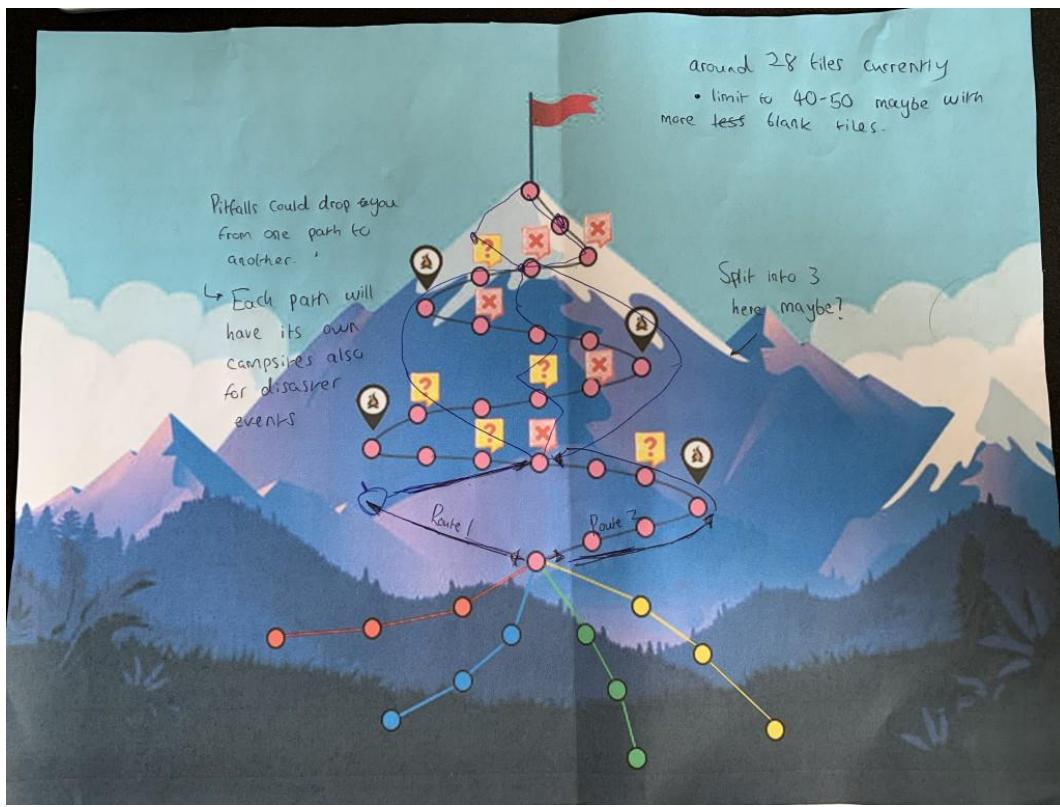
Following my playtesting from last week, I've updated my rule-sheet to reflect the number of players required for play. I've also been working on my gameboard changes.

I've also corrected some minor grammatical errors on a couple of the event cards.

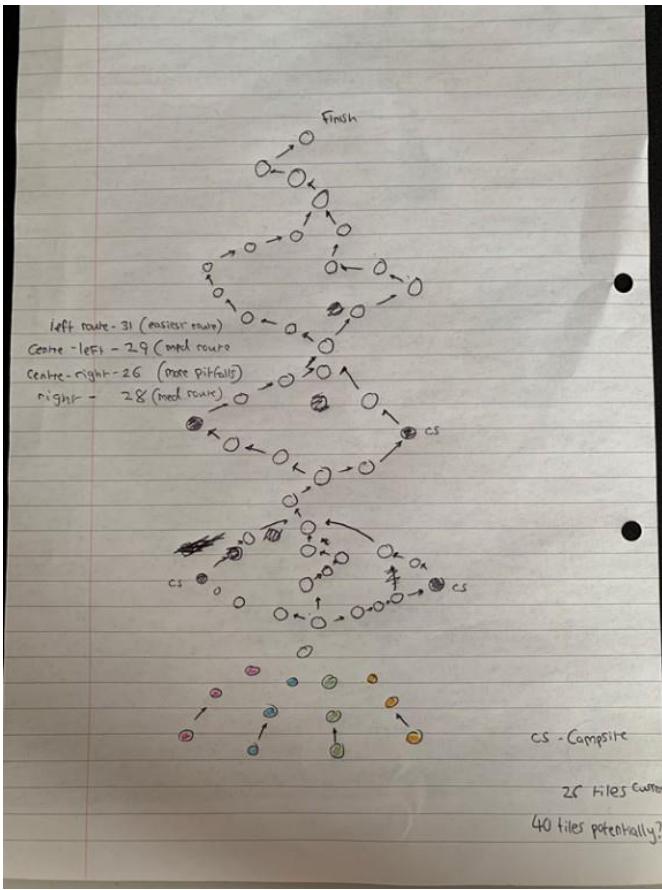
**Move all characters from both ~~other~~ teams
to the leading player on the gameboard**

Gameboard

As mentioned last week, I wanted to re-work my gameboard having branching paths to prevent character bunching in-game. I made some brief notes on my old gameboard to help visualise how I wanted the new board to feel.



After making some brief notes, I sketched out a rough idea of the game-board changes on paper to get an idea of the routes and the number of tiles on each route.



Finally, I went back into photoshop to re-work the game-board with these new changes (Branching paths and more blank tiles) and made some edits to make the board look better.

Iteration 5:



Week 9 – Uncertainty - March 29, 2022

This week, we have been learning about different types of uncertainty that can be introduced into analogue games and how it can impact play and player perception.

Review the list of uncertainty systems discussing your likes and dislikes about them

Betting and Bluffing:

Likes	Dislikes
Allows players to trick each other, by pretending to have strong or weak hands	Ultimately a random outcome that can't be countered against in many games
Players can predict the likelihood of certain cards to be played in games like poker relying on patterns	Not all players will actively take part in games like werewolf, leading to certain players who are more talkative being targeted

Push-Your-Luck:

Likes	Dislikes
Gameplay is very dynamic with players choosing to be timid or aggressive throughout the game	Can lead to drama and arguments amongst players
Chance based play with dice rolls and easy to understand	

Memory:

Likes	Dislikes
Requires player skill to memorise lots of information	Blocks accessibility for certain players who may struggle with memory
Utilises luck-based choices that can, then be memorised if its good or bad	Many games incorporate this, but don't explicitly rely on player memory

Hidden Roles:

Likes	Dislikes
Everyone has their own objective and agenda; therefore, multiple strategies can be in play at once	Games can be ruined if players reveal their role or another players role
Often a large-scale game with lots of phases and variation per game	May require a moderator to handle gameplay, if there's not many players it's hard to get someone

Roles with Asymmetric Info:

Likes	Dislikes
Allows everyone including the games moderator to actively take part in play	May be hard for new players to figure out all the roles and deduce who's playing a traitor style role
Can be used in casual, competitive and co-op games	

Communication Limits:

Likes	Dislikes
Adds more intensity and makes players focus on the game more	Can be boring having no communications between players

Probability Management:

Likes	Dislikes
Allows modification of chance-based events such as dice rolls, meaning that players with a bad role can still gain a better score	Hard to balance as once a good mechanic is found it will be used by everyone
	Requires good knowledge of the game to be utilised fully, making it harder for new players

Variable Setup:

Likes	Dislikes
Game evolves over time, making each game feel different	Designers need to be mindful of balancing the game as resources constantly change
The power balance constantly shifts, forces players to try new strategies	

Think about your analogue game

Does it already implement any of these mechanics?

My analogue game 'Ascent' implements **probability management**. Play is dictated by dice rolls, with players having the choice to assign each roll to a particular character from their team of two. This allows players to choose a route from the branching level paths, to strategically play towards safe areas, shorter dangerous routes, or choice between landing on event tiles or pitfalls.

Could you implement a different approach?

I could possibly implement a **variable setup** approach whereby players could move/create new event/pitfall tiles on the game-board. This could allow players to make certain routes too dangerous and control play.

Project Update

Following on with my project, this week I've been working on polishing the game and starting to design my game box.

Play-Testing

Doing some playtesting at home with friends, I've tested the new board (Iteration 5) and the play time is now around 10-25minutes, to complete the game. The bunching issue is no longer as bad due to the branching level paths, players can choose to be passive or aggressive in game. I'm happy with this progress, if I have time, I may add a few more tiles in game just to increase the playtime slightly. Over Easter I plan to get a proper gameboard, game box and event cards.

During the lecture this week I've done some more playtesting and seen multiple issues with the event cards. These range from grammatical to clarity issues, to fix these I re-worked the following cards

- [Disaster] Avalanche
- [Chance] Joint Expedition
- [Chance] Helping Hand

- [Chance] Party
- [Mischief] Sabotage

Finalizing for printing

Preparing my game components for printing, I investigated different board sizes, card sizes and game boxes on the Board Game Maker website - <https://www.boardgamesmaker.com/>

Gameboard

Starting with the gameboard I chose to use a 20x20 board size, I wanted to have a big board as there would be max 8-character tokens moving across it at once. Particularly in playtesting I had lots of issues with the board size being too small and tokens getting knocked over.

When preparing this I noticed my resolution was low as the image wasn't scaled correctly. I did some research in photoshop and found a way to resize the image without too much resolution loss.

I also investigated different resampling methods to see if any methods gave me better resolution. As my image was being enlarged the 3 main methods, I looked at were:

Nearest Neighbour, Bicubic Smoother and Preserve Detail 2.0.

Research - <https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/using/image-size-resolution.html>

Learning how to use these methods in photoshop -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dfJWqkIrGY&t=242s>

After trialing all these methods, I ended up using Preserve Detail 2.0 when resizing my gameboard, I still lost some resolution but it's a lot better than the previous previews. I also added a small slot on the board to hold the event cards.

Event Cards

I had no issues with my event card setup, the resolution appeared fine I chose to go with [Custom White Boarder Player Cards Poker Size].

Game Box

I've begun work on my game box choosing [10.5 x 10.5 x 2] dimensions. I've started designing this and have a pdf template that I can apply the designs to using Adobe illustrator. Once it's complete I will go order all the game components.

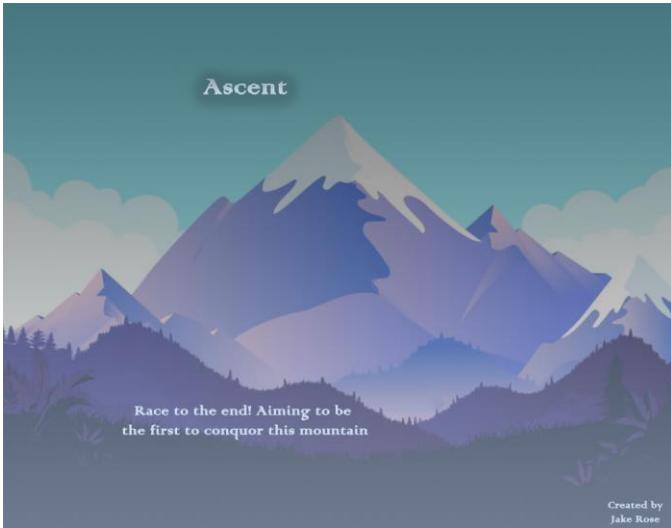
Week 10 – Finalizing the Board Game Components - April 4, 2022

This week, I've been finalizing my board game, I've been working on my game box and making some final changes to the game. During the lecture, I spent time play-testing other board-games.

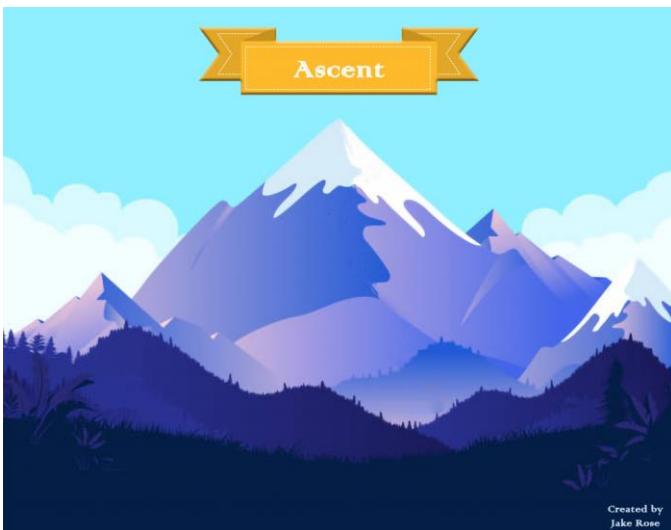
Game Box

I've spent some time iterating on my game box designs to prepare for ordering the components required for my analogue game. After lots of trial and error, I finally got the box design finished and the size dimensions sorted.

Iteration 1:



Iteration 2:



Iteration 3:



Final Box: This image showcases the front design of the game box. The base of the box will be entirely white as I wanted a simplistic art style to correspond with my game.



Board Game Maker

Having everything setup, I've now ordered all my board game components [Game-Box, Game-Board and Event Cards] and they should arrive over the Easter period.

Board Game Maker Site link - <https://www.boardgamesmaker.com/>

Week 11 – Project Update - April 25, 2022

Over the holidays, I received my board game components that I ordered [Gameboard, Game Box, Event Cards]. Now that I have all the game pieces prepared, this week I plan to record my playthrough video and finalize my board game.



Ascent - Updated Short Text Description

Ascent is a multiplayer race to the end style game. The person to play first will be chosen by all players rolling dice and the player with the highest roll plays first. The order of the game then follows clockwise around the group of players.

When a player starts their go, they will roll 2 dice. The player will then view the dice roll values individually giving one value to each of their characters.

For example, if a player rolls a '2' and a '6' then they can move one character a total of 2 tiles and their other character a total of 6 tiles.

There are two types of interactions that can occur between characters on different teams and characters on the same team.

Hostile - Characters on different teams – When landing on the same tile as a character on a different team. The player who is currently playing (active) will get the choice to betray the other character. Betraying another character means that you can force that character back a total of 3 tiles.

Friendly - Characters on the same team – When landing on the same tile as one of your characters, you can send one character up directly to the next floor. In some locations such as Campsites or areas without a floor directly above, this interaction becomes null, and nothing happens.

The gameboard contains multiple random event tiles and pitfall tiles:

- When landing on a random event tile, players are forced to draw an event card. These cards will drastically change the flow of the game, by helping or hindering players at random. Try your luck and hope for the best!

- When landing on a pitfall tile, players will be knocked down a floor directly below their current location, losing precious time in this race to conquer this mountain. Players can send enemy characters onto these dangerous tiles during character interactions and from event effects.

To win the game, a player must reach the top of the gameboard (Mountain) with both characters on their team. The first team to reach the final tile secures victory and wins the game.

Ascent – Updated Rules Documentation

Ascent Rulebook

Introduction

The mountain is known for endangering climbers due to its harsh terrain and unforgiving wilderness. The mountain has remained unconquered for years. Renowned climbers have gathered from around the world to tackle this obstacle. Will you be first to reach the summit? Or the first to fall behind?

Box Contents

- 1 Game-board
- 1 Rulebook
- 2 (6 Sided) Dice
- 8 Coloured Player Tokens
- 32 Event Cards

Overview

The goal is simple, movement is controlled by dice rolls. The objective is to reach the summit of the mountain first. Once both characters of a team reach the summit that team wins the game. [Recommended for 3-4 player]

Setup

- Lay out the gameboard on a flat surface
- Collect the event cards and give the deck a good shuffle. Once shuffled lay the deck face down on the game-board tile marked as "Event Cards"
- Next everyone needs to pick their characters. Each character has a colour pick the colour that suits you best and grab both corresponding character tokens.
- Each player now needs to place their characters on their starting-coloured tile **ie.** the red characters would go on the red tile at the base of the mountain.

How to play?

- First, each player needs to roll one dice. The player with the highest roll plays first then the order follows clockwise looping around the players for the rest of the game.
- Start your turn by grabbing the 2 dice and rolling them. Once rolled, you'll have 2 individual dice values. Assign a dice value to each of your characters to move them
- The first team to have both their characters on the mountain summit wins the game

Example Turn

- Dave rolls 2 dice
- Dave scores a '3' and a '5'
- Dave moves character 1 a total of 3 tiles
- Dave moves character 2 a total of 5 tiles

1 | P | E | G | O

Character Interactions

Hostile

When landing on the same tile as another team, you get the option to send them back 3 tiles or let them remain. Players can be pushed back onto event tiles and pitfalls leaving them at an advantage or disadvantage. Players cannot interact with one another by landing on each other once on the final tile of the gameboard.

Friendly

When landing on the same tile as your other character, you'll get the option to send one of your characters up to the next floor, directly above your current location. If the characters are located on a campsite tile or there's no tiles above, you then the interaction made is then null forcing you to remain where you are.

Campsites

The gameboard has multiple camps dotted around. When landing in a camp players remain safe being immune to any negative events and character interactions. These tiles act as neutral zones and a refuge for targeted players.



Event Tiles

When landing on an event tile, anything can happen. You'll need to draw an event card and carry out the rule written on it. These rules can affect anyone being negative or positive it's entirely up to chance



Pitfall Tiles

When landing on a pitfall tile, players fall to the floor directly below their current location.



2 | P | E | G | O

Preparation – Playthrough Video

Preparing for my playthrough video, I have got together with some friends to play my game. I will be recording a full game and some individual clips of the game components this week. Next week, I will edit the playthrough video in preparation for the final project submission.

Week 12 – Project Completion & Reflection - May 1, 2022

Following on from last week, I have been editing my final playthrough video and been working on my project reflection.

Final Playthrough Video



Project Reflection

Starting out on this project, I originally intended for the game to feel similar to Snakes and Ladders with players constantly being pushed forwards and backwards. I wanted the gameplay to be co-op/versus with teams being able to work together to beat the leading player and have teams working independently to win the game themselves. The key mechanic being the choice to aid or betray players when landing on the same square giving players the option to help or hinder other teams.

As the project progressed, I moved slightly out from this initial idea and focused more on this race to the end style genre of analogue games. Instead of having the option to aid or betray players when landing on the same square, I decided to only give players the option to move other players back to add urgency to the game. A few naming conventions changed also as time progressed, the “unstable bridges” changed to “pitfalls” in accordance with the game’s themes.

One of the most important design approaches for this project was iterative design whereby I would focus on building core mechanics and then slowly adapt/change them to better fit my project. My gameboard is the best example of this iterative design having around 7 iterations until I was happy with the gameboard.

Utilizing the play-testing sessions has also helped me to develop and visualize my ideas for my analogue game. Having feedback from other people has helped me understand different flaws in my project, that would not have been noticed otherwise. Having verbal feedback and playtesting feedback forms has helped me to understand and tackle many gameplay issues.

I really enjoyed working on my core gameplay mechanics such as the character movement, character interactions and event card designs. Once I had the character interactions secure, I felt

confident continuing to iterate on my event cards. I was really pleased once I had the designs completed for the 4 variations (Good Luck, Mischief, Bad Luck, Disaster).

The most challenging part of this project was balancing the event cards and developing my artwork. The event cards were the first challenge to handle, as there would be 8 characters on the board and in many cases all characters could be affected by an event card. I spent some time doing playtesting in lessons and at home, to iterate and improve these cards to make them more balanced and enjoyable for players. Developing the artwork was another big challenge, as I am not very experienced as an art designer and my preferences in development would be in a more technical area. The main challenge was creating the gameboards artwork, as I had to do lots of editing in photoshop when creating the board and do lots of research into different scaling methods to ensure none of the board was blurred when printing.

Competing this project, I am happy with the progress I have made on 'Ascent'. The project's game time is just as I planned, being around 10-20 minutes in total. My game components are all a nice quality giving the game a nice feel. The gameplay works as intended with players constantly interacting with one another competitively, having setbacks and breakthroughs.

The one thing I would like to improve is the balancing of the event cards. I feel that they needed more time to be refined in play-testing sessions, as certain cards felt quite overpowered when compared with others.