



Lunar Hunt

RPG Game

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Report Submission Form

Lunar Hunt

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Toward fulfillment of the requirement for Bachelor of Science Degree in
Digital Media Program at
Prince of Songkla University International College, Hat Yai Campus

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Chapter 1 Executive Summary

1. Project title

Lunar Hunt

2. Project duration

3 months

3. Principle investigator

Prince of Songkhla University International College (PSUIC)

4. Project advisor / co-advisor

Project Advisor: Aj. Jittrapol Intarasirisawat

Co-advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Athitaya Nichot

5. Keywords

Misinformation; RPG games, Fake news, Serious games, Pixel arts;

6. Research Area

Game development; Pixel Art; Anime style; Misinformation;

7. Abstract

“Lunar Hunt” is a game project that reminds players about the world of misinformation. As of today, people are exposed and drowned in a lot of information. Thus, it is common that information is often manipulated to take advantage of easily deceived people. To elaborate, misinformation can spread through social media to lure other people like children and teenagers. These young adults may lack critical thinking skills to decide whether the information received can be trusted or not. Therefore, this game project aims to raise awareness and understanding of fake news and tackle such misinformation. The game will be a 2D RPG game with a story of a young wolf who tries to avenge his father’s death. His journey to find the truth after his late father’s death is the battle against fake news and misinformation. The gameplay mechanics are designed to test the player’s cognitive ability to better tackle misinformation using evidence-based decision making.

Chapter 2 Project Description

1. Project title

Lunar Hunt

2. Principle investigator

Mr. Nattapat Ratnui 6111610007

Mr. Tonnam Somchanakij 6111610008

3. Introduction to the research problem and its significance

One of the problems of today's world is the abundance of information that everyone has to consume. Naturally, not all information is perfect. Information can be misleading to target an unsuspecting victim or the information could stem from an unfiltered misunderstanding, which then spreads to others. One of the solutions to solve this problem is to create more awareness. Thus, game project Lunar Hunt, the 2D role-playing game, will help players become safer from fake news. The game can do so by providing game features to help with investigating information.

4. Literature review

4.1 Misinformation and fake news

4.1.1 The possible society outcomes of misinformation

Previous research studies (Anderson & Rainie, 2017) have shown that there are many outlooks on how society will handle online misinformation. These outlooks came from the 1,116 respondents who were asked what will happen in the next ten years in the world of online information whether fake news will take over the internet, or there will be effective approaches to encounter fake news. This research has evaluated the respondents' explanation into the following five different outcomes, including, "Not improve because of human nature", "Not improve because technology becomes more challenging", "Improve because technology helps filter misinformation", "Improve because people are adaptable", and "It is up to funding support

on the production of accurate news and educating public how to identify fake news and reliable sources of information.

Based on the findings in this article, project Lunar Hunt was initiated with the aim to help society fight against fake news. A serious game will be developed to raise public awareness about the prevalence and the effects of fake news and encourage players to rely on evidence when deciding whether the information can be trusted.

4.2 Investigation method

4.2.1 Information horizon

From the study, this type of information research is very efficient compared to other information research methods. It gives users a glance of information connected, making it less effort to use. (SonnenWald et al., 2001)

4.3 Games for education

4.3.1 Serious Games

As defined from Classifying Serious Games: the G/P/S model (Djaouti et al., 2011), Serious Games are games developed to connect knowledge and technology for a serious solution. An example of serious games for education is Lure of the Labyrinth. The game is a mathematical multiplayer online game designed for the classroom to teach children mathematics. Serious games were also used in healthcare. For instance, Fatworld is a management game, in which players need to manage the daily life of their avatar to maintain a good healthy life. September 12th was developed for a political purpose. The game basically simulates possible consequences of players' actions where they may choose to kill innocent villagers instead of terrorists.

4.3.2 History of games and education

The research paper Video Games in Education (Squire, 2003) has described that games have been used for educational purposes throughout history. Examples of serious games include AlgaBlaster, Reader Rabbit, or Knowledge Munchers which were used to improve the study's exercises. Video games in simulation and strategy games also help learners understand a concept of system according to reality. High detailed simulation games can be used in riskier practices

such as military training for pilots. Low detailed simulation games are helpful to present important concepts in a more simple approach such as SimEarth which simulates natural systems of the earth. The same research mentions other academic work by Dominick on videogames and violence stated there has been no clear evidence of the game's side effects that playing games will lead to violence.

4.3.3 Potential of educational games

In *Harnessing The Power of Games in Education* (Squire & Jenkins, 2003), the research gives five examples of video games for education. The first example is Civilization III to learn about history. The second example is to use video games to improve historical thinking by role-playing as people from historical time. Third example is Prospero's Island, a historical game based on the story by Shakespeare which encourages literary analysis. The Fourth example is to include the surrounding environment as gameplay for video games which can be achieved with tools such as PDA. Fifth example is the game called "Biohazard: Hot Zone", where an emergency situation, such as the gas attack in shopping malls, is simulated. The game can be potentially used to teach players how to handle such a critical situation.

4.3.4 Using narrative forms from role-playing games to education

In a research paper titled *Linking capabilities to functionings: adapting narrative forms from role-playing games to education* (Cherville, 2016), the study has implemented the education system to mimic how role-playing games progress its objective. The teacher assumes an NPC's role, who gives out different objectives for students to complete according to what previous tasks they have done. The scores' evaluations are used as experience points where students will keep collecting them to level up, similar to role-playing games.

4.4 Related works

4.4.1 The Bad News game

The bad news game is an interactive online website game. This game allows players to assume the role of misinformation creator. The Gameplay is a parody of using popular Twitter apps to spread false information. The player can choose between 2 options to interact with the game. (Roozenbeek & van der Linden, 2019)

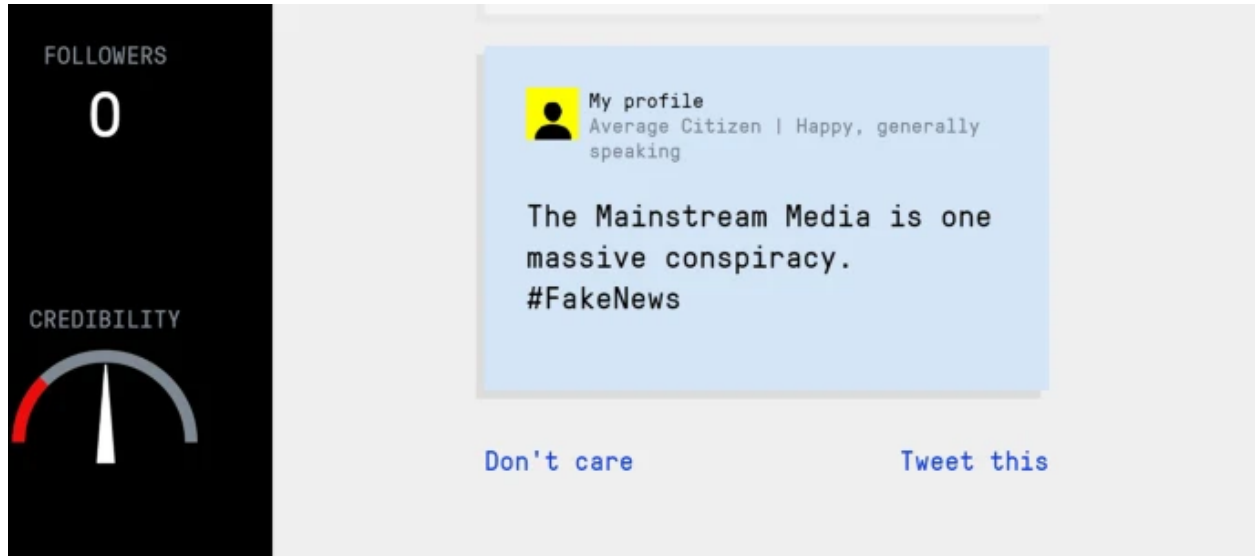


Figure 1: The Bad News game

In comparison to our game, the Bad News game was designed as a web game which controls how to spread fake news like using social media applications while Lunar Hunt will be a role-playing game in which players will roleplay the main character to find evidence. Lunar Hunt will use more in-game environment and game mechanics that most people are familiar with as compared to the Bad News game. The following table concludes the comparison.

The Bad News game	Lunar Hunt
Web-like browsing	Role-Playing Game
Learn by making fake news	Learn by finding evidence
Choose between 2 options to play	Several input needed ie. walking, interacting.

Table 1: Comparison between Fake It To Make It and Lunar Hunt

4.4.2 Factitious

Factitious, released by the American University Game Lab, focuses on testing players to find out if an online news is real or fake. The gameplay includes a gesture interface to swipe right for real and left for fake, showing hints of a news source to help players detect fake news. (How the Factitious news game helps people learn to detect fake news, Hone, 2018)



Figure 2: Factitious gameplay

In comparison to our game, Factitious was designed as a web game which feels like reading news on mobile devices while Lunar Hunt will be a role-playing game in which players will roleplay the main character to find evidence. Lunar Hunt will use more in-game environment and game mechanics that most people are familiar with as compared to Factitious. The following table concludes the comparison.

Factitious	Lunar Hunt
Reading news in mobile device	Role-Playing Game
Learn by spotting fake news	Learn by finding evidence
Swipe left or right to answer.	Several input needed ie. walking, interacting.

Table 2: Comparison between Factitious and Lunar Hunt

4.4.3 Fake It To Make It

Fake It To Make It is “a social-impact game about fake news”. The game was created to increase player awareness on fake news (Warner, 2017). The game mechanics make the player become the fake news website manager to lure people into viewing ads for money.

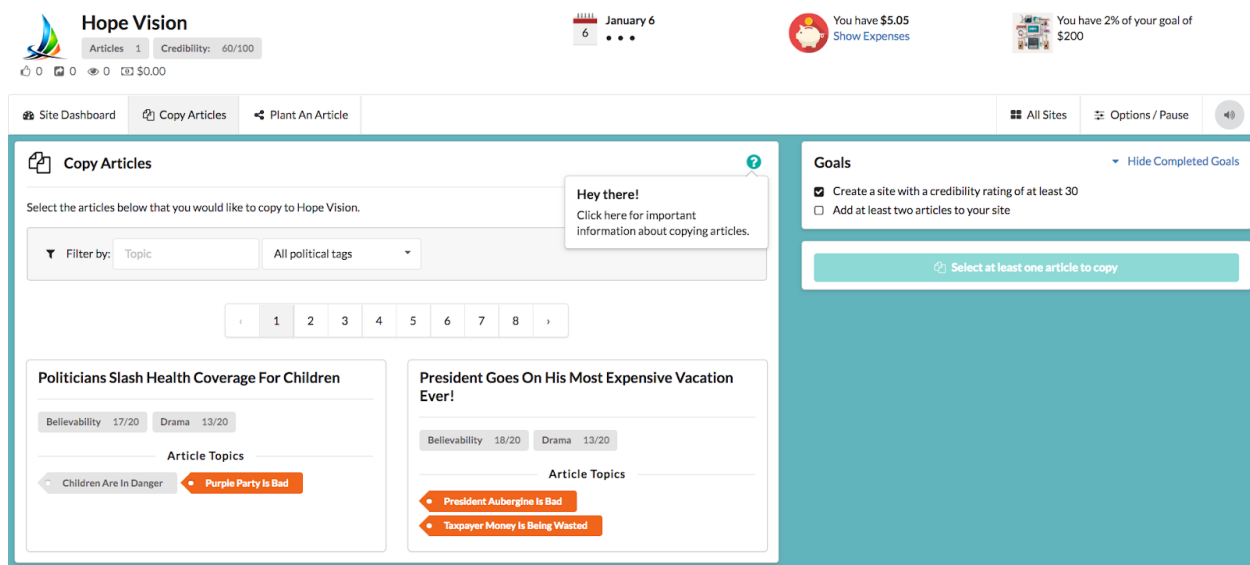


Figure 3: Fake It To Make It gameplay

In comparison to our game, Fake It To Make It was designed as a business management game in which players have to make misleading news to get more traffics and money while Lunar Hunt will be a role-playing game in which players will roleplay the main character to find evidence. Lunar Hunt will use a more in-game environment as compared to Fake It To Make It. The following table concludes the comparison.

Fake It To Make It	Lunar Hunt
Fake news website manager	Role-Playing Game
Learn by spreading fake news	Learn by finding evidence

Table 3: Comparison between Fake It To Make It and Lunar Hunt

4.5 Influence of game mechanic from existing games

Our Lunar Hunt game design, especially the gameplay and concept of pixel art games, is influenced by previous game titles.

4.5.1 LiEat

LiEat (Miwashiba, 2014) is an RPG game with a story about a con artist who adopts a girl who can eat manifested lies. The game mechanic is straightforward thus the game gives less feel of a visual novel game. For game mechanics, LiEat has enough features for its storytelling. Players can move around as one of the game characters and interact with other NPCs and objects. The game has a battle system where players can fight the enemy. However, such a battle is not challenging.



Figure 4: LiEat with dialogue box

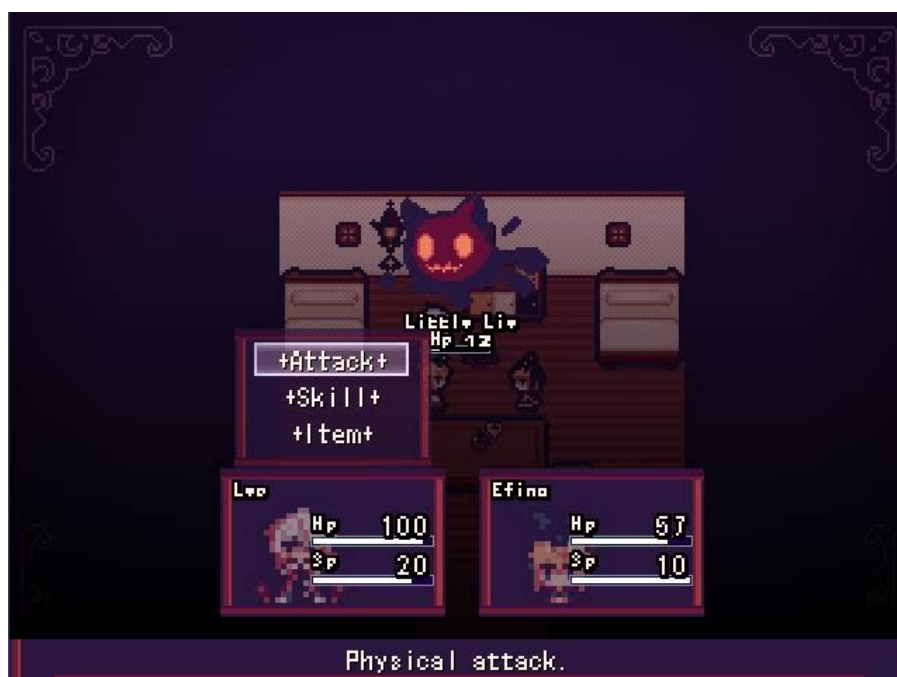


Figure 5: LiEat in battle



Figure 6: LiEat portraits scene

Similar features

- Made in 2D with Pixel Art Style
- Top-down view
- A role-playing game that feels more like a visual novel

In comparison to our game, LiEat was designed as a role-playing game to tell the story of the main characters solving the lies of other culprits while Lunar Hunt will be a role-playing game to tell the story of the main character finding evidence among the town of fake news. Lunar Hunt will use more game mechanics in the battle system as compared to LiEat. The following table concludes the comparison.

LiEat	Lunar Hunt
Turn-based combat system	Combat in the open world
Combat doesn't depend on strategies	Combat can benefit from strategies
Can not move diagonally	Can move diagonally

Table 4: Comparison between LiEat and Lunar Hunt

What LiEat has for influence in Lunar Hunt, is the style of storytelling and it's aesthetic style of using pixel arts as visuals. LiEat with the world settings of medieval fantasy can be used as one of the references for Lunar Hunt world settings.

4.5.2 CrossCode

CrossCode (Radical Fish Games, 2018) is an action-RPG game about characters playing the game in their world. This game has an open-ended world in which enemies are scattered around the map. The puzzles in this game include interactable objects around the map. There are many game mechanics in CrossCode because it is an action-RPG game that has to keep players engaged. CrossCode has an open world map with enemies to fight and interactive puzzles to solve. The main story of CrossCode gives players tasks to complete to progress the story, these tasks include talking to an NPC, fight certain enemies, explore and find another town etc.



Figure 7: CrossCode exploration and combat



Figure 8: CrossCode map layout

Similar features

- Made in 2D with Pixel Art Style
- Top down view
- Each region has room for player to explore

In comparison to our game, CrossCode was designed as an action role-playing game with lots of features to entertain the player with story, puzzles, and battle system while Lunar Hunt will be a role-playing game which focuses more on telling the story and has mechanics of connecting evidence. Lunar Hunt will use more game mechanics to simulate connecting evidence in the story as compared to CrossCode. The following table concludes the comparison.

CrossCode	Lunar Hunt
Don't have jump button (Auto jump when going around ledges)	Has a jump button
Progress the story by battle, puzzle, and other interaction ⁴⁴	Focus on connecting evidences to solve the problem

Table 5: Comparison between CrossCode and Lunar Hunt

What CrossCode has for influence in Lunar Hunt is its combat system and the feel of exploration in the open world filled with puzzles. The art style also uses pixel art which can be used as one of the studies on how action can be animated and used in pixel art.

5. Objective

- To make 2D role-playing game as a learning medium for finding evidence.
- To encourage players to make decisions based on evidence rather than personal belief.

6. Methodology

6.1 Game Concept Design

6.1.1 Game Mechanic design

Game mechanic is what makes the game work. The game mechanic design takes priority on the necessary features first. These necessary features are often very common among video games in the similar genres. In particular, Lunar Hunt is a role-playing game, which will include features that typical role-playing games commonly have, including, speech dialogues, game maps, collectible items, interactable NPCs, and a system to save and load game data.

The game design will then focus on what game mechanics will make Lunar Hunt different from other games. Besides using typical game mechanics commonly used in most RPG games, a quest system will be introduced in Lunar Hunt. In particular, when the main character, Sebastian, takes a quest from an NPC, he will have multiple choices to decide an answer. The quest will reward players for choosing the right answer which requires them to gather evidence before making decisions.

6.1.2 Game Character design

Designing characters is another important process to keep players engaged in role-playing games. They should make the player think they are real and capable of having impact in the story of the game.

When designing the characters, it is commonly started with the question “What is the role of this character?”. Later on, the concept of visual design and character personality will be based

on that said role. For example, in Lunar Hunt, Sebastian is the main protagonist who has just arrived in the town and is determined to search around the town for evidence. Therefore, his character will be designed with visual elements, including rucksacks and forest hunting attire to help when investigating the area around the town. He is given a skeptic personality compared to other characters to make him a good candidate to solve the problems in Lunar Hunt.

6.2 Game script writing

Role-playing games require stories to keep players engaged. Lunar Hunt let players read the games' story through the dialogue box which players will keep reading in the game. Story writing in video games is different from story writing in movies or plays. The complexity of writing a story will be affected by how much control and interaction the player can do in the game.

6.2.1 Story writing

The priority in story writing is to write how the story will flow from start to finish. Lunar Hunt's lore was designed in the big picture first, which consists of “what will this chapter be about?”.

On the other hand, Lunar Hunt could do storytelling in video games unconventionally compared to movies and animations. The game may leave some clues via an item's description box or rely on the game visual to give players a hint, for example, a broken wall to hint that there is something out of place and therefore, players should start investigating.

6.2.2 Game script flowchart

The dialogues and scenes in Lunar Hunt may change depending on the player's actions in the game. It is important to have a roadmap on how the game will progress depending on different conditions. For the key story progress in Lunar Hunt, it is manageable to make a flowchart on how the story can progress. On the smaller scale like managing independent tasks, it is also manageable to write the game script in flowchart.

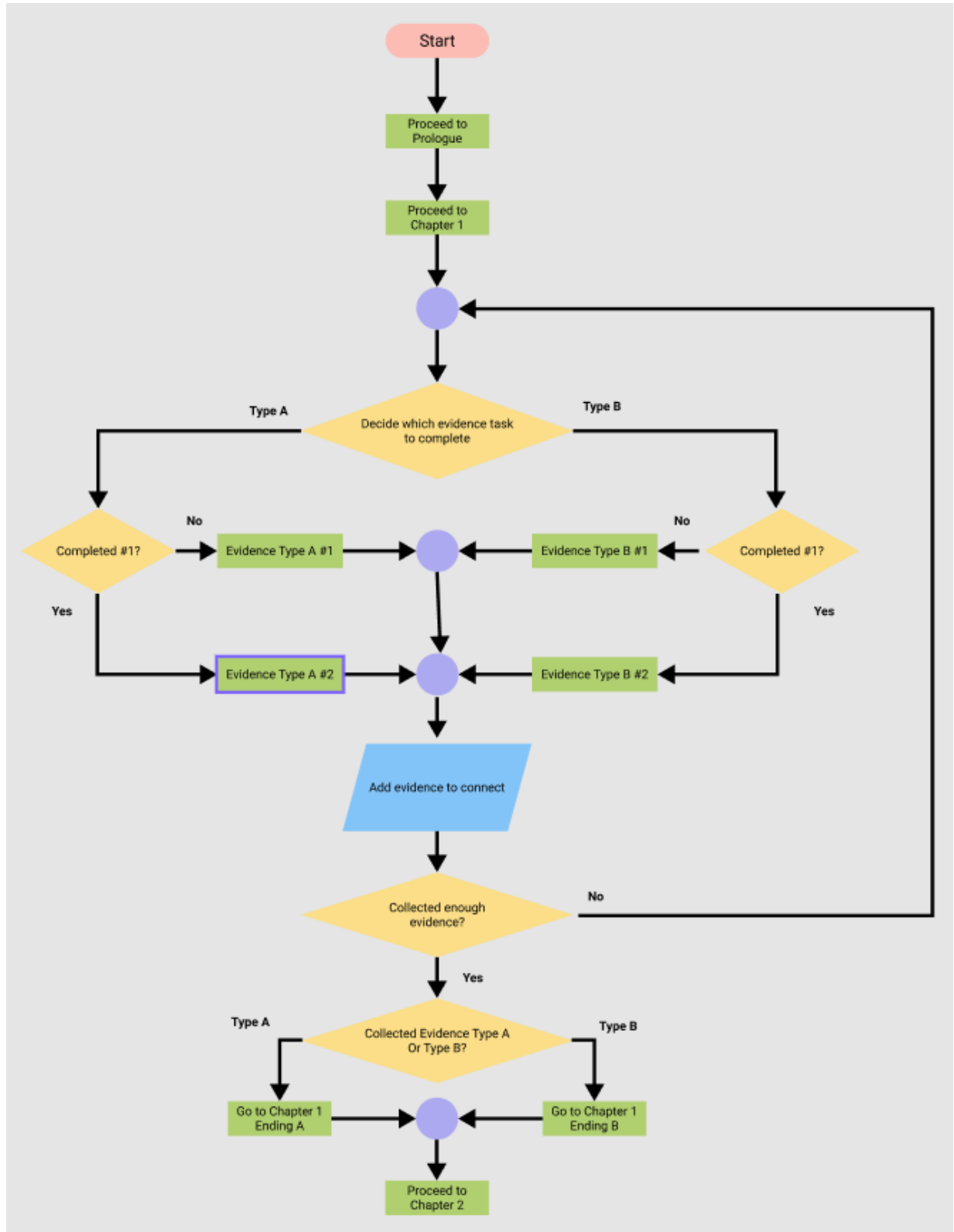


Figure 9: A game script flowchart for chapter procedure

6.3 Sound Design

Sound design includes choosing sound effects and background music. Lunar Hunt will employ various sound effects including sound effects for user interface, sound effects for ambience in the game and sound effects when characters interact with game objects. It is also important to ensure that the background music in Lunar Hunt will give the mood and feels of a situation in the game.

There are several ways to find the right sound for the game. One way to do this is to use sounds and music available on the internet. The other method requires more equipment but more rewarding is to record sounds or produce original music.

6.4 Iterative Design

In the game development process, it is very common to test the game several times to ensure that the game is playable and engaging players. It is an iterative process. Each time the game is tested, there will be an insight on how the feature could be changed or improved.

7. Scope of the project

8.1 Project creation

- Create a 2D game with Unity engine

8.1 Target Group

- Age 13+
- Likes role-playing games

8. Equipment needs for the project

This section will talk about the equipment which are needed to work on our game project Lunar Hunt. The list will only show what Tonnam Somchanakij used to work on his responsibilities on game script writing, game design, sound design, and game development.

8.1 Hardware

Hardware are the physical equipment needed to work on our game project Lunar Hunt.

8.1.1 Personal Computer

Computer is an important asset used to process work.

Specification

Computer Model	Legion Y740-17IRHg
CPU	Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-9750H CPU @ 2.60GHz 2.59Hz
RAM	32 GB
GPU	Nvidia Geforce RTX 2060

8.1.2 Mouse

Basic hardware used for navigating the computer

Model	RZ01-0265 Gaming Mouse
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8.1.3 Keyboard

Basic hardware used to give input to the computer

Model	Logitech K200
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8.2 Software

Software are programs uses to work on our game project Lunar Hunt.

8.2.1 Unity Engine

Unity Engine is a game development software that is capable of making games. Lunar Hunt will use Unity Engine to create 2D game

8.2.1 Visual Studio 2019

Visual Studio 2019 is an integrated development environment (IDE) used to write computer programs. In project Lunar Hunt it is used to write C# code to make the game works.

8.2.2 Figma

Figma is a vector graphics editor suited for prototyping early design. Flowcharts and early user interface design can be created using Figma.

8.2.3 Google Docs

Google Docs is a web application for writing texts and documents. Script writing, and game design concepts are mostly written in Google Docs.

8.2.4 Digital audio station

In order to design original sound assets, Digital audio stations (DAW) will be used to help create and edit sounds for the game project. However, there are also other software that may be used, including

- Bandlab, free web application also available for mobile devices in the app store.
- Cakewalk, free DAW from the same producer of Bandlab with more features.
- FL studio, A popular DAW known for being recommended to beginners composers.

9. Expected benefit

- The players have learned or practiced the method on how to perceive information.
- The players understand how misinformation can affect the lives of people.

Chapter 3 Result Demonstration

1. Project description and purpose

Lunar Hunt is a 2D role-playing game that aims to help society beware of misinformation and prevent being deceived by them. And to help achieve that goal, the game has features to improve the player's ability to recognize fake news by testing their ability to find and connect evidence to analyze the news. The game includes the story of a young wolf boy who lost his father during his travel to a nearby town. He wants to avenge his father's death by finding the truth among the misinformation from the town.

2. Draft of model and prototype

2.1 Script writing

The script writing was done mostly in google doc. The script summarizes the game's story in the prologue, chapter 1 to chapter 4, and epilogue. This report's section includes the synopsis and prologue.

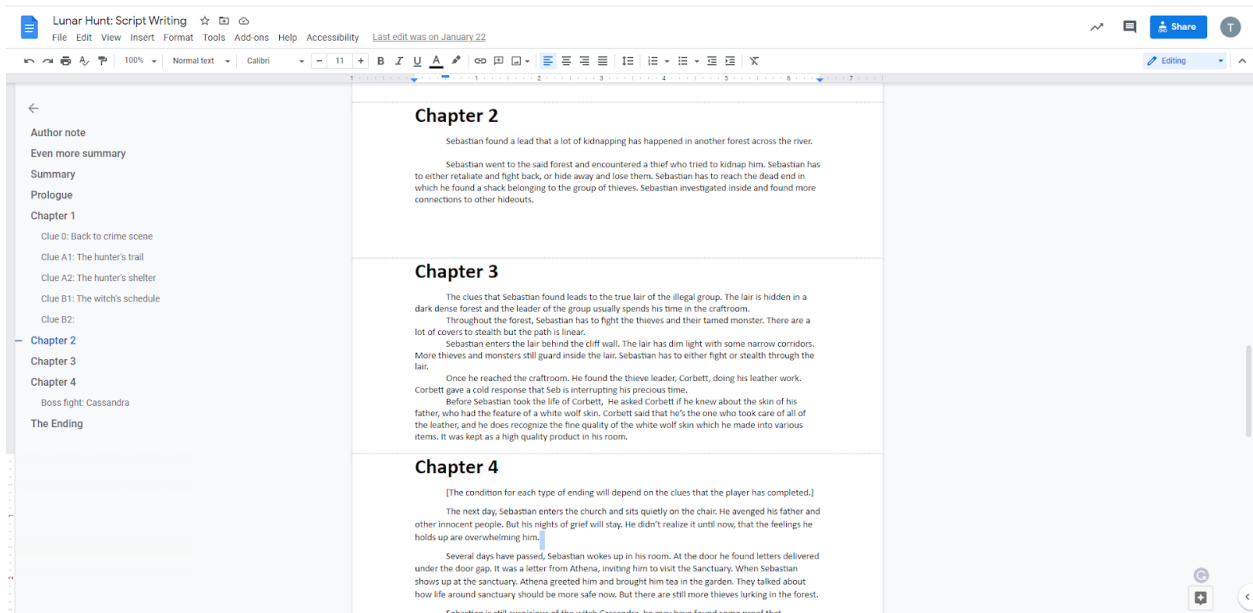


Figure 10: The written scripts in Google Doc

Prologue

Somewhere in the forest, there was a pair of half-wolves travelling at dusk. The father, Rafael, was ill and not in a great condition for hunting. The son, Sebastian, volunteered to go alone and hunt for Rafael and let him rest. While the son was scavenging, he heard his father's painful cry. He hurried to find him but when he got there, it was too late. Sebastian found a bloody trail with the scent of his father. Upon this bloody sight the young wolf let out a raging howl, running to catch up for his father's scent. But as he bolted carelessly, something hit his head and fainted him. As the night passed to day, Sebastian woke up with frustration knowing he lost the murderer's trail. And then realised he got himself to a different area. As he surveyed around. He found a town called the sanctuary.

Synopsis

Sebastian, a half-beast race which is constantly being hunted, travelled with his father to reach a safe place, The Sanctuary. However, just before they reach the town, a thief has kidnapped Sebastian's father and left Sebastian behind. Sebastian had no leads to find the thief so he started searching for clues from The Sanctuary.

While Sebastian had suspected that the town's leader, Cassandra, could be the culprit. He still accepts Athena, the witch apprentice, to help find other leads about the group of thieves. During his investigation, he found out that his father is dead and the thieves captured other missing people for Cassandra's experiment and sacrifices. This made Sebastian plan to stop Cassandra's scheme and kill Cassandra. In the end, the true culprit is gone and Sebastian stays in the town to keep other people safe.

2.2 Game design

In the game project Lunar Hunt, there are designs that focus on the mechanics of the game. These include ideas of how these features will work out, and early visual design on how they could work

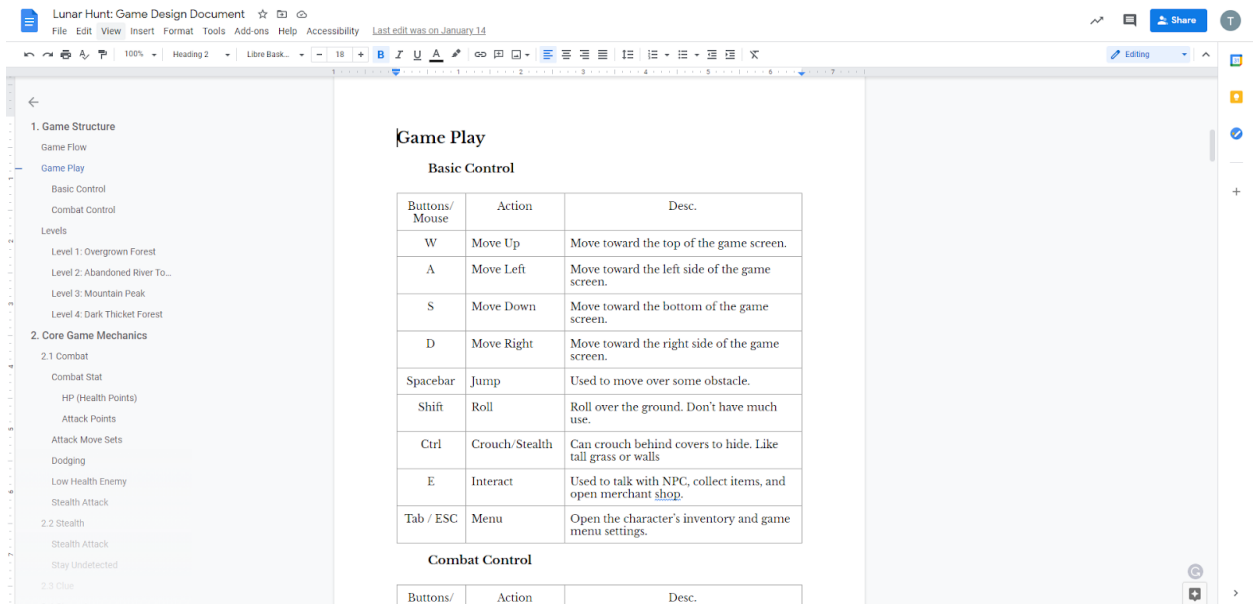


Figure 11: The game design idea written in Google Doc

2.3 Game prototype

In the game project Lunar Hunt, some designs focus on the mechanics of the game. These include ideas of how these features will work out, and early visual design on how they could work. Assets used in the visual are work in progress by Nattapat Ratnui.

- Able to walk around
- Able to interact with NPC
- Able to navigate through the dial

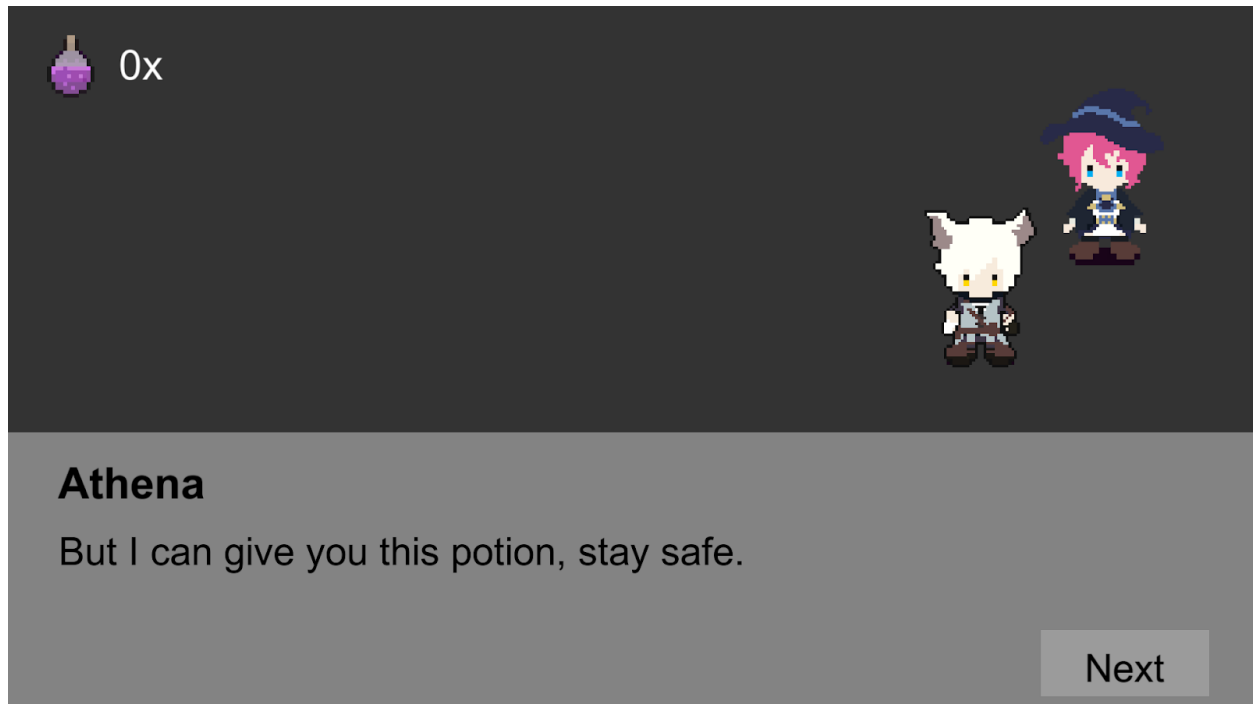


Figure 12: Early implementation of Lunar Hunt Dialogue system

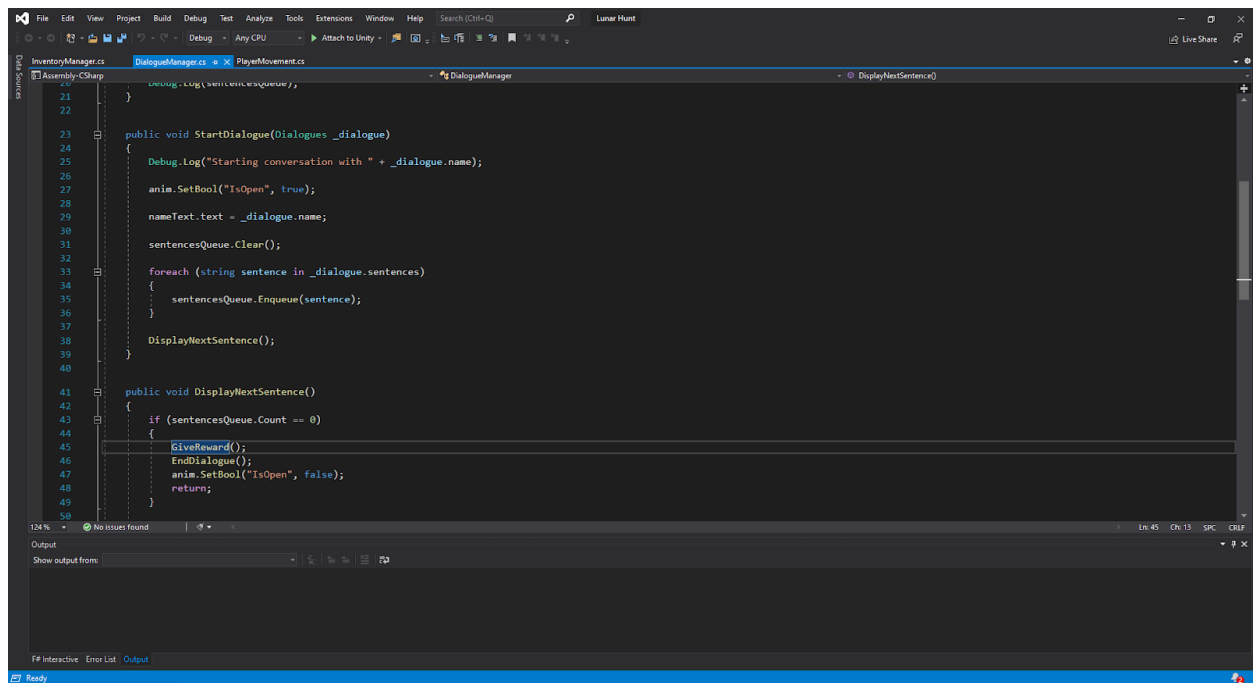


Figure 13: Using visual studio 2019 to write C# languages for the game system

3. Preliminary design

3.1 Gantt Chart

There are 3 phases of Gantt chart design for project Lunar Hunt. The color for each duration bar represents the responsibilities of the member in this project. Yellow is the responsibility of Tonnarn Somchanakij. Green is responsible for Nattapat Ratnui. And blue is the responsibility of both members.

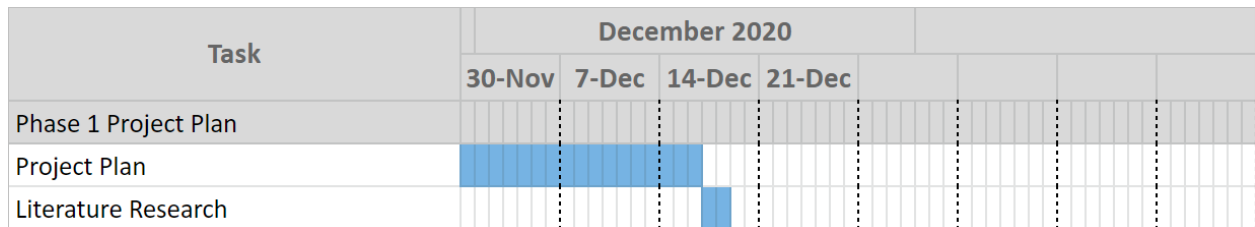


Figure 14: Gantt Chart Phase 1 Project Plan

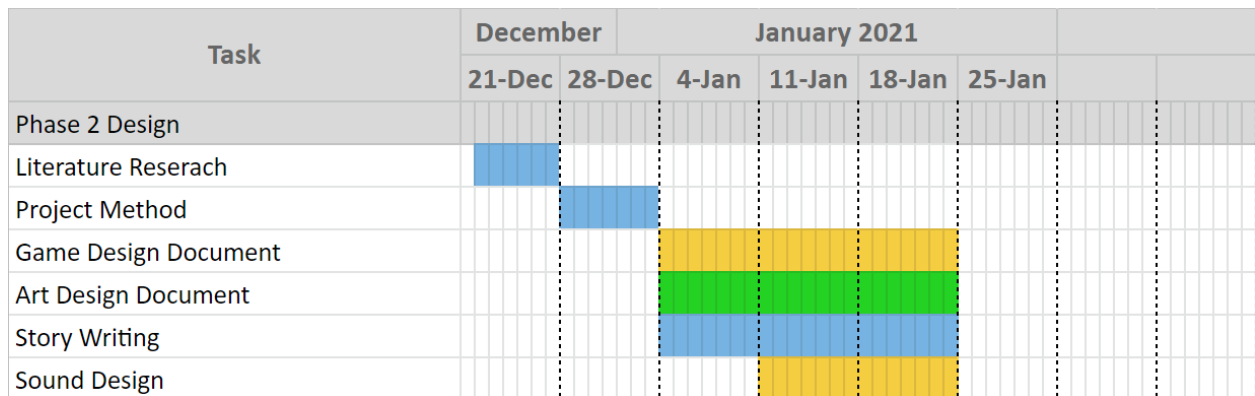


Figure 15: Gantt Chart Phase 2 Design

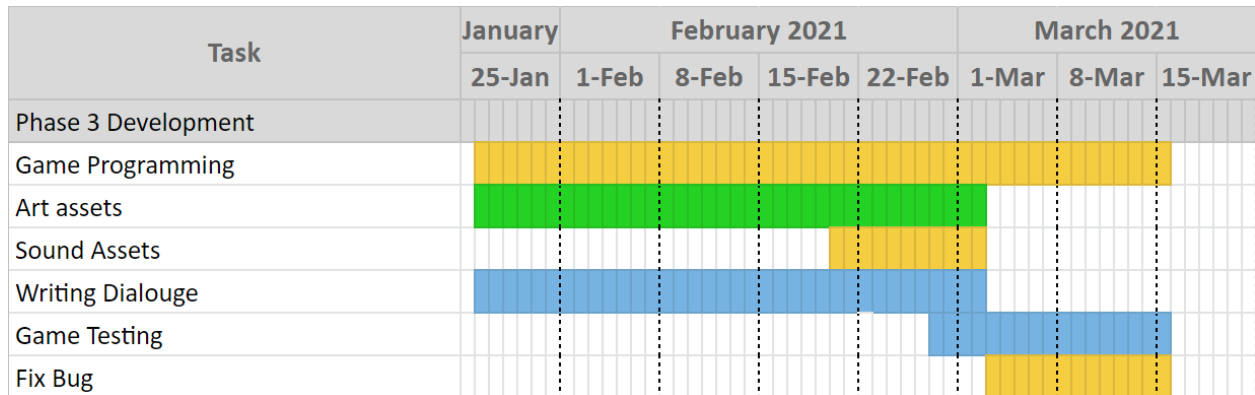


Figure 16: Gantt Chart Phase 3 Development

3.2 Data collection design

This design of data collection will be used after the project makes a testable prototype. This design is subjective to change when there's a better implementation.

3.2.1 Population and sample

In order to test the game, the chosen population should at least have certain characteristics to give some structured answers. The required characteristics are as follows.

- Needs to be patient enough to read game dialogue (Therefore, prefer an age of 13+)
- Has an interest in video games
- Has an interest in role-playing games
- Has an interest in anime-related content

For populations, there are three plans for data collection.

Population #1: PSUIC students

Sample: Selected 10 students

Reason: These students should know some basics of digital media and could give an opinion regarding visual or interactive aspects.

Population #2: Family and Friends

Sample: Selected 10 people

Reason: It can be challenging to find people who will agree to sit down and test a game project over an hour while doing an interview. Scouting for close acquaintances who also has the required characteristics should be sufficient.

Population #3: Volunteer over the internet

Sample: Selected 10 people

Reason: A larger pool of population could mean more diversity of people. Though these options may risk getting people who are not consistent with answering or risk not finding enough volunteers. However, this population can prove to be realistic to the project. As people who took interest in Lunar Hunt could be anyone from anywhere in the world.

3.2.2 Statistical tool

There are two parts of statistical tool design. The first part is the interviews which will be conducted on selective individuals who are able to spare at least 1 hour of time for this process. The second part is the questionnaire which is more flexible to give out to other people in which they are free to answer anytime they are able to.

The Interviews

Tasks will be given to the interviewee to test the game. It does not need to be done in order. The interviewee should already do these tasks if they managed to play to the end of the game. The interview will take notes on how the interviewee interacts with the game to complete the task and how they respond to the game prototype in any particular way such as frustration or confusion. Examples of tasks are starting a new game, playing the prologue (The first part of the game), navigating to the game's inventory menu, navigating to the game's setting menu, and reaching the game's ending.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire designed to have options to answer in ratings of 1 to 5. The example of questions is as follows.

- How related is the game with finding evidence?
- Is the game's difficulty just right?
- How satisfied are you with the narrative of the game?
- How satisfied are you with the visual appeals of the game?
- How satisfied are you with the music and sound effects of the game?

Chapter 4 Bibliography

1. Bibliography and references

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