

Bandit Train-

[Bandit Train \(textadventures.co.uk\)](http://textadventures.co.uk)

Game Design Document:

Game Title/Genre: The game is titled Bandit Train because in the story, the character is on a train that is overtaken by bandits. The genre of the game is puzzle, with the setting resembling a wild-west themed train ride.

Premise: In this game you play as a civilian who happened to be riding a train before it got overtaken by bandits. The bandits tied you up and looted everything valuable from the train. They then jumped off the train, leaving you there tied up on route to crash into a mountain. To stop the train, you must make your way to the conductor's car and hit the brakes. Only, the bandits left traps and puzzles throughout the train to prevent you from doing so. The game narrative follows the journey of the civilian as he struggles to solve these puzzles and make his way to the front of the train to hit the brakes.

Player's Role: The player's role is to control the civilian for the duration of this train ride and to solve puzzles and ultimately escape their deadly predicament of being stuck on a train.

Win Condition: The game is completed upon the completion of the puzzles in each room, including the engine car. The story ends with the player braking the train and jumping off onto the ground, reaching safety.

Game Mechanics: The player is able to walk around and interact with their environment. They are able to equip, use, and combine objects to serve various puzzle-solving purposes.

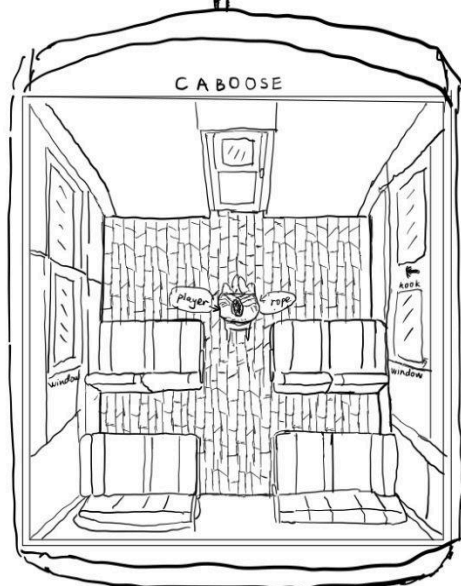
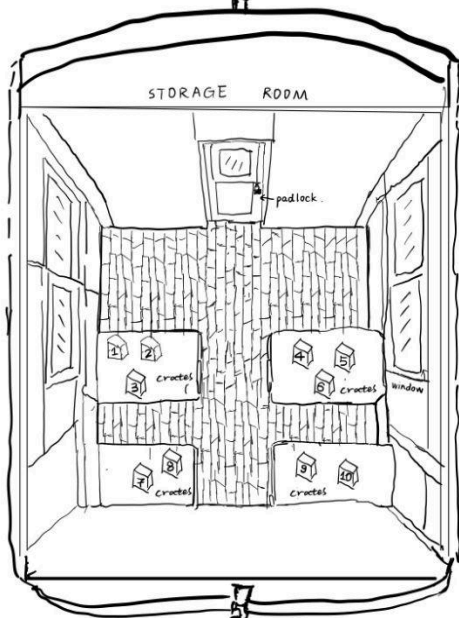
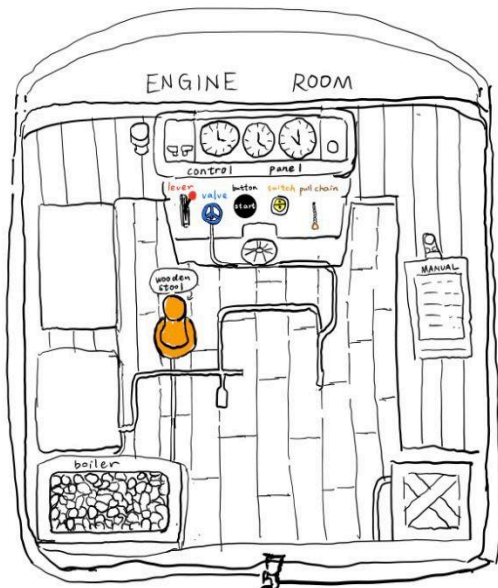
Scoring/Progress:

Progress will be made by how many puzzles you have solved and moving forward in the rooms. Once you have solved all of the puzzles in each room and hit the brakes, you will then be allowed to jump off the train and win the game.

Game Style:

Puzzle, period, western, escape game.

Scene Layout Design:



Puzzle Descriptions & Solutions:

Ropes: the first puzzle introduces the player to some of the basic mechanics of the game. The player is bound in ropes which they can not escape. If the player inspects their pockets, they will find a knife. Using this knife will cut the ropes and will introduce the character to more info in the environment used to escape the kaboose (grappling hook head and kaboose door).

Escaping the Kaboose: When the player opens the door to the kaboose they find an impassable gap. The player needs to take the grappling hook head, the cut ropes, and combine them. After this, the player is allowed to pass through the area.

Padlock: The player has access to 10 crates, and a padlock. All of the crates are locked besides crate 7 and crate 10. The player must grab the crowbar from crate 7 in order to unlock the rest of the crates. Inside the other crates (crate 1, crate 4, crate 6, and crate 9) the player will find the letters "W" "I" "L" and "D," spelling out the code for the padlock. Upon typing in "WILD" after pressing "unlock" on the padlock, the padlock will open and you will be given access to the next room.

Brakes: The player has access to a train manual, a wooden stool, the engine boiler, and the control panel. The control panel has a red lever, yellow switch, a blue valve, and a start button. Reading the manual tells the user that to brake, the boiler should be fueled, the controls should be set to green, and the start button should be pushed. If the player does not fuel the boiler with the manual or the wooden stool, pressing the start button does nothing. If the player fuels the boiler then the start button can do multiple things. If the correct combo of switch and valve are turned on, the player brakes the train. If the red lever is pulled the train accelerates and the player loses. If a different combo is inputted nothing will happen

Game Layout:

Roome: caboose:

prepare for an adventure.

On a random hot day, you, a regular Joe, stroll to the train station. You have no idea where you're going, you just know you need to get out of this dusty town. You spend all your money on a ticket.

"Anywhere."

You say to the ticket booth attendant.

"That's not how this works." the attendant says. "You need to actually tell me a specific place for me to do my job."

"Why?" you ask. You'd think they could just do it. Who even cares if you get up-charged or whatever. You've literally given the company carte-blanche to charge you for their most expensive ticket. Is it illegal for them to do that, even if given consent? Perhaps these are potentially the very consumer safety laws that have made you so dissatisfied with your life you'd need to escape this town.

"Okay okay whatever. One ticket to Kansas" you say.

Hours later you're on the train sipping some water and looking out at barren terrain. The rhythmic hum of the wheels of the train are beginning to make you sleepy. To stay awake you start counting cactuses. You stop after another hour after finding none. You realize that just because it's a desert doesn't ensure there will be any cacti. Actually, almost 90% of deserts lack any remarkable vegetation at all. Of those excluded, the most common plant life are various scrub bushes. Cacti are actually a rare site to see, a far throw from your typical stereotypical encounter. This fact is so insanely boring and pointless that just thinking about it makes you fall asleep.

You awake to a passenger jostling your elbow while passing. "How rude" you think to yourself. You look outside over the sun baked landscape. Still no cacti. You're very disappointed, but remark to yourself how much better this was than your old town. The new world has plenty of excitement. Perhaps, maybe, you could become a famous desert vegetation expert in Kansas. That would be wicked. You hear commotion behind you and the rush of feet.

Then everything goes black

You awake in a cold and unfamiliar room. Your head is throbbing. You attempt to move before realizing you're bound to a chair. Oh god, what is happening. The distant hum of the locomotive suggests that time is of the essence.

As you attempt to make sense of your surroundings, you peer out the window to your right. You can see the train tracks make a wide left hand turn over many miles. Off in the distance, you can see the silhouette of a destroyed bridge. You're not a calculus major, but you can pretty clearly see that if the train does not stop, it will eventually bank the turn and plummet off the bridge. You must escape.

You can see the the ropes that bind you and your pockets

Ropes:

Struggle helplessly: you struggle helplessly.

Cut (W/O) knife: you can't cut the ropes even with your nasty unclipped fingernails

Cut (W) knife: You cut the ropes. Finally, free, you look around the room and take in the scene. You appear to be in the caboose of a train car. The window to your left has bullet holes and the window to your right has the head of a grappling hook stuck to it. Bandits must have boarded the train and knocked you out! You look around and see the caboose door.

Look at: these are the ropes that bind you

Pockets:

Look at (first time): You look in your pockets and see your lucky pocket knife. How convenient.

Look at (2nd time): Your pockets are empty

Grappling Hook Head:

Look at: this is the head of some bandit's grappling hook. I wonder what became of them.

Take: you take the grappling hook head

Freshly Cut Rope

Look at: this is the rope that bound you

Take: you take the rope

Combine (W/O Grappling Head): nothing to combine with

Combine (W grappling head): You take the freshly cut ropes and tie it to the grappling hook head. You now have a grappling hook. Nice! Now what to do with it....

Caboose Door

Open door (first time / without grappling hook): You open the door to the kaboose and see a plummeting gap between the kaboose and the next car. The only point of connection is a think coupler far above your head connecting the two trains. You know you're hands are too weak, uncalledoused, and pathetic to grab the connector and swing across. There must be another way. Maybe there is something in this room that can help you?

Open door (with grappling hook): You open the door and use the grappling hook to swing across the train cars like Indiana Jones. As you leap to the next car, you rope slippes from your hand and the grappling hook falls away under the wheels. Drat! With no way back, you're forced to proceed to the next compartment.

Storage Room:

As you enter the second room, the door creaks open, revealing a dimly lit space filled with ten wooden crates and the smell of oil. Dust particles dance in the faint glow of a lantern swinging from a hook. Moonlight spills through the windows, casting eerie shadows across the storage room. You rush to the door but notice that it is locked by a padlock.

Crate 1:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. Having leveraged the crowbar to crack open the crate, a rush of air fills the room, bearing the distinct fragrance of weathered leather and aged wood – an essence synonymous with the untamed allure of the Wild West. The train storage room, immersed in a dim, dusty ambiance, radiates an atmospheric glow, resembling scenes lifted from the pages of a vintage frontier tale. Within the opened crate, your attention is immediately drawn to a tumbleweed of straw scattered across the floor, remnants of careful packaging to safeguard the hidden treasures within. Despite a thorough search, no practical items reveal themselves. Undeterred, you decide to clear the dust off the inner side of the lid, unveiling an engraving in the shape of the letter "W." While the initial inspection yields no tangible discoveries, the engraved "W" sparks a flicker of intrigue. You recognize the potential significance of this detail and make a mental note, acknowledging that this piece of information might hold the key to unlocking the mysterious padlock that secures the door to the next train car.

Crate 2:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. Inside this newly opened container, disappointment settles in as you find no tumbleweed of straw or any remnants hinting at the preservation of valuable items. A barren interior greets your gaze,

devoid of the intriguing artifacts that previously fueled anticipation. Despite a thorough search, this crate offers no practical or even suggestive clues. It stands as a silent witness to the unpredictability of cargo, holding nothing of tangible worth or investigatory value. In contrast to the first crate, the second one guards its secrets with a stoic emptiness, leaving you with no leads or hints to follow. It becomes evident that not every crate harbors a narrative or puzzle to unravel, and, with a faint sigh, you close this unyielding box, its mystery perhaps hidden in its very lack of revelation.

Crate 3:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. Cracking open the crate reveals a disheartening sight – within, cobwebs cling to the corners, and useless debris lies scattered. The remnants of abandoned spider homes intertwine with forgotten fragments of discarded packing material, creating a scene that echoes neglect and abandonment. A sense of futility sets in as you realize that this crate holds no treasures, valuable or otherwise. It becomes a graveyard of unremarkable remnants, a testament to the capricious nature of cargo. The useless debris and cobwebs, like ghosts of forgotten journeys, tell a tale of neglect and disuse, offering no hints or clues to unravel. With a shrug, you close the unremarkable crate, its emptiness mirroring the void of purpose it holds within.

Crate 4:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. After a persistent tussle with the crowbar, the crate reveals a chaotic assortment of random junk as it swings open. A medley of discarded items spills out, ranging from battered hats to tarnished silverware, forming a disorganized collage of forgotten odds and ends. The air carries the musty scent of old paper, mingled with the faint whiff of disuse. Determined to sift through the jumble, you start moving the random items aside, creating a cluttered tableau on the train storage room floor. As the debris is shuffled, a clear revelation emerges at the bottom of the crate – the letter "L" is unmistakably drawn, standing out amidst the chaos like a hidden clue. The unexpected discovery adds a new layer to the enigma surrounding the crates. The seemingly unrelated junk now bears a mark, a mysterious "L" that beckons further investigation. You carefully note the

newfound information, realizing that this unexpected symbol might hold the key to unraveling the puzzle embedded in the cargo of this train storage room.

Crate 5:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. With a cautious curiosity, you pry open the lid of the crate. An earthy and peculiar aroma wafts out, accompanied by a soft rustling sound. As the crate opens further, an unexpected and bizarre scene unfolds – it's filled with nothing but squirming, wriggling worms. The mass of earthworms undulates within the crate, creating a surreal and unexpected tableau. The room is filled with the damp scent of soil, and the sight of the worms seems both strange and mesmerizing. They move in a synchronized dance, seemingly unbothered by their unusual confinement. The crate, once a bearer of potential treasures, now holds a living spectacle that defies the typical contents one might find during an exploration of Wild West artifacts. It raises questions about the purpose and origin of such an odd cargo. As you watch the worms continue their rhythmic movement, you can't help but wonder how and why this peculiar shipment ended up on this journey through time and space.

Crate 6:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. As the crate swings open, a cascade of objects spills forth, revealing a jumble of peculiar items. Amidst the assortment, your eyes catch a glint of metal. Bending down to investigate, you find a tarnished silver pocket watch. Fingers delicately trace the intricate engravings on its case, and as you open it, the hands frozen in time, you notice a small, carefully crafted compartment. Within this hidden alcove lies a folded parchment. Unfurling the paper, you discover a cryptic message, each word carefully chosen and leading your eyes to a revelation. The letter "I" is cunningly concealed within the text, subtly announcing its presence. The ink seems to emphasize this solitary vowel, creating an enigmatic connection between the hidden letter and the contents of the crate. The discovery adds a layer of intrigue, leaving you to ponder the significance of the letter "I" within the context of this Wild West-themed train storage room. It becomes a subtle clue, a piece of the puzzle awaiting its place in the unfolding narrative.

Crate 7:

Look at: The crate seems to be unlocked

Open: You open it. It contains nothing but a Crowbar

Crowbar:

Look at: it's a rusty crowbar, but it seems like it could be useful

Take: This could be useful for opening the locked crates!

Crate 8:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. As you pry open the lid, the contents within reveal themselves in a chaotic arrangement of seemingly unrelated objects. From faded clothing to rusted tools, the crate offers no discernible pattern or hint. Despite a thorough inspection, the crate guards its secrets with an air of indifference. It becomes apparent that this particular box holds no deliberate clues, no hidden symbols, and no cryptic messages. It stands as an enigma, a testament to the unpredictability of cargo and the inherent mystery that surrounds some shipments. The absence of any clear clues or patterns leaves you with a sense of both frustration and acceptance. Some crates, it seems, are meant to be inscrutable, withholding their stories and origins with an elusive silence. As you close the lid, the mystery of this final crate lingers, a reminder that not every puzzle is meant to be solved, and some secrets are destined to remain buried in the recesses of time.

Crate 9:

Look at (player isn't holding crowbar): The crate appears to be locked

Look at (player is holding crowbar): You can use the crowbar to unlock the crate

Open (player isn't holding crowbar): It is locked

Open (player is holding crowbar): You use the crowbar to pry open the crate. Prying the crate open, the contents spill out, revealing an eclectic mix of items, from weathered books to worn-out leather gloves. Yet, it's the carefully constructed wooden "D" that captures your

attention. The craftsmanship of the crate, intentionally or serendipitously forming this letter, adds an unexpected layer to the discovery.

Crate 10:

Look at: The crate seems to be unlocked

Open: You open it. It contains a Rat

Rat:

Look at: It's a cute little rat! :)

Pet: You pet the rat and it looks very happy :)

Speak to (1st time): The rat responds "Well, well, look who's stumbled upon my humble abode. 'Bout time someone noticed me, eh? I've been tailing those bandits for days, keeping a low profile in this cozy crate of mine. Ah, the bandits. A bunch of troublemakers they are. They took control of this train, see? And then they left us all here to die! Started off as a ragtag group, but now they've got big plans – none of them good, mind you. They're after the train's cargo, and they don't care who gets hurt in the process. I may be small, but I've got a big heart and an even bigger dislike for chaos. These bandits think they're invincible, but they haven't met me yet. I've been gathering intel, watching their every move, and I aim to put an end to their little shenanigans." You look at the rat in amazement. "You talk?" you ask. The rat responds with nothing but a squeak.

Speak to (again): You try talking to the rat again, but It just looks at you and squeaks. You wonder if you hallucinated that whole conversation. "wow, I must look stupid trying to talk to a rat" you think to yourself. You change your attention towards the task at hand: getting to the conductor's car.

Padlock:

Look at: It appears that the lock requires a 4 letter word to unlock.

Unlock: Enter in the combination:

Engine car:

Opener:

You find yourself in an Engine Car.

You can see a Control Panel, an Engineer's Manual, a Wooden Stool and a Boiler.

You can go north or south.

The engine roars loudly inside the car. The chugging and rattling and wind create a cacophony. The interior is simple with bare and rusty metal. To your sides, the open sides of the train car could allow you to jump off.

Control Panel

Look at:

The control panel features a mess of gauges and dials. You can't begin to make sense of it.

The controls predominantly feature a Lever, a Valve, a Switch, a Button and a Pull Chain.

Engineer's Manual

Look at:

A dusty old tome of a book.

Take:

You pick up the manual.

Read:

The book is hundreds of pages long. Luckily a marker sticks out from about halfway through: You open it to that page.

How to brake:

1. Ensure engine is fueled.
2. Set controls to combo GREEN.
3. Press button.
4. Success!

Do not add RED!

Drop:

You drop the manual.

Use (on Boiler (Open)):

You toss the manual into the flames. They grow in size from their new fuel.

Use (on Boiler (Closed)):

You can't fit that through the grate.

Wooden Stool

Look at:

A simple three-legged wooden stool.

Take:

You pick up the stool by one of its legs.

Drop:

You set the stool back on the ground.

Use (on Boiler (Open)):

You toss the stool into the flames of the engine. Their size grows with the new fuel.

Use (on Boiler (Closed)):

You can't fit that through the grate:

Boiler

Look at (unfueled):

It is an iron grate covering the flames of the engine. There is an orange glow from which an occasional flame laps.

Look at (fueled):

It is an iron grate covering the roaring flames of the engine. There is an orange glow from which flames continuously lap.

Open:

You carefully open the hot grate so as to not burn yourself. The fiery-warm air rushes out.

Close:

You kick shut the grate. It squeaks then bangs shut.

Lever

Look at:

A waist height bright red lever. It looks important.

Pull:

You pull the lever down and towards you.

Push:

You push the lever back into an upright position.

Valve

Look at (turned left):

A large valve with four spokes painted blue. It is turned to the left.

Look at (turned right):

A large valve with four spokes painted blue. It is turned to the right.

Turn right:

You turn the valve to the right. You hear a hissing begin.

Turn left:

You turn the valve to the left. The hissing subsides.

Switch

Look at (switched left):

A yellow electrical switch with a rubber handle. The switch is set to the left.

Look at (switched right):

A yellow electrical switch with a rubber handle. The switch is set to the right.

Switch on (on):

It is already switched on

Switch on (off):

You pull the switch to the right. Sparks fly from the contacts.

Switch off (on):

You pull the switch to the left.

Switch off (off):

It is already switched off.

Button**Look at:**

A shiny black button with white lettering reading "START."

Press/Push/Start (Correct control combo):

The wheels of the train squeal against the tracks as the brakes engage. You are almost thrown forward but you catch yourself. The train slows, as does its chugging. It inches to a stop with one last exhausted chug.

Press/Push/Start (Incorrect control combo):

The engine roars to life and the train chugs faster. You might have made a mistake. The train speeds up, and the cliff edge approaches before you can act.. Oops...

Press/Push/Start (Invalid control combo):

Nothing seems to happen.

Pull Chain**Look at:**

A thin metal chain that dangles from the ceiling with a carved wooden handle on the end.

Pull:

You pull the chain. A loud whistle sounds from the outside.

Yank:

You pull the chain right out of the ceiling, breaking it.

Broken Chain:**Look at:**

A broken thin metal chain with a carved wooden handle on the end. You should really be more careful with machinery you don't understand.

Ground:**Opener:**

You hope safely to the unmoving ground. You look to see the front end of the trains cowcatcher hanging over the edge of a massive gorge. You can't believe how close you were. Nevertheless, you have survived your ordeal with the bandits, saved the train, and made a new rat friend. Now time to find a way out of this desert...

THE END

End Game

Playtesting Feedback and Change Log:

Name	Email	Playtime	Comments
Ben Chester	bjc141@case.edu	19:26	Overall I thought it was really fun and that the stages were balanced in terms of difficulty. I really appreciated the storytelling and attention to detail. One struggle: I found myself a bit confused when it came to stopping the train because I thought that the train was already fueled even though I was expected to use the wooden stool to grow the fire.
Jaimee Joshi	jxj751@case.edu	21:56	This game was so fun to play and very interesting. I liked speaking to the rat. One problem I had was in the second room, I tried unlocking the padlock when it was already unlocked, and it messed up when I was trying to leave the room. But besides that, I really enjoyed it.
Ava Ellis	aee42@case.edu	23:24	Very nice game! Was confusing, I just pressed all the buttons until it worked. There was a bug when I tried using the knife in the second room. It said I was cut free but I was already free and in the second room. I died at the end :(
Claire Kozma	cek111@case.edu	20:00	The descriptions were super cool! They enhanced the game a lot. There was a bug when I tried to look at the rope, but otherwise it was really fun. Kinda difficult too!
Caeden Couch	cec200@case.edu	21:56	I did not understand what GREEN meant on the last car. But it was definitely a good concept with good explanations at every point!

The following changes were made in response to feedback:

Engine Room:

- We made it more clear that the engine wasn't fully fueled. Instead of saying it is hot and fiery, we changed it to "It is an iron grate covering the flames of the engine. There is a **dim** orange glow from which an **occasional** flame laps." (the words aren't actually bolded in the game, but trying to emphasize how the change helps the problem)

Padlock:

- We made it so that when you unlock the padlock, it becomes invisible so you can't try to unlock it again

Knife:

- We made it so when the ropes are cut, the knife “breaks” and the object becomes invisible, so you can’t try to use it again.
- When you cut the ropes there was an error. But the error was just capitalization so we fixed it just by fixing the variable names

Grappling Hook:

- There was a bug where you couldn’t use it. But we added the “Use” verb and it worked. not sure why it disappeared but we just needed to re-add it