

INTRODUCTION TO GAME DESIGN

CSD2511 – Week 01

Lecturer . Jonathan Kwek

Before we begin



- Use the first 15 minutes to settle in
 - Sign your attendance
 - Log into your workstation
 - Log into Moodle, specifically CSD2511 module
 - Log out from your game, application, communication, chats
 - Prime yourself physically for the next hour, ie. Finish your food, fill up your water, visit the restroom, get comfy
 - Prime yourself mentally for the next hour, ie. Recall what happened during last week's session, put a save point on any ongoing conundrums, meditate on what to do this morning

About the Lecturer



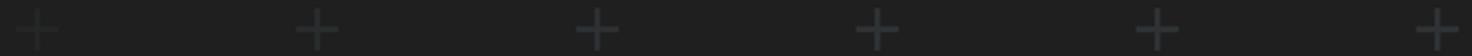
Jonathan Kwek

About the Lecturer



Danielle Fong

About the Lecturer



Dr. John Michael Quick

House Rules



- Always remember to sign your ATTENDANCE
 - If you miss it, email me as soon as possible
 - Your credibility lowers the longer you wait
- Announcements made during lectures *supersede* moodle documents

House Rules



- Health and Hygiene
 - Masks?
- Focus on having *fun* with your teammates during this module

Module Matters



- Lectures – THURSDAYS (9am – 11am)
 - LT 5A
 - Topic presentations/discussions
 - Play sessions
- Labs – TUESDAYS (9am – 12pm)
 - PASCAL
 - Work on your assignment
 - Design challenges

Digital Tools:

- FIGMA - <https://www.figma.com/>
- Tabletopia account: <https://tabletopia.com/>
- Boardgame Arena account: <https://boardgamearena.com/join>

Other tools:

- Screenshot : <https://screentop.gg/>
- Tabletop Simulator (SGD\$20, 50% during sales)
- OBS Studio: <https://obsproject.com/>

Module Matters

Physical Tools:

- Paper Prototyping equipment:



Sophomore Fall Module

- 47
- 70
- 74
- 67

Freshman Summer Module

- 121

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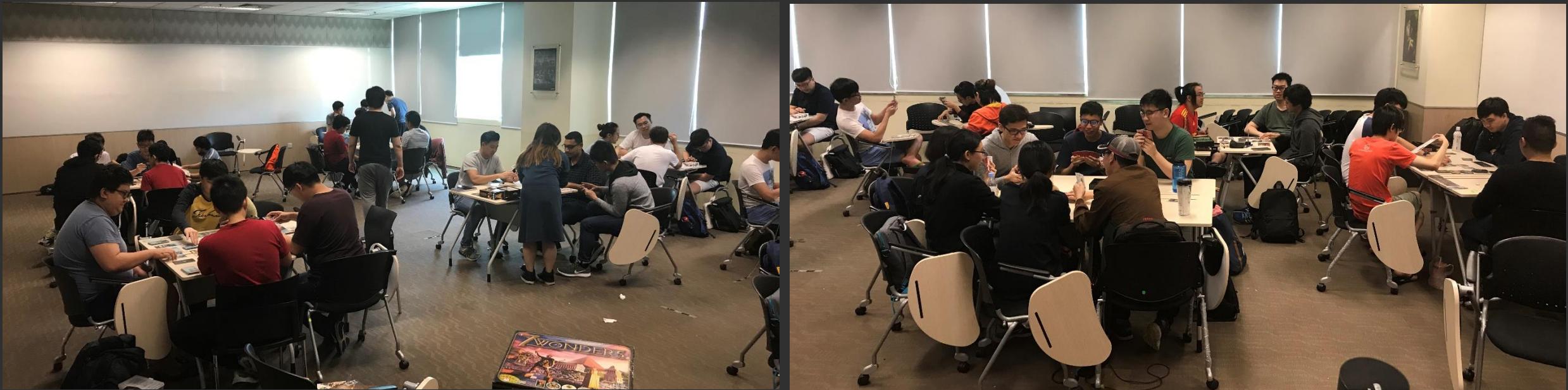
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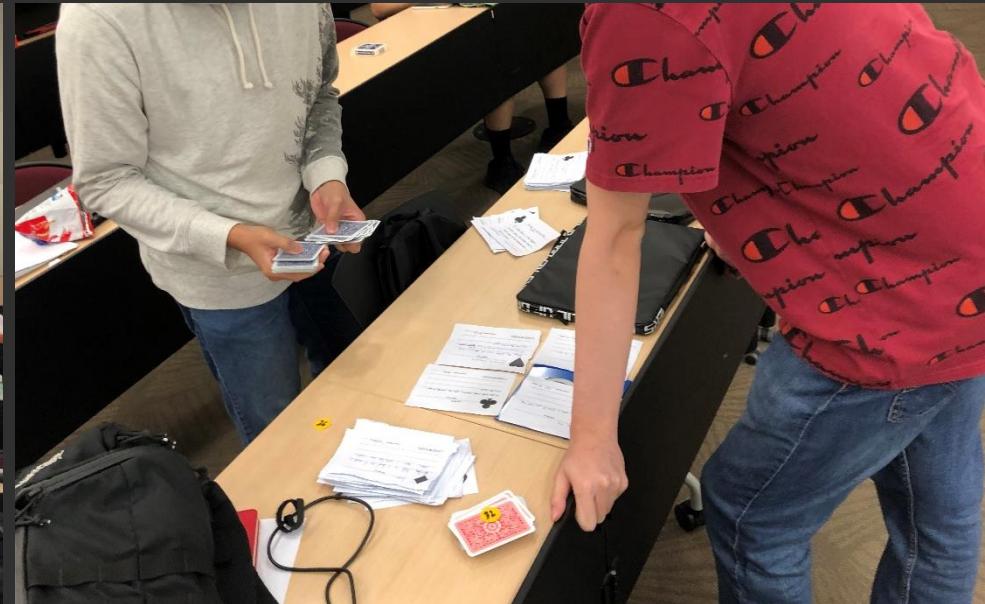
Previously

Previously



A proud tradition of DigiPen, Game Design foundations set in tabletop gaming
Playtesting sessions – commercial and prototypes

Previously



A proud tradition of DigiPen, Game Design foundations set in tabletop gaming
Playtesting sessions – commercial and prototypes

Previously



Quality products handmade by teams of 4
DES115 - Fall 2019

Previously



3D printed tokens, custom foam settings, even furry bees and spiders!

Previously



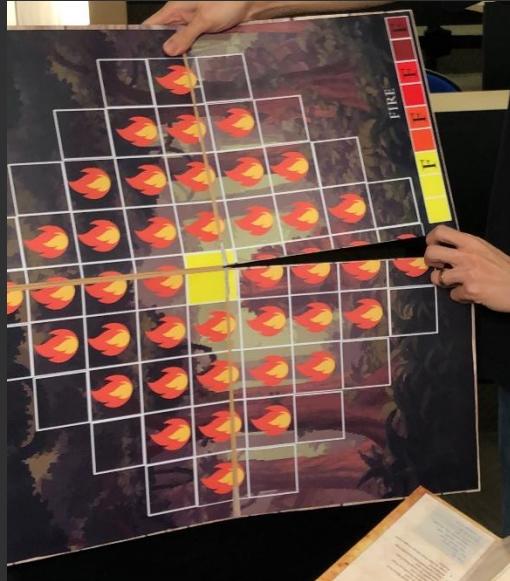
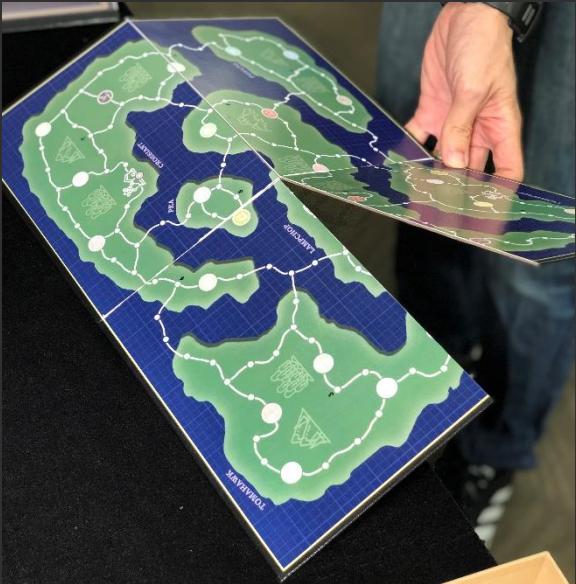
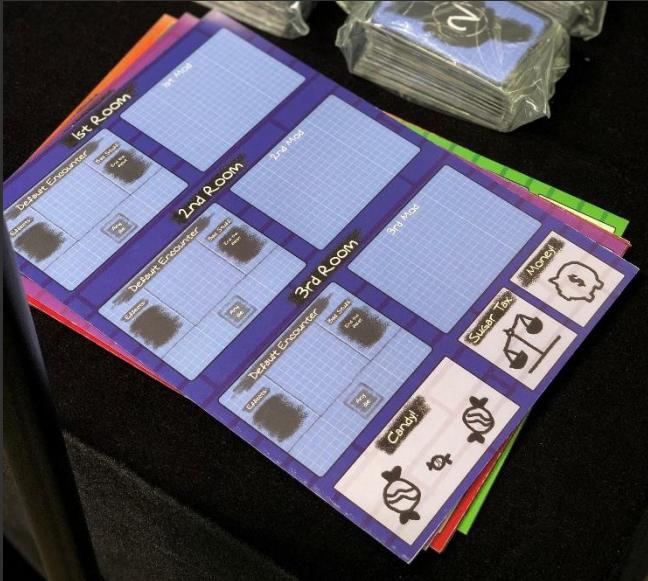
Innovative box sets

Previously



Attractive Cards

Previously



Versatile Boards

Previously



Career Fair

Physical Boardgame Submissions

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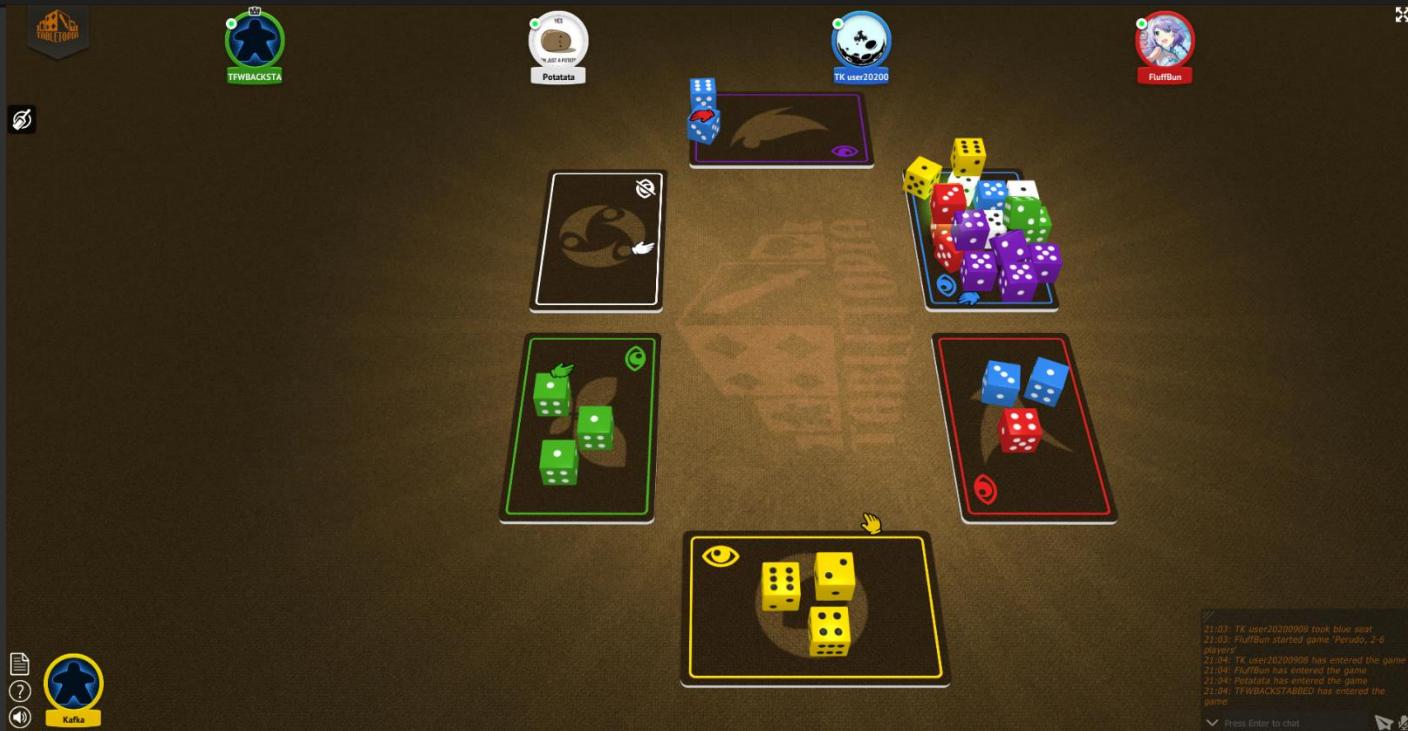
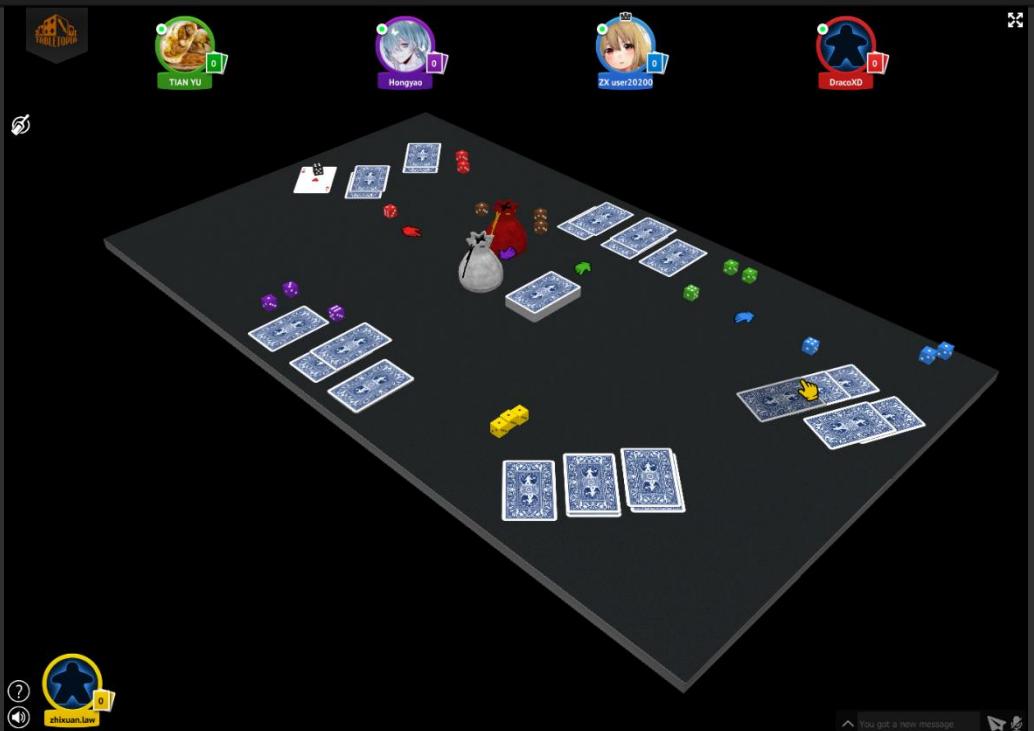
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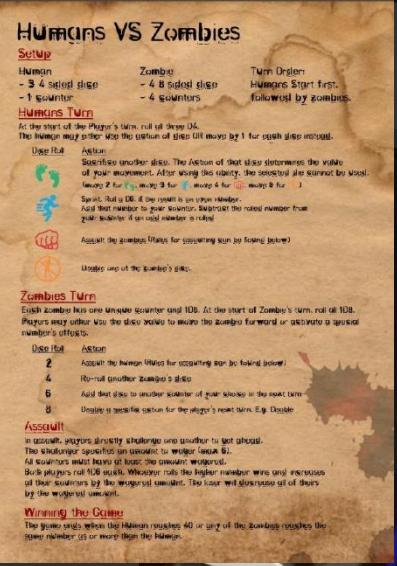
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- Great for photographs and live demos
- Costly
- Potential for injuries
- Only one set (limited edition)



Prototyping with Tabletopia



Dice Game

DES115 - Fall 2020



COOKADEL

DESIGNED BY troycupboardfullofboardgames

HOW TO PLAY

This game is played in turns in clockwise order.

On your turn:

- 1 Score a Recipe Card or 1 Action Card
- 2 Score a Recipe Card OR play an Action Card
- If you score a Recipe Card, draw 2 Ingredient Cards
- 3 Discard down to 5 Ingredient Cards and 1 Action Card

Game Over

Once a player has scored all 3 of his Recipe Cards, that player wins and the game ends.

OVERVIEW

Cookadel is a 3-6 player game in which players take turns adding ingredients, scoring recipe points and playing other action cards.

OBJECTIVE

The first to obtain all 3 of your Recipe Cards.

COMPONENT

- 15 Recipe Cards (3 Impact)
- 15 Ingredient Cards (5 Impact: Meat, Dairy, Flour, Vegetable, Seasoning)
- 12 Action Cards (3 Impact)

SETUP

- 1) Shuffle the Recipe Cards, Action Cards and Ingredient Cards and deal them out evenly.
- 2) Distribute 3 Recipe Cards, 4 Ingredient Cards and 1 Action Card to each player.
- 3) Ingredient Cards are held secret but Recipe Cards and Action Cards are placed faced up in front of each player.
- 4) Put a draw and discard pile for Ingredient Cards, and another for Recipe Cards.
- 5) Set aside the Recipe Cards that are not used; they will not be used in the game.

ACTION CARDS

Used to resources in the game to score Recipe Cards, draw Ingredient Cards, draw Recipe Cards and 3 Ingredient Cards at the end of your turn.

INGREDIENT CARDS

Used as resources in the game to score Recipe Cards, draw Recipe Cards, draw Ingredient Cards and 3 Ingredient Cards at the end of your turn.

RECIPE CARDS

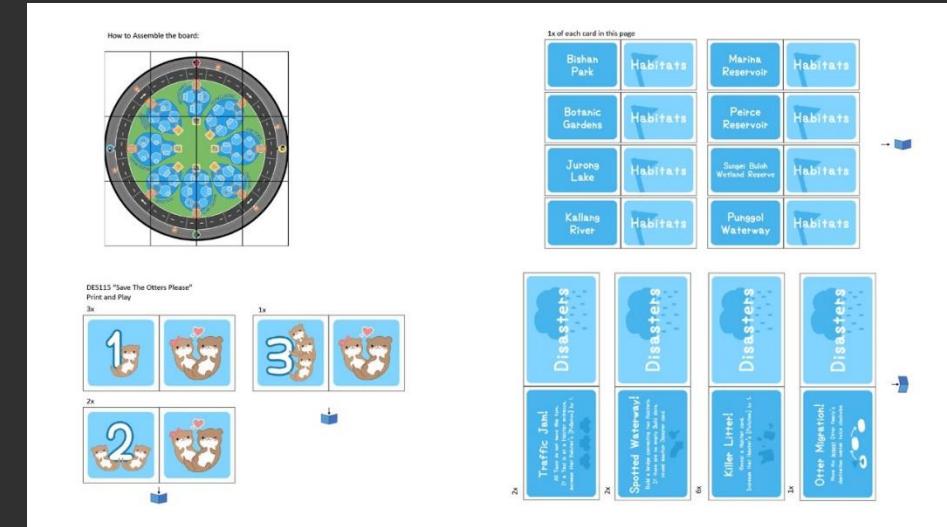
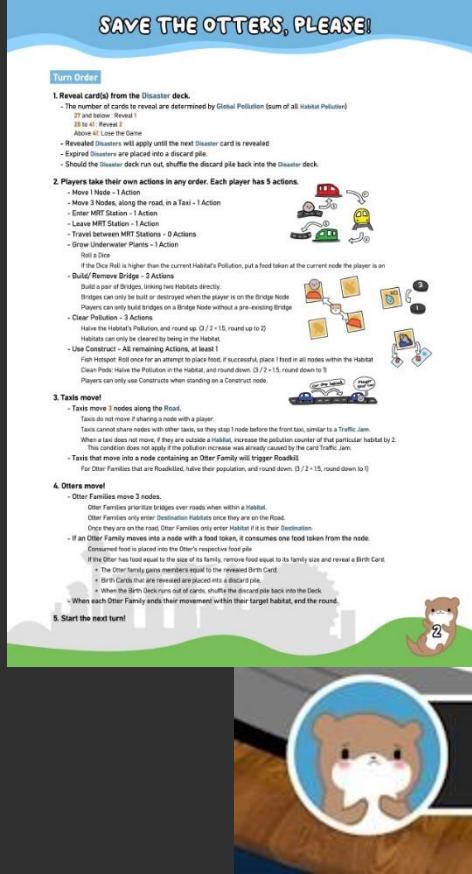
Used to claim a Recipe Card is located at the bottom of the card. Once you need, place it face up in front of you. You must have 3 Ingredient Cards ready for the recipe and flip it, then draw 2 Ingredient Cards. Recipe Cards should be placed in front of each player and discarded at the end of your turn.

Default setup



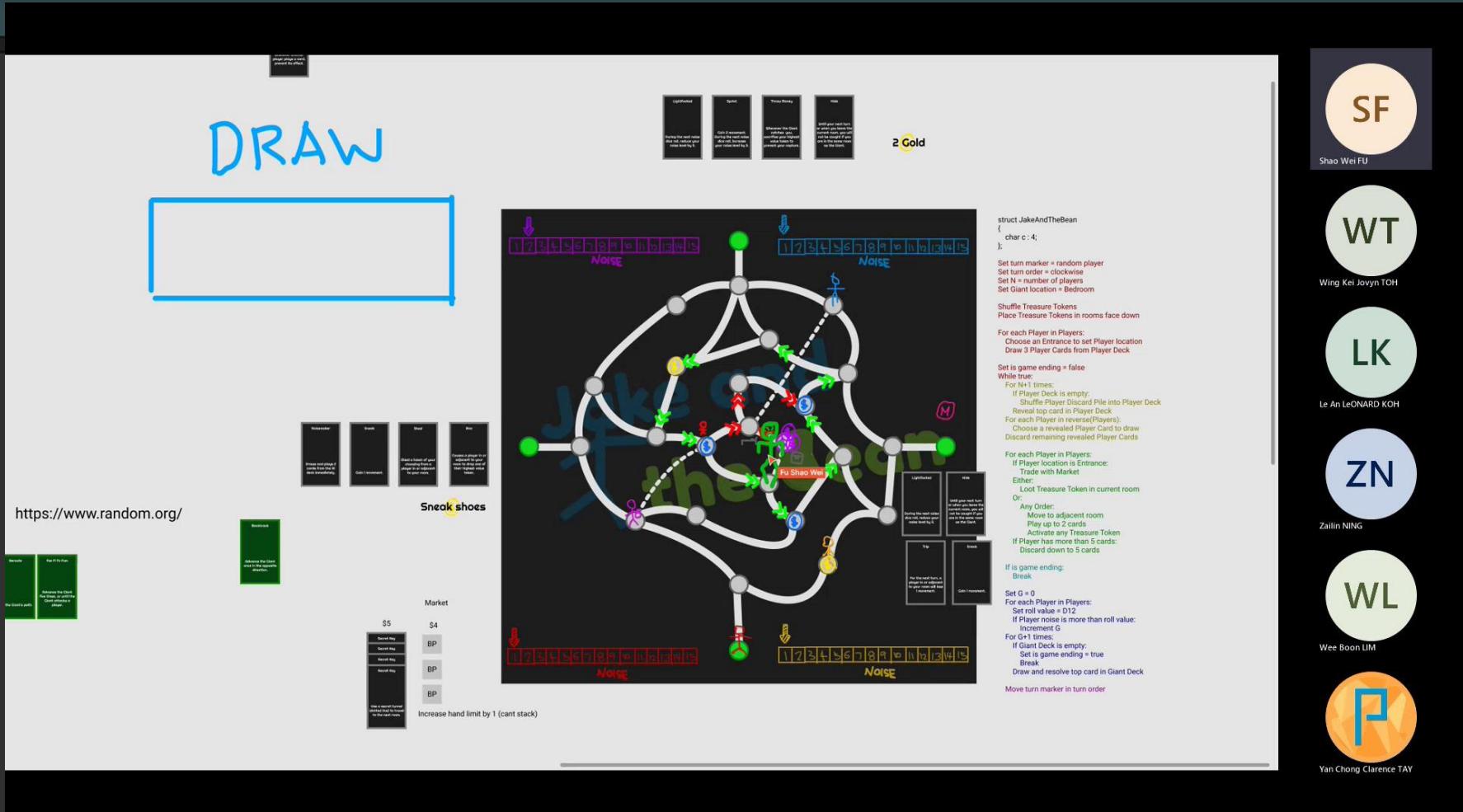
Card Game

DES115 - Fall 2020



Board Game

DES115 - Fall 2020



Collaborative prototyping in Figma before transferring to Tabletopia

CSD2510 - Fall 2021

Online Boardgame Development

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- Free!
- Tabletopia was clunky and slow
- Figma lacked boardgame features, such as deck shuffling
- Great for sharing and playtesting
- Online discussions weren't as effective, led to tensions

This Semester



The core mission of Legend Story Studios is "*to bring people together in the flesh and blood through the common language of playing great games.*" -2018

- Hybrid methodology
 - Develop and submit online
 - Playtest in person
- More structured, so no one gets left behind

Expectations



- Focus on DESIGN
 - Experience-centric
 - Limited weightage on Art and Coding skills
- DESIGN as a TEAM
 - 4 member teams
 - Analyse experiences as a group
 - Communicate and resolve ideas as a group
- DESIGN as Individuals
 - Individual components to supplement the group design

Timeline and Assessment

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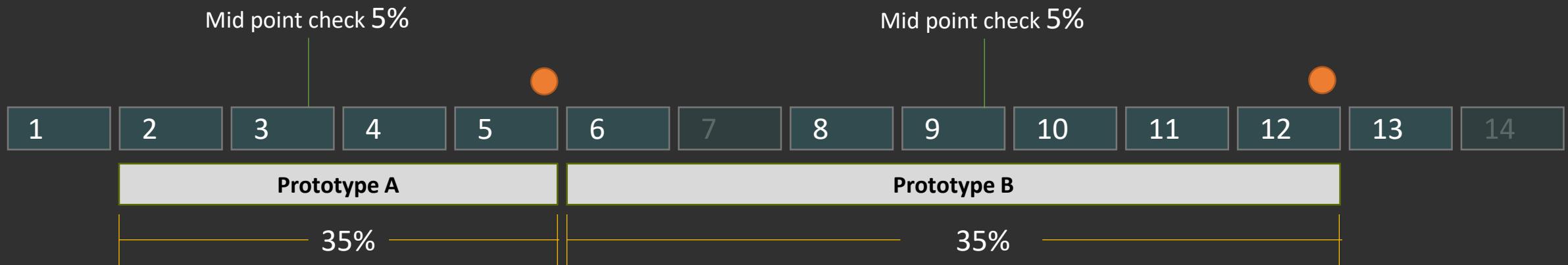
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Class Activity Participation

20%

Assignments



Prototype A – AN ADVENTURE IN 40 CARDS

- ❖ Group Work – 4 team members (*assemble by beginning of Week 2*)
- ❖ Pitch and prototype a solo(*1 player*)card game that takes place within a modern(*2023*)context(*please define*)
 - ❖ 1x 4 panel narrative pitch
 - ❖ 1x A4 page rules and setup
 - ❖ 40x card deck
 - ❖ Dice and tokens allowed, no more than 20 in total
 - ❖ No maps/board allowed; game is designed around mechanics and choices
 - ❖ Individual - 4x card DLC per team member (total 16)
 - ❖ More details in separate doc
- ❖ Submit by end of Week 5 (FIGMA/MOODLE)
- ❖ Live presentation and recording in Week 6

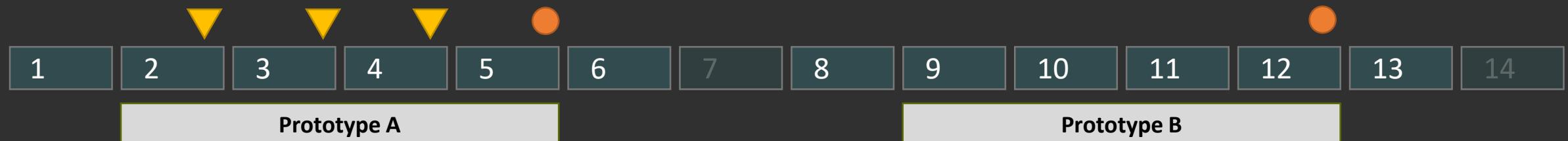
Assignments



Prototype B – 8 TURNS IN A 20 TILE WORLD

- ❖ Group Work – 4 team members (*assemble by beginning of Week 2, can be different from Prototype A group*)
- ❖ Pitch and prototype a solo(*1 player*) board game, constructed out of 20 tiles, where the gameplay has to be concluded in 8 turns
 - ❖ 1x A4 page narrative pitch
 - ❖ 1x A4 page rules and setup + Video playthrough
 - ❖ Up to 20x tile board pieces
 - ❖ 20x card deck limit
 - ❖ Dice and tokens allowed, no more than 40 in total
 - ❖ Individual - 1x board extension/mod DLC per team member (total 4)
 - ❖ More details in separate doc
- ❖ Submit by end of Week 12
- ❖ Live Presentation and Recording in Week 13

Development Timeline



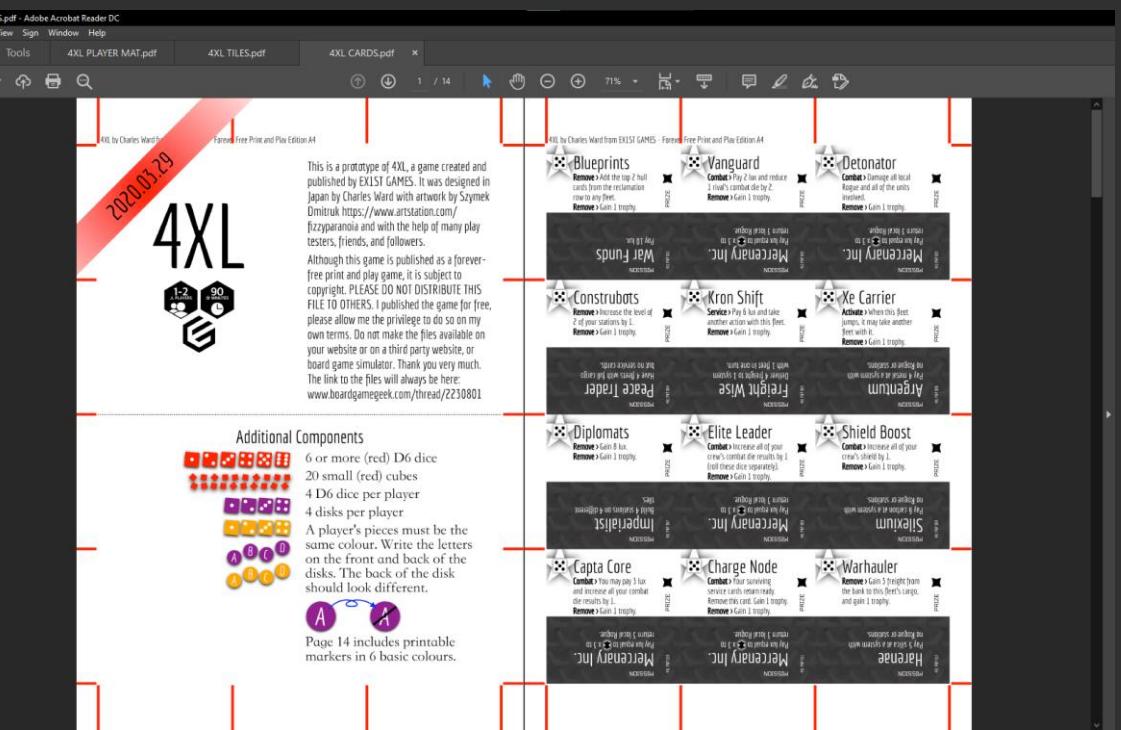
- Narrative Pitch ready by Week 2
- Basic Game Loop by Week 2 (10 cards)
- First draft of 40 cards by Week 3
- Playtest and polish in Week 4
- DLC + Deliverables in Week 5

Deliverables

The screenshot shows the Tabletopia website. At the top, there are navigation links: PLAYGROUND, WORKSHOP, and ABOUT. Below that is a header with HOME, FIND & PLAY, ALL GAMES, and PLAYERS. A 'Go Premium' button is also present. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'About Tabletopia'. It describes Tabletopia as a multi-platform digital environment for playing board games. It mentions the Steam integration, the online arena for playing board games just like in real life, and the unique editor for building new board games from scratch. It also highlights specialized tools for playtesting, demonstrating, and monetizing your games. A large 'On Hold' message is overlaid on the banner. Below the banner, it says '1000+ Board Games' and shows several thumbnail images of different board games.

TABLETOPIA

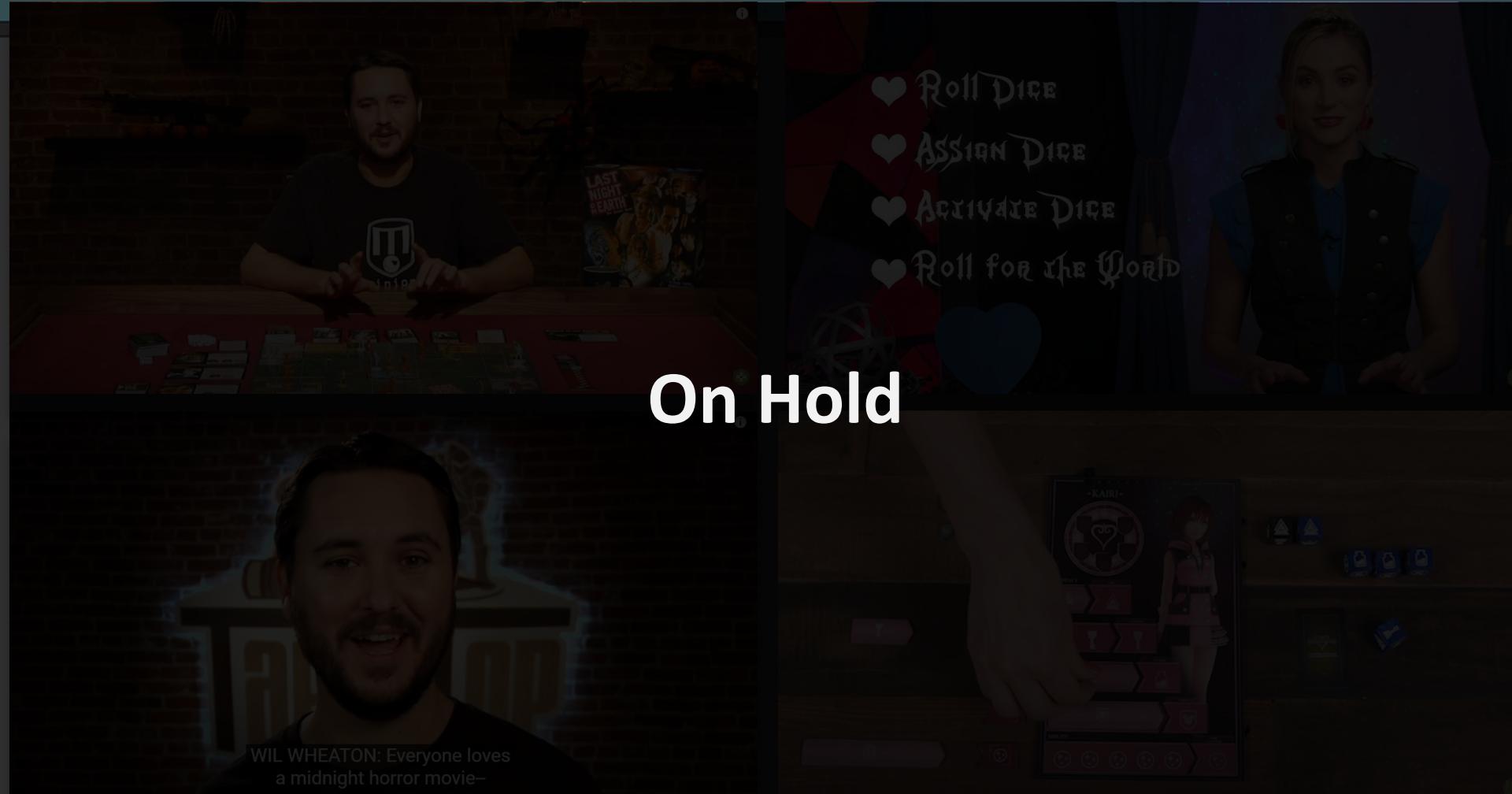
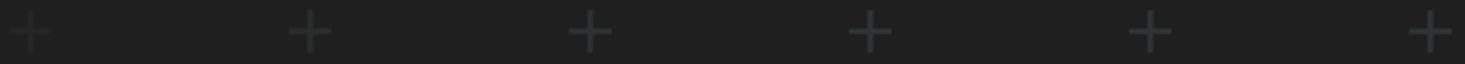
<https://tabletopia.com/>



PRINT & PLAY

<https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/2230787/2019-solitaire-print-and-play-contest>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNghPlwbYe8>

Deliverables



Video Introduction to your game

Q&A

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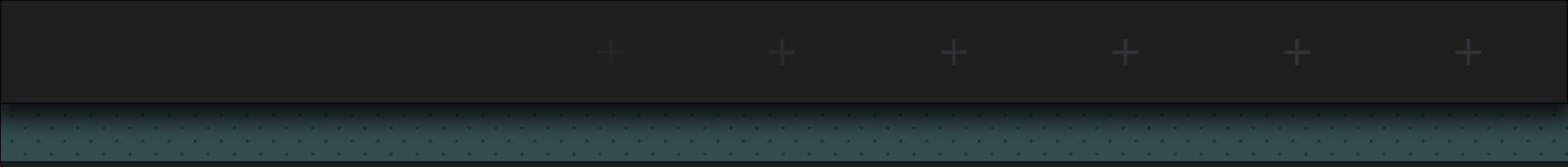
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Introduction to Game Design



Why tabletop gaming?
How is it relevant to software projects?



How will prototyping tabletop games help in game design?

- *Come up with 3 possible suggestions*

How will it NOT help in game design?

- *Come up with 3 possible suggestions*

Do these games look good to you?



Do these games look good to you?

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42/100

3/10

1/10

0/10



13/100

1/10

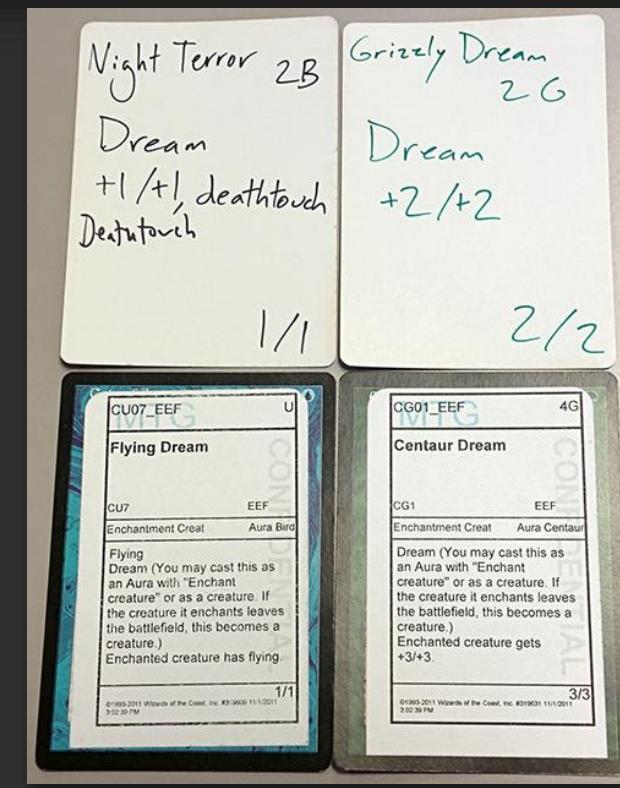
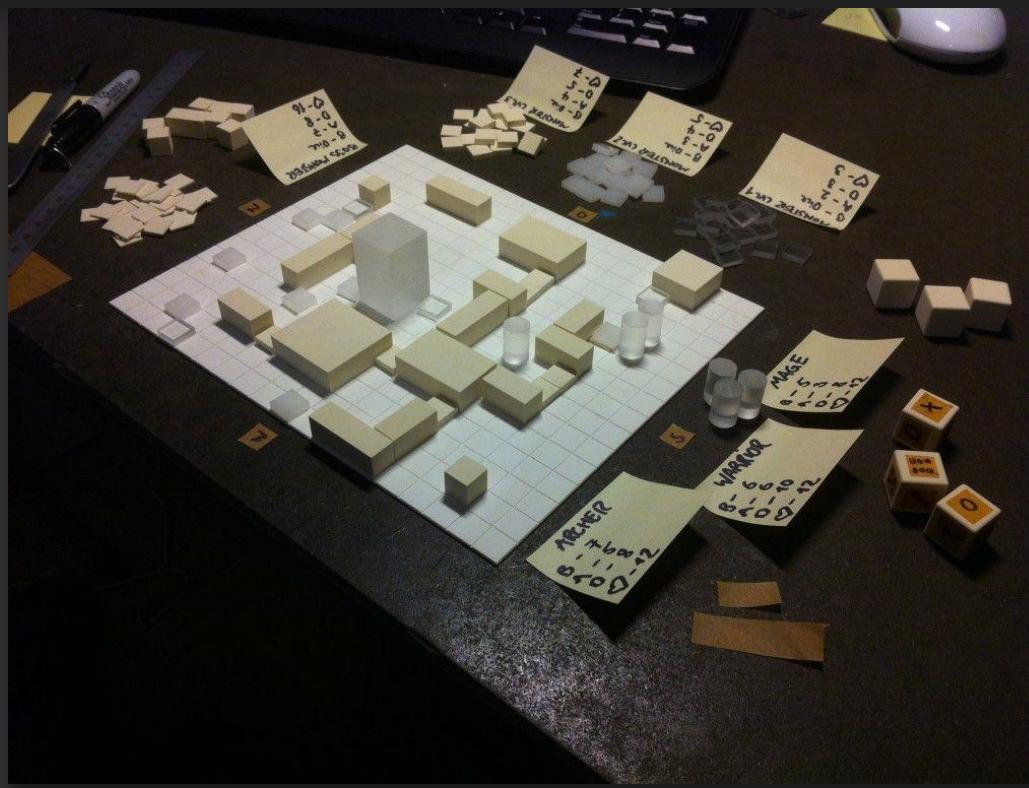
0.5/10

It has not gotten easier to make good games

Relevancy

Tabletop games help you understand pure design

- Not hidden by art or programming
- Bad gameplay mechanics reveal themselves very quickly



Relevancy



Playing tabletop games means YOU are the CPU:

- Executing all the task sequences
- Keeping track of all the moving parts
- Running all the calculations

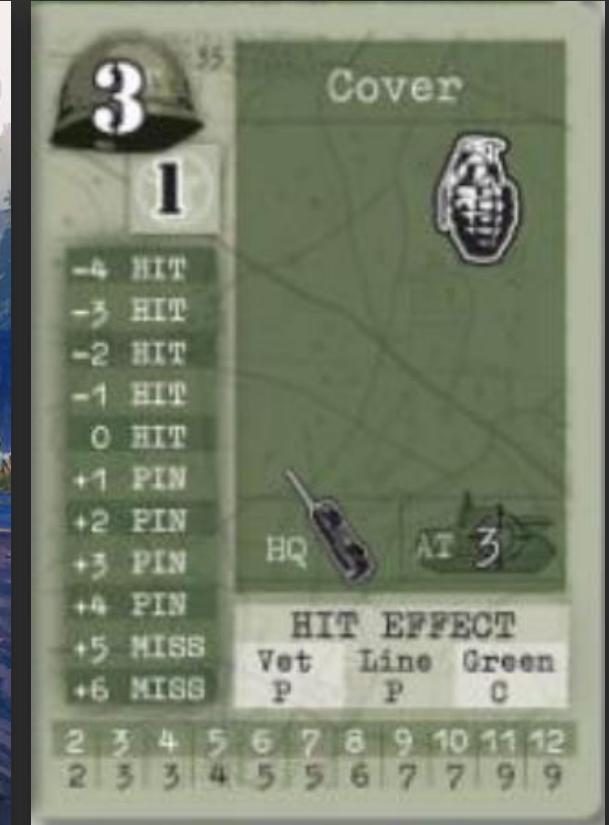
Relevancy



Tabletop games teach you basic game design skills

- How to represent complex ideas through simple metaphors
- Convert ideas into Game Mechanics and Dynamics
- Quick Iteration
- Prevents you from implementing over-complicated rules

Relevancy



How would you design a grenade throwing mechanic?

Core Principles of Game Design



Tabletop games enforce 3 core principles of game design:

What is the Player's **OBJECTIVE**?

- It should be clear, quantifiable and easy-to-understand

What are the **MECHANICS** for the players to gain their objective?

- The fewer mechanics the better, and they must be clearly linked to the player's objective

What is the **GAME LOOP**?

- Games progress through update loops, where the mechanic can be used, executed and evaluated for results

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Let's Play

Let's Play – EVEN MINUS ODDS

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Google 6d6 x | ⚡ | 🔍

All Images Shopping Videos News More Tools

Roll dice Share

6 1 1
5 5 6

Total **24**

▲ 4 □ 6 △ 8 ♦ 10 ◊ 12 ○ 20 | ±

Roll

▼

Let's Play – EVEN MINUS ODDS

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- Each player has six 6-sided dice. There are ten counters in the middle.
- Player with the most counters at the end of the game wins
- During their turn, each player will roll all the dice
- The total sum of the ODD dice values is deducted *from* the total sum of the EVEN dice values
- If you have a positive result, take that many counters from the middle
- If you have a negative result, return that many counters to the middle
- The game ends when no more counters remain in the middle

Anatomy of a Game Structure

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Set Up

Players have an idea of what's involved.

- Each player has six 6-sided dice. There are ten counters in the middle.
- Player with the most counters at the end of the game wins
- During their turn, each player will roll all the dice
- The total sum of the ODD dice values is deducted from the total sum of the EVEN dice values
- If you have a positive result, take that many counters from the middle
- If you have a negative result, return that many counters to the middle
- The game ends when no more counters remain in the middle

Anatomy of a Game Structure



- Each player has six 6-sided dice. There are ten counters in the middle.

Objective

Players understand what is the most important motivation

- Player with the most counters at the end of the game wins
- During their turn, each player will roll all the dice
- The total sum of the ODD dice values is deducted from the total sum of the EVEN dice values
- If you have a positive result, take that many counters from the middle
- If you have a negative result, return that many counters to the middle
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Anatomy of a Game Structure

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- The game ends when no more counters remain in the middle

Correlation

Players start to build a connection between the pieces and their objective. Now the question is how?

Anatomy of a Game Structure

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- Each player has six 6-sided dice. There are ten counters in the middle.
- Player with the most counters at the end of the game wins

Priority

When a player's action(s) has the highest preference

Mechanic

The action that players get to make, to interact with and change the game state

- During their turn, each player will roll all the dice
- The total sum of the ODD dice values is deducted from the total sum of the EVEN dice values
- If you have a positive result, take that many counters from the middle
- If you have a negative result, return that many counters to the middle
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Anatomy of a Game Structure

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- Each player has six 6-sided dice. There are ten counters in the middle.
- Player with the most counters at the end of the game wins
- During their turn, each player will roll all the dice

Resolution

A system of rules and events that takes inputs and returns an output

- The total sum of the ODD dice values is deducted from the total sum of the EVEN dice values
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- The game ends when no more counters remain in the middle

Anatomy of a Game Structure

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- If you have a positive result, take that many counters from the middle
- If you have a negative result, return that many counters to the middle

Conclusion

The mechanism that stops all gameplay, and starts the identification of the winner*

- The game ends when no more counters remain in the middle

*Did you think “Even Minus Odds”
relied on “luck” or “skill/strategy”?*

*Did you think the mechanics of
“Even Minus Odds” were “good”?*

What makes a good Game Mechanic?

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Essence of good Game Mechanics:

- Create opportunities for players to make meaningful decisions

What is a meaningful decision?

- It has to affect the outcome of the game

Let's Play – SHIP CAPTAIN CREW

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- Five 6-sided dice (5d6) for each player
- Player with the most points at the end of 3 rounds wins
- Player gets to roll dice at least once, and up to 3 times per round
- For the first roll, player must roll ALL the dice
- After which, player decides which dice to roll, and which to “freeze”, or whether to end the round
- The numbers “6”, “5” and “4” must appear and be “frozen”, before points can be tabulated
- Once “6,5,4” have been assembled, the remaining two dice values are added for points
- The round ends after 3 rolls, or when the player ends the round



Must have



Sum of these two = points

Let's Play – SHIP CAPTAIN CREW

First Roll - ALL



Second Roll – 4d6



Third Roll – 1d6



7
Final Score

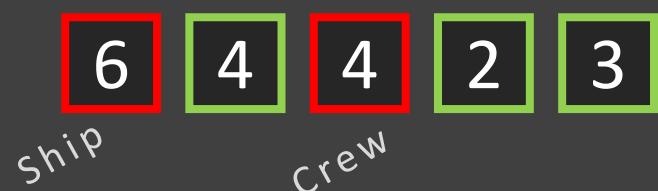
First Roll - ALL



Second Roll – 4d6



Third Roll – 2d6

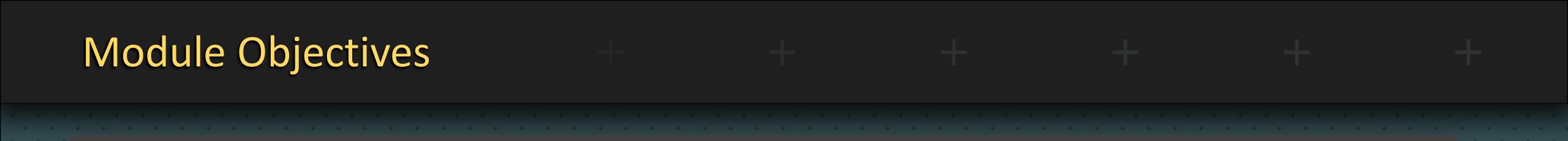


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Final Score

*Did you think “Ship Captain Crew”
relied on “luck” or “skill/strategy”?*

*Did you think the mechanics of
“Ship Captain Crew” were “good”?*

Module Objectives



DESIGN SKILLS

- Good, calculated use of randomness/luck
- Creating opportunities for players to make meaningful, strategic choices

A few limitations for this module

Limitations

Certain mechanics will not be allowed during this module:

- Social deduction , Negotiations, Open interpretations, Dexterity based, etc



Limitations

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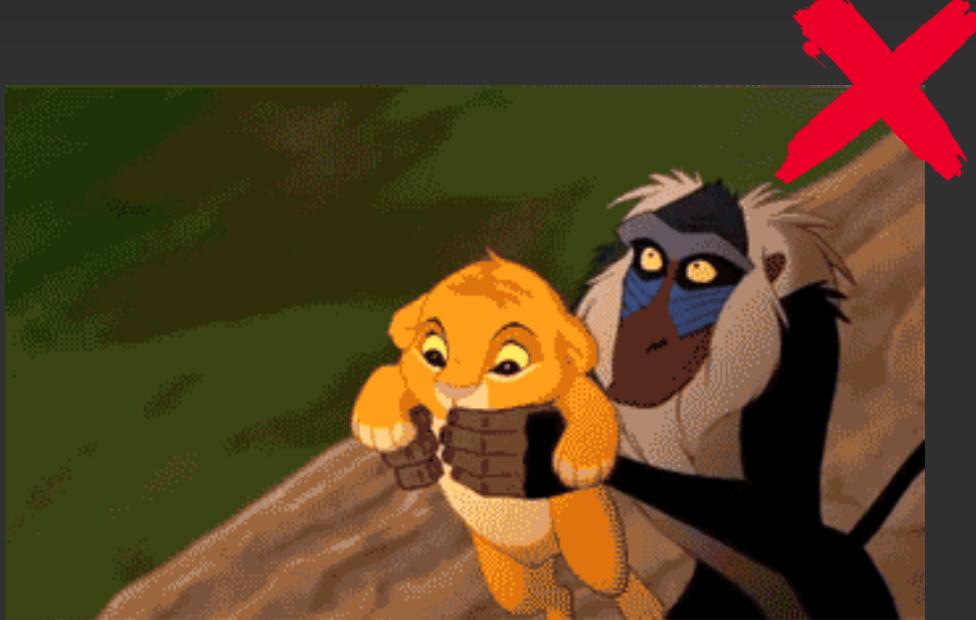
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Certain qualities that will be frowned upon:

- Absolute randomness where players have no control over the outcome of the game, winning/losing the game by pure luck



- And more to come...

Module Matters



- Lectures – THURSDAYS (9am – 11am)
 - LT 5A
 - Topic presentations/discussions
 - Play sessions
- Labs – TUESDAYS (9am – 12pm)
 - PASCAL
 - Work on your assignment
 - Design challenges

Digital Tools:

- FIGMA - <https://www.figma.com/>
- Tabletopia account: <https://tabletopia.com/>
- Boardgame Arena account: <https://boardgamearena.com/join>

Other tools:

- Screenshot : <https://screentop.gg/>
- Tabletop Simulator (SGD\$20, 50% during sales)
- OBS Studio: <https://obsproject.com/>

Before this Friday



- Register a Figma account
- Do not form teams just yet, wait until end of Thursday lab
- Check out some card games!
 - https://store.steampowered.com/app/1367020/Storybook_Brawl/
 - https://store.steampowered.com/app/544810/KARDS_The_WWII_Card_Game/
 - https://store.steampowered.com/app/1449850/YuGiOh_Master_Duel/
 - https://store.steampowered.com/app/1284410/GWENT_The_Witcher_Card_Game/
 - <https://magic.wizards.com/en/mtgarena>
 - <https://www.pokemon.com/us/pokemon-tcg/play-online/>

Q&A

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Let's go back further into the past

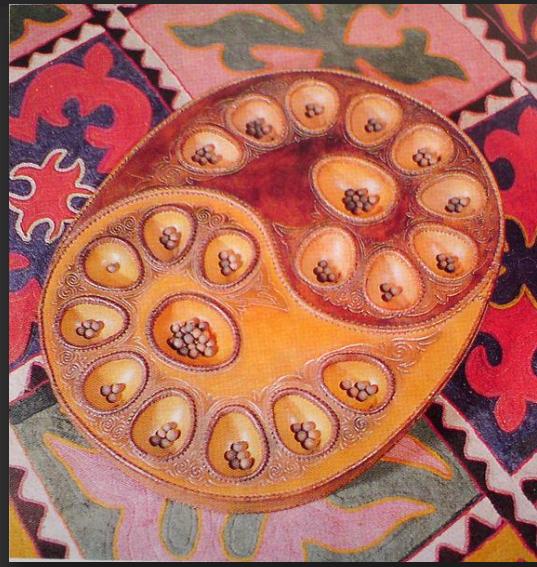
History of Games

Mancala

- Turn-based strategy game played with small game bits dropped into rows of holes
- Found all over the world - Southern India, Africa, Southeast Asia, Phillipines, Greece, Egypt, Lebanon, etc



Congkak, Malaysia



Toguz korgool,
Kyrgyzstan



Ivory board, Spain

History of Games

Mancala

- Cloth and wood does not last very long, but how about rock?



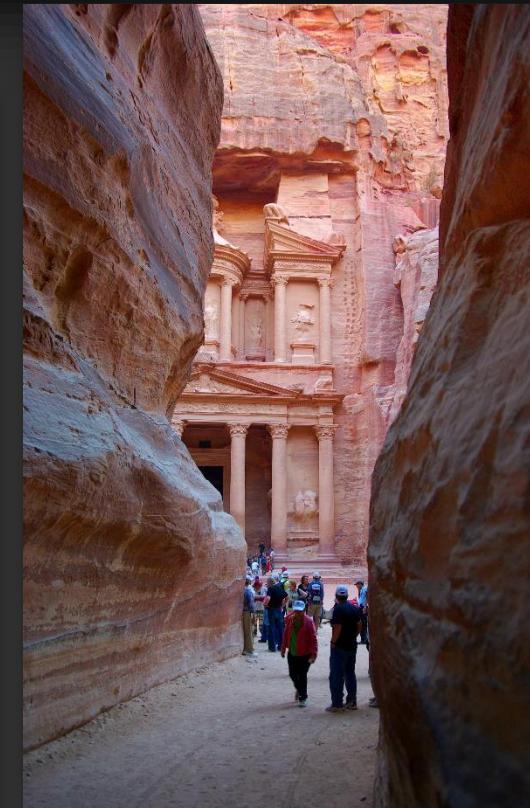
Mancala

- Some historians believe the game dates back to 6000 BCE by the ancient Nabateans

At Umm el-Bayyārah (biblical Sela), the great mountain city that dominated the basin in which the Nabatean city of Petra was built, game boards were discovered carved

in rock. These game boards are made up of three rectangles within which are parallel rows of nine to eleven smaller rectangles (Morton, p. 35 fig. 6). It is believed that the game played on these boards may have been an ancient Nabatean or possibly pre-Nabatean version of the modern "mancala" game (Matson, p. 139), which is still played by the bedouin of the district (Morton, pp. 33f.). Another game played on a game board was chess, known to have been played in Babylonia and Elam from the 3rd millennium B.C. and possibly known in Palestine as well. Excavations at numerous Palestinian sites have brought to light what must be considered toys of the young, such as rattles, marbles, animals (with wheels), chariots, whistles, dolls, etc. These have survived because they were made of baked clay.

Although archeology has provided much information concerning games that were known in biblical times, information on the rules that governed their playing is still lacking.



History of Games

Human Timeline

- Time: The History & Future of Everything | Kurzgesagt :
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TbUxGZtwGI>



History of Games



Games as Past-time

- Imagine, if you can, a time long before even the wheel was invented
- Groups of humans banding together to survive; hiding in a cave for safety
- Imagine bringing up a group of children in these times
- How many of us could survive an hour, a day without our cellphones and internet?



Games as Past-time

- Games were used as a way to pass time, create excitement, communicate strategy, etc



The Game of Knucklebones, *Astragalois*

Games as Past-time

- Knucklebones of sheep with inset bits to indicate a value for each side



The Game of Knucklebones, *Astragaloī*

Games as Past-time

- Roman Dice



How Games are taught

- Dr Irving Finkel, Assistant Keeper, British Museum



How Games are taught



History of Games

How Games are taught

- Children and adults learn even complex games naturally by watching and then trying to play
- Details, special rules, exceptions are explained along the way

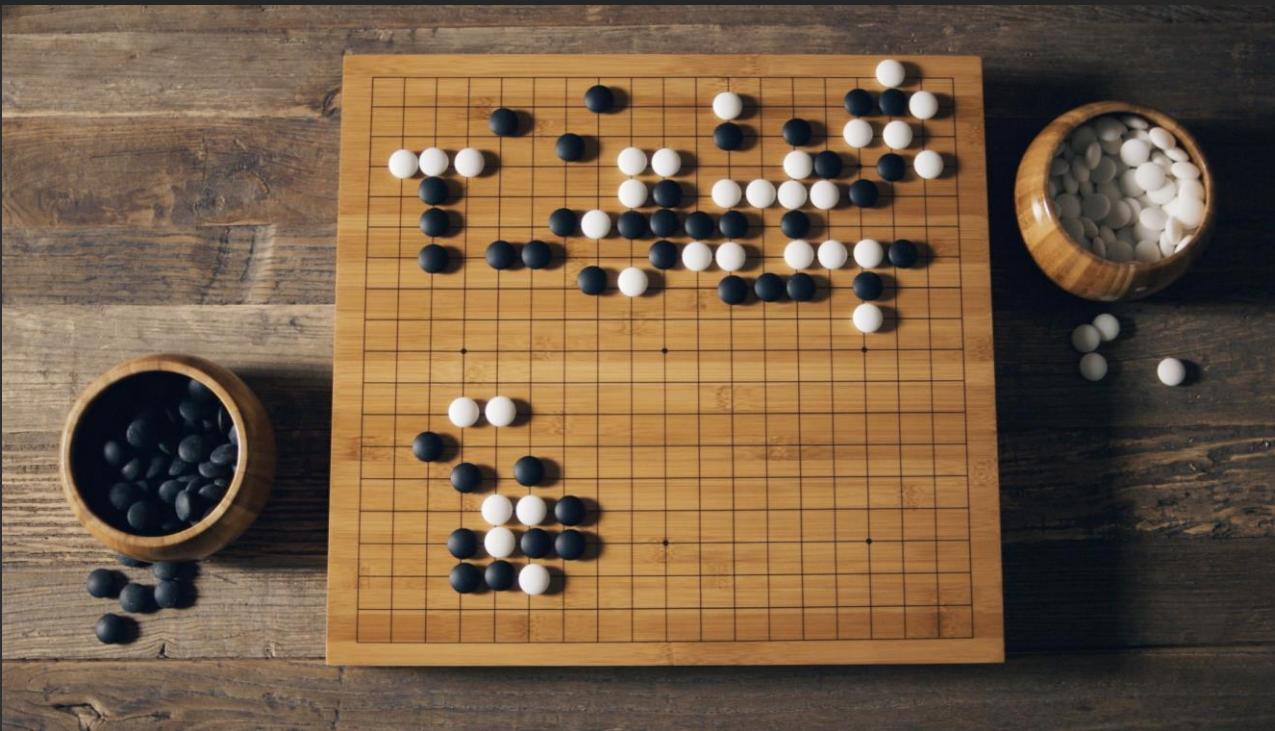


History of Games

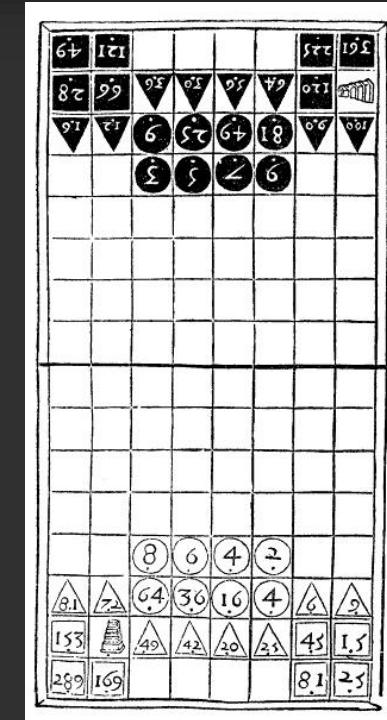


How Games are taught

- “Good” games tend to spread easily and survive a long time with the core mechanics intact
- “Bad” games tend to have bad or overly complex rules, making it difficult to learn, much less play



Game of Go, China, ~2500 BCE



Rithmomachy, Europe, 1013

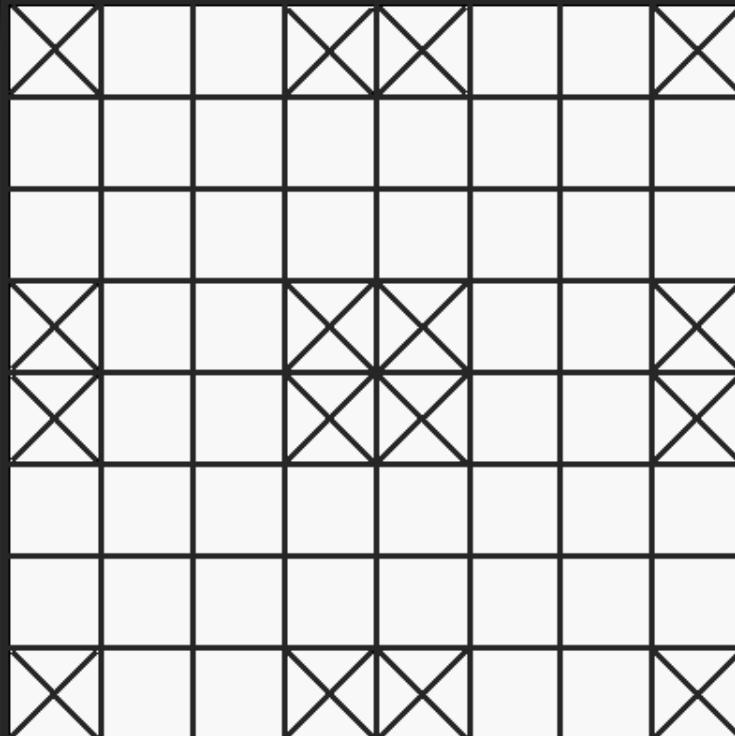


Variance and Dissemination

- Friends, Family, Tribe
- Soldiers, Mercenaries
- Travelling Merchants and Traders
- Sailors
- Missionaries
- Slaves
- Refugees

Variance and Dissemination

- The game of Chess has its roots in an ancient Indian game called Chaturanga
- 6th century AD, Gupta Empire, India



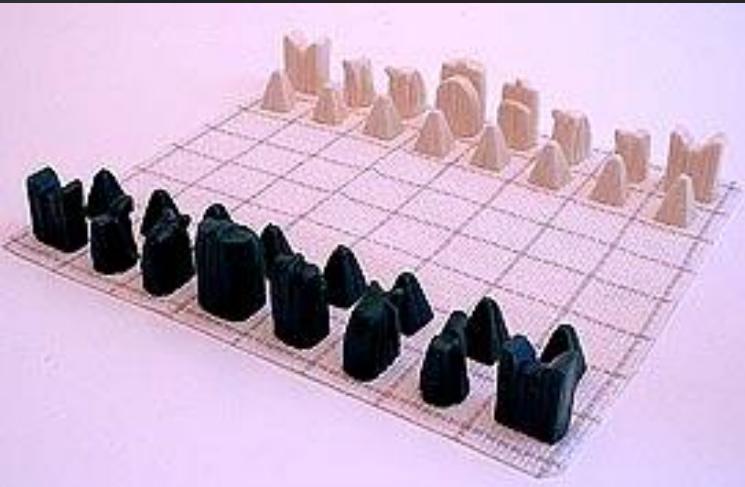
8x8 Ashtapada board



4-player game, Chaturanga

Variance and Dissemination

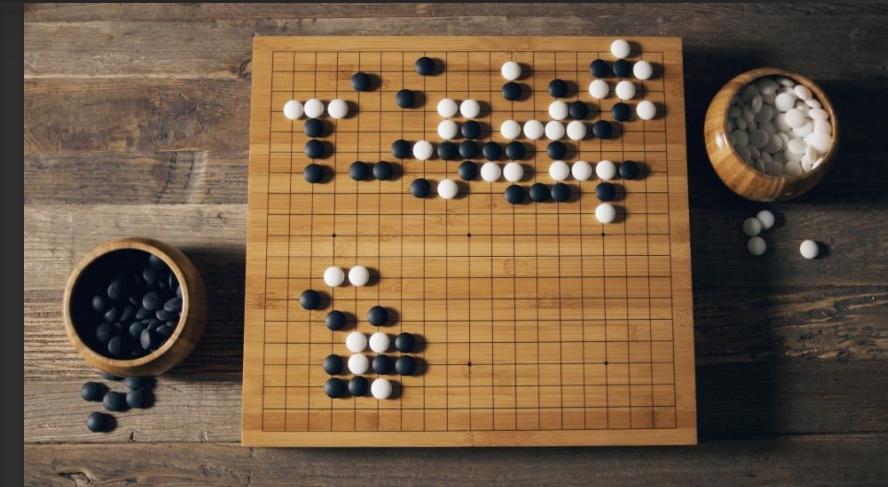
- The game spread to the middle east and to the European nations
- The hierarchical symbolism and themes changed according to the culture, sometimes variants of the rules emerged as well
 - *Some regarded the pieces as idols, so the pieces became more abstract; some felt the theme of battle is too violent, so “attacking” became “surrounding”; during a period of powerful queens, the most powerful chess piece was added to the board*



Persian



Europe



Asia

History of Games

Variance and Dissemination



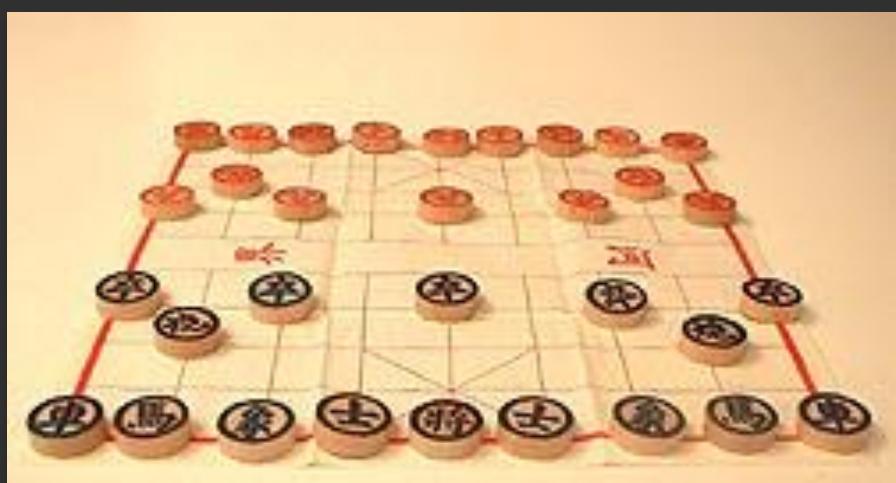
Thailand



Myanmar



Viking



China



Japan



Europe

Variance and Dissemination

- People make rules, so people can change rules
- Sometimes, little by little, by unravelling its complexity slowly
- Sometimes, rules are changed abruptly to get “updated” to new ideas



History of Games

The Next Chapter in Games

- What games mean to us as human beings, in our culture, in our homes, in our times

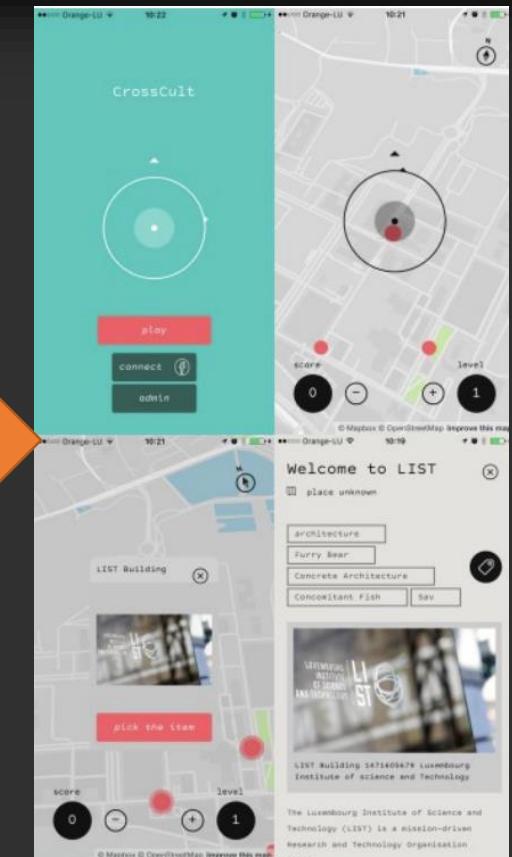


17:09 Skoshuke : always tip the supports imo
21:05 Handyandy58 : love playing Zen on this map
22:39 mastercola9612 : i need healing 🦶
22:53 Mr_Sujano : What is up beautiful people o @Kotaku !
22:55 Mr_Sujano : hey all
23:39 mastercola9612 : hey @Mr_Sujano
26:00 ddgbooks : So close.
27:13 Handyandy58 : it looks good
27:39 mastercola9612 : 🐕 🐕 🐕
28:38 Skoshuke : hell yeah congrats dota 2
28:41 Handyandy58 : the question of what someone "should be playing" is so interesting to me. i get you guys work in games media, but like riley ha been playing witcher 3 all year so *shrug*
28:57 Skoshuke : imo Turbo mode makes Dota the GotY
36:58 Handyandy58 : i think i've eaten my weight in christmas cookies this week
39:30 Skoshuke : congrats on becoming a christmas

History of Games

Tabletop games can help improve your game development processes

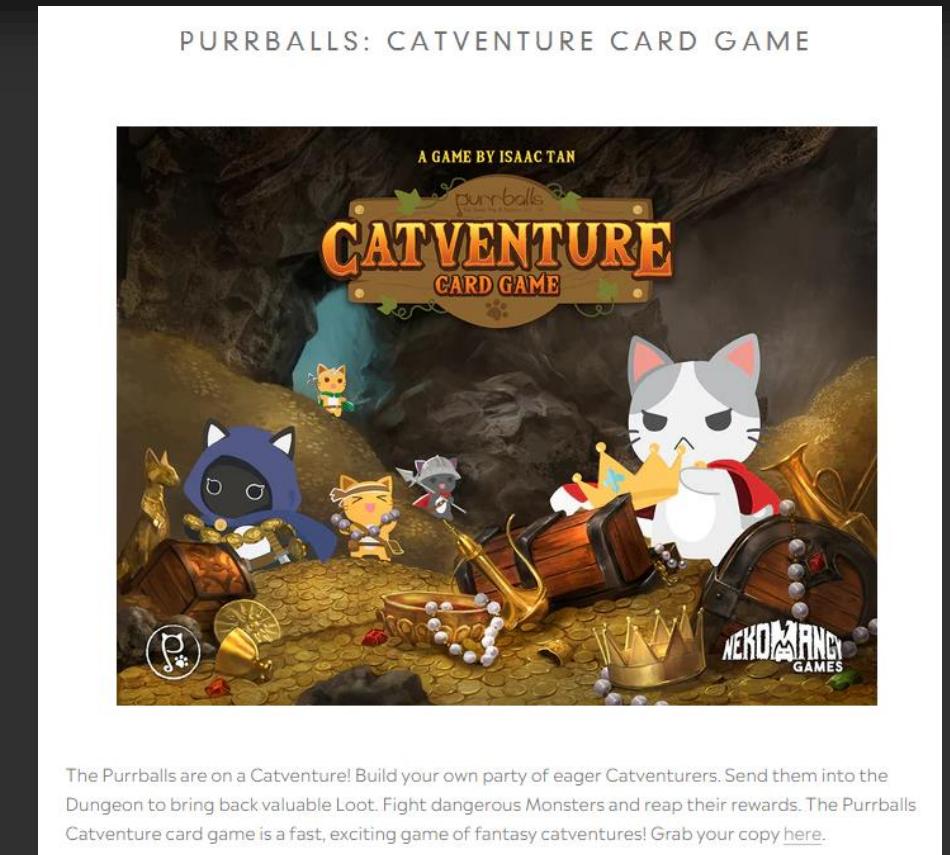
<https://www.institutedigitalgames.com/blog/chi-case-study-on-board-game-prototyping/>



History of Games

Tabletop games can make you money

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/apr/01/sales-of-board-games-and-jigsaws-soar-during-coronavirus-lockdown>



The Purrballs are on a Catventure! Build your own party of eager Catventurers. Send them into the Dungeon to bring back valuable Loot. Fight dangerous Monsters and reap their rewards. The Purrballs Catventure card game is a fast, exciting game of fantasy catventures! Grab your copy [here](#).

Tabletop games can help teach things to people

<https://mirm-pitt.net/you-make-me-sick-board-game-teaches-students-about-covid-19/>

"You Make Me Sick" Board Game Teaches Students About COVID-19

COVID-19 is highlighted in a newly updated board game, "You Make Me Sick," to teach students about the immune system, infectious diseases, and good health practices.

Designed by Duquesne University's Partnership in Education, the game is available as a [free download](#) and optimized to print from the organization's website.

With funding from a Science Education Partnership Award from the National Institutes of Health, "You Make Me Sick" challenges players to successfully fight off and recover from common infectious diseases by learning about immunology and healthy habits. The game is designed for two to four players and recommended for children age 11-15 years old. The game provides a learning opportunity for the whole family and can be used by parents who are home schooling their children during the coronavirus pandemic.



"The game offers instructors and parents a fun, educational way to teach children steps on how to prevent the spread of diseases, including COVID-19," said McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine affiliated faculty member **John Pollock, PhD**, professor of biological sciences at Duquesne University and the game's creator. "The game informs players about bacteria and viruses, and highlights the importance of healthy habits, such as good nutrition and exercise, to successfully fight and prevent disease."

An award-winning educator, Dr. Pollock originally developed the game in 2007 and updated it now with information about the coronavirus.

History of Games

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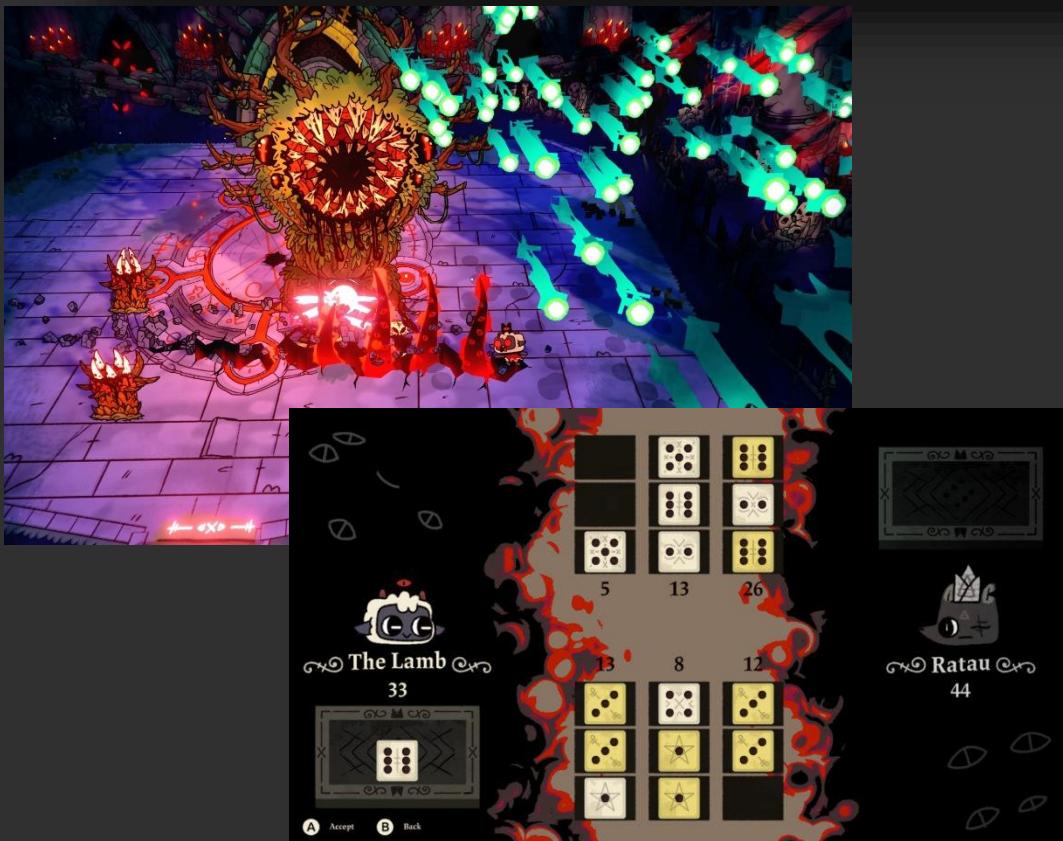
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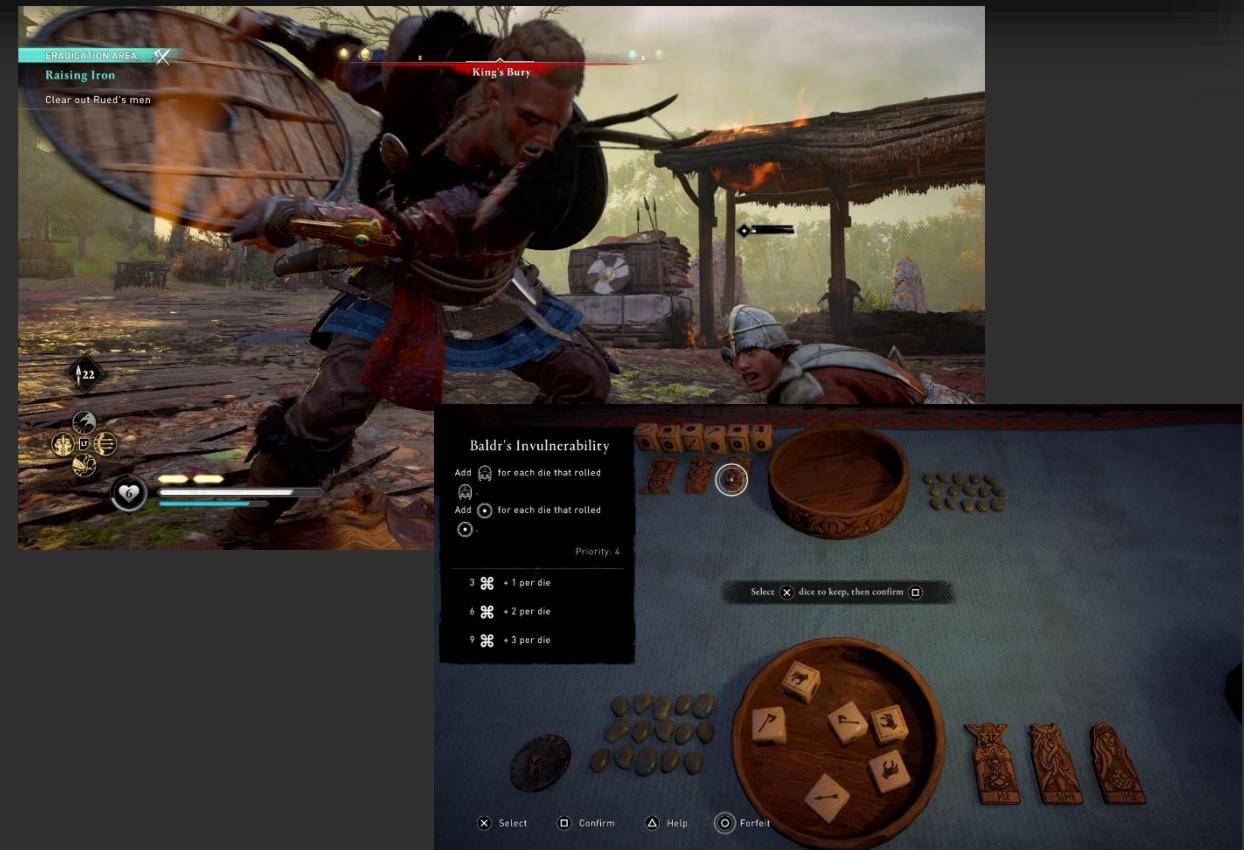
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Tabletop games are fun on consoles too (essential even)



Knucklebones, Cult of the Lamb



Orlog, Assassin's Creed Valhalla

History of Games

Tabletop games can help with “digital detox”, connect people with each other, connect developers with their love of games

Digital detox and post-pandemic catch-ups fuel board game boom

Once niche activity enjoys renaissance as families and friends meet up for slower, more mindful ‘logged-off’ activities



Oooh, a six! Board games are making a comeback as families and friends opt for face-to-face fun. Photograph: ICIMAGE/Alamy

From “Dirty Scrabble” dating to children’s board game afternoons, fans of living room games are taking their love affair into the real world as the desire for a [digital detox](#) and post-pandemic catch-up with friends and family fuels a boom in events.

In the weeks after the pandemic took hold in March 2020, sales of board games, card games and jigsaw puzzles soared as [families stocked up on in-home entertainment](#) to while away lockdown.



TIM SCHAFER
DOUBLE FINE CEO



History of Games

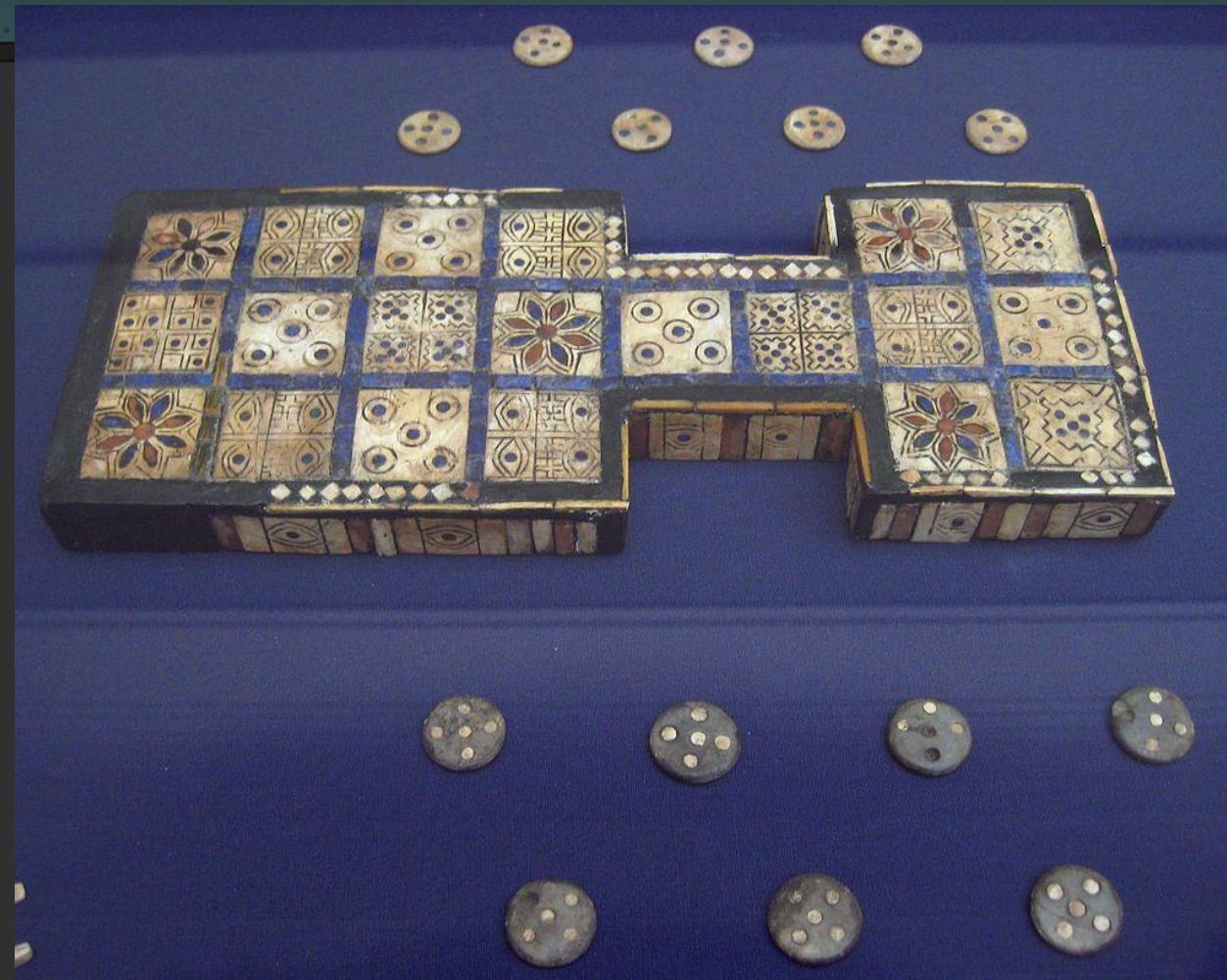


CSD2511?

History of Games



Rules Tablet, 177 BC



Royal Game of Ur gameboard, 2600-2400 BC, Middle East

Hope you enjoy this module!

End

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Links



Royal Game of UR

- <https://youtu.be/WZskjLq040I>

Can Video Game Developers Make a Board Game?

- <https://youtu.be/wE0xC4FEbc8>

Devs Play Board Game Special – Cthulhu Wars

- <https://youtu.be/IwHafsImrh0>

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